



Annual Report 2025

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MISSION, VISION & VALUES

OUR MISSION

To transform the lives of people and families living with the burden of chronic illness through community-based clinical exercise programmes

OUR VISION

To bring the ExWell service to every community in Ireland and to make it available and accessible to everyone who would benefit from participating

OUR CORE VALUES

1 WE SERVE

We are privileged to transform lives. We undertake this role with humility and gratitude. Respect for our participants governs everything we do.

2 WE HAVE PASSION

Everyone on our team works with quiet, consistent passion and a commitment to excellence. This passion is delivered with energy and enjoyment.

3 WE FIND A WAY

We have a can-do attitude. We will always find a way to make things work for our participants.

4 WE TRUST

We believe the best of everyone we meet, take everyone at face value, and operate with integrity and reliability.

5 WE ARE A TEAM

We work together and help each other to be the best we can be.

GROWTH

2023

2024

2025

EXWELL CENTRES

26

+ 73%

45

+ 33%

60

WEEKLY CLASSES

133

+ 93%

257

+ 38%

355

MAX WEEKLY VISITS

3747

+ 90%

7136

+ 41%

10035

DAILY REFERRALS

50

+ 70%

85

+ 18%

100

WTE STAFF

29.6

+ 91%

56.6

+ 29%

80

IMPACT DATA 2025

POPULATION

*based on participants with both baseline and retest data from 2025

3,345

Participants

72

Avg Age (yrs)

65%

Female

PHYSICAL TEST RESULTS

6 Minute Time Trial (N=2730)



Max distance covered in 6 minutes. Assesses aerobic fitness. Increased distance = improvement.

+42 metres

Above MCID* of 30.5m ✓



30 Second Sit-to-Stand (N=2727)



Number of sit-to-stand reps in 30 seconds. Measures lower body strength. Higher reps = improvement.

+2 reps

Meets MCID* ✓



Timed Up and Go (N=2840)



Time to stand, walk 3m around a cone, and return to sit. Assesses balance and coordination. Decreased time = improvement.

-0.8 seconds

Just below MCID* of 0.9s



Timed Up and Go Dual Task (N=2810)



Same as TUG with an added cognitive task. Assesses cognitive decline. Decreased time = improvement.

-0.9 seconds

No reference MCID*



■ Baseline ■ Retest

*MCID: Minimally Clinically Important Difference

SELF-REPORT OUTCOMES



↓ FALLS EXPERIENCE

At least 1 fall in previous 6 months

Fear of falling

Fear of falling limits activities

Baseline

28%

>>

55%

>>

56%

Retest

22%

>>

48%

>>

47%





↓ BREATHLESSNESS

Fear of breathlessness

Breathless with strenuous exercise only

Baseline

53%

>>

78%

Retest

36%

>>

88%





↓ HEALTHCARE UTILISATION

ED Visits

Hospital Admissions

Nights in Hospital

Baseline

0.36

>>

0.23

>>

1.30

Retest

0.28

>>

0.13

>>

0.55



Self-reported numbers in previous 6 months (mean values)



↑ EXERCISE READINESS

Currently not exercising

Currently exercise regularly

Baseline

22%

>>

40%

Retest

4%

>>

71%





↑ SELF-RATED HEALTH

Mean VAS Score (0-100)

Baseline

65

>>

Retest

71

>>



Results from self-report surveys for participants with both baseline and retest data

TESTIMONIALS

“
*ExWell gave me back **confidence in my body** and a new outlook on training. Being able to talk with people who understand has been incredibly helpful.*

— Catherine McIntyre, Loughlinstown

“
*The class is amazing... I feel more agile, have **fewer aches and pains**, and benefit greatly from the support of the group.*

— Amy Carswell, Loughlinstown

“
*It's somewhere I feel **safe and comfortable**. Everyone understands without anything needing to be said.*

— Claire Treacey, Clontarf

“
*I've **met wonderful people** and had a lot of laughs, which helped me through a very difficult time.*

— Caroline Hayden, Clontarf

“
*The support is amazing. The **mental benefits are huge** - I feel like I'm doing **something positive for myself**.*

— Ruth Carty, Clontarf

TESTIMONIALS

“

*Without ExWell, I wouldn't have the mobility I have today... The **friendships and positivity** are just as important as the exercise.*

— Eileen Chrystal, Sligo

“

*The instructors are brilliant... we **have great fun** and I've made many good friends.*

— Frances Gallagher, Sligo

“

*I've **rebuilt my fitness and confidence**. My lungs are now as strong as they were before my illness.*

— Aileen Morrissey, Clontarf

“

*I'm **able to do everyday things much better** now - with less pain and more stamina.*

— Geraldine Warren, Clondalkin

“

*It **got me out of my comfort zone**... even a small amount of regular exercise makes a real difference.*

— Cathal Kelly, Kildare

EXPLAINING EXWELL

We are a rapidly growing non-profit social enterprise that is committed to transforming the lives of people with chronic illness through our exercise programmes.

WHAT IS A CHRONIC ILLNESS?

There are two components that define a chronic illness. The first is that it persists for a long time. The second is that, unlike many infectious illnesses, it does not spread from person to person but is caused instead by a combination of lifestyle, environmental and genetic factors. Common examples of chronic illnesses are diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), coronary artery disease of the heart and arthritis.

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT EXWELL?

The following are key differentiating features of ExWell:

- We have a **medical leadership model**, which means there is medical input into the design of the programme and there is medical support and advice for the delivery staff when needed.
- **Access is via referral from health care professionals.**
- Our medical team **communicates directly with the referrers** as necessary.
- Our **distinctive group induction session** is the first direct contact that we have with participants, and this involves a combination of explaining the programme and collecting extensive baseline impact measurement data.
- We carry out **re-testing and reporting** (to participants and referrers) at regular intervals.
- We prioritise carrying out **practically relevant, high-standard research.**
- Participants are welcome to **continue attending ExWell long-term.**
- **ExWell is a club.** We offer other activities such as weekly on-line educational sessions, an annual Health Fair and the ExWell Unity Choir that make ExWell a community that is totally focused on enriching the lives of our participants

HOW TO GET REFERRED?

Any health care professional can refer a patient to ExWell using online options or by direct post. These details are at <https://www.exwell.ie/join-us>



The Participant Pathway

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

As most people who will read this report now know, ExWell's mission is to transform the lives of the chronically ill through community-based exercise programmes. While providing exercise classes sounds easy in practice, doing so at scale and with consistent "transformational" impact requires getting a lot of things right, and doing things in a distinctive way.

