

FACULTY OF PATHOLOGY

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND



Annual Report 2025



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Welcome from the Dean

Report by Prof Mary Keogan

Dear Fellows and Associate Members,

It is an honour and a pleasure to welcome you to our 2025 Annual Report. This will be my final Annual Report as Dean, as I complete my term at the AGM in February 2026. I am delighted to be handing over to Dr Shari Srinivasan, our current Dean-Elect, leaving the Faculty in excellent hands. Over the last 4 years, it has been an absolute privilege to work with highly committed and hardworking Faculty Officers, Board members, National Specialty Directors, Regional Specialty Advisors, members of Faculty Committees, Trainers, and all the Fellows who give generously of their time to represent the Faculty on many RCPI and National Committees.



The work of the Faculty relies on support from RCPI staff in many departments within the College. Within the Faculty, we would particularly like to thank Mr Brian O'Murchu, our Faculty Officer, for all his work supporting the Faculty throughout 2025. We are grateful to Mr Sean McCarthy, for his support as Faculty Liaison Officer, and Mr Darragh Whelan for his ongoing support in his role as Faculties Manager. We receive invaluable support from many departments within RCPI and would like to thank all who have contributed to and supported the Faculty throughout the year.

Our 6 HST training programmes, together with our BST Histopathology Programme, continue to benefit from the commitment of Dr Cynthia Heffron, together with the National Specialty Directors. Dr Heffron's report on the work with the Education and Training Committee is detailed in her report. The annual cross-specialty trainee day has gone from strength to strength – a particular highlight this year, was a workshop with Dr Chris Turner from Civility Saves Lives, which combined key aspects of professionalism and well-being, addressing the often overlooked area of the impact of negative behaviours on patient safety as well as burnout and engagement. We would also like to thank our training co-ordinators, Ms Thiasha Cullen, Ms Kratika Dubey and Ms Tina Balogun, who work tirelessly throughout the year to look after our Trainees, together with all in the Education and Training Department.

RCPI is a College made up of 6 Faculties and Institutes, and many challenges we face are common across Faculties and Institutes. We are stronger together, and the Faculty is contributing to and benefitting from a number of cross-college initiatives. Priorities for the Faculty including attracting new trainees into pathology disciplines, focusing on keeping pace with educational advances to train the pathologists of tomorrow, as well as ensuring that our CPD programme complies with the new Medical Council framework – these areas have all benefitted from being part of a broader college.

It has been an absolute pleasure working with our President, Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, whose leadership has guided the College from strength to strength. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Deans and Chairs of the other Faculties and Institutes on many common areas of interest, with enormous support from our CEO Ms Audrey Houlihan and all of the Senior Management Team, together with so many talented people throughout RCPI. The supportive, collegiate and constructive atmosphere in RCPI ensures that we can all give our best, to support trainees, trainers and life-long learners, as well as advocating for continuous development and improvement of services for patients.

The Faculty continues to advocate for the resources and infrastructure to continuously improve the delivery and utilization of laboratory medicine services. The changes to health service structures has

made this temporarily more challenging as it will take some time for the new regional structures to bed down. Following the publication of the Pathology Workforce Plan the NDTP in 2023 ([pathology specialty review.pdf](#)), it is well documented that all 6 of our training programmes need to expand, however driving this increase will now progress in a regional, rather than a national structure. It is clear that the histopathology workload has growth at a much higher rate than predicted when the 2023 report was being prepared, and therefore projections, and the requisite pathology workforce to meet the population need needs to be revised. Workforce planning is a dynamic process, which must be revised when measured activity greatly deviates from projections. Faculty has been strongly advocating for integration of service planning, such that when new clinical services are set up, or consultant workforce is expanded, pathology capacity should be expanded in parallel to ensure that services develop in a safe and efficient way.

Recruitment into pathology specialties has been highly variable in previous years. Some specialties are consistently oversubscribed, while other less visible specialties frequently have vacancies on their programmes. Clearly recruitment of high caliber trainees is central to delivering the pathology workforce of the future. We are delighted to participate in the RCPI Intern Day, highlighting careers in Pathology. We continued to prioritize our Webinar entitled “How did I get here? The Pathologist’s Journey” during International Pathology Week for Interns and SHOs. We have had an increase in applications since focusing on this area – it remains vital to showcase pathology careers to our younger colleagues, both locally and nationally. We really appreciate the input of our wonderful Trainee Reps who played a key role in these activities.

