

## INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

# July 2024 – June 2025





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## Message from the Dean

Dear Colleagues, Members, and Fellows,

I am pleased to present the Institute of Medicine, RCPI Annual Report for 2025.

It has been a busy and productive year bookended by our most important role, the conferring of the IOM Trainees with their certification of specialist training. I want to wish all our graduates great success in the future and look forward to maintaining close links between them and the IOM as they progress their

careers in clinical medicine. A special thanks to all the trainers, training leads, and administrative staff who deliver training to over 1500 trainees each year.

Following on from the OPTIMISE report published last year, the IOM has established a Restructuring of Internal Medicine Steering Group that will look at the implementation of the recommendation of this ambitions report to improve how we deliver general internal medicine training in Ireland. In addition, The Irish Clinical Educator Track, co-directed by myself and Prof Margaret O'Connor has gone from strength to strength with seven trainees now enrolled across IOM and the Faculty of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The IOM has also launched a new pilot programme in Point of Care Ultrasound working in conjunction with and supported by the NDTP and National Simulation Office. Finally, I would like to congratulate the successful applicants for the Healthcare Leadership, ASPIRE, and Richard Stevens Fellowships.

The Irish Medical Council Accreditation was completed for remaining of our 7 stand-alone medical programmes this year, following on from the successful accreditation of 9 of our dual-training specialities. In addition, we were successful in establishing a new training programme in Clinical Neurophysiology with a planned first intake in July 2025. The RCPI has quality assured 66% of the training sites and our NSDs and RPDs have engaged closely to support medical training on these sites as part of this QA process.

Our symposia and webinars have continued with excellent engagement and feedback from fellows and members. Thank you to all our speakers across all events this year. Our Autumn Symposium included excellent speakers delivering rapid fire clinical cases as well as talks and panel discussion on the future direction of General Internal Medicine delivery and training in Ireland. In November, we were honoured to recognise Professor Sir Stephen O'Rahilly who delivered the IOM Stearne Lecture along with Professor Fergus Shanahan who delivered the 2024 Bryan Alton Medal Lecture. Our Spring Symposium focused on the role of coaching as a tool to improve medical training.

## About the Institute

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) was established in 2020 to enhance the oversight and practice of the 18 clinical medicine specialties in Ireland. The Institute has replaced the Irish Committee on Higher Medical Training (ICHMT) as the training body for these specialties. This year, this has increased to 19 specialties, with a new programme being developed for July 2025 intake, Clinical Neurophysiology









The key priority of the Institute is to embed accountable governance, enhance national engagement, and increase awareness of the Institute with a focus on continuous improvement for education and training. The Institute also supports professional affairs related to clinical medicine and aims to forge engagement with specialist professional societies, hospitals and other healthcare sites, the HSE, universities and the Medical Council.

#### Governance

The Institute has established a governance structure as a Faculty of RCPI. RCPI Council devolves the responsibility for education and professional affairs of 19 medical specialties to the Institute and the Institute reports directly to the Council and the President of RCPI. The organogram of IOM reporting and its constituent committees is illustrated in the diagrams below. The key to this governance is the ability of Members, Fellows, Trainers, and Trainees to actively engage with the Institute.

A key aspect of the Institute governance structure are monthly meetings of the Officers of the IOM chaired by the Dean, Prof Ed McKone and the weekly meeting chaired by the Director of Education and Training, Dr Emer Kelly. These meetings include representation from BST, HST, Examinations, Professional Affairs and senior RCPI Administration, allowing for a more responsive Institute, and timely decision making.

Changes to IOM Governance:

- 1. After approval by the IMC, the specialty of Clinical Neurophysiology has been added to list of Specialties under the governance of IOM. The STC has been formed and NSD, Dr John McHugh, has been appointed.
- 2. The new role, Director of Professional Affairs, has been created. Prof. Jim O'Neill, Consultant Cardiologist has been appointed to this position.
- 3. The Director of Examinations, Institute of Medicine has been appointed. Dr Vera Keatings, Consultant in Respiratory and General Internal Medicine has taken up the position. A proposal to change the standing orders of the IOM to reinstate the Director of Examinations as an officer is underway.
- Prof Jim O'Neill was Council Representative on the IOM Board. After appointment to IOM Officer Role of Director of Professional Affairs, Prof O'Neill has stepped down from RCPI Council. Dr Laura Durcan has been appointed as Council Representative on the IOM Board by the President of RCPI.

The organizational charts have been updated to reflect the above changes.

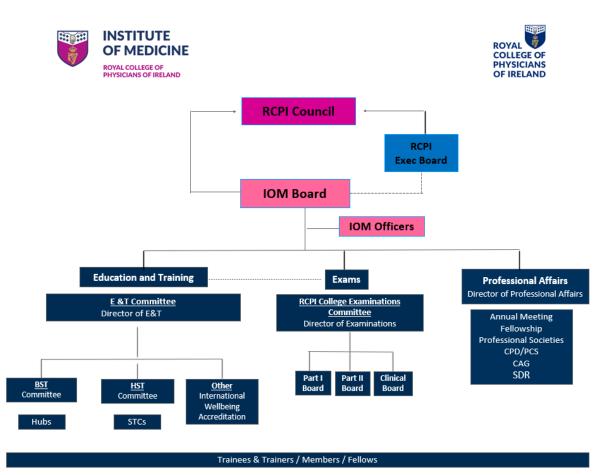


Figure 1 Institute of Medicine Education, Training and Exams Governance

IOM Institute of medicine; E&T Education & Training; CPD Continuing Professional Development; PCS Professional Competence Scheme; CAG Clinical Advisory Group; BST Basic Specialty Training; HST Higher Specialty Training; STC Specialty Training Committee

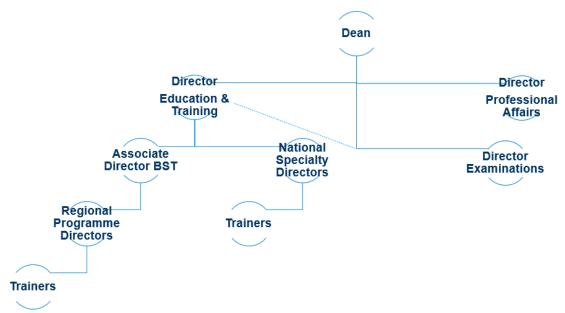


Figure 2: Institute of Medicine Organisational Structure and Reporting Lines





## The Board

The Institute of Medicine is governed by the Board, the Chair of which is the Dean of the Institute. The Dean also serves on the Executive of the College. During the 2024/2025 period, the Board met on 4 occasions on 19 September 2024, 28 November 2024, 28 February 2025 and 20 June 2025. Mr Kieran Barbalich was appointed as Lay member in September 2024, Prof Jim O'Neill was appointed as the Director of Professional Affairs in November 2024, Dr Vera Keatings was appointed as the Director of Examinations in April 2025.

Board membership for 2024/2025 period	
Board Member	Role
Prof Edward McKone	Dean/Chair
Dr Diarmuid O'Shea	President RCPI
Dr Emer Kelly	Director of Education and Training
Dr Vera Keatings	Director of Examinations
Prof Jim O'Neill	RCPI Council representative
Prof Gaye Cunnane	RCPI Council representative
Prof Margaret O'Connor	Fellow
Prof Pat Nash	Fellow
Dr Seán Donohue	Trainee representative
Mr Kieran Barbalich	Lay member
Mr Kevin Marshall	Lay member

We have welcomed on board the following Board member during 2024/25:

Name	Role
Dr Laura Durcan	RCPI Council representative

## Officers

IOM Officers for 2024/2025 period		
Officer	Role	
Prof Edward McKone	Dean	
Dr Emer Kelly	Director of Education and Training	
Prof Jim O'Neill	Director of Professional Affairs (from Nov 24)	

## Committees

The Standing Committees of the Institute are the Education and Training Committee, National Specialty Directors (NSD) Committee for HST, and Regional Programme Directors (RPD) Committee for BST.





## **Education and Training Committee**

## Chair: Dr Emer Kelly

During the 2024/2025 period, the Education and Training Committee met on 3 occasions on: 16 December 2024, 24 March 2025 and 9 June 2025.

Education and Training Committee membership 2024/2025	
Committee Member	Role
Dr Emer Kelly	Director of Education and Training
Prof Edward McKone	Dean
Prof Jim O'Neill	Director of Professional Affairs
Dr John McDermott	Associate Director of BST
Prof Michael Watts	Associate Director of HST /SDR Lead
Dr Vera Keatings	Director of Examinations
Dr Sean Fleming	NSD representative
Dr Alwin Sebastian Prof Alan Moore	RPD Representative
Dr Nigel Glynn	
Dr Anna Clarke	International Lead
Prof Gaye Cunnane	Health and Wellbeing Lead
Dr Ellen Walsh	Trainee representative

## National Specialty Directors (NSD) Committee

Chair: Professor Mike Watts/Dr Emer Kelly

During the 2024/2025 period, the NSD Committee met on 2 occasions on: 25 October 2024 and 7 April 2025.