I have described before the components of our delivery model, the combination of which we think is distinctive. These components are medical oversight, extensive research, focus on impact, inclusive multi-condition classes, an overlay of rich social interaction, unswerving commitment to trust-based relationships with all stakeholders, and a passion to deliver every class to the best of our ability.

I am delighted to say that 2025 was another year of strong progress. Broadly speaking we expanded our activity by 30% and had important impact on the lives of our participants. Noel will elaborate on this progress in his CEO report, including reference to important new impacts. We hope the main body of the report will give the reader a real sense of how ExWell does what it does.

ExWell Medical is now in its 8th year (albeit Noel, our founder and CEO has been pursuing our mission for over 20 years). Our Board and advisory group are very focused on ensuring that as ExWell grows and matures, we have robust systems and processes in place to handle that growth, and that our dedicated staff continue to grow and develop to manage that growth.

During the year, two new members were appointed to the Board, namely, Annette Kent (Clinical Director, Endowave) and Pat Magee (Director of IT , TCD) as non-executive directors. Both bring skill sets and perspectives that strengthen our collective ability.

Looking forward, we believe that ExWell has an important and growing role in Ireland's difficult chronic illness management landscape, and we are confident that we can rise to the challenge and make a real contribution. Our aspiration is that every person in Ireland who suffers from chronic illness should be able to access exercise classes, as exercise has such significant demonstrable impact on health outcomes and improved wellness

ExWell is a not-for-profit entity, and we do everything we can to ensure our costs are carefully managed so that we can keep our charges as low as possible. While many participants are able to cover the cost of attendance, there are many who cannot, and we will continue to advocate for funding on an ongoing basis from the HSE, a critical stakeholder for ExWell.

I want to pay tribute to all our participants, whose personal stories represent individual triumph over adversity, and to reiterate that ExWell will be with them every step of the way.

We also acknowledge the crucial role of all the GPs and consultants who understand and appreciate what we are trying to do and refer their patients to us, essentially “prescribing” ExWell.

Finally, I want to thank all of our staff in ExWell, an extraordinary group of professionals who every day demonstrate their commitment and passion in delivering our mission.

Lar Bradshaw, Chairperson ExWell Medical



Cork participants Christmas party

CEO REPORT

LOOKING BACK

I am delighted to look back on ExWell's performance in 2025 knowing that we have continued to deliver our mission (to transform lives) and vision (to expand nationally).

Our participants again experienced significant improvements in strength, aerobic fitness, frailty, self-rated health, falls experience, fear of falling, pain experience and fear of breathlessness (which is known to be a significant barrier to taking part in exercise). In addition, taking part in our programme was linked with a reduction in unscheduled visits to emergency departments and consequent emergency admissions. We have new evidence from 2025 of a reduction in participants' loneliness scores. Loneliness is recognized as one of the few reliable predictors of hospital admissions in people with chronic illnesses.

Last year, ExWell touched the lives of 20,000 people. This is the number that attended an ExWell induction in 2025, an increase of 40% compared with 2024. The monthly average weekly visits in 2025 was 7603, 45% higher than the 2024 average. The peak value seen was just over 10,000, an amazing figure and 52% higher than the peak seen in 2024. Our team grew by 30% to 80 WTE. More details about our 2025 growth is provided below in the operations report and in the main document.

THE SOUL OF EXWELL

Our reputation is strong. Everywhere we go, we meet people who are either attending ExWell or know someone who is attending. Because of the extraordinary work done by everyone in ExWell, we are well known as a reputable and trustworthy organization, and this is a source of great pride to all of us.

What we do is a source of satisfaction and excitement. Equally important is how we do it. One of my key roles is to promote and support the ExWell culture which is central to our ethos and to our success and is grounded in our core values. These are our participant-centered servant role, our passion, our can-do attitude, our belief in trust-based relationships and our commitment to always working as a team.

So much of what we do every day in ExWell is a true and honest expression of these values, but this is often not appreciated. I want us to acknowledge, highlight and to celebrate living the values whenever this happens and to push ourselves to do better when it does not. Looking ahead, our plan is that the entire ExWell environment will have our core values woven into its fabric.

WHERE DO WE FIT IN?

The work we do in ExWell aligns closely with all the relevant government strategies and policies. Ireland's national health strategy strongly prioritizes physical activity as a cornerstone of chronic disease prevention and management. The most important of these is *Sláintecare*, which aims to move chronic illness management from hospital to community settings. This is exactly what ExWell does. *The National Physical Activity Action Plan 2024–2029 and the National Physical Activity Framework 2024–2040* set ambitious targets to embed physical activity into community settings. These plans emphasize collaboration between healthcare providers, local organizations, and sports bodies to deliver inclusive, medically-supported programmes. The *HSE's Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027 and National Service Plan 2025* further commit to expanding community-based interventions, recognizing their role in improving population health, reducing hospital admissions, and enhancing quality of life.

ExWell is a committed partner in translating these policies and strategies into everyday actions.

LOOKING AHEAD

As referred to in the Chairman's Report, strong growth brings its own operational challenges. In addition, the funding landscape is always challenging and changing. With the help of our Board, we are trying to get the balance right between self-generated revenue and funding support from the HSE and other agencies.

As ExWell grows, we face challenges on many fronts, but I feel it is important for us to identify and work towards targets in 2026. My hope and ambition are to achieve success in the following specific areas:

- *Continued growth:* while we have made great strides, there are 12 counties in Ireland where we are not yet active. We should halve this number in 2026.
- *Our operational processes:* the inevitable consequence of rapid growth is the need to ensure the efficiency, security and safety of all our operational processes, especially in relation to data handling. This is a priority for 2026.
- *Our staff:* Our staff are the heartbeat of ExWell. We will improve the ways in which we support their personal and professional development.
- *Research:* In 2026 we will publish our first major larger study on the effectiveness of ExWell and will then produce a new research strategy to build on this success.
- *Our governance:* ExWell is now a big operation and we will review our governance structures to ensure ExWell's ability to grow safely and sustainably.