It is an exciting time in Pathology nationally. We congratulate Prof Martin Cormican on all he achieved during his tenure as Clinical Lead for the Laboratory Services Reform Programme. The development and adoption of the Outline Strategic Plan for Laboratory services 2026-2035 which will be launched during the 2026 Annual Symposium is an enormous achievement. While there is a lot of work to implement the strategy, an approved strategy is an essential step in securing development among the competing priorities in the health service. The HSE has adopted plans to support Digital Pathology as part of the Digital for Care strategy– there is much to look forward to in the coming years. Regionalization of the health service will inevitably impact on the design of Pathology in all specialties, and it is important that we all engage to ensure that this change is a positive one, bringing improvement of services for the patients we serve.

We are all really stretched doing our best to meet patients’ needs for high quality pathology services. However, it is equally important for all of us to design and plan the pathology services of the future, despite the business of the present. We need to show our trainees the importance of advocating for improvement when services do not meet the needs of patients, or when change increases risk rather than bringing improvement. We all have days when optimism is hard to muster – but it is always worth remembering that *“Positive thinking will let you do everything better than negative thinking ever will”*.

Welcome from the Dean-Elect

Dr Shari Srinivasan

I am delighted to be taking up the role of Dean in February 2026. I have been a member of the faculty board and executive for a number of years and have spent the last number of months familiarising myself with the multitude of tasks and challenges undertaken on an ongoing basis.

The faculty has made great strides in 2025 thanks to the hard work of our outgoing Dean, Professor Keogan, boards and committees, the fellows and the support of the college, I look forward to building on this during my term.

It will be an honour to work alongside RCPI colleagues from the other faculties and institutes and to have the opportunity to represent fellow pathologists.



Faculty Annual Symposium 13 February 2025

Faculty Highlights for 2025

Faculty Annual Symposium 13-14 February 2025:

The Faculty of Pathology held its 44th Annual Symposium at No. 6 Kildare Street on 13 and 14 February 2025. The programme featured a wide variety of topics, including technological advances in pathology and training within the field, which are detailed in the Scientific Meetings Committee Report.

We welcomed two Honorary Fellows, Prof Jacqueline James, Director of Northern Ireland Biobank Belfast, and Dr Bernie Croal, President of the Royal College of Pathologists UK, both of whom delivered keynote addresses during the symposium.

New Fellows and Associate Members:

Nineteen new Fellows & thirteen new Associate Members were admitted into the Faculty at the 2025 AGM. Gratitude is extended to the Faculty Credentials Committee, for evaluating Associate Membership applications ahead of their names being submitted to the Board and RCPI Council for ratification. New Fellows now receive a dual Fellowship – both FRCPI and FPath (RCPI). We are delighted to welcome New Fellows and Associate Members to the Faculty, and encourage you to get involved in Faculty affairs.

Fellows	Associate Members
Breda Lynch	Ellen Browne
Cariosa Lee-Brennan	Samuel Holt
Clodagh Keohane	Janet Tan
Corrina Wright	Tamara Wanigasekera
Cynthia Heffron	Ciara Guerin
Elizabeth Beatrice Nolan	David Egong
Erum Rasheen	Paraic Behan
Fionnuala Cox	Michael Craughwell
Grace Neville	Fiona Ryan
Jeremy Sargent	Stuart MacLeod
Khairin Khalib	Alanna McMullin
Laura Aalto	Robert Farrell
Linda Feeley	Leya Motala
Rachel Grainger	
Rory Crotty	
Saradha Srinivasan	
Sean Hynes	
Sinead O'Donnell	
Sorcha Ni Loingsigh	

AWARDS & MEDALS

Rapid Fire Posters	Mr Turlough Heffernan (RCSI Bachelor of Medicine, Surgery, & Obstetrics). Dr Corey Commins (Senior House Officer, Tallaght University Hospital). Dr Grainne O'Keeffe (Histopathology department, Cork University Hospital). Dr Fearghus Kelly (Higher Specialist Training in Histopathology). Dr Maeve Leonard (Higher Specialist Training in Clinical Microbiology).
George Greene Medal	Dr Anne Marie Dolan, Clinical Microbiologist. Paper entitled ' <i>Magnusiomyces capitatus, an unusual cause of invasive fungal infections in neutropenic patients: Case reports and outbreak investigation</i> '.
John D Kennedy Medal	Dr Fionnuala Cox, Immunology. Paper entitled " <i>The Death of Desensitization—Delabeling the Destroyer</i> " (co-authored with Elise Mitri and Jason A. Trubiano).
John O'Dowd Medal	Dr Sarah Kenny, Clinical Microbiology. Paper entitled " <i>Beyond the Needle: Innovative Approaches for Reducing Blood Culture Contamination Rates in the Emergency Department</i> ".
Paule Cotter Medal	Professor Hilary Humphreys, Clinical Microbiology, received the lifetime achievement award.

