

# NLFI Symposium: Advancing Education in Head and Neck Cancer Management

## Overview of the Symposium

The NLFI organised and hosted a dedicated symposium focusing on the education, treatment and management of head and neck cancer. The event took place on Saturday, 15th November 2025, in the welcoming setting of the Radisson Airport Hotel, Dublin. The afternoon attracted a multidisciplinary group of healthcare professionals, all involved in the comprehensive care of patients with this complex condition.

## Opening Address

The symposium began with an address by Mary Hickey, MISCP, Chairperson of NLFI. She provided background on the continuing work of NLFI, highlighting their commitment to advancing care. Additionally, she referenced Lymphoedema Ireland, the patient advocate organisation, noting that its chairperson is also part of the NLFI steering group, thereby emphasising collaborative efforts in lymphoedema management.

## Expert Presentations

### Surgical Procedures in Head and Neck Cancer

Dr Cian..... delivered an in-depth and impactful presentation on the surgical approaches to treating different forms of head and neck cancer, detailing the complexities and considerations involved in these procedures.

### Radiation Therapy Planning and Delivery

Dr Jake Murphy, Specialist Registrar in Radiation Oncology at St Lukes Hospital, Rathgar, Dublin, discussed the meticulous process of pre-planning and administering radiation therapy. His presentation underscored the importance of precision and tailored approaches for this specific patient group.

### Physiotherapy and Holistic Management

Ms Niamh Moylan, Physiotherapy Manager at St Lukes Hospital, Rathgar, explored the effects of both surgical and radiation treatments on individuals living with head and neck cancer. She provided valuable insights into the wider impact beyond the immediate site of cancer, stressing the significance of a holistic approach to patient management.

### Occupational Therapy and Lymphoedema Treatment

Ms Aileen Ryan, Occupational Therapy Manager at South Infirmary University Hospital, Cork, presented on the management of internal and external lymphoedema post cancer

treatment. She shared practical advice on tools and techniques to facilitate the clearance of oedema and empower patients in self-management of their condition.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

Ms Eimear Hannigan, Speech and Language Therapist at South Infirmary University Hospital, Cork, concluded the presentations. She offered information and visual evidence illustrating how lymphoedema can affect speech, swallowing, airway clearance, and nutrition, highlighting the broad impact on patients' quality of life.

### **Audience Engagement and Outcomes**

All speakers provided clear and practical information, fostering an engaging question and answer session. While formal participant feedback is awaited, the NLFI hopes the symposium has contributed to a deeper understanding and more effective management strategies for lymphoedema in patients with head and neck cancer.

The presentations from the event are currently being prepared and will be uploaded to the website soon.