**News**

**Helen McLoughlin**

Health scare for young mum

By Helen McLoughlin

A YOUNG mother has spoken out about a rare heart condition diagnosed following childbirth.

Mayo native, Mary Jones, said Croi was ‘invaluable’ after she was diagnosed with the rare Post Pregnancy Coronary Artery Dissection after giving birth to her third child last month. “I was two weeks home from hospital after giving birth when I took chest pains. I was rushed to WestDoc and from there was sent to Mayo General Hospital, Castlebar and then Galway, where I was admitted into intensive care,” she recalls.

In University College Hospital Galway (UCHG), doctors diagnosed the extremely rare condition, Post Pregnancy Coronary Artery Dissection, involving a tear in the coronary artery which causes blood to flow between the layers, forcing them apart.

The complaint can often be extremely traumatic and sometimes fatal. In eighty percent of cases, young women are affected.

Mary said charity organisation, Croi Ireland, was vital, and thanked the members for its help and support. “Croi really helped a lot because they provided accommodation to me and the family which really helped me emotionally, because the doctors said I was too sick to go home,” she said.

The news of the diagnosis came as a shock to the young mother, who admits: “I didn’t cope very well”.

“I was away from my children for so long and couldn’t see my new born baby. I was terrified and was worried for my children as they are so young and weren’t really sure what was happening.”

Treatment for the condition takes the form of a daily tablet as Mary is getting to grips with the reality of what happened. Her life has changed dramatically as she struggles to carry out her normal daily routines. “I’m trying to get back to normal with regular visits to my doctor and counselling,” she said.