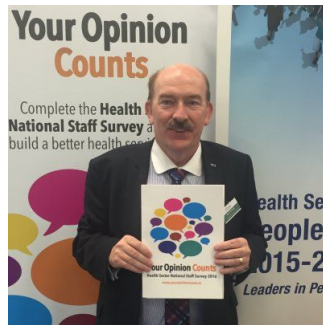

Honoring Gerry O'Dwyer's Retirement



[Gerry O'Dwyer](#), the Group Chief Executive of the South/SouthWest Hospital Group, has recently announced his retirement after an impressive 50-year career in the health services. Originally from Dublin and a proud fan of the Blues, Gerry has dedicated the past eight years to serving as the Group Chief Executive in the second capital. During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in establishing the Group and devising a strategy that aimed to provide a unified approach to healthcare delivery across the community, spanning from Waterford to Tralee.

Gerry's journey in the health services began in the 1970s as a Psychiatric Nurse, an experience that left a lasting impact on him and shaped his patient-centred approach to managing healthcare services. This background also instilled in him a belief in the importance of integrated service delivery, where acute and community services seamlessly work together to benefit the service user. Throughout his career, Gerry traversed both the public hospital system and the voluntary sector, holding senior positions in institutions such as the [Cork University Hospital Group](#) and [Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children](#). He also made significant contributions within the HSE, serving as the Network Manager South and Regional Director of Operations in Dublin Mid-Leinster.

Gerry was the epitome of multitasking, always exhibiting boundless energy and a willingness to lend a hand. Consequently, he often found himself juggling multiple responsibilities simultaneously. He actively participated behind the scenes in national negotiations with health service unions, establishing highly effective working relationships with them.

Early on, Gerry became deeply involved in the [Health Management Institute \(HMI\)](#), where he served as Director of Education. During his time with the institute, he played a crucial role in nurturing the development of various training courses for healthcare managers and oversaw the introduction of development programmes that offered nationally recognised qualifications for frontline managers. He even had the honour of serving as President of the HMI and subsequently became the first Irish person to assume the role of President of the [European Association of Hospital Managers \(EAHM\)](#).

Gerry's exceptional ability to bring people together was exemplified by his establishment of strong connections with emergency services, as well as the relationships he built with senior managers in air and sea rescue services, the ambulance service, and voluntary organisations.

In December of last year, an event was held to honour Gerry's retirement, and then-Taoiseach Micheál Martin paid tribute to his extraordinary work and dedication to the Irish health system over the course of many years. Extending his best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement, the Taoiseach expressed his gratitude for Gerry's contributions in caring for the people.

Gerry, in turn, expressed his gratitude to all the individuals he worked with throughout his career. He conveyed his appreciation to the staff in the 10 hospitals of the SSWHG Group, acknowledging their unwavering commitment and support during his eight-year tenure as CEO. Leading the hospital group has been the most significant privilege of his 50-year health services career, and he expressed immense pride in the daily work carried out by the group for the healthcare needs of the people of Munster and beyond.

Gerry specifically commended the hard work, dedication, and professionalism exhibited by the management and staff at each hospital, particularly during challenging times such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the cyberattack on the HSE. He acknowledged that all levels of staff across the group worked tirelessly and faced extremely difficult circumstances with unwavering resolve.

Gerry emphasised that the existence of the group would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the management and staff in each of the 10 hospitals. He consistently found himself impressed and inspired by the commitment and professionalism displayed by the

clinical staff across all grades, while recognising the invaluable contributions of the administrative and support staff who underpin their efforts.

Image Credit: [HSE](#)

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