THANKS

Thank you to our hospital and community-based referrers for trusting us to look after your patients. Thank you to our Board for the guidance and support you give us. Thank you, all our partners, including the HSE, Healthy Ireland, the Local Authorities in Dublin, Fingal, Meath, Offaly and Westmeath, Age Friendly Ireland, the Irish Cancer Society, and our many Health Fair sponsors. Thank you to everyone in ExWell for making this a great place to work.

And thank you to our participants. As we hopefully enrich your lives, you certainly enrich ours.

Dr Noel McCaffrey, CEO ExWell Medical

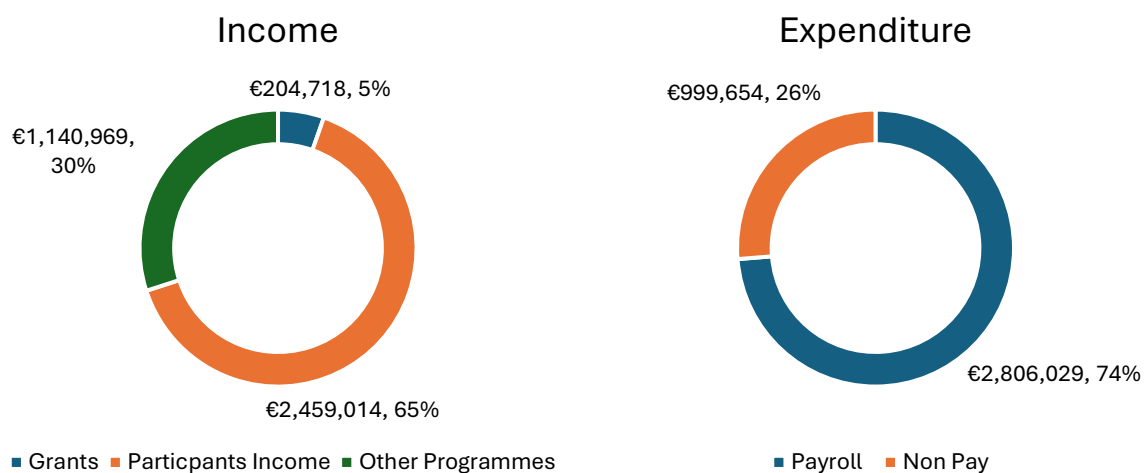


Turloughmore participants pre class chats

FINANCIAL REPORT 2025

In 2025, ExWell Medical had an income of €3,804,702, compared to €2,659,490 in 2024. Grants and Sponsorship accounted for 5% of our income, and they are a great support to our work. In 2025, Sponsorship of €52,000 was awarded from our corporate sponsors to cover the cost of the Health Fair.

Income from participants amounted to €2,459,014 in 2025, which reflected a strong growth in the number of centres and participants. Other Programme income of €1,140,969 was received from The Health Service Executive, Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council and Offaly, Meath and Westmeath County Council for the delivery of our programme at multiple locations.



ExWell Medical is committed to openness and transparency both within the organisation and externally with donors, funders, participants, and the public. The annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102.

Expenditure in 2025 was €3,804,979, which was up from €2,610,187 in 2024. Payroll costs amounted to €2,806,029 (74%). This created a net deficit for the year on the income and expenditure account of €277, (2023 Surplus €50,010). In 2024, Two staff members received salaries of more than €60,000, and there were no pension contributions made.

ExWell Medical accounts are audited by Copsey Murray Accountants each year, and the financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December. The following extracts are taken from the audited accounts for the year ending 31 December 2025.

Brendan Gillen, Chief Financial Officer

OPERATIONS REPORT 2025

This year has been a year of notable achievements, alongside some challenges. ExWell has made significant strides, particularly in developing a robust referral pathway, which continues to grow steadily. At its peak, we recorded nearly 100 referrals per day toward the end of the year—an impressive accomplishment, driven by our dedicated administrative team. Their efforts are integral in maintaining a smooth and efficient participant onboarding.

In response to the growing demand, the team successfully scaled up inductions to ensure that participants could begin their ExWell journey at the earliest opportunity. As a result, most patients referred were able to start their programme within four weeks of referral and we are working hard to achieve this target in all ExWell centres.

Many team members took on new leadership roles in programme management and coordination, fostering a collaborative and growth-oriented work environment. This has had a positive effect on both team morale and on our ability to deliver the ExWell mission.

One notable example of our commitment to improvement was the launch of our **participant journey** design project, in collaboration with Martin Ryan, an expert in user-centred design. We defined a strategic direction for the project which was to focus exclusively on enhancing the participant experience throughout the ExWell journey. This process involved over 100 one-on-one and group interviews with ExWell participants, culminating in the development of a comprehensive 35-step journey map. This work has allowed us to identify key areas for improvement and redesign while fostering a culture of innovation within the team. The design project also provided an opportunity to upskill staff in design thinking, increase ownership of ideas, and prepare ExWell for sustainable scaling in the years to come. In 2026, we will focus on implementing some of these design solutions to further improve our services.

Managing growth was a key theme throughout 2025. As expected, integrating new centres presented challenges, including the need for additional resources and time to build capacity. While some regions saw strong growth, others faced challenges related to low referral rates. We developed plans to assess the performance of every centre and to provide targeted support measures where needed.

A significant milestone in 2025 was the growth of our team, thanks in part to the internship program offered in collaboration with universities such as DCU, SETU, TUD, UL and, for the first time, UCD. These internships have been invaluable in supporting our operational needs while providing students with practical, hands-on experience in the field.

Additionally, we made key upgrades to our systems and processes. For the first time, we appointed a dedicated compliance officer to oversee the management of data and performance metrics, helping to refine our operational strategies and inform future business decisions.

In 2025, ExWell's 'fee-paying' activity increased (alongside continued activity funded by the HSE, Healthy Ireland and local authorities). A lot of effort went into improving our methods of safely and efficiently collecting payments from participants.

In conclusion, 2025 has been a highly successful year for ExWell Medical, with significant achievements in growth, service delivery, and team development. While we faced some operational challenges, the resilience and collaboration of our team have been central to positioning ExWell as a leader in clinical exercise rehabilitation services nationwide.

