

at college



ROLE: Professor Michael Murphy, Executive Dean, School of Medicine and Health.

College of Medicine and Health

PROFESSOR Michael Murphy was appointed Executive Dean, School of Medicine and Health, in 2000 and has been Acting Head, College of Medicine and Health, since 2005.

His appointment as Head of College was confirmed earlier this month.

Professor Murphy held senior posts in Dublin, London and Chicago before his return to Cork in 1992 as Professor of Clinical Pharmacology.

The new college: The College of Medicine and Health accommodates a wide range of schools, primarily to meet the needs of health service, while contributing intellectual capital to the University.

I see more teaching programmes being added during the next five, while, at the same time, the Government continues to invest in an enhanced health service.

The next five years?

Probably more focus on research. Biosciences or Life Sciences will, on the basis of international experience, be a major driving force for economic activity in Ireland over the next 20 years.

So, if there will be a change in how we appear, it will be from the addition of some more professional degree programmes, development of more higher degree programmes linked to higher specialist training.

Structure of the College: What we will certainly see is that the administrative and managerial capability of the college will be greatly improved in order to allow the Head of College and Heads of Schools to fulfil their roles.

Leadership at these levels is about scanning the horizon for new opportunities not micro-management. The team must be in place over the next six months.



AIMS: Professor Murphy says that the objective in the university should be that the life cycle should be one where change is constant, but measured.

Delegation: Firstly, within the college, we must make provision for somebody who will work closely with the Head.

This person has a deputising role but also, and very importantly, takes responsibility for a significant part of the portfolio of functions that the Head cannot be expected to carry on his own.

Secondly, we must make provision for delegation of as much decision-making latitude as possible to the professional schools.

Research: The Bio-medical or Life Sciences agenda is common to Medicine and Health and to the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science (SEFS) and cross-College collaboration will be critical.

We need, jointly, greatly enhanced infrastructure, (BSI II, BSU II at UCC and a clinical research centre at Cork University Hospital campus) and we need more researchers.

Health services research describes a whole range of methodologies housed mainly in this college, but which can gain enormously from inputs from applied psychologists, counsellors, and social workers from the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, economists, management experts and lawyers from Business and Law.

The research agenda, more than any, will require cross-university collaboration.

Four Colleges, Four Universities? I look at life cycles of organisations and see that too many conduct their busi-

ness by lurching wildly from one side of the middle course to the other, and some, generally older organisations that steer with much more finesse.

The objective in the university should be that our life cycle should be one where change is constant, but measured.

To avoid lurching, we will have to agree the role of the centre of the university, and then the devolved role of the colleges, in that order.

Ultimately, the four colleges must recognise that major policy must be developed centrally, with input from the Colleges.

And I would go so far as to say that devolution should be operational predominantly, providing urgently needed managerial and administrative support, while policy devolution should be restricted to very specialised areas where expertise is lacking centrally.

There's little wrong with the structures that we actually have for policy-making, but they do need tweaking in how they operate.

The Governing Body ultimately controls the University, and ultimately, all of the colleges.

There's the modulating influence offered by Academic Council, as a common playing pitch for all the academic staff at the University, affording an opportunity for all to input their views on where the university should be going.

The mechanisms to preclude 'unilateral declarations of independ-

ence' exist; it's a question of utilising them better. Finally, I think that the UMG that we've put in place has the capacity to perform strong, central co-ordinating management, again, relating to the Governing Body appropriately, and to the Colleges.

Finance: There will never be enough! However, we are heading into a rational and overt rationing process!

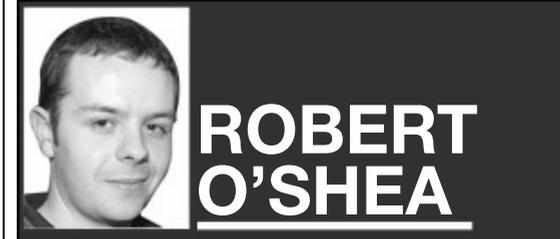
We must dispel myths about the RAM (Resource Allocation Model); it is but a tool to effect our strategic decisions. We must have our university strategy and plan, subsequently tweaking the RAM to make sure that the colleges, and the central administration, actually deliver what the university wants.

