It is recognised that the organisational context within which health care is delivered is an important and powerful factor impacting nursing practice and health care outcomes. Over the past decade the Irish health care system has experienced significant alterations across the full spectrum of its structures and processes and is now facing significant challenges in recruiting and retaining registered nurses and midwives.

Continuous process improvement within any organization is difficult to achieve without the smooth cooperation between non-managerial team members and their leaders. My mixed-methods, PhD-based research highlights the content of work team human dynamics and their enablers, as important social mechanisms within effective lean organizations. In particular, I studied the values and behaviors of effective lean work team members and their leaders at multiple organizational levels. I would like to discuss how the findings can be used to study lean leadership in and outside healthcare settings, also based on my more recent, exploratory work in healthcare settings.

Desirée van Dun obtained her Ph.D. in Operations Management and Organizational Behavior at the University of Twente, the Netherlands. She has 10 years of practical (lean) management consultancy experience at House of Performance, primarily in the service industry. Her research interests include lean management, leadership, industrial and organizational psychology, organizational behavior, and change management. Her work is published in the International Journal of Operations & Production Management, European Management Journal, International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and The Routledge Companion on Lean Management.