Daniel Fagan, Director of Operations



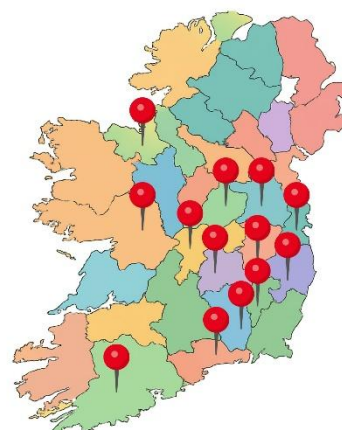
Christmas celebrations in Dublin

EXWELL GROWTH & ENGAGEMENT

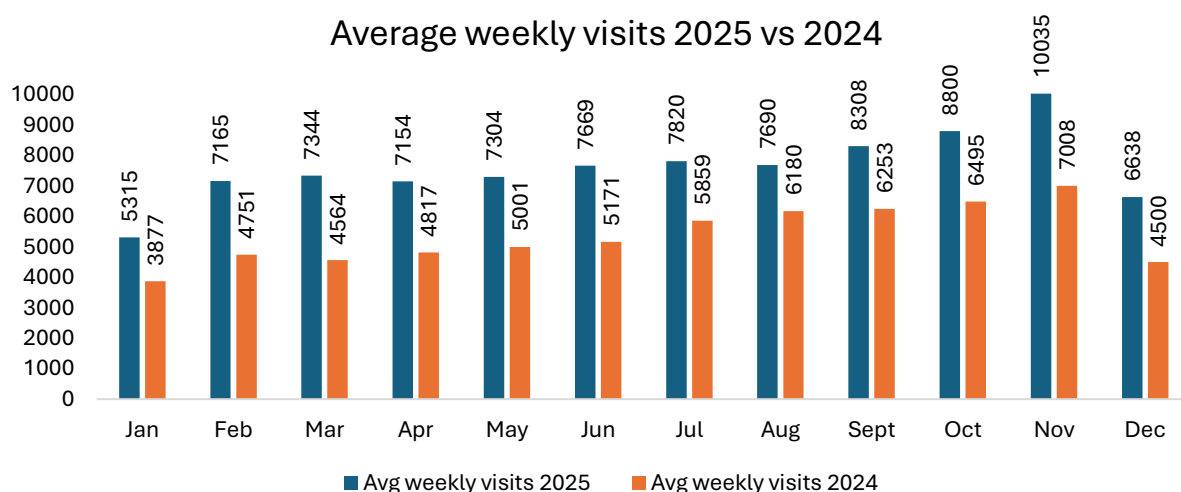
ExWell classes were operating in 60 centres, across 13 Counties at the end of 2025, an increase of 33% compared to the end of 2024. A total of 17 new centres were opened which included 8 in Dublin, 1 in Kildare, 3 in Cork, 1 in Sligo, 1 in Galway, 1 in Meath and 2 in Wicklow. The average number of weekly visits peaked in November, reaching over 10,000 visits in one week. To meet the increasing demand, the number of WTE staff increased by 40% from 56.6 in 2024 to 80 in 2025. There were 15,150 clients who engaged in ExWell classes and almost 319,000 total visits in 2025.

New centres opened in 2025

<u>Dublin North</u>	<u>Dublin South</u>	<u>Cork</u>	<u>Galway</u>
St Bridgets GAA	Knocklyon	Carrigaline GAA	Moylough
St Lawrence O Toole	Mounttown	Finbarrs GAA	<u>Meath</u>
Blakestown	<u>Dublin West</u>	Ovens GAA	Kells
Ayrfield	Belgard	<u>Sligo</u>	<u>Wicklow</u>
<u>Kildare</u>	Kilnamanagh	Collooney	Greystones
Athy			Bray



**Classes ceased in Sandyford Community Centre and Pairc Ui Caoimh.*



EXWELL RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Our research activity reflects a strong belief that community-based exercise programmes should be grounded in robust scientific evidence while remaining practical, accessible and responsive to the needs of participants. Through collaboration with academic institutions, healthcare providers and community partners, ExWell contributes to a growing body of research that supports exercise as a key component of chronic disease management, rehabilitation and long-term health maintenance.

GUIDED BY EXPERTISE AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

ExWell's research programme is overseen by a dedicated Research Committee comprising leading researchers and clinicians from Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin and Tallaght University Hospital. This governance structure ensures that all research activity is aligned with best practice, clinically relevant and scientifically rigorous.

We also partner with various academic research institutions including South East Technological University (SETU), Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), Technological University of Dublin (TUD), Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Dublin City University (DCU), Trinity College Dublin (TCD), Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) and St Vincent's University Hospital (SVUH). In addition, we are carrying out funded research for the Department of Health (see below).

Equally important is the contribution of our Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Committee, made up of ExWell participants. Their lived experience plays a central role in shaping research priorities, refining study design and interpreting findings. This collaborative approach ensures that research is conducted *with* participants rather than *for* them, helping to maintain a strong focus on real-world relevance, accessibility and impact. The key research projects from 2025 are summarised below.

EVALUATION OF EXWELL EXTRA

In 2025, ExWell Medical undertook a comprehensive evaluation of *ExWell Extra*, a suite of resources designed to support independent exercise alongside supervised classes. These resources include short daily exercise videos, a home exercise booklet and access to pre-recorded classes through the ExWell Medical app.

The study aims to determine whether access to these supports leads to increased levels of independent physical activity compared to participation in the standard supervised programme alone. In addition, the research evaluates usability, acceptability and participant satisfaction through structured feedback.

This work is particularly important in supporting long-term behaviour change, as it explores how individuals can maintain physical activity beyond structured sessions. Findings will inform future programme development and help optimise supports for self-management.

EXWELL IN OLD AGE PSYCHIATRY

Supported by the Spark Innovation Fund, ExWell is collaborating with the Department of Old Age Psychiatry at St. Vincent's University Hospital to pilot an in-house group exercise programme.

This mixed-methods study examines whether participation in a 12-week hospital-based ExWell class can support older adults in transitioning to community-based exercise programmes. It also evaluates outcomes including exercise self-efficacy, perceived benefits and barriers to exercise, and mental wellbeing.

Using a combination of physical assessments, questionnaires and focus groups, the study will generate valuable insights into how best to engage older adults with mental health conditions in physical activity. It also highlights the importance of continuity of care, supporting individuals as they move from clinical services into community settings.

DIGITAL INNOVATION IN EXERCISE AND BRAIN HEALTH

ExWell is collaborating with the Global Brain Health Institute and Trinity College Dublin on research evaluating the *Andante* mobile application, an innovative tool designed to enhance walking performance through rhythmic auditory stimulation.

