

Dr Chris Luke: a brief bio

Dr Chris Luke is originally from Stillorgan, in Dublin: he spent most of his growing-up there, in Dun Laoghaire and at St Conleth's College, in Ballsbridge, where he was school captain. He qualified medically in UCD in 1982, and subsequently trained in Ireland (including in St Vincent's, St Columcille's and Wexford), Scotland, Australia and England, before returning home to work in Cork's three acute hospitals, in 1999.



Chris has been a consultant in emergency medicine since 1992, when he was first appointed at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital. He has spent almost 40 years working mostly in urban accident and emergency departments, dealing with the many healthcare challenges that can be found in busy, often deprived inner-city areas, as well as the “side-effects” of nightlife in big cities.

He has a particular interest in the *prevention* of health problems before they reach overcrowded, and overwhelmed, emergency departments, and has engaged for many years in public health education, particularly in relation to self-care, alcohol and drug misuse, “joy-riding” and violence. He is particularly interested in parental education as he believes that the most effective prevention begins at home.

Dr Luke comes from a journalistic family and contributes frequently to the media, including the *Today* programme on RTE television; he is a columnist in the *Irish Medical Times*, and his best-selling memoir, *A Life in Trauma*, was published in October 2021. He has recently retreated from emergency department work, and spends most of his time teaching, writing, peddling ideas to the HSE (and the ‘power-that-be’) and undertaking charitable work with the Mercy Foundation in Cork.

In this talk, “*A Little Party Medicine: Drink and Drugs at the (Healthcare) Frontline - An A to Z for those who care for teenagers*” the extraordinarily varied and dynamic area of hazards related to a ‘big night out’ - or partying - are covered, after an initial review of the possible mishaps that can occur in a teenager’s life, both before and after the Leaving Cert, plus the basic mental health issues affecting teenagers, and Chris uses the example of ‘rugby medicine’ to show how parents (teachers and coaches) can be better prepared for the sort of mishaps that happen on and off a pitch, and then transfer that preparation to umpteen other parts of their teenagers’ lives. Dr Luke speaks with the experience of a busy veteran physician and father of four (now) young adults, and he is a passionate advocate of positivity and humour when it comes to the trials and tribulations of parenting!

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