International Pathology Day

Each year the Faculty of Pathology celebrates International Pathology Day by holding a free hybrid event to highlight the role of pathology in a key service. The aim of the meeting is to interest laboratory users and trainees in all specialties in the key role played by laboratory medicine in patients' healthcare journeys. By holding a hybrid event, we support multidisciplinary networking as well as maximising accessibility throughout the country.

This year International Pathology Day shone a spotlight on the power of Near Patient Testing (NPT), bringing diagnostics out of the lab and right to the bedside. The inspiring program explored how NPT is transforming healthcare, from its exciting future directions to its real-world impact on patient outcomes. Speakers included experts on the clinical benefits of intraoperative parathyroid hormone detection, the role of urine toxicology in the emergency department, and advances in microbiology and haematology near patient testing. International Pathology Day showed how diagnostics closer to care are breaking boundaries, speeding decisions, and improving the lives of our patients today.

Webinars

The Faculty Webinar programme continued throughout the year. Webinars have proved highly popular as a form of accessible CPD, which also allows us invite a diverse range of speakers, including international speakers.

In collaboration with Prof Hilary Hoey, the Dean engaged in College wide preparations for the Medical Councils new CPD framework which came into effect in May 2025. This groundwork has ensured that our webinar series can be maintained, and achieve compliance with the new requirements.

Faculty Scientific Meetings Committee

Report by Prof Sean Hynes

Our scientific meetings programme for 2025 was once again centered on a highly successful Annual Symposium, held over two days on Thursday 13th and Friday 14th February. This year's symposium focused on molecular pathology and encompassed all subspecialty interests, reflecting the breadth and evolving nature of the discipline. A new round-table discussion format was introduced and proved particularly effective in encouraging multidisciplinary engagement and informed dialogue around the theme of the meeting. We plan to maintain the round table aspect in all symposia going forward. Trainees played a central role throughout the programme, delivering high-quality oral presentations and sharing valuable insights from their fellowship experiences, which were well received by attendees.

The Society also continued to build on the momentum of its increasingly successful webinar series, delivering sessions in April, June, September, and November. These webinars covered a diverse range of topics of relevance to contemporary practice, including future directions for pathology services in Ireland, emerging scientific developments, and broader considerations relating to environmental health and toxic exposures. Attendance and engagement across these sessions remained strong, highlighting the ongoing demand for accessible, high-quality educational content.

In addition, a dedicated webinar focusing on careers in pathology was delivered, providing guidance and perspective for trainees and early-career colleagues. We also marked International Pathology Day with a particularly significant event celebrating 50 years of progress in the field, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the National Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics Service for Solid Organ Transplantation. This occasion provided an important opportunity to reflect on past achievements while recognising the critical role of pathology in advancing patient care.

Overall, the 2025 scientific meetings programme demonstrated continued growth, strong engagement, and a commitment to professional development across all career stages. We look forward to further expanding and strengthening our scientific meetings programme in 2026, building on the success and feedback from this year's activities.

Annual Symposium Day 1 Thursday 13 February 2025:

Session 1:

- Dr Emily Vereker "The future of ethics in sample collection: the NREC experience"
- Prof Ellie Dow "The future of AI in Laboratory testing: the iLFT experience?"
- Prof Martin Cormican "The future of Laboratory services in Ireland: an update"
- Prof Richard Greene "The future of digital transformation in the health service"
- **KEYNOTE & HONORARY FELLOW:** Prof Jackie James "The future of biobanking: the Northern Ireland Biobank experience"

Session 2:

- Dr Manisha Ahuja "Trainee Networks in the UK"
- Dr Darrell Martin & Dr Kate Ridge "My Fellowship Experience"
- **KEYNOTE & HONORARY FELLOW:** Dr Bernie Croal "The future of Pathology Education and Assessment"
- Rapid Fire Presentations by:
 - Mr Turlough Heffernan
 - Dr Corey Commins

- Dr Grainne O' Keefe
- Dr Fearghus Kelly
- Dr Maeve Leonard
- Medal winners and speakers:
 - Dr Anne Marie Dolan – George Greene Medal
 - Dr Fionnuala Cox – John D Kennedy Medal
 - Dr Sarah Kenny – John O'Dowd Medal
 - Prof Hilary Humphreys – Paule Cotter Medal

Annual Symposium Day 2 Friday 14 February 2025:

Session 1:

- Dr Cynthia Heffron “Pathology Training: State of the Nation”
- Mr Thomas Walsh “MedLIS: an update”
- Prof Deirdre Murray “Update on the NCRI”

