



**INSTITUTE
OF MEDICINE**

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

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Annual Report for the Annual Stated Meeting

**Reported by: Professor Edward McKone,
Dean, Institute of Medicine**

Date: Monday, 19 October 2026





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This is a report summarising the activities and achievements of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and its standing committees from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Governance

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) continued to support excellence in physician training, examinations, professional affairs, international education and strategic healthcare initiatives throughout the reporting period.

Major areas of focus included the restructuring of Internal Medicine Training, growth of international programmes, expansion of the Irish Clinician Educator Training Programme (ICET), launch of the Inclusion Health Framework, examination capacity and workforce sustainability planning.

The Board also continued its engagement with the Medical Council (IMC), National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP), Health Service Executive (HSE) and national stakeholders on matters relating to postgraduate medical education, workforce planning and professional affairs.

IOM meetings continue according to schedule, including the IOM Board and standing committees. The IOM Officers, along with administrative leads in the IOM, meet weekly to review active issues in Education & Training. This is chaired by the Director of Education and Training.

The IOM Officers meet monthly with senior administration and administrative leads to review IOM operations and strategy. This is chaired by the Dean.

Changes to the IOM Board (July 2025-June 2026)

- Dr Declan Byrne was appointed as a Fellow Member and began his term in September 2025.

IOM Board Membership 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

Board Member	Role
Prof Edward McKone	Dean/ Chair
Dr Diarmuid O'Shea	President
Dr Emer Kelly	Director of Education and Training
Prof James O'Neill	Director of Professional Affairs
Dr Vera Keatings	Director of Examinations
Dr Laura Durcan	RCPI Council representative
Prof Gaye Cunnane	RCPI Council representative
Prof Margaret O'Connor	Fellow
Dr Declan Byrne	Fellow
Dr Lucy Dooley	Trainee representative
Mr Keiran Barbalich	Lay member
Mr Kevin Marshall	Lay member

Education and Training

The IOM represents 19 specialties involved in clinical medicine in Ireland, with more than 1,000 trainees and over 900 trainers in these specialties. We would like to thank all our National Speciality Directors (NSD), Residency Programme Directors (RPD) and Trainers for their continued work in training.

Basic Specialist Training (BST) Internal Medicine:

There were 1391 applications to BST General Internal Medicine (GIM), with 1073 interviewed, with 283 appointed for the July 2025 intake. There were 503 Trainees on the Basic Specialist Training General Internal Medicine (GIM) scheme for 2025-2026.

Higher Specialist Training (HST) Programmes:

There were 351 applications to the IOM HST programmes, with 232 interviewed, and 148 appointed for the July 2025 intake. There were 608 Trainees on the IOM HST schemes for 2025-2026, with 89 doctors receiving their Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Specialist Training (CSCST) at the IOM CSCST ceremony in June 2026.

International Programmes:

There were 114 doctors in International Clinical Fellowships and 3 in International Residency programme from July 25 to July 26. There were 104 doctors from the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) and Sudan Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB) in training in various medical specialties - 53 in Year 1 and 51 in Year 2.

Irish Medical Council Accreditation

The remaining IMC Qualitative Annual Returns are currently being completed, with NSD input for Officer approval ahead of submission to the IMC by 26 June. During this cycle, some of the Postgraduate Training Bodies (PGTB) raised concerns through the Forum regarding the tight timelines and the absence of having a calendar and timelines for when these requests would be issued, which creates planning and resourcing challenges on the PGTBs. These concerns were discussed directly with the IMC, and a meeting was held to discuss. It was agreed that a shared calendar of key dates should be developed collaboratively to support improved transparency, predictability, and alignment for future returns. The IOM and PGTBs will work with the Forum and IMC to develop this shared calendar. No further update or engagement has been received from the IMC on the development of their new Quality Assurance model for medical education and training in Ireland.

IOM Events

Webinar Series:

The Acute Physician webinar series continued with its most recent session, “All I Need Is the Air That I Breathe” (respiratory-focused masterclass), which attracted 105 attendees. A subsequent webinar, “Sepsis: New Guidelines, Old Challenges”, took place on 22 April and drew 167 participants.

On 20 May, a further session in the series, “Scary ECGs”, was delivered, attracting 83 attendees. The next scheduled masterclass, “Capacity, Autonomy, and the Clinician: Ireland's New Legal Landscape”, took place on 17 June 2026, and was attended by 126 participants.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Workshop

The workshop took place over two days, the 15th and 16th of May 2026, exploring how artificial intelligence can be meaningfully integrated into medical education to support teaching, assessment and research. Around 30 participants benefited from the expertise of an international faculty – Prof Ken Masters, Dr Sofia Valanci and Dr Heather MacNeill – who guided discussions and shared reflective, hands on approaches to using AI in health professions education.

Inclusion Health Framework

The Inclusion Health Framework was co designed by service users, clinicians, and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. Led by the Institute of Medicine, with support from the Faculty of Paediatrics and HSE NDTP Development Funding (2024), the project reflects RCPI's commitment to advancing equitable clinical care for people experiencing social exclusion.