An initial pilot study was conducted with a group of ExWell participants who completed structured walking sessions using the app. The technology synchronises music tempo with individual walking pace, while smartphone sensors capture key gait metrics such as speed, rhythm and symmetry. Participant feedback was collected to assess usability and motivational impact. This pilot work will help to inform a larger feasibility study due to take place in 2026.

Together, these studies demonstrate the potential of digital health innovations to enhance mobility, support rehabilitation and increase motivation for physical activity, particularly among individuals with neurological conditions or reduced functional ability.

REHABILITATION INNOVATION: LONG COVID

ExWell participants were recruited to take part in a pilot study led by researchers in Dublin City University evaluating a novel coaching-based rehabilitation programme for individuals living with long COVID.

This mixed-methods feasibility study explores both the effectiveness and acceptability of the intervention. The programme combines education on the neuroscience of long

COVID, strategies to reduce fear of symptoms through increased body awareness, and the gradual reintroduction of physical activity using graded activity principles.

The findings will contribute to the development of scalable, evidence-informed rehabilitation approaches aimed at improving confidence, physical function and overall wellbeing for those affected by long COVID.

IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT EVALUATION

A PhD researcher at South East Technological University is conducting a study examining the implementation and impact of ExWell programmes across community and GAA settings.

This research applies a Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework to capture the broader value of the ExWell programme, including social, economic and health outcomes. In addition to measuring participant health and wellbeing, the study explores programme delivery in real-world settings and identifies factors that influence success, scalability and sustainability.

Importantly, the project incorporates perspectives from participants, programme coordinators, healthcare professionals and community stakeholders. This comprehensive approach provides a deeper understanding of programme benefits and challenges, while also highlighting potential healthcare savings and improvements in quality of life.

Findings from this work will support strategic planning and strengthen the case for investment in community-based physical activity programmes.

STROKE RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

In 2025, ExWell secured funding for two complementary stroke-related research initiatives, reinforcing its role in advancing community-based rehabilitation and contributing to national policy development.

The first project, funded by the Department of Health, focuses on enhancing the ExWell programme for stroke survivors. The study follows a structured three-stage approach: evaluating the current programme and participant experience, refining programme design and staff training, and implementing and assessing the adapted programme over a 12-month period.

In parallel, ExWell is a partner in the INsPIRE research programme (Informing National Policy for physical activity-based secondary prevention of stroke in Ireland), funded through a Health Research Board Evidence for Policy award in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin.

This project applies implementation science approaches to evaluate how community-based physical activity programmes can be delivered effectively at scale. It includes a

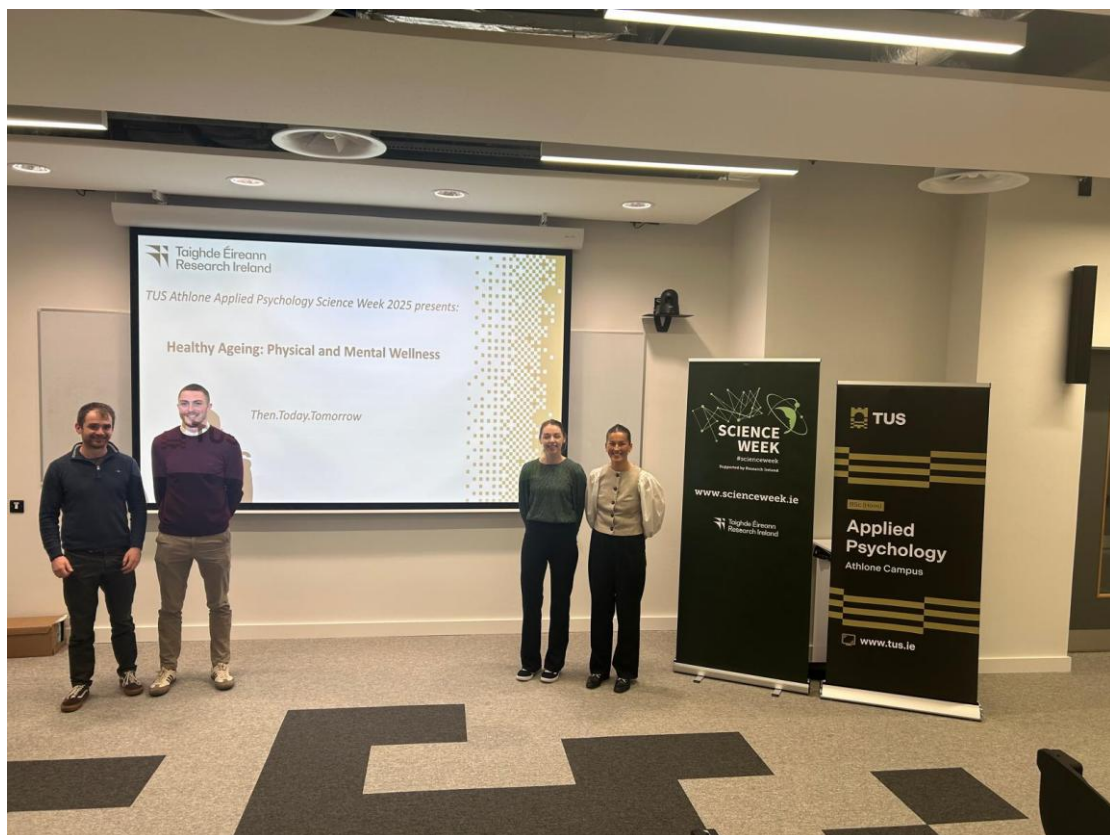
review of existing evidence, mapping of current services in Ireland and assessment of cost-effectiveness and system-wide impact.

Together, these projects position ExWell at the forefront of stroke rehabilitation research, contributing to improved patient outcomes and providing critical evidence to inform future health policy and service delivery.

SUMMARY

ExWell Medical's research activity in 2025 reflects a strong commitment to evidence-based practice, innovation and collaboration. Across a diverse portfolio of projects, ExWell continues to explore how exercise can be effectively integrated into the prevention, management and rehabilitation of chronic conditions.

By combining scientific expertise with lived experience, and by focusing on both programme effectiveness and real-world implementation, ExWell is helping to shape the future of community-based healthcare. This work not only enhances programme quality and participant outcomes but also contributes valuable evidence to inform policy, investment and service development at a national level.