Session 2:

- Dr Judi Lynch “Update on HPV in cervical screening”
- Dr Corrina Wright “New developments in Cervical cytology”
- Dr Niamh Conlon “Pathology of non-HPV associated cervical cancer”
- Prof Noirin Russell “The journey towards cervical cancer elimination – the role of laboratory medicine”

Faculty of Pathology Webinar Thursday 09 April 2025

It's All in the Blood: Unlocking Cancer Biomarkers & Chemical Pathology

- Dr. Reiltin Werner “Liquid Biopsy, set up and implementation”
- Prof Louise Burke “Liquid biopsy, clinical applications”
- Dr Robert O'Byrne “Correct Clinical Use of Tumour Biomarkers”

Faculty of Pathology Webinar Thursday 18 September 2025

A Toxic Environment for Humans and Microbes

- Prof Lisa Connolly “Endocrine disrupting chemicals, safeguarding human health”
- Dr Patrick Stapleton “The key changes and the INAB transition assessment process”
- Dr Julie Tierney “Correct Clinical Use of Tumour Biomarkers”

Faculty of Pathology Webinar Thursday 06 November 2025

Pathfinders: exploring careers in Laboratory medicine

Trainee presentations:

- Dr Jane O'Connor “Clinical Microbiology”
- Dr Kevin McCarthy “Chemical Pathology”
- Dr Colette Fogarty “Immunology”
- Dr John Harford “Haematology”
- Dr Hannah Ashe “Histopathology”

Roundtable discussion with NSDs

- Prof Niall Swan
- Dr Eoghan Molloy
- Dr Ana Rakovac
- Dr Anna Rose Prior
- Dr Michael Jansen

International Pathology Day, No 6 Kildare Street, Wednesday 05 November 2025

Near Patient Testing: Diagnostics Unbound and Closer to Care

Session 1:

- Dr Gerard Boran “Near Patient Testing and the Future of Diagnostics”
- Mr John Kinsella “Clinical Benefits of Intraoperative Parathyroid Hormone Testing”
- Ms Phyllis Reilly, Ms Claudia Russell “Urine Toxicology Testing: Laboratory and NPT Methods”

Session 2:

- Prof Patrick Stapleton “No More Waiting: How NPT in ED can Speed Up Diagnosis of Infections”
- Dr Joan Fitzgerald “NPT Applications in Haematology/Transfusion”



Dr Helene McDermott, Dr Saied Ali, Dr Thomas Rogers, Prof Anna Rose Prior, Prof Karina O’Connell, Dr Anne Marie Dolan in Dun Library at RCPI, 28 May 2025

Advocacy, Guidelines, Reports and National Projects

Report by Prof Mary Keogan

Throughout 2025, The Faculty continued to support on-going activities relating to many key areas, reports and position statements. In addition to specific projects outlined below, the Faculty continues to advocate in the area of workforce planning, to ensure sufficient pathologists to meet the demand of the population. In 2025, we advocated for re-examination of the Histopathology portion of the 2023 NDTP workforce plan for Pathology Specialties ([pathology specialty review.pdf](#)). In addition, through representation on CAAC, the need for linking appointment of pathologists in parallel with appointment of surgeons has been repeatedly highlighted.

The following is a flavour of some of those activities (further activities are detailed in individual reports) either completed or on-going in 2025 by Faculty Committees, Fellows and Associate Members. On behalf of all Fellows of the Faculty of Pathology, I would like to acknowledge and thank all those who have contributed to these activities.

Position Paper on the Provision of an Autopsy Service in Ireland.

Provision of an Autopsy Service for the Irish Population was a major focus of activity throughout 2025. Throughout 2023 and 2024 Faculty played a key role in the development of HSE National Clinical Guidelines for Post Mortem Examination Services, an associated toolkit and an educational programme around these guidelines.

The public consultation on the reform of the Coroners' Service was completed in 2024 and this reform, including major adjustments to the Coroner's Acts 1962-2020 was included in the programme for government. In 2025, the Faculty of Pathology continued to engage with the Department of Justice, Health Service Executive, Department of Health and the Coroners to progress this.

To highlight the need for urgent governmental action to ensure that Irish citizens had access to a robust autopsy service, the Board of the Faculty undertook to develop a Position Paper. Such a service is an essential quality improvement tool, may provide information essential for healthcare and reproductive choices for bereaved relatives, supports public health and underpins the societal duty of death investigation.

The Position Paper, entitled "Death Investigation. The Provision of an Autopsy Service in Ireland: An Essential Part of Patient Safety, Quality Improvement in Healthcare and Bereavement Support for Families". Was completed in 2025