GIM Update

2-day hybrid educational event. A total of 213 registrations were recorded for the event. Attendance and engagement levels were consistently high across both days, with strong representation from consultants, HST, and Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (NCHD). Overall, the event successfully met its educational objectives and demonstrated strong demand across the GIM community.

Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Specialist Training (CSCST) Ceremony

The CSCST graduation ceremonies to mark the major achievement of 91 doctors on completion of Higher Specialist Training and also to acknowledge the essential work of our National Specialty Directors in coordinating this training.

Strategic

Restructuring of Internal Medicine Training

The IOM commissioned a review of the Internal Medicine training programme. The review sets out to ensure the training programme is fit-for-purpose and graduates are being provided with the skills and expertise required to meet the needs of patients and society into the future. The review has been titled OPTIMISE (Optimisation and Progression of Training in Internal Medicine In Search of Excellence), and work has been carried out under the leadership of Prof Anthony O'Connor as Clinical Lead and is now progressing under the project management of Dr Ann O'Shaughnessy. A formal interim report was published in August 2023 detailing the findings of our review and set out recommendations for an improved training programme in general internal medicine is now available.

Since then, the IOM have formed an implementation group that is looking at restructuring of the Internal Medicine Training. Currently the focus is in restructuring the training programs to ensure a more equal training experience across the country. Curriculum review and new methods to deliver the curriculum are also under review. Proposed changes have been discussed with individual RPDs at each site as well as presented to the NSDs, NDTP and at the recent Autumn Symposium. Current plans are to begin the implementation in July 2027.

Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS)

Point of care ultrasound (POCUS) is a clinician-performed ultrasound at the patient bedside for procedural guidance, or for rapid diagnosis and triage. RCPI has run a number of these training courses for our trainees and received positive feedback.

This project aims to train consultant physician trainers in POCUS, in a new model which will provide a mentoring and blended training programme (e-learning, simulation-based education, onsite training). These trained physicians will then provide mentorship and guidance in training their NCHDs in POCUS going forward. A pilot program is being led by Prof Paul O'Hara, Consultant Nephrologist, Portlincula and Galway University Hospital (GUH) and currently is being rolled out in selected training sites across the country.

ICET (Irish Clinician Educator Training Programme)

The ICET program continues to grow. The first 2 ICET Graduates, graduated during St Lukes Week in October 2025, with 4 due to graduate in October 2026. 1 trainee is progressing into 2nd year, with 6 trainees starting in July 2026.

Professional Affairs

Below are the latest Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) enrolment figures for the IOM Specialist and General Division Schemes. The first table shows the final enrolment figures for the 2025/26 PCS year, which ended on 30 April 2026. The second table shows the latest enrolment figures for the current 2025/26 PCS year.

Professional Competence Year 2025 - 2026

Institute of Medicine Professional Competence Scheme from 1 May 2025 - 30 April 2026			
Enrolments and Renewals	General	Specialist	Total
Registered (Enrolments)*	3,412	1,724	5,136

NB: The total who failed to renew for 2025-2026 was 248 in the General Division and 26 in the Specialist Division.

Professional Competence Year 2026 - 2027

Institute of Medicine Professional Competence Scheme from 1 May 2026 – 09 June 2027			
Enrolments and Renewals	General	Specialist	Total
Registered (Enrolments)	1,919	1,106	3,025
Pre-Registered (Renewal not yet paid)	1,592	651	2,234
Total	3,511	1,757	5,268

Annual Verification Process

The Verification Process for the 2025 – 2026 year will commence in July 2026. A total of 4% of doctors will be selected from each Scheme for review. Doctors selected for review will be given four weeks to ensure their records are up to date before the review commences. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities will be reviewed by the PC Administration Team and Practice Review activities will be reviewed by Clinicians.

Specialist Division of the Register (SDR) – Updated from the Board Pack Meeting

Following a series of workshops held between the Training bodies and the IMC, the identified areas for improvement in the SDR process were presented at the IMC – Forum Working Group meeting held on 2 March. At this meeting, it was agreed to establish three dedicated subgroups - Service Level Agreement (SLA) Review, Process Review, and Qualifications: Category F Review - each to be co chaired by representatives from both the IMC and the PGTBs. The first meetings of these subgroups will be scheduled shortly, during which Terms of Reference will be agreed and detailed workplans developed over the coming months.

