



HOW SOFTWARE HELPED REDUCE ELDERLY FALLS

Louise Reid, PhD student, developed a Hospital Quality Assurance Program (H-QAP). This was initially designed for software development and implementation within hospitals, with its use being recently generalised.

H-QAP has been implemented in the Radiography Department and the Maternity Labour Ward in the University of Limerick Hospital. In the Labour Ward, the use of H-QAP demonstrated inefficiencies in the collection and use of data. Through following the program, staff changed their data collection systems, thus providing timely and accurate data to clinicians. Clinicians have used this data to effect improved patient outcomes within the Labour Ward.

Within St. Camillus Geriatric Care centre, it has been used to identify that clinical practice should change. In the past, best practice would indicate that elderly patients should have cot-sides on their beds. But, that is no longer the case! Using H-QAP, nursing staff

identified that technology would help them to change practice. Now, through the use of sensor mats and other similar technology, they have been enabled to remove cot-sides for many patients, and have reduced the number of falls in the Care centre.

Louise Reid's study was carried out part-time in the hospital and was funded through TRANSFoRm, an EU FP7 project. She was supervised by Dr Ita Richardson, Lero Principal Investigator, and Dr John Burton, an industry-based Lero PhD graduate.

Lero researchers have subsequently been funded for two further healthcare projects. Dr Richardson is a Principal Investigator on Enterprise Ireland Funded Industry-led Applied Research in Connected Health (ARCH) Technology Centre, led by University College Dublin. She is also supervising Martha Lotter's PhD study. Martha received an Irish Research Council Employment-Based grant to carry out research in the Radiography Department in University of Limerick Hospital.