Lisa Kelly and Andrew Evans presented at TUS Athlone about ExWell and the impact of social inclusion and exercise on mental health for the aging population

SOCIAL INTERACTION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A key pillar of ExWell Medical is the promotion of social interaction and community engagement. In addition to encouraging the social cup of tea or coffee and chats after classes, various other events and activities were organised across the ExWell network in 2025.

HEALTH FAIR

ExWell's third annual Health Fair, held on 5 September 2025 at Punchestown Racecourse, marked a record year, welcoming over 800 participants from across the country. The event continues to serve as a flagship celebration of community, connection, and active living, bringing members together for a day of education, exercise, and shared experience.

The Fair was officially opened by Minister for Health, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill and hosted by Professor Niall Moyna. Speakers and participants highlighted the vital role of social connection in health, particularly in managing chronic illness and reducing loneliness.



Expert speakers at the Health Fair 2025. Back L-R. Mr Tom Coleman, Dr Noel McCaffrey, Dr Brendan Egan, Prof Donal O'Shea, Dr Leonard Douglas, Front L-R. Ms Ailín Rogers, Ms Kate Sheridan

A series of expert-led talks addressed key areas of wellbeing, including healthy ageing, nutrition, mental health, sleep, and chronic pain, reinforcing the message that positive health outcomes are achievable at every stage of life. Interactive breakout sessions provided opportunities for participants to engage in a wide range of physical activities in a supportive and inclusive environment.



Breakout session at the Health Fair 2025

The participant voice session offered powerful personal insights across a range of conditions, with a consistent theme emerging: the combined impact of exercise and social engagement as central to improved quality of life. The day concluded with a performance from the ExWell Unity Choir, reflecting the strong sense of community that defines the programme.



ExWell Choir at the Health Fair 2025

OTHER ACTIVITIES

This sense of connection extended well beyond the Health Fair and remained central to ExWell's work throughout 2025. A strong calendar of social and community events complemented weekly classes, creating further opportunities for engagement and participation. Summer gatherings and Christmas celebrations were held across all regions, bringing ExWell communities together in relaxed and supportive settings.

Community-led initiatives also played an important role. In Athlone, participants and families came together for a memorial walk, raising over €2,500 for RNLI. In Sligo, coffee morning fundraisers in support of North West Hospice combined social interaction with meaningful local impact.



RNLI Fundraiser held by Participants in ExWell Athlone

Partnerships with Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) continued to develop, supporting both research and student engagement, and further strengthening the link between exercise, education, and community.

Across all regions and activities, a consistent message emerged: while exercise is central, it is the sense of belonging, shared experience, and social connection that underpins the success of the ExWell programme and its impact on participants' health and wellbeing.

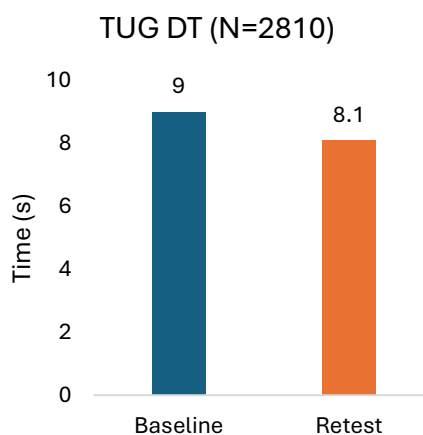
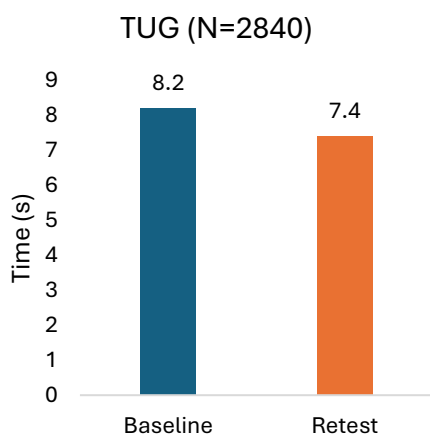
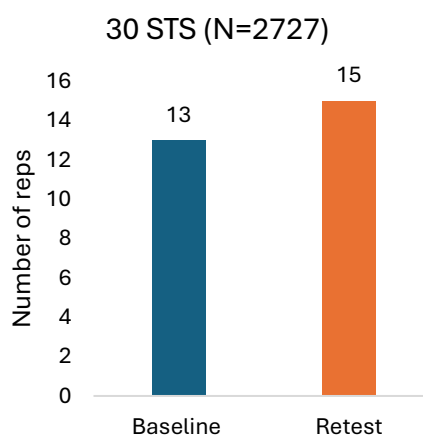
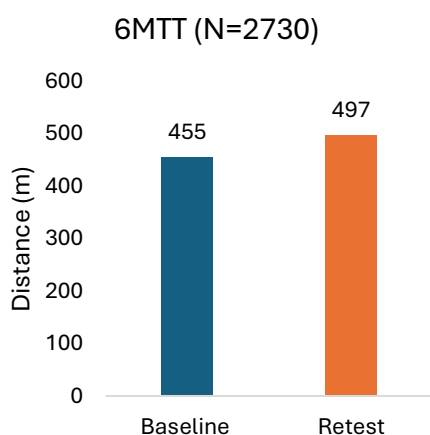
IMPACT DATA

DEMOGRAPHICS

Data were available for 3345 participants overall. The n for each variable is lower due to missing data at either baseline or retest. Of the 3345 included, the average age was 72 years and 65% were female.

PHYSICAL TEST RESULTS

- The 6-minute time trial (6MTT), 30 second sit-to-stand (30 STS), Timed Up and Go (TUG) and Timed Up and Go Dual task (TUG DT) all significantly improved from baseline to retest (all $p < 0.001$).
- The average improvement for the 6-minute time trial was 42 metres exceeding the minimal clinically important difference (MCID) of 30.5 metres.
- The 30 STS improved by an average of 2 reps from 13 at baseline to 15 at retest which meets the MCID of 2 reps.
- The TUG improved by an average of 0.8 seconds, and although statistically significant was just below the MCID of 0.9 seconds.
- The TUG DT improved by an average of 0.9 seconds.



SELF-REPORT SURVEY RESULTS

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- At baseline, 25% did 0 days of physical activity compared to 5% at retest.
- At baseline the percentage doing 5 or more days of physical activity was 25% vs 32% at retest.