NSD Committee Members 2024/2025	
Committee Member	Role
Prof Michael Watts	Chair, Associate Director of HST/ SDR Lead
Dr Emer Kelly	Director of Education and Training
Prof Edward McKone	Dean
Dr Ross Murphy	NSD Cardiology
Prof Briain MacNeill	NSD Cardiology
Dr Andrew Green	NSD Clinical Genetics
Prof David Williams	NSD Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics
Dr Sinead Field	NSD Dermatology
Dr Richard Watchorn	NSD Dermatology
Prof Fidelma Dunne	NSD Endocrinology
Dr Ronan Canavan	NSD Endocrinology
Dr Orlaith Kelly	NSD Gastroenterology
Dr Karen Hartery	NSD Gastroenterology
Dr Marcia Bell	NSD General Internal Medicine





Dr Seán Fleming	NSD General Internal Medicine
Dr Aisling Loy	NSD Genito-Urinary Medicine
Dr Martin O'Donnell	NSD Geriatric Medicine
Dr Hilary Cronin	NSD Geriatric Medicine
Dr Clodagh O'Dwyer	NSD Geriatric Medicine
Dr Sarah O'Connell	NSD Infectious Diseases
Prof Eoin Feeney	NSD Infectious Diseases
Prof Liam Grogan	NSD Medical Oncology
Dr Miriam O'Connor	NSD Medical Oncology
Prof Denise Sadlier	NSD Nephrology
Dr Lisa Costelloe	NSD Neurology
Prof David Bradley	NSD Neurology
Prof Karen Ryan	NSD Palliative Medicine
Dr Anthony Chan	NSD Pharmaceutical Medicine
Dr Paul Carroll	NSD Rehabilitation Medicine
Dr Emer Kelly	NSD Respiratory Medicine
Dr David Curran	NSD Respiratory Medicine
Dr Barry O'Shea	NSD Rheumatology

We would like to take this opportunity to thank and recognise the hard work of the following NSDs whose terms came to an end during the 2024/2025 period:

Name	Specialty
Dr Paul Carroll	Rehabilitation Medicine
Dr Orlaith Kelly	Gastroenterology
Dr David Curran	Respiratory Medicine
Prof Andrew Green	Clinical Genetics

We have welcomed on board the following incoming NSDs during 2024/25:

Name	Specialty
Dr John McHugh	Clinical Neurophysiology
Dr Raymond Carson	Rehabilitation Medicine
Prof Liam Cormican	Respiratory Medicine
Prof Mark Rogan	Respiratory Medicine
Dr Juliette Sheridan	Gastroenterology
Dr Careni Spencer	Clinical Genetics

## **Regional Programme Directors (RPD) Committee**

Chair: Professor John McDermott

During the 2024/2025 period, the RPD Committee met on 3 occasions on 1 October 2024, 10 December 2024, 8 April 2024.

RPD Committee Members 2024/2025	
Name	Site/ Hub





Prof John McDermott	Associate Director of BST
Prof Alan Moore	Beaumont Hospital
Dr Brian Kent	St. James's Hospital
Dr Syed Rivzi	Мауо
Dr Danny Cheriyan	Director of the International Residency Programme
Dr Nigel Glynn	The Mater
Dr Elizabeth Abernethy	South-East
Dr David Gallagher	West
Dr Patrick O'Boyle	Connolly
Dr Sam Kant	St Vincent's University Hospital
Dr Claire Murphy	St Vincent's University Hospital
Dr Alwin Sebastian	Mid-West
Dr Dan Ryan	Tallaght University Hospital
Dr Clifford Kiat	South
Dr Donal Sheehan	South
Prof Cathy McHugh	Sligo
Dr Junaid Awan	Trainee Representative

We would like to take this opportunity to thank and recognise the hard work of the following RPD whose term came to an end during the 2024/2025 period:

Name	Specialty
Dr John Garvey	St Vincent's University Hospital

We have welcomed on board the following incoming RPDs during 2024/25:

Name	Specialty
Dr Sam Kant	St Vincent's University Hospital
Dr Claire Murphy	St Vincent's University Hospital

## Medical Council Accreditation

The accreditation of the following remaining IOM specialty programmes took place during the week of 10 to 14 June 2024 (Clinical Genetics, Dermatology, Genito-Urinary Medicine, Medical Oncology, Neurology, Palliative Medicine, Rehabilitation Medicine).

The draft IMC accreditation report for the remaining specialty programmes was received in September for IOM review and feedback. The final draft was approved by the IMC Education & Training Committee in November 2024 and obtained Ministerial approval in February 2025. A copy of the Final Report along with an Action and Implementation Plan template for completion and submission was received and is currently being completed. The IOM will meet with the IMC on the 23 June to present and review the Action and Implementation Plan.

The remaining IOM Specialty programmes have all been approved for a period of 5 years with a number of conditions and recommendations.





The Final IMC accreditation report for Clinical Neurophysiology was approved by the IMC Education and Training Committee and Ministerial approval was received in March 2024. The proposed HST programme in Clinical Neurophysiology has been approved for a period of 3 years with a number of conditions and recommendations.

The IOM met with the Medical Council to present and review the Action and Implementation Plan for Clinical Neurophysiology on 2 October 2024. The first trainees are due to commence this new programme in July 2025.

A change has been made by the IMC to the Annual Returns process for 2023 – 2024 resulting in the splitting out on the call for Quantitative and Qualitative returns and staggered deadlines. The Quantitative returns were completed for all BST and HST programmes and submitted to the IMC in September 2024. The Qualitative return for the Dual Specialties was completed and submitted to the IMC in INC in November 2024 and for Geriatrics Medicine and Endocrinology & DM on the 30 April 2025.





## Training Programmes

The Institute is Ireland's largest training body and training is overseen by Dr Emer Kelly, Director of Education and Training and Professor John McDermott, Associate Director of BST. The Dean and training leads, along with administrative leads in the Institute meet weekly at the officers meeting which provides operational oversight of IOM related issues.

## **Basic Specialist Training**

There were 578 Trainees on the IOM BST GIM scheme for 2024-2025. There were 866 applicants, with 679 shortlisted and interviewed with 287 posts filled for July 2024 intake.

No. Applicants	Eligible	Shortlisted	Interviewed	Appointed	On list	reserve
866	679	679	679	287	289	

There are 268 doctors due to receive their BST Certificates of Completion this July 2025, pending successful evaluations.

## **Higher Specialist Training**

There were 562 Trainees on IOM HST schemes for 2024-2025. There were 273 applications to the HST programmes, with 188 interviewed and 129 posts filled across 17 specialties for the July 2024 intake.

Speciality	Applicants	Eligible	Shortlisted	Interviewed	Appointed	On reserve list
Cardiology and GIM	40	26	26	26	13	4
Clinical Genetics	4	3	3	3	2	0
<b>Clinical Pharmacology and GIM</b>	3	3	3	3	2	0
Dermatology	33	15	15	14	8	0
Endocrinology & DM and GIM	18	12	12	12	12	0
Gastroenterology and GIM	24	17	17	16	12	1
Genito-Urinary Medicine	3	2	2	3	1	1
Geriatric Medicine and GIM	34	32	32	27	21	3
Infectious Diseases and GIM	12	11	11	10	6	2
Medical Oncology	7	7	7	6	6	0
Nephrology and GIM	14	10	10	10	8	0
Neurology	13	10	10	10	8	0
Palliative Medicine	23	15	15	13	6	3
Pharmaceutical Medicine	4	0	0	0	0	0
Rehabilitation Medicine	4	4	4	4	2	0
Respiratory Medicine and GIM	27	22	22	21	15	6
Rheumatology and GIM	10	10	10	10	7	0
Total	273	199	199	188	129	20

There are 89 IOM doctors who have received their Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Specialist Training (CSCST) in the year 2025. The majority received their certificate at the dedicated CSCST





Graduation Ceremony on 20 June 2025, however, this number is also inclusive of anyone who has received their CSCST from 1 January 2025, and those who were expected to receive before 31 December 2025.

## Fellowships

#### **RCPI Management Fellowships commencing July 2025**

Name of Trainee	Company	Specialty
Dr Odharna Ní Dhomhnalláin	EY	Clinical Pharmacology &
		Therapeutics
Dr Daniel Creegan	PwC	Cardiology

#### **ASPIRE Fellowships commencing July 2025**

Name of the Fellowship	Specialty	Primary location
Movement Disorder Fellowship	Neurology	Mater Misercordiae University
		Hospital
Fellowship in Advanced Endoscopy	Gastroenterology	Beaumont/SVUH
Diabetes in Pregnancy	Endocrinology & DM	Galway University Hospital
Post CSCST Fellowship in Vulvar Disease	Dermatology	South Infirmary – Victoria
		University Hospital
ASPIRE Fellowship in Interventional	Respiratory	Beaumont Hospital
Pulmonology & Community Lung Cancer	Medicine	
Screening		
Fellowship in Glomerular Disease	Nephrology	Cork University Hospital

For July 2025-26 commencement, 21 proposals have been received which is a huge increase in number from this year.

## International Medical Graduate Training Initiative

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative (IMGTI) continues to provide a route for sponsored and scholarship overseas doctors to experience structured postgraduate medical training in the Irish public health service.

## **RCPI IMGTI HSE Scholarship Programme Intake**

The College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan's (CPSP's) working relationship with the HSE and the Forum of the Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies, continues to provide a Postgraduate Scholarship Programme in Ireland for doctors from Pakistan. This allows doctors who are enrolled with the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Pakistan to complete two years of their training in Ireland. Dr Shabahat Shah has taken up role as CPSP/SMSB Programme Director for the Institute of Medicine from January 2025. There will be 67 doctors from the CPSP and SMSB undertaking training in various medical specialties in 2025/26, 27 in Year 1 and 35 in Year 2.

