

Mater celebrates

Hospital founded in 1851 completes its move to 21st century facilities, which includes 120 single ensuite rooms

YEARS of planning, organising and negotiating finally came to fruition in February 2014 for the Mater Hospital, with the final migration of areas to a €284 million development. The Mater Whitty Wing is an eight story, T-shaped, state-of-the-art building. It is an intelligent, green and beautiful facility. Thanks to funding from the HSE, areas have now moved from the iconic but outdated 1861 building and relocated to a world class facility.

The Mater Whitty Wing accommodates an emergency department (ED), radiology department, oncology/haematology unit, outpatient department, national centre for cardiothoracic surgery/heart and lung transplantation, national spinal injuries unit, intensive care unit and theatres, among other services.

The Mater's status as a major trauma centre is firmly established as a trauma patient's journey is significantly improved by the provision of direct access from the ED, combined with improved centralisation of critical care departments.

In 2013, the ED's relocation to this modern facility was a significant milestone. The radiology department enriches the radiology experience and houses the latest technology equipment for all radiology subspecialties. The outpatients department provides privacy, dignity and comfort for patients. The relocated oncology/haematology unit ensures that at a difficult period in their lives patients and families enjoy the comforts of a clean, bright and spacious environment.

"Moving into a purpose-built facility of this calibre is a morale boost for everyone. It enables us to rethink how care is delivered and review and change as part of continuous quality improvement. A series of LEAN projects were instigated to rationalise work processes in accordance with the new surroundings. While some challenges prevail, this new expanded space allows patients more privacy, dignity and comfort. It facilitates staff to work together more efficiently," said Mairead



Nurse Nicola Shorten pictured in the new spinal unit in the Mater Whitty Wing

Curran, interim director of nursing.

"The quietness and calmness of the environs for patients cannot be underestimated. Access to new technology and the innovative adaptation by staff to the new surroundings adds to a more positive patient and staff experience."

The final migration involved the ICU and HDUs relocating to an area directly adjacent to the theatre complex. The new theatre complex provides an improved patient journey and experience and will ensure that the hospital is well placed to adopt emerging technologies and trends.

The Maurice Neligan Heart and Vascular Hybrid Theatre is the first hybrid theatre in a public hospital. The experience of patients and families attending the National Centre for Cardiothoracic Surgery is also enhanced with this relocation.

The National Spinal Injuries Unit's move allows further development of a service that has been provided in the Mater since 1988.

Relatives of critical and palliative care patients can be accommodated in family rooms. Interactive kiosks at entrances provide visual displays and written directions to public accessible areas and departments in the Mater Campus. A 444-space underground car park is also onsite.

"This final migration of departments to

the Mater Whitty Wing creates a perfect environment for the delivery of worldclass care to our patients under the expertise of the most dedicated and professional medical teams," said Mary Day, CEO of the Mater Hospital.

"The experience of our patients will be enhanced significantly through the provision of these state-of-the-art facilities. This significant milestone in the long and illustrious history of the Mater and the Sisters of Mercy's dedication to serving the community will ensure the hospital continues to enhance its national reputation for high quality care."

The new development is named after Sr Vincent Whitty who acquired the site in 1851, fundraised in the decade after the famine and built the original building, which opened in 1861. This large development is evidence of considerable partnership between the State and the Mater as a voluntary care provider.

In February 2014 the remit of Mater Campus Hospital Development was discharged with Sr Helena O' Donoghue, chair of the Mater Campus Development Company formally 'handing-over' the Mater Whitty Wing to the Mater.

Mairéad Curran is the interim director of nursing at the Mater Hospital