PAIN

- At baseline, 54% reported having significant pain in the last 7 days compared to 36% at retest.
- The percentage experiencing pain every day in the last 7 days was 57% at baseline vs 47% at retest.
- The percentage reporting that exercise makes their pain worse was 38% at baseline vs 28% at retest.
- The mean maximum pain level reported at baseline and retest was similar for both time points (5.8 vs 5.6).
- Mean pain interference score was lower at retest (15.24) compared to baseline (16.08). Although statistically significant ($p=0.03$) it was not clinically significant.

FALLS

- At baseline 28% reported at least 1 fall in the previous 6 months compared to 22% at retest.
- At baseline 55% reported a fear of falling vs 48% at retest.
- Of those who reported a fear of falling, 56% said this fear causes them to limit their activities at baseline compared to 47% at retest.

BREATHLESSNESS

- There was a small change in fear of breathlessness with 60% reporting being at least a little bit afraid of becoming breathless at baseline vs 56% at retest.
- Level of breathlessness seemed to improve with 78% reporting becoming breathless only with strenuous exercise or when hurrying on level ground at baseline compared to 88% at retest.

HEALTHCARE UTILISATION

- The number of self-reported ED visits ($p<0.001$), number of hospital admissions ($p=0.001$) and number of nights spent hospital ($p<0.001$) in the previous 6 months were significantly lower at retest compared to baseline.

	Baseline	Retest	P value
Number of ED visits (n=1232)	0.36	0.28	<0.001
Number of hospital admissions (n=1210)	0.23	0.13	0.001
Number of nights spent in hospital (n=1212)	1.30	0.55	<0.001

SLEEP QUALITY

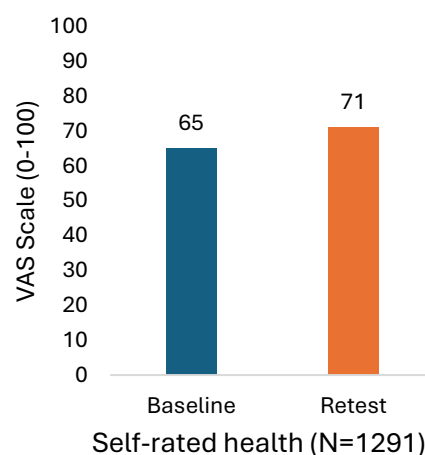
- Participants were asked to rate on a scale of 0-10 how they would rate their sleep quality in the past 7 days. Of 1262 with both baseline and retest scores, the mean rating was slightly higher at retest (6.2) compared to baseline (5.9) ($p<0.001$).

FEAR OF BREATHLESSNESS AND READINESS FOR EXERCISE

- At baseline, 53% reported being at least a little bit afraid of becoming breathless compared to 36% at retest (n=1156).
- Self-reported readiness for exercise was higher at retest compared to baseline. At baseline, 22% were currently not exercising compared to just 4% at retest.
- Those reporting that they currently exercise regularly was higher at retest 71% compared to baseline 40%.

SELF-RATED HEALTH

- Self-rated health was significantly higher at retest (mean VAS = 71) compared to baseline (mean VAS = 65) ($P<0.001$).



MOVE ON CANCER PROGRAMME

ExWell offer specific cancer classes called Move On across some areas in Dublin. The full Cancer Support programme will be launched in 2026. Below are some testimonials from participants who attended MoveOn classes in 2025.

The MoveOn class provides a supportive environment where I am surrounded by people who truly understand. I never have to explain why I am there, and I feel safe knowing that everyone appreciates the importance of exercising carefully and appropriately.

The support I receive from the group is incredible. On days when I am not feeling my best, I know the others are there for me. The mental health benefits are just as important as the physical ones — I feel empowered knowing I am doing something positive for myself.

— Ruth Carty

ExWell gave me back confidence in my body and a new outlook on strength training and exercise. Being able to talk openly about cancer with people who truly understand has been incredibly helpful.

More people need to hear about this class. Regular physiotherapy helps recovery after chemotherapy and surgery, but ExWell encouraged me to aim higher and believe in what I could achieve again. I am very grateful.

— Catherine McIntyre

EXWELL GOVERNANCE

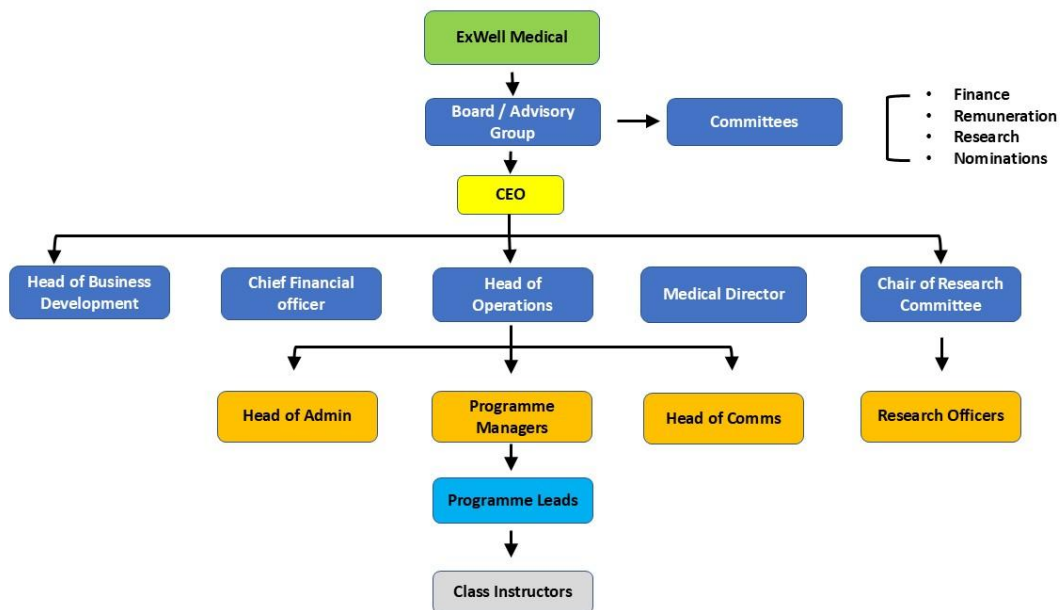
CORPORATE STRUCTURE

ExWell Medical is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is a social enterprise with a not-for-profit ethos. It was founded in January 2019 by Dr Noel McCaffrey.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisation structure is laid out below. The following committees report to the Board:

1. Finance committee: Chair Clive Kilmurray
2. Remuneration committee: Chair Grainne McMorrow
3. Nominations Committee: Chair Chris Kelly
4. Research Committee: Chair Professor Susan Smith



ExWell Medical's Organisational Structure 2025

EXECUTIVE TEAM

There are five members on ExWell's executive team. Dr Noel McCaffrey and Danny Fagan are full time employees. Brendan Gillen and Dr Emmett Byrne are part-time employees and Professor Sean Kennelly has an honorary position.