#### **RCPI IMGTI Sponsored Programme Intake**





The sponsored route for trainees from the Gulf at Residency and Fellowship level continues to be a successful programme. 94 trainees have graduated from IOM Residency and Fellowship programmes and have returned home to embed their newly acquired knowledge and skills in health services in their own countries. International members and fellows from IMGTI sponsored programme contribute significantly to our activities. These contributions include becoming exam convenors, interviewing at Residency level and supporting new potential partnerships in the region.

	Number of Trainees to date	Number currently on programme
Residency	21	8
Programme		
Clinical Fellowship	101	51

## Business Development

Sinéad Lucey, Director of Business Development and Exams and Cliodhna Martin, Global Training and Partnership Manager.

## **Global Training and Partnerships update**

**IMGTIS Sponsored Programme**: The International Sponsored Programme continues to provide an opportunity for qualified medical trainees from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries— Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates—to engage in a fixed period of clinical training in Ireland. These trainees receive full sponsorship from their respective governments throughout their training period. Notably, all positions within this programme are supernumerary. The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) offers two distinct training streams under this sponsored route: Residency and Fellowship.

- 1) International Residency Training Programme (IRTP): The International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) is open to doctors upon completion of their Internship. The programme enables doctors to complete residency training in Ireland before returning to their home country with a Saudi/Arab Board equivalent qualification and membership in the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. It is currently offered in Internal Medicine, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Histopathology. Currently, there are 16 graduates of the Internal Medicine programme and 4 in training with a further 4 trainees due to start in January 2026.
- 2) International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP): The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) offers structured, curriculum-based specialist training at a senior level for doctors seeking advanced training in their chosen specialty or sub-specialty. The programme includes the following IOM specialties:

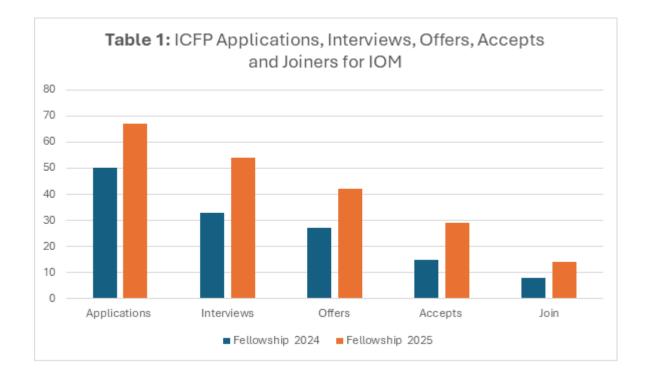
Additionally, offerings are available in other faculties and institutes. Now in its eleventh year, 88 fellowship trainees have graduated from IOM Fellowship programmes and have returned home to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills in their respective health services. This year, there are 21 trainees enrolled in the programme across IOM fellowship specialties. The total number of trainees across all RCPI faculties and institutes for both Residency and Fellowship is 59. Performance through the recruitment funnel for 2024/25 is significantly improved with 14 expected to join IOM in July 2025 and Jan 2026. This represents an increase of 75% for the institute.

**Table 1** outlines the increases in the various stages of the recruitment funnel. A new Fellowship inObesity Medicine was introduced this year and new subspecialities introduced include, GeriatricOncology, Respiratory - Interstitial Lung Disease and Rare Parenchymal Lung Disease, Respiratory -





Interventional Pulmonology, Rheumatology - Adolescent Transitional Rheumatology and Stroke Medicine.



## Global Health Update:

**The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies**: The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies has completed the process of developing a competency framework on Global Health which takes the form of a 2 hour, 2 CPD points module. This module is free to access and went live on the RCPI website for Members, Fellows and Trainees to access. 113 learners are enrolled on the course to date and 42 have completed the module.

In April 2025 a call for funding proposals was issued to all RCPI Members, Fellows and Trainees for current global health initiatives. Applications are currently being reviewed with funds to be issued before end of June 2025

**EQUALS Initiative**: In August 2024 and February 2025 two more 40ft containers of equipment were shipped to Zambia. This will take the total number of 40ft containers sent to Zambia since 2013 to 18. The equipment was tested pre shipment by clinical engineers of the EQUALS Initiative and on arrival it will be distributed across the country to larger teaching hospitals and smaller health clinics.

Through the collaboration between RCPI and ZACOMS, RCPI continues to provide access to online courses to Zambian trainees on various specialist training programmes, which comprises part of their core curriculum. ZACOMS invited delegates from EQUALS Initiative to attend the 2025 graduation ceremony for their trainees in June. Prof David Weakliam and Prof Diarmuid O'Donovan will be attending on behalf of EQUALS. Whilst there they will meet with key stakeholders, including the Irish Embassy in Zambia.

## Membership and Fellowship update:





The Collegiate Membership and Engagement Steering Group Report was completed and approved through Council in June 2024. As per one of the recommendations, Trueology was commissioned for an updated research piece on our members and fellows database. Trueology last completed this research on our behalf in 2019/2020. This updated state of the nation aims to find out more about the changing needs of our members since COVID, and what impact the changes the college has made in that time have had on our engagement with our members and fellows. This work began in July 2024 and was completed in February 2025. Findings are being presented to all Faculty and Institute Boards and Council from May 2025 onwards.

A new dedicated membership section on the website launched in July 2024. This is an area where members and fellows can find information relating to their membership, including benefits, what's happening, FAQs and further ways to get involved with the college. The plan is to expand this area with further offerings as we get more feedback on what members would like to see more of.

The first International Alumni Network event was held in Riyadh in February 2025 and had 64 Members and Fellows attend. The next event is scheduled for Bahrain in November 2025.

#### New Business Development update:

RCPI/ Bus Development team launched its inaugural course with SEHA hospital group on Telemedicine Train the Trainer in April 2025.

Dr Neil Reddy is the clinical lead for the blended course which has four modules of asynchronous online material followed by four virtual tutorials.

Excellent feedback has been received to date and 20 doctors have engaged on the education programme. This programme has generated income of €10K with an opportunity to generate future income via a licensing agreement next year.

It was a cross-functional initiative, with the Learning, Innovation, and Development team, Education Delivery team, and Business Development team working closely together to ensure RCPI is delivering a best-in-class pilot course with this strategic customer.

Business Development team also launched a tailored performing audit online asynchronous programme for VHI doctors and allied health professionals in January 2025. To date approx. 70 doctors and allied health professionals have completed or are registered on this course. This programme generated income of €5K, further CPD opportunities are being explored with VHI to identify what other RCPI education programmes meet the CPD needs of VHI clinical staff.





## Training Site Quality Improvement (QI) Model

(Previously training site accreditation)

In line with both international and national best practices, the College transitioned from a traditional hospital inspection process to a continuous Quality Improvement (QI) model. This updated approach evaluates the key factors influencing training outcomes, including trainee experiences, trainer engagement, and site environment.

Under the QI model, training sites are approved to deliver training in designated specialties for a fiveyear period, unless significant issues arise. During this period, sites are required to submit an annual return containing key quality metrics.

Over the past 12 months, nine IOM training sites across Ireland have been visited as part of the Site QI process. The following sites were reviewed and approved for training:

## May 2024

- Naas General Hospital
- (MRH) Tullamore

## September 2024

- MRH Mullingar
- MRH Portlaoise
- St. Vincent's University Hospital
- St. Columcille's Hospital
- St. Michael's Hospital

## November 2024

- University Hospital Waterford
- St. Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny

## March 2025

- National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street
- The Coombe Women & Infants University Hospital
- The Rotunda Hospital

## Planned Visits for the Remainder of the Year

## September 2025

- Tipperary University Hospital
- Nenagh General Hospital
- Ennis General Hospital
- St. John's General Hospital

## October 2025





- University Hospital Limerick
- University Hospital Limerick Maternity

## November 2025

- Wexford University Hospital
- Ten hospice sites (nationwide)

With these scheduled visits, all IOM training sites will have been assessed during the first five-year rollout of the Site QI model.

A comprehensive report will be published following the completion of the first 5-year planned visits, to review the model's implementation and outcomes. This will include feedback from key stakeholders and a full evaluation of the model's approach and areas of improvement.

## Trainer & Membership Engagement

**Intern Open Day:** An intern open day was held in October 2024. The morning session was a series of talks on successful internships and approaches to common clinical challenges with talks by Dr Sam Kant, Dr Paul O'Hara, Dr Donal Sexton, Dr Hugh Kearney and Dr Sarah O'Beirne. The afternoon included talks from Deans and Directors of Education and Training from each faculty in RCPI on how to apply for BST training and careers in the different RCPI specialities. This was followed by a reception with tables set up for informal discussion with RCPI Faculty Deans and Directors of Education and Training on careers and training in the different specialities.

**General Acute Medicine Course.** The IOM are planning a course for GIM physicians on acute medicine. The expected format will be a 2-day course, hybrid, in RCPI delivering talks with updates on the management of acute medical presentation coming through ED. Audience will be members and fellows of IOM and will include international participation. Organisers will be Dr Sam Kant and Dr Donal Sexton.

**Curriculum Development.** Cross Faculty Curriculum in Inclusion Medicine: Funded by NDTP, cross faculty curriculum being developed by IOM and Inclusion Medicine Leads Prof Cliona NiCheallaigh. Planned submission to NDTP for Development Funding to develop Cross Faculty Curriculum in Integrated Care Medicine.

**Introduction of AI in Medical Education.** A series of lectures and workshop are being planned for NSD, RPDs and examination committees on use of AI for medical education.