The biggest determinant of our financial latitude will be our success in competing for the Strategic Innovation Fund announced in the recent budget, and how successful we will be in developing international education further.

The biggest source of growth will be research income, although, until the funding agencies adopt a 'full-funding' model, our income from will remain small.

The biggest gain from devolution, will be the putting in place, out in the schools, faculties and colleges, of financial management support that will allow an academic to get on with academic agenda, leaving administration to those who are professional at administration.

● *Interview reproduced from UCC News.*



Robert O'Shea tackles the Ballycotton '5' race, and lives to tell the tale

MY FOOT has gone to sleep again. It's my left foot and it has been completely useless for a while now. Typing this, I feel like some sort of anti-Christy Brown.

Walking, I could be mistaken for trying to pull off an impression of Kevin Spacey before we realise he is Kaiser Soze in *The Usual Suspects*; my foot drags behind like an insolent pup.

'What happened?' you query. 'What ailment has struck that extremely useful bit at the end of your leg? Will amputation be necessary?'

For those weak of heart among you, who quiver at the thought of human suffering, I urge you to close the newspaper right now, find a family member, hug them and tell them how much you love them.

For the rest of you, pour your eyes over the following.

To get the complete story, we must delve through the mists of time, back to last Thursday evening in Ballycotton.

Clad in a football jersey and Umbro shorts, I stood in the middle of the fishing village, surrounded by hundreds of people, people sleek of limb with fresh complexions.

Most of them had spent the previous half-hour warming up, jogging with gazelle-like grace up and down the streets. I found a railing, and after sitting on it for a while, I decided it was time to limber up. I did that stretch where you try to touch your toes and get down far enough to sniff your crotch. And the one where you lift your leg up like a dog pissing. The latter I held until I felt myself cramping up.

The run was the Ballycotton '5', and what I was doing there, standing a few yards short of the start line at 7.30pm last Thursday, I'm still not sure of.

Around six months and two stones ago, I might have felt confident of an enjoyable jog but my running this summer has been limited to sprints through airport terminals and dashes into cold

waves, pretending to enjoy the beach.

We registered in the primary school, where the scent of sweaty socks was truly overpowering. My Leaving Cert maths teacher, the former Olympian steeplechaser Liam O'Brien, handed me my number: 184. It was one of the few times he had given me a number and not asked me the square root of it.

I had dragged along Mike (sleek of limb, freshly complex) so I'd have someone to run with. But Mike, it turned out, looked on it as some sort of race and sprinted past me after 400 metres, leaving me amid a bunch of straggling strangers.

It was after that first quarter of a mile that I began regretting the cigarettes I had smoked earlier in the day. Up until then, I had been doing well, but I had gone out too quickly, I realised. You had to jostle for position after the gun and Mike and I, being Kerry-men and unable to fetter our cynical nature, kneeled fellow runners in the back, stamped on them, elbowed them.

At the two-mile mark, I hit the wall. Well, less hit the wall, more leaned up against one for a while to recapture some oxygen. After shouts of encouragement from a few of the hundred people who took the opportunity to pass me out, I ended my breather and retook the road.

After two more miles, I actually felt slightly better, my foot the only part of my body in disagreement.

During the last mile, when almost everyone else overtook me, I did manage to pass out somebody myself, a minor victory I congratulated myself on until she overtook me again.

I saved my legendary kick for the last two and a half yards and at least half of those clapping at the finishing line seemed not to be doing so ironically. My face may have been redder than that of a nun who had sworn in front of the Pope, but a sense of grim accomplishment surged through my body as I collapsed over the line.

It took me 42 minutes-something to complete the five miles, which is, I think, a world record for someone with a limp.

TOMORROW: We profile the fourth head of college at UCC, Professor Patrick Fitzpatrick, who is in charge of the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science