EXWELL BOARD & ADVISORY GROUP 2025



Lar Bradshaw
(Board)
Chairperson,
Retired Managing
Partner of McKinsey &
Company



Prof. Sean Kennelly
(Board)
Consultant Physician in
Geriatric and Stroke
Medicine, Tallaght
University Hospital



Anne Dermody
(Board)
Retired Business
Development
Director with Rethink
Ireland



Annette Kent
(Board)
Clinical Director with
Endowave



Dr. Noel McCaffrey
(Board)
Founder and CEO of
ExWell, Sports &
Exercise Medicine
Specialist



Prof. Susan Smith
(Board)
Professor of General
Practice, Trinity College
Dublin



Chris Kelly
(Board)
Retired CRH Senior
Executive, ExWell
Participant



Grainne McMorow
(Board)
International Human
Rights Lawyer and Jurist,
ExWell Participant



Clive Kilmurray
(Board)
Entrepreneur and
Corporate Finance
Specialist



Patrick McGee
(Board)
Director of IT at Trinity
College Dublin



David Beirne
(Advisory Group)
Executive and
Healthcare Leader



Diarmuid McNamee
(Advisory Group)
Managing Director of
Tower View, Chair of the
Dublin Simon
Community Board

EXWELL STAFF 2025

ExWell would not be thriving as it is without the ongoing work from all staff involved. A big thank you to all our staff from 2025 as well as all students and volunteers who contributed throughout the year.

MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH

- Dr Noel McCaffrey, *Chief Executive Officer*
- Daniel Fagan, *Director of Operations*
- Brendan Gillen, *Chief Financial Officer*
- Dr Fiona Skelly, PhD, *Clinical Exercise Physiologist / Researcher*
- Colm Ryan, *Programme Manager, Dublin North*
- Dr Emmett Byrne, *Medical Officer*
- Katie Moran, *Programme Manager, Kildare*
- Eve Moloney, *Programme Manager, Dublin South*
- Cathy Dowdall, *Administration Manager*
- Dr John O’Riordan, *Medical Officer, Cork*
- Dr Danielle Courtney, *Business Development Officer*
- Dr Lisa Kelly, PhD, *Research Officer*
- Aodhaghan O’Deasmhunaigh, *Programme Manager, Dublin West*
- Edel Larkin, *Programme Manager, Midlands*
- Cliona McGowan, *Programme Manager, Dublin South*
- Cein McMonagle, *Programme Manager, Kildare*
- Conor Ryan, *Programme Manager, Dublin North*
- Andrew Evans, *Programme Manager, Midlands*

CLASS DELIVERY & ADMINISTRATION STAFF

- Aaron Byrne
- Abby Sweeney
- Adam Byrne
- Adam Hawkins
- Adam Lowry
- Aeda Ismail
- Aideen Cooley
- Aine Casey
- Alanna Gallagher
- Alex Fitzgerald
- Alex O'Reilly
- Alex Regan
- Alex Trimble
- Ameera Liyana Muhammad
- Amkela Kamogelo Nontso
- Amy Hopkins
- Amy Adams
- Ananya Maher
- Andrew Evans
- Ant Morgan
- Aoife Hughes
- Aoife Rennick Hughes
- Brian McMahon
- Brian O'Sullivan
- Caitlin Kiernan
- Camila Naves
- Caoimhe Kinsella
- Carl Walshe
- Chris Myles
- Christian Crosbie
- Christine Shanahan
- Cian Farrell
- Ciaran Hartnett
- Colm O'Meara
- Conor O'Reilly
- Conor Owens
- Danylo Maryshcuk
- Darragh Travers
- David Fagbule
- Deirdre O'Reilly
- Donnacha Sullivan
- Eimear O'Neill
- Ella Pasley
- Emily Cahill
- Emily Duff
- Emma McClean
- Eoghan Furey
- Eva Tretjacova
- Fabiano Portelas
- Feighlim Kelly
- Fionn Delaney
- Grainne Egan
- Grainne Pracht
- Hannah Martin
- Hannah Nolan
- Heather Masterson
- Ingrid McGloughlin
- Isabell Otoole

- Jack Barrett
- Jack Crampton
- Jade Geraghty
- Jaqueline Fernandes
- Jason Quaile
- Jean Kelly
- Joshua Connaughton
- Julieanne Murtagh
- Kaitlyn Whelan Kinsella
- Karl Corcoran
- Kate Forde
- Kate Markey
- Kayla Ryan
- Kelly Carr
- Kian Moran
- Killian Ocarroll
- Kirsten Branigan
- Leah Irwin
- Leanne Rath
- Lee Dixon
- Lisa Shaw
- Lukasz Walczak
- Luke Moore
- Lynn Byrne
- Maria B Machado
- Mark Thornberry
- Mark Watson
- Martha Stephenson
- Mary Jane Clerkin
- Mathew McNally
- Matthew Winters
- Megan Moynagh
- Megan Neale
- Michael McAndrew
- Muireann Booth
- Natasha Hogan
- Nathan Farrell
- Niamh Barnes
- Niamh Smyth
- Nicolas San Martin
- Oisin O'Donoghue
- Oliwia Pikul
- Oran McDonagh
- Patrick Brogan
- Poppy Maguire
- Precious Aderinwale
- Prince Osayande
- Rachel McPartlin
- Rachel O'Reilly
- Rachel Smyth
- Rebecca Reilly
- Rita Trenz
- Roma McLaughlin
- Ruth Cronin
- Sarah Reddin Conroy
- Sean Collier
- Shane McMonagle
- Shauna Turner
- Simone O'Reilly
- Sophie Gibney

- Stewart Metcalfe
- Susie Burzawa
- Tapiwa Nyagano
- Teagen Comber
- Thomas Fox
- Tim Staunton
- Úna Smith
- Warren Murray



ExWell staff members 2025