## **SDR** Applications

Ms Siobhán Kearns, RCPI SDR Senior Administrator

#### IOM SDR applications numbers from July 2024 to May 2025:

Number of Applications Received & Recommendations Made	Specialties/Recommendation	
New Applications Received: 40	<ul> <li>19 Dual Specialty – 2 Cardiology &amp; GIM; 2 Endocrinology &amp; GIM; 6 Gastroenterology &amp; GIM; 5 Geriatric Medicine &amp; GIM; 1 Nephrology &amp; GIM; 2 Respiratory &amp; GIM; 1 Rheumatology &amp; GIM</li> <li>21 Single Specialty – 4 Cardiology; 1 Clinical Genetics; 2 Endocrinology; 1 Gastroenterology; 8 GIM; 2 Medical Oncology; 1 Neurology; 2 Respiratory Medicine</li> </ul>	
Written Reviews Received: 16	<ul> <li>8 Dual Specialty – 1 Cardiology &amp; GIM; 1 Endocrinology &amp; GIM; 2 Gastroenterology &amp; GIM; 2 Geriatric Medicine &amp; GIM; 2 Respiratory Medicine &amp; GIM</li> <li>8 Single Specialty – 2 Cardiology; 1 Endocrinology; 1 Geriatric Medicine; 3 GIM; 1 Respiratory Medicine</li> </ul>	
Initial Assessments (new applications) = 32	<ul> <li>Recommended – 7 (1 Cardiology &amp; GIM; 1 Geriatric Medicine &amp; GIM; 2 GIM; 2 Medical Oncology; 1 Rheumatology &amp; GIM)</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Not Recommended – 26 (3 Cardiology; 1 Cardiology &amp; GIM; 2 Endocrinology; 3 Endocrinology &amp; GIM; 2 Gastroenterology &amp; GIM; 2 GIM; 3 Geriatric Medicine; 2 Geriatric Medicine &amp; GIM; 6 GIM; 1 Infectious Diseases; 1 Respiratory Medicine; 1 Respiratory Medicine &amp; GIM)</li> </ul>	
Written Reviews = 11	<ul> <li>Recommended: 8 – (1 Cardiology; 1 Cardiology &amp; GIM; 1 Endocrinology &amp; GIM, 1 Geriatric Medicine; 1 GIM; 1 Gastroenterology &amp; GIM; 1 Respiratory Medicine &amp; GIM)</li> <li>Not Recommended 3 – 1 GIM; 1 Gastroenterology &amp;</li> </ul>	
Re-Applications = 0	GIM; 1 Geriatric Medicine & GIM)	

Note the data given above is reflective of the activity undertaken during the period July 2024 to May 2025 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 previous academic year.

## IMC & FORUM Planned SDR Review





A review of the SDR process and SLA is planned to commence this year. It has been over 10 years since the last formal review leading to the signing of the SLAs. Draft TORs have been shared with the IMC and PGTBs and representatives nominated to participate in the review. A date for the first meeting will be scheduled over the coming months.

## **Examinations and Development**

This report is presented by Dr Vera Keatings, Director of Examinations (DoE) for the Institute of Medicine, RCPI, with oversight of all three parts of the MRCPI General Medicine examinations. Dr Keatings took up the post of DoE in April 2025.

We continue to deliver the written exams through remote invigilation with just over 3,340 candidates taking the Part I and Part II written exams in July 2024 – June 2025. Part I GM numbers continue to grow with a 22% increase in candidates' numbers compared to the last academic year. The GM1 sitting in August 2024, with 824 candidates, was the largest number of candidates to sit an RCPI remote invigilated examination. We continue to deliver three diets of the clinical exams in Ireland with 21 exam days nationally across eight exam centres, however, this will increase to nine thanks to University Hospital Waterford coming onboard from October 2025.

Our GM international clinical exam centres have continued to expand in 2024/25. The President, together with the CEO and Registrar of the College opened a new GM Clinical examination centre at RUMC, Penang, Malaysia, with the inaugural exam taking place on Saturday, 9 November 2024, with 20 candidates. This is the third new exam centre we have opened in northern Malaysia since February 2023. Together with our long-established centre in Kuala Lumpur, this brings to four the number of clinical exam centres we now have in this region. This highlights the long history, and close relationship the College has with Malaysia. While in Penang RCPI also signed an MOU with RUMC and delivered a Career Pathway talk to final year med students. In total we have nine international exams centres and between July 2024 – June 2025 we delivered 13 exam days.

Exam	Date	#Candidates	Academic Year Total
July 2024 – June 2025			
Part I			
	Aug-24	824	
	Jan-25	711	
	Apr-25	743	
		Total	2,278
Part II Written			
	Jul-24	307	
	Oct-24	426	
	Mar-25	337	
		Total	1,070

## **Examinations Sittings and Numbers**





Part II Clinical – Ireland			
	Sep/Oct 2024	158	
	Jan/Feb 2025	143	
	May/June 2025	160	
		Total	461
Part II Clinical –			
Overseas			
Saudi Arabia (Riyadh)	Sep-24	40	
UAE (Dubai)	Oct-24	35	
Malaysia (Penang)	Nov-24	20	
Bahrain	Dec-24	37	
Saudi Arabia (Jeddah)	Jan-25	38	
Saudi Arabia (Riyadh)	Feb-25	38	
Oman (Muscat)	May-25	17	
Malaysia (KL)	May/June 2025	29	
			254

## **Examination Board Members**

## Part I Written:

Chair – Dr James Jamison, Dr Gerard Crotty, Dr Aidan Droogan, Dr Patrick Bell, Dr Henry Brown, Dr Niall Herity, Dr Tim Beringer, Dr John Kellett, Dr Peter Watson, Prof Aine Carroll, Dr Kevin Molloy

## Part II Written:

Chair – Prof Catherine McHugh, Dr Timothy Beringer, Dr Geoffrey Chadwick, Dr John Connaughton, Dr Brian Lalor, Dr Colman Muldoon, Dr Aidan Droogan, Dr Linda O'Shea, Dr Triona O'Shea, Dr William Bourke

## Part II Clinical:

Chair – Dr Helen Tuite, Dr Peter Branagan, Dr Declan Byrne, Dr Muirne Spooner, Dr Mensud Hatunic, Dr Geoff Chadwick, Prof Catherine McHugh, Dr Raymond Carson, Dr Andrea Holmes, Dr Lucy-Ann Behan, Dr Regina McQuillan

I would like to express my thanks the Examinations Team and the Examination Boards for their assistance and hard work and look forward to continuing working with them. I would also like to thank the Dean of the Institute of Medicine, The Director of Education and Training and the IoM Board for their continued support.





## **Institute Events**

**Webinars:** Our webinar series, Hot Topics for Acute Physicians continued in September 2024. We had seven webinars this year with the themes of MPox, Pharmaceutical Medicine, Clinical Neurophysiology, Medical Emergencies on Planes, Palliative Care, Acute Medical Problems and Cardiology. Attendance at these averaged at around 118 attendees and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We are very grateful to the clinicians for their time and effort with these webinars.

Date	Specialty/Topic	Speakers
24 September 2024	MPox	Prof Eoin Feeney
		Prof Fiona Lyons
		Prof Christine Kelly
		Dr Mairín Boland
		Mr Adam Shanley
30 October 2024	Pharmaceutical Medicine	Dr Anthony Chan
	<ul> <li>Patient safety during drug discovery process</li> </ul>	Dr Catherine O'Connor
		Dr Bernard Vrijens
		Dr Onthatile Serehete
20 November 2024	Clinical Neurophysiology	Dr John McHugh
		Dr Eimer Maloney
		Dr Yvonne Langan
19 February 2025	Medical emergencies in	Prof Jim O'Neill
	an airplane	Dr Ciaran Craven
		Mr Jim Gavin
		Dr Ronan Murphy
19 March 2025	The Deteriorating Patient	Dr Faith Cranfield
	<ul> <li>What Next – Intensive care medicine, care of the</li> </ul>	Dr Leo Kevin
	older person, and	Dr Orla Sheehan
	palliative care.	
23 April 2025	The Special Patient – Solid	Dr Jim O'Byrne
	organ transplant, rare	Prof Michael Clarkson
	metabolic diseases and cystic fibrosis	Dr Suzanne Carter
21 May 2025	Cardiology and the	Dr Niamh Murphy
	growing overlap between	Dr Magid Awadalla
	cancer care and cardiac	Dr Carla Canniffe
	care	Prof Jim O'Neill





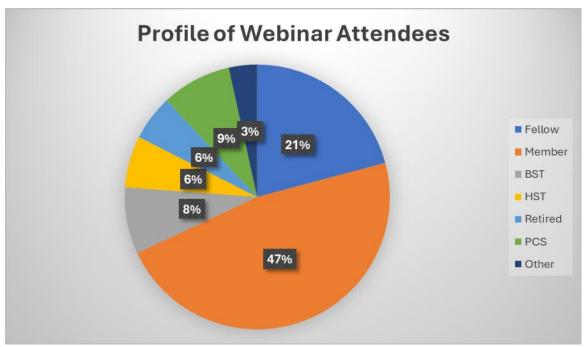


Figure 1 Profile of Webinar Attendees

**The IOM Autumn Symposium:** The IOM annual Autumn Symposium took place on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024. There were two sessions. Session one focused on 'Rapid Fire Hot Topic Updates from Specialists across a Range of Specialties' and session two focused on the 'Future of General Internal Medicine Delivery and Training in Ireland.'

There was very positive feedback on the content, and good face-to-face attendance.

Presenter	Presentation Title	Role
Dr Paul Cotter	Geriatrics	Consultant Physician and Geriatrician/Stroke Physician
Dr Maeve McAleer	Dermatology	Consultant Dermatologist, CHI Crumlin
Dr Roisín Stack	Gastroenterology: Common GI Presentations	Consultant Gastroenterologist, University Hospital Limerick
Dr Tríona O'Shea	Endocrinology	Consultant Endocrinologist
Dr Norma O'Leary	The evolving role of specialist palliative medicine	Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine at Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services
Dr Laura Durcan	Delivering of GIM: Perspectives from a Model 4 Hospital Setting: 'Challenges in Delivering	Consultant Rheumatologist, Beaumont Hospital





	Unscheduled Medicine at all Levels.'	
Prof Clare Fallon	Delivering of GIM: Perspectives from a Model 3 Hospital Setting: 'All the leaves are brown, and the sky is grey – California Dreaming.'	Consultant Geriatrician and GIM Physician, Mullingar Regional Hospital
Prof Anthony O'Regan	GIM as a stand-alone specialty	Consultant Physician and Immediate Past Dean IOM
Dr Sean Fleming	Future Challenges in Training GIM Physicians	NSD in General Internal Medicine

**The Stearne Lecture & Bryan Alton Medal** took place in No. 6 on 28 November 2024. 44 of the 83 invited guests attended in person. We had the pleasure of welcoming Professor Sir Stephen O'Rahilly, Professor of Clinical Biochemistry and Medicine, Director of the MRC Metabolic Diseases Unit at the University of Cambridge and Honorary Consultant Physician at Addenbrooke's Hospital, to deliver the Stearne Lecture. The Bryan Alton Medal, which is awarded in recognition of contribution to clinical and academic medicine, was presented to the remarkable physician, Professor Fergus Shanahan, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, and Professor of Medicine and Consultant Gastroenterologist at University College Cork, Ireland. We were very honoured to welcome Ms Bryanna Alton, Bryan Alton's daughter, to the talk and medal presentation.

**The Spring Symposium** took place on 23 January in No. 6 and online via Zoom. There were 98 attendees. In the first session, Dr Maya Hammoud, J. Robert Willson Research Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Professor of Learning Health Sciences at the University of Michigan Medical School, delivered an engaging presentation on 'Coaching in Medical Education.' In the second session, Ms Claire Doole, Communications trainer and conference moderator Founder & Director of Doole Communications presented a strong Zoom presentation involving online communication tips and skills. Both sessions were followed by a Q&A. Prof Edward McKone, Dean of the Institute of Medicine, provided important updates on the ICET programme. Dr Jeffrey Harte, fourth year Specialist Registrar in Infectious Diseases and General Internal Medicine and Dr Karen Dennehy, 4th year Geriatric Specialist Registrar/RCPI's Irish Clinical Educator Track 2023-2025 shared their experiences and provided valuable insights on the ICET programme and took part in the panel discussion.

**CSCST Graduation Ceremonies** The Institute hosted two formal CSCST graduation ceremonies in Number 6 Kildare Street on 20 June 2025. We are delighted to congratulate and recognise our graduating CSCST Trainees as well as acknowledge the work of our National Specialty Directors. It was also a pleasure to welcome our guest speaker Prof Gaye Cunnane who addressed the attendees of both ceremonies.





## Health & Wellbeing

The Health and Wellbeing provides support and referral pathways for trainers and trainees who are struggling to meet the training requirements or reach the competencies required due to reasons related to their health & wellbeing or overall performance.

The department has been working with the IOM in the following areas:

- Developing new courses and workshops, specially tailored for doctors, to help them manage stress and workplace challenges
- Providing expert advice and pathways to support to doctors experiencing mental health difficulties
- Developing policies and procedures for training sites regarding physician wellbeing, with an emphasis on early intervention and red flags for referral
- Acting as a point of contact for doctors who feel they require additional support while in training.
- Informing and influencing national workforce policies on physician wellbeing
- Advocating for increased funding of physician wellbeing initiatives

This year we have actively increased our relationships with the NCHD Hub, Practitioner Health and counselling and coaching services. These services are available to all IOM trainees and trainers. In 2024/2025 year, we have run a number of mentoring workshops and increased our mentors on the programme, we have run two medical parent coffee mornings, and we have worked on a number of projects to improve health and wellbeing while on training programmes. The department looks forward to working with the IOM on new initiatives and quality improvement projects for next year.

## Advocacy

## **Representation on Committees and Groups**

Name	Committee/ Group		
Dr Bairbre McNicholas	Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine of Ireland (JFICMI)		
Prof Margaret O'Connor	RCPI Credentials Committee		
Dr Geoff Chadwick	RCPI Credentials Committee		
Prof Anthony O'Regan	RCPI Credentials Committee		
Dr Donal Reddan	RCPI Credentials Committee		
Dr Cormac Kennedy	National Medicinal Product Catalogue		
Dr John Barragry	RCPI Research Ethics Committee		
Dr Alex Franciosi	National Audit of Hospital Mortality Governance Committee		
Prof Orla Crosbie	Simulation Governance Steering Group		
Dr Imran Sulaiman	Simulation Governance Steering Group		
Prof Jim O'Neill	Consultant Applications Advisory Committee (CAAC)		

We are very grateful to those who represent the Institute on various committees and groups.





Dr Ellen Newman	National Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme - Clinical Advisory Group Membership	
Prof Karen Ryan	Faculty of Pain Medicine	
Prof Anthony O'Regan	Assisted Dying Advisory Group	
Dr Breda Cushen	Smoking and Vaping Advisory Group	
Dr Niamh Allen	Global Health Committee	
Dr John MacFarlane	Disability Advisory Group	
Dr Bairbre McNicholas	Climate Action Committee	
Prof Corinna Sadlier	National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC)	

We would also like to thank the following people who have recently finished their terms on different committees:

Name	Committee/ Group	
Prof Jim O'Neill	RCPI Credentials Comittee	
Dr Eavan Muldoon	National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC)	
Prof Frank Murray	Global Health Committee	

## Strategic Objectives

Despite the major work-streams outlined above, the Institute is committed to strategic planning for its members. Our major strategic initiative for 2025-26 remains focused on the review and reorganisation on Internal Medicine Training and the clinical delivery of internal medicine care in Ireland, as well as the professionalization of clinical educators via the Irish Clinical Educator Track. We will continue to work to engage members for future roles in the Institute and will place a strategic focus on this area for 2025-26 which will provide opportunities for all members to be heard and involved in our plans going forward.

## 1. Restructuring of Internal Medicine Training:

Following on from the OPTIMISE report, the IOM have set up the Restructuring of Internal Medicine Training (RIMT) Steering Committee chaired by the Dean, Prof Edward McKone. Aisling Smith has been appointed as Head of Strategy for this committee.

There are 4 Subgroups

- 1. Curriculum and Core Clinical Exposures Group
  - Dr Emer Kelly, Dr Maeve Doyle, (GIM NSD/BST(TBC)) and Internal Med Training Lead
- 2. Training Structures Subgroup
  - Prof Ed McKone, Prof John McDermott, NDTP(TBC)
- 3. Stakeholder and Advocacy (Communications)
  - Prof Trevor Duffy, Dr Emer Kelly and RCPI Communications Department
- 4. Business Planning and Change Management
  - Audrey Houlihan and Sheila Gallagher

The Steering Group meets monthly in RCPI. Aim for training programs and curriculum/rotation structure completion by Q3 2025 with implementation by July 2027.





## 2. 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.

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. The consultant trainers will receive access to learning materials and a guide to mentoring as part of their training so that they can ensure the propagation and expansion of the programme on hospital sites within their region.

This programme was rolled out in two regional health areas in 2024; Galway and Waterford. It is proposed that the programme will continue in Kilkenny, Dublin and Limerick in 2025. Continued evaluation of this project will inform subsequent years and overall will inform a model for implementation of a sustainable, standardized competency-based point of care ultrasound training programme for trainees.

## 3. Irish Clinical Educator Track (ICET)

The aim of the ICET (Irish Clinician Educator Track) programme is to develop a national programme to provide training and a pathway into a career in post-graduate medical education in Ireland. The programme has three main components: Teaching Theory, Teaching Practice and Research and is open to SpRs from all IOM specialties.

One new Trainee will commence their first year on the programme in July.

ICET Trainee 2025-2027		
Trainee	Post	Specialty
Dr Róisín McConnell	NMH	O&G

Current Trainees in ICET Program:

ICET Trainee 2023-2025			
Trainee	Post	Specialty	
Dr Karen Dennehy	UCC/UHW	Geriatric Medicine	
Dr Clare Kennedy	NMH/UCD	O&G	

ICET Trainee 2024-2026			
Trainee	Post	Specialty	
Dr Anne-Marie Sweeney	UCD/SVUH	Respiratory Medicine	
Dr Nick Power	RCSI/Beaumont	Infectious Diseases	
Dr Jeffrey Harte	RCSI/Beaumont	Infectious Diseases	
Dr Cillian Hurst	UCC/UHW	Rheumatology	





## **RCPI Supporting Functions**

The Institute is supported by the following administrative functions within RCPI:

- Business Development: Sinead Lucey, Head
- Communications and Public Affairs: Siobhán Creaton, Head
- Corporate Support Services & Operations: Sheila Gallagher, CFO
- Education: Diarmuid Breathnach, Head
- Healthcare Leadership: Prof Trevor Duffy, Director
- IT Services: Michael Hughes, CTO
- Postgraduate Training: Muríosa Prendergast, Head of Operations
- All of the above are under the management of the CEO, Audrey Houlihan

## Operations

Muríosa Prendergast, Head of Operations

## Purpose

The overall aim of the Postgraduate Training (PGT) Function is to pursue excellence in all that we do as we support doctors. Key parts to that include the delivery and supports for training, accreditation (including the Irish Medical Council), projects, initiatives and quality assurance / quality improvement as it relates to training and our training sites, supports in health and wellbeing and supports for the effective operation and management of RCPI's six Faculties and Institutes.