SDR stats for the period February - May 2026:

Number of Applications Received & Recommendations Made	Specialties/Recommendation
New Applications Received: 17	• 6 Dual Specialty – 3 Geriatric Medicine & GIM; 1 Nephrology & GIM and 1 Respiratory Medicine & GIM • 11 Single Specialty – 4 Cardiology; 1 Clinical Neurophysiology; 3 GIM; 1 Neurology; 2 Rheumatology
Written Reviews Received: 8	• 3 Dual Specialty – 2 Gastroenterology & GIM; 1 Respiratory & GIM • 5 Single Specialty – 1 Cardiology; 2 GIM; 2 Nephrology
Initial Assessments (i.e. 1st application) = 13	• Recommended – 2 (1 Infectious Diseases; 1 Geriatric Medicine & GIM) • Not Recommended – 11 (2 Cardiology; 2 Gastroenterology & GIM; 1 Geriatric Medicine & GIM; 3 GIM; 1 Nephrology; 1 Nephrology & GIM; 1 Respiratory Medicine & GIM)
Written Reviews = 6	• Recommended: 2 Gastroenterology & GIM) • Not Recommended 4 – (1 Cardiology & GIM; 1 Dermatology; 2 GIM)

Note the data given above is reflective of the activity undertaken during the period 1 February – 26 May 2026 only. Some of the new applications received during this period are still in the initial assessment process stage. Recommendations made also during this period can reflect applications received in the previous reporting period.

General Medicine Examinations Report

The Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCPI) in General Medicine (GM)) remained a key area of examination activity and growth during 2025/26, with 4,947 candidates sitting the three examination components, a 10% increase on the previous year.

The RCPI Education Team worked closely with the Written Examination Board to introduce an alternative standard-setting methodology for the General Medicine Part II Written Examination and a revised results calculation approach, further aligning outcomes with the purpose of the examination. This work continues as the methodology is embedded through successive standard-setting exercises.

Succession planning initiatives were progressed to support the long-term sustainability of Examiners in Ireland and Board membership. In addition, induction sessions were delivered for newly appointed members of the Written Examination Boards providing guidance on their Exam role, responsibilities and Board procedures.

A small number of planned international clinical examination diets were cancelled between March and June 2026 due to geopolitical unrest in the Middle East. Despite these disruptions, efforts to expand and strengthen the international examination network continued, including the successful re-establishment of India as an examination location. Planning is underway to deliver a General Medicine Clinical Examination in India in the coming months.

During 2025/26, significant progress was made towards commissioning an independent external review of the MRCPI in General Medicine examination. Proposed by the General Medicine Director of Examinations and supported by both the General Medicine Examination Board and the Institute of Medicine, the review aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the examination framework against international best practice. The scope of the review was developed collaboratively with input from the Institute of Medicine officers, Director of Examinations, GM Examinations Board, Examinations Team and Education Team. The review is expected to assess the validity, reliability and effectiveness of current assessment methodologies, evaluate standard-setting processes, identify areas of strength and opportunities for enhancement, and further strengthen confidence in the fairness, robustness and credibility of the examinations. A formal external tender process for the review is scheduled to be launched in 2026.

Part I GM Written exam

A record 2,463 candidates sat the Part I examination, representing an 8% increase compared with the previous year. This continues a trend of consistent year-on-year growth and reflects strong national and international demand for the qualification.

General Medicine Examinations Report

Part II GM Written examination

The Part II examination achieved its highest candidate volume to date, with 1,771 candidates sitting the examination during the reporting period. It is important to note that the July 2026 Part II Written examination was brought forward to June 2026. As a result, the 2025/26 academic year contained four Part II Written sittings instead of the usual three, contributing an additional 427 candidates to the reporting period. Excluding this scheduling adjustment, underlying candidate growth was 19%. This move was to support candidates and medical manpower in the hospitals, remove the scheduling clash with changeovers, and accommodate better planning and study leave.

Part II GM Clinical examination

Demand also continued to increase for the Part II General Medicine Irish Clinical examination. A total of 509 candidates sat the examination during 2025/26, representing a 12% increase compared with the previous year and the highest clinical candidate volume recorded to date. To accommodate this growth, examination capacity in Ireland was expanded by introducing 20 additional examination places across the January and June 2026 diets and extending delivery to an additional examination day, resulting in a total of eight examination days.

General Medicine Key Metrics

Measure	2024/25	2025/26	Change
Part I GM Written	2,275	2,463	+8%
Part II GM Written	1,108 (Included 3 sittings)	1,771 (Included 4 sittings)	+60% *(21%)
Part II GM Irish Clinical	456	509	+12%

**Excluding this scheduling adjustment of a 4th diet, underlying candidate growth for 3 sittings was +21% for Part II written.*

General Medicine Examinations Report

Overview of GM candidate numbers and pass rates

General Medicine		Total	
		Candidates	Pass Rate
Part I Written			
August 2025		881	44%
December 2025		807	39%
April 2026		775	41%
Part II Written			
July 2025		354	50%
October 2025		508	55%
March 2026		482	64% (Angoff)
June 2026		427	53% (Angoff)
Part II Clinical Ireland			
Sep – Oct 2025		155	55%
Jan – Feb 2026		176	53%
May – Jun 2026		178	57%
Part II Clinical International			
Saudi Arabia (Riyadh)	Sep 2025	37	50%
UAE (Dubai)	Oct 2025	37	50%
Bahrain (West Riffa)	Nov 2025	37	83%
Malaysia (Sungai Petani)	Nov 2025	29	62%
Saudi Arabia	Jan 2026	36	50%
Malaysia	Jun 2026	27	57%