The College and the PGT Function prides itself in being responsive and innovative.

## **Training and Education Delivery**

Zoë Cashman. Education and Training Delivery Manager

The overall aim of the Training Delivery Function is to pursue excellence in all that we do as we support doctors. Key parts to that include the delivery and supports for training, accreditation (including the Irish Medical Council), projects, initiatives and quality assurance / quality improvement as it relates to training and our training sites, supports in health and wellbeing and supports for the effective operation and management of RCPI's six Faculties and Institutes.

The Training Delivery Function is responsible for the delivery of the RCPI postgraduate training programmes. The purpose of the office is to be a model for excellence and leadership in the development and delivery of postgraduate specialist training programmes, emphasising high quality service, efficiency, effectiveness and excellence in Trainer and Trainee engagement on behalf of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the other five Faculties and Institutes: Faculty of Paediatrics, Faculty of Occupational Medicine, Faculty of Public Health Medicine, Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Faculty of Pathology.

The Training Delivery Function prides itself in being responsive and innovative and supports circa 1,300 trainees in the administration of the college's 31 training programmes. In terms of the IOM, this is the





two-year BST programme, eighteen specialties at HST and also our General Internal Medicine HST training programme. Our newest Speciality is Clinical Neurophysiology which gained HST training programme status in March 2024 from the Minister of Health. The first two trainees on this scheme will commence in July 2025. The office also runs four RCPI Regional Offices across the country.

## **Registry and Faculties Office**

Kelly Webster, Registry Manager Darragh Whelan, Faculties Manager

The purpose of the Registry and Faculties Office is to support the key activities of the RCPI Training Bodies. It is responsible for providing high-quality administrative services to leadership / Officers, the Boards and various Committees of the six Faculties and Institutes. The Registry office manages the academic records and certification for all postgraduate trainees.

## Admissions Office

Tanya Chapple, Admissions Manager

The office supports the recruitment and allocation of new intake trainees across BST, HST and our International Residency and Fellowship programmes.

## HST Trainees

Most of the IOM's programmes are of four or five-year's duration. The Institute of Medicine will be graduating 75 CSCSTs in summer of 2025.

For the HST recruitment for 2025/26, interviews took place over February and March 2025.

- 351 applicants in total
- 394 NDTP approved posts available
- 148 offers accepted

## BST Trainees

Demand remains very strong for the BST GIM and we saw an increase in applications in autumn 2024. Interviews took place as usual in late January 2025:

- 1391 applicants in total
- 1073 interviewed
- 283 appointed
- Total posts available: 543

## Increasing Trainee Numbers at HST

The IOM and the College have been working closely with the NDTP, HSE over the first half of 2025 on meeting the future workforce needs of the State. With appropriate and sustainable funding, the IOM is looking at increased HST trainee numbers in a carefully planned and incremental way over the period of 2025 to 2030. Over the next five years we are looking at further increasing the intake to the region of about 165 in Year 1 of our HST programmes by 2030.





As part of an overall approach to improving quality in postgraduate medical education and training, RCPI and its constituent training bodies are committed to a programme of continuous quality improvement. This Department leads out on these key projects as we support and develop the best training we can provide as a College.

Projects and initiatives are achieved through driving and developing standards in the quality of postgraduate medical education and training, ensuring improved standards are maintained, and delivering robust processes that will assure and engage the medical profession and the public about the standards and quality of postgraduate medical education and training in Ireland.

A key priority for this Department is our system of Training Site QAQI. This model works on a five-year timeline for each training site, and it is chaired by an extern from outside of Ireland. There are embedded annual quality checks.

The Department also supports the Medical Council accreditation for all of the RCPI's postgraduate training bodies and programmes as well as the assessment of applications to the Specialist Division of the Register. In that regard the IOM met with the Irish Medical Council the week of 10 June 2024 in terms of our reaccreditation of our HST single specialties. We also presented on progress for our Action and Implementation Plans for all our HST dual specialties. We presented to the IMC on plans we have for Internal Medicine Training – our OPTIMISE Project.

In terms of the IOM, the IMT project, which started in the summer of 2022, is fundamentally reviewing how we can better deliver internal medicine training into the future. An Interim Report was produced in June 2023 with 26 key recommendations, and we have worked over the last year on a new curriculum and to agree on the framework for the Implementation Plan. In summary it is:

- Framework
- Curriculum and Core Clinical Exposures
- Training Structure and Programme Scheme
- Governance and oversight
- Resources
- Appoint Internal Medicine Advisory Oversight / Working Group
- Search and Appoint Foundation Director of Internal Medicine

Agree approach with NDTP – Mandate for Change





## Healthcare Leadership

Prof Trevor Duffy, Director of Healthcare Leadership

## Overview

RCPI provides healthcare leadership broadly through advocacy, influence, expertise and support. In partnership with a range of stakeholders, RCPI actively leads via the National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes, the National Immunisation Advisory Committee, National Clinical Programmes and QI Educational Initiatives.

Within the scope of Healthcare Leadership, there is a focus on engaging with Trainees, Members and Fellows in three key areas: Teaching Leaders, Supporting Leaders and Acting as Leaders. To strengthen current RCPI offerings of formal leadership education, the Healthcare Leadership function develops a programme of supports for doctors in their day-to-day role as leaders and will continue to develop the college's own leadership role. There is also a strategic approach to gathering advocacy views of Trainees, Members and Fellows. This will be backed up by an education programme, policy development and active advocacy, ensuring the voice of RCPI is heard within the healthcare community, among national policymakers and legislators as well as the general public.

## Healthcare Leadership Projects

## Pilot Mentorship Programme for Early-Stage Consultants

The first cohort completed the pilot mentorship programme in 2024. Additional retired doctors have volunteered to participate in mentorship. Two mentor training groups completed training in June and October 2024. A second phase of the programme has started, response levels have been positive, 25 consultants sought to participate, and we are seeking to match this group with mentors. Feedback from both mentees and mentors who participated in first cohort has been very positive with the evaluation surveys completed by mentees during the programme providing valuable insights on the benefits of mentorship.

## **RCPI Academy for Retired Doctors**

The establishment of the Academy provides an instrumental vehicle for retired RCPI members and fellows to add value and stay connected with the College. On Heritage Day, 16 October 2024, RCPI hosted retired members for lunch during St Luke's Symposium. Increased numbers of retired members are now contributing to the College through their involvement in mentorship, examinations, CPD audits, representation on committees and heritage projects. To date, twenty members participated in mentorship training to support early-stage consultants. RCPI provides ongoing support to the committee as the Academy evolves.





## **Leadership Forum**

RCPI Leadership Forum was established in 2024. The Leadership Forum group consists of National Clinical Programme Leads, Chairs of Clinical Advisory Groups and other RCPI Chairs of Committees. This group most recently met on 7 May 2025 and discussed proposals for Terms of Reference for Clinical Programmes and how KPI setting and measurement can contribute to improving standards of care. These meetings were hybrid format, with over 30 Clinical Leads and CAG Chairs participating in the meetings.

The Leadership Forum has three core objectives. Firstly, educating leaders by developing and offering newly designed leadership courses to members. Secondly, providing adequate leadership support and knowledge of governance to members in leadership roles, this would include Clinical Programme Leads, Chairs of Clinical Advisory Groups, RCPI Committees and external College Representatives. Thirdly, to create a network or community of Members interested in getting involved and participating in RCPI activities and perhaps taking on leadership roles in the future. The College will plan networking events, seminars and training to support these leaders in their roles.

The Leadership Forum Group will be involved in the implementation phase of the Clinical Advisory Review. Improving communication and connectivity within this leadership group is part of the scope of the Leadership Forum.

## Sabbatical Pilot Project

This project is aimed at mid-career consultants.

A new project, at the initial stage of development, aims to enhance personal job satisfaction and reinvigorate the individual by enabling them to step away from the constant demands of their day job. Stakeholder engagement is ongoing as we scope out the various aspects of delivering this multilayered project. RCPI are actively seeking a viable funding model for this project.

## **RCPI President Hospital Visits and Quality Improvement Workshops**

Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President RCPI, Audrey Houlihan CEO and Prof Trevor Duffy, RCPI Director of Healthcare Leadership, led a delegation visiting Tipperary University Hospital, Wexford General Hospital and Limerick University Hospital during January and February 2025. Dr Diarmuid O'Shea and the RCPI team met a number of stakeholder groups, including trainees, trainers, consultants and NCHDs groups to listen to the current challenges experienced by medical teams. There was a strong level of engagement with trainee doctors and consultants alike and the feedback received by the College was invaluable, with many actions to follow up on.

## **Professional Competence**





## Summary of Key Activities – 1 May 2024 – 30 April 2025

The number of doctors enrolled in RCPI Professional Competence Schemes (PCS) increased to 5,901 in the PCS year May 2023 - April 2024. A total of 4267 doctors were enrolled in the Institute of Medicine Schemes (1446 on the Specialist Division Scheme and 2821 on the General Division Scheme).

The Professional Competence Department continues to develop extensive guidance, support and innovations in order to help doctors fulfil their CPD requirements and also provided individual help and support to many doctors.

## Submission of PCS Annual Reports to the Medical Council – June 2024

Under the formal Arrangements with the Medical Council for the operation of PCS, our six Training Bodies are required to submit annual reports on the operation of PCS by 30 June each year. For the 2023 – 2024 PCS year, Training Bodies were only required to submit the Quantitative (KPI) Report, and this report was submitted on behalf of the Institute on 28 June 2024.

## Compliance with Scheme Requirements for 2023 – 2024 PCS Year

The overall percentage of participants across RCPI's 11 Professional Competence Schemes who met the PCS requirements for the 2023 – 2024 PCS year is 81%, which is slightly lower than last year, where the compliance rate was 82%. The individual scheme compliance rates for the 2023 - 2024 year ranged from 74% to 94% (87% for IOM Specialist Division Scheme and 74% for the General Division Scheme).

The Annual Statements issued in May 2024 were once again annotated to state the reduced PCS requirements for the 2023 - 2024 year.

## Annual Verification Process (AVP)

A total of 283 doctors were selected for the 2023 – 2024 process, which included 47 reselections (doctors who had not completed their corrective actions from previous years). 113 doctors were selected from the IOM General Division Scheme, and 23 were selected from the IOM Specialist Division Scheme.

At the conclusion of the process, 272 (96%) of the initial group of 283 participants remained enrolled on a Professional Competence Scheme. Of the remaining 272 participants, 104 (39%) have been verified with no further action required. This includes 126 doctors from the Institute of Medicine General Division Scheme and 65 from the Specialist Division Scheme.

Doctors who were verified with no further action received an annotation on their 2024 - 2025 Annual Statement which was issued on 15 May 2025.

## **Strengthened Model for Maintenance of Professional Competence**

The Medical Council approved the new Maintenance of Professional Competence Rules and Guidelines on 12 December 2023, representing an important step to bring Maintenance of Professional





Competence (MPC) in line with international practice and incorporate right touch and compassionate regulation.

On 1 May 2025, the revised, strengthened and more flexible framework was introduced. This updated model upholds high standards of professional practice while maintaining self-directed CPD processes that are relevant to each doctor's scope and stage of practice.

A new CPD Accreditation Model will also be introduced as part of the new Maintenance of Professional Competence (MPC) Framework. Under the new framework, the IMC will serve as the CPD accreditation body, setting standards for CPD programs and activities while recognising accredited CPD Providers.

The updated IMC accreditation standards generally align with RCPI's current criteria, as we have always aimed to comply with EACCME and the newly developed International CPD accreditation standards. However, the ACCME's recommended new criteria include additional requirements, including a greater emphasis on commercial disclosure by event planners and participating speakers. This necessitates a review of our CPD accreditation criteria and guidance for external events and those applied by the College in delivering CPD.

The IMC has assured us that the PGMTBs will continue as accredited CPD Providers for the next five years. However, in June 2025, PGMTBs will be required to submit two examples of CPD activities demonstrating compliance with the new criteria. The PGMTBS will continue to accredit CPD events submitted to them.

The Professional Competence Department will continue to collaborate with our Training Bodies, the Forum and the Medical Council on the implementation of the new CPD Accreditation Model.

## CPD Event Approval

RCPI facilitates a process of reviewing and accrediting external activities provided by both RCPI and other individuals or bodies for the purpose of awarding CPD credits.

Outlined below is a summary of activity for the period 1 May 2024 to 30 April 2025

Туре	Applications Approved	Credits Allowed
RCPI	216	1477
Non RCPI	355	2372
TOTAL	571	3849





## **National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes**

Currently there are four National Quality Improvement (NSQI) Programmes managed by RCPI: histopathology, gastrointestinal endoscopy, radiology and bronchoscopy. Three of the programmes are funded by the HSE National Quality and Patient Safety while bronchoscopy is funded by the HSE and the NCCP. The goal of these programmes is to optimise patient care through facilitating and supporting the use of evidence-based quality improvements in diagnosis and reporting. The data collected via these programmes are aggregated in annual national data reports, which are used to drive quality improvement in participating HSE, voluntary and private hospitals. These data are also reported on locally to assist clinical audit and drive quality improvement. Based on findings from analysis of 2023 data, the programmes assigned owners to several report recommendations in their national data reports in line with a newly developed HSE procedure. It is hoped that assigning ownership to recommendations can ensure development of a suitable implementation that will be actioned and monitored.

## National Bronchoscopy Quality Improvement (NBQI) Programme

The NBQI Programme, which is the newest, has identified five key quality areas within which they are developing key quality indicators (KQI) for adult bronchoscopy, EBUS and combined procedures, 1) access to procedures, 2) safety, 3) complication rates, 4) patient experience and 5) indicators of procedure success. The working group are focusing on a first round of target setting for KQIs using local clinical audit findings, national and international best practice, and clinical expertise as guidance. A network of local QI clinical leads has been established, with 24 out of a possible total of 27 respiratory consultants on board to date. This network is key in ensuring the programme can be run locally. The NBQI Programme plays key role in reviewing the bronchoscopy module in the new uniform endoscopy reporting system (ERS), Solus to ensure it will meet the day-to-day needs of respiratory teams. The development of a data collection tool, which will enable participating hospitals to collect and upload data to a national dataset, is also underway.

## National GI Endoscopy Quality Improvement (NEQI) Programme

In November 2024, the NEQI Programme published its 9th national data report, which was then launched at the NSQI annual conference. The report presented data collected in 2023 from 36 HSE and voluntary hospitals and 15 private hospitals, accounting for 295,237 procedures performed by 898 endoscopists across the country over the year. Findings highlighted improvements in targets being met for the following key quality indicators compared to 2022: the percentage of endoscopists meeting the target for caecal intubation rates, comfort scores, sedation doses, polyp detection rates and duodenal intubation rates. A new key quality area has been developed by the working group and programme management, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP). Key quality indicators and associated targets for ERCP will be included in version 7 of the NEQI Guidelines, due for release in Q4 2025.

## National Radiology Quality Improvement (NRQI) Programme





The 5th national data report was published by the NRQI Programme in November 2024, with its launch at the annual conference. This report presented anonymous quality improvement data collected from 48 participating HSE and voluntary hospitals in 2023. The data findings revealed an 5.5% increase in workload between 2022 and 2023 in participating radiology departments, reaching over 3 million cases. The NRQI Programme reported on four key quality areas including report turnaround times (TAT) and peer reviews. The findings for report TAT were found to be similar to the previous year with almost half of hospitals meeting the recommended target. The report highlighted ongoing challenges faced by participating hospitals in meeting the recommended target for the authorisation of X-ray cases. The NRQI Programme continues to emphasize the issues due to rising workload (data for 2019-2023 presented), growing complexity of cases and the need for adequate resourcing.

## National Histopathology Quality Improvement (NHQI) Programme

The NHQI Programme launched its 11th annual national data report in November 2024 during the NSQI annual conference. The report presented anonymous aggregated findings on national data collected in 21 HSE and voluntary and seven private laboratories between 1 January and 31 December 2023. The data reveal continuous increase of workload figures since 2019, reported the highest figures to date for cases, specimens and blocks across all participating laboratories in 2023. Aggregated findings presented in the report revealed that laboratories met targets for intradepartmental consultations, multidisciplinary team reviews, addendum reporting and frozen section concordance rates. Report highlighted the fact that laboratories continue to face challenges in meeting the turnaround time targets for histology, cytology and autopsy cases.

## **Quality Improvement**

Two cohorts of the Situation Awareness For Everyone (SAFE) Collaborative QI programme ran in the academic year 2024-25, Cohort 7 with 10 teams and Cohort 8 with 11. Teams work to understand the safety and communication risks in healthcare and tailor the improvement or implementation of a bespoke scripted short (5-10 minute) safety huddle in their setting. Of these 21 teams, 20 were from HSE paediatric, maternity, care of the elderly, palliative care, intensive care, emergency department and acute adult medical/surgical services and one was a self-funding private hospital team. All teams completed their SAFE collaborative programme. At the end of the course, teams submitted abstracts and/or newspaper articles, digital posters and a short video story of their experiences and outcomes. The SAFE Cohort 7/8 Report will be published online later in May 2025. All eight cohorts from 2018 – 2024 were tailored from the original Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (UK) and delivered in Ireland by Dr Peter Lachman. We wish to acknowledge Dr Lachman's essential contribution to this and other QI programmes in RCPI and congratulate him on his retirement. Two new cohorts of the situation awareness (huddle) programme, now known as RCPI Being Safe Together, have been funded for 2025-26 and will be directed by Dr John Fitzsimons.

Two cohorts of Quality Improvement in Action were run with 21 and 24 registered novel Learners, of whom the majority are doctors. Learners conduct a bespoke small QI project in their setting and report on the outcomes at the final session. This year's medical projects included addressing improvements in detection, communication and surveillance of Lewy Body Dementia, documentation of intra articular injections in a rheumatology clinic, recording of peak flow in ED and introducing criteria led discharge to two units.

The 2024-2025 cohort of the Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership comprised 10 multidisciplinary teams from specialties including obstetrics and gynaecology, general internal medicine psychiatry, and endocrinology. As part of the programme, participants collaborated on team-





based Quality Improvement (QI) projects and completed a range of formative and summative assessments. This year's projects focused on key healthcare improvements, such as eliminate patient and staff non-value-added time in a post-transplant Cystic Fibrosis clinic, appropriate sepsis management in a maternity hospital, reducing outpatient waiting list in a mental health facility, and improving patient satisfaction in patients transitioning from acute to community services.

A new bespoke programme, Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence (ALICE) was launched in partnership with the National HSCP Office. Running from December 2024 to June 2025, ten multidisciplinary HSCP-led teams are participating in the blended learning programme of in person and virtual learning sessions, targeted project and leadership coaching sessions whilst conducting a quality improvement intervention in the workplace to address access, coordination or delivery of the care service.

## National Immunisation Advisory Committee

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) continues to play an essential role in Irish healthcare. This expert group comprising members nominated by a range of healthcare professional bodies and lay members provides independent, evidence-based advice to the Chief Medical Officer and Department of Health on vaccines, immunisation, and related health matters. As of April 2025, NIAC has moved hosting organisation and is now hosted by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA).

## Research

Janet O'Farrell, Research Manager

Year-on-year research is conducted institutionally to assess learner feedback and educational needs, identify areas of good practice and barriers preventing lifelong learning, monitor outcomes and target interventions to improve engagement.

## **Training Post Evaluation**

The Training Post Evaluation (TPE) is an anonymous online survey of all trainees (BST and HST) rolled out by RCPI in 2016. The purpose of the evaluation is to harness feedback on each rotation Trainees have completed over the past year. The most recent survey, conducted in June-July 2024, based on the 2023-2024 year, gathered feedback from doctors in Basic and Higher Specialist Training programmes in 86 training sites across Ireland. Key areas examined included Trainee interactions with Trainers, overall site factors and the workplace environment. The majority of posts evaluated were in the Institute of Medicine, with 64% of all respondents in IOM. In particular, 72.6% of all IOM BST respondents, and 86.7% of IOM HST respondents noted that they would recommend their training post to a colleague.

This data has been used throughout the year to inform site accreditation visits and provides an important source of confidential feedback from Trainees regarding their training posts. Additional data collection led by Research, in collaboration with colleagues in Quality Assurance and supported





by colleagues in communications is currently underway and will close on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025, aligning with annual evaluations. Additionally, it is envisaged that a project working with Trainees in the college regarding use of their data and impact will be commenced to improve engagement and impact of TPE data.

## Mandatory Teaching Review

The RCPI Research department, with support and input from the RCPI Education Development Department within the Education Function, has continued a research project aiming to capture Trainers', Trainees', Faculty and RCPI Education Delivery staff's perceptions of the new Mandatory Taught Programme, including comparison with the "old" Mandatory Course (MC) Programme. As the new Mandatory Taught Programme commenced in July 2023 for BST Year 1 Trainees, the 2022-2023 training year provided a unique and final opportunity to capture the perceptions of all users (BST and HST Trainees, all Trainers, all MC Faculty and MC Education Delivery staff) who engaged with the "old" MC Programme's MCs. A cohort-specific survey was distributed to all MC users at the end of the 2022-2023 Training year and results form a baseline against which comparisons can be made with data collected in the 2023-24 survey, comparing perceptions of the "old" MC Programme and the new Mandatory Taught Programme. The impact of these changes will emerge in the third data collection time point through the 2024-2025 survey which will be administered at the end of the training year.

## **International Clinical Programmes Research**

Despite the growth in the number of international Trainees in Ireland, there remains a limited understanding of their experiences during training and the subsequent impact on their professional outcomes. Previous research from other countries has highlighted various challenges faced by international medical Trainees, including cultural adaptation, integration into clinical settings, and access to support resources (Mo Al-Haddad et al., 2022). There is a need for comprehensive studies that specifically assess the experiences of international Trainees in Ireland and how their training influences their career trajectories.

In 2024 a study was developed to fill this gap by examining the perceptions and experiences of current international Trainees and those who have graduated since 2014. By assessing the impact of medical training on their experiences and post-graduate outcomes, this research will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the training programmes offered by RCPI. Additionally, the study will help identify the challenges and barriers faced by international Trainees during their medical training, which can inform the development of targeted support strategies.

The primary aim of this study is to explore the perceptions and identify concerns of the past and present international Trainees:

- 1. Evaluate the overall impact of medical training with RCPI on their experiences and postgraduate outcomes.
- 2. Explore the challenges and barriers faced by international Trainees during their medical training with RCPI.

**Objectives:** 

- 1. Gather qualitative and quantitative data from current international Trainees and graduates who have completed the programme since its commencement in 2014 through surveys and focus groups.
- 2. Analyse the perceptions and experiences of international Trainees regarding their training, including aspects such as support systems, integration into clinical settings, and overall satisfaction with the programme.





- 3. Investigate the non-clinical experiences of international Trainees during their medical training in Ireland, including aspects such as cultural adaptation, social integration, and wellbeing.
- 4. Document the specific challenges and barriers encountered by international Trainees, including cultural, social, logistical factors that may affect their training experience.
- 5. Examine the career trajectories of graduates, focusing on how their training in Ireland has influenced their professional development and opportunities.
- 6. Present the findings in a comprehensive report, highlighting key themes, challenges, and insights to inform stakeholders and improve future training programmes.
- 7. List evidence-based recommendations for enhancing support services and training experiences for international Trainees with RCPI.

Data analysis and triangulation is currently underway. Actionable recommendations for improvement will be developed based on these findings, aimed at enhancing the training experience and support services for future international Trainees. The ultimate findings will contribute to enhancing the training experience for future international Trainees including those in IOM and inform stakeholders about potential areas for improvement in programme delivery and support services.

## **RCPI Research Ethics Committee**

The Research Ethics Committee (REC) is a standing committee of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

## **REC Activity 2024**

The Research Ethics Committee met on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and 4<sup>TH</sup> December 2024. The committee received fifteen new proposals, with three additional submissions for re-review. Of these, on review and following receipt of project clarifications, all received fully favourable decisions following clarifications being received. These projects are listed below.

	Meeting date	RECSAF reference	Study title
1.	March 2024	RCPI RECSAF 201	Clinicians' Knowledge and Clinical Experience of Female Genital Mutilations – An Updated National Cross-Sectional Survey
2.	March 2024	RCPI RECSAF 202	Cross-sectional audit of the prevalence of burnout among Irish Rheumatology Consultants, Specialist Registrars, Registrars, Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists
3.	March 2024	RCPI RECSAF 204	Be Sun Smart by the Seaside (Using Wearable UV Index Sensors in Sun Safety Awareness Study in Beach Lifeguards)
4.	March 2024	RCPI RECSAF 206	Exploring Career Choices of Consultant Geriatricians: An Irish Perspective
5.	March 2024	RCPI RECSAF 208	Expectations, Motivations and Reservations among Faculty of Pathology Trainees in the Republic of Ireland toward their Respective Specialties
6.	May 2024	RECSAF 205	Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Situational Awareness for Everyone (SAFE) Collaborative – All Cohorts Research Study





7.	May 2024	RECSAF 207	Liver Services in Ireland: A Review V1& V2
8.	May 2024	RECSAF 209	Evaluation of four Outcome Based Medical Education Curricula in RCPI: a pilot study
9.	September 2024	RECSAF 210	Advocating for Adolescent Health: Are we doing it right? Using a psychosocial approach in hospitals when caring for adolescents; how capable are trainees across different specialties of implementing the HEEADSSS assessment tool?
10.	September 2024	RECSAF 211	National histology workload analysis 2014 – 2022 and impact on turnaround times and other quality metrics
11.	September 2024	RECSAF 212	Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Quality Improvement Research Project: Evaluation and Impact of Learning
12.	September 2024	RECSAF 213	Assessing the Impact of Medical training in Ireland on International Trainees' experience and Post -Graduate Outcomes
13.	September 2024	RECSAF 214	Wellbeing of Hospital Doctors: a National Review
14.	September 2024	RECSAF 215 V1 & V2	The Postgraduate Scholarship Programme for Pakistani doctors in Ireland: migration and career intentions after a decade
15.	December 2024	RECSAF 180V2	Evaluation of the outcomes-based curriculum for Public Health Medicine
17.	December 2024	RECSAF 210V2	Advocating for Adolescent Health: Are we doing it right? Using a psychosocial approach in hospitals when caring for adolescents; how capable are trainees across different specialties of implementing the HEEADSSS assessment tool?
18.	December 2024	RECSAF 216	RCPI Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence (ALICE) Programme Evaluation Research Study

## New developments and challenges: National governance of research ethics committees

Despite the advent of the NRECs, there is still no NREC for national, largescale, multi-sited research projects, meaning that research investigators have no option but to apply to RCPI REC for ethics approval. The HSE continues to work on establishment of National Reference RECs as outlined by Sláintecare's regional Health Areas, which will be developed from existing RECs. However, implementing this has progressed slowly since initial engagement in 2023. RCPI remains involved in these developments in the changing landscape of Research Ethics in Ireland and where the committee appropriately sits in this changing context.

Additionally, consistent engagement of the committee has been variable across the committee, and membership is under review with a view to recruiting new members, in line with ToRs and the existing SoP.

## Research Strategy development

In early 2025, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland commenced a project to develop a new research strategy for the college, aligned to the new college strategy to commence in the 2025-2026 training year was convened. This is underpinned by the needs of the college, reflecting both institutional needs and those of Trainee, Members, Learners and Fellows, supporting growth of a positive research culture across RCPI.





It is envisaged that this will be supported and bolstered by a research committee with representation from IOM along with other Faculties and Institutes to inform implementation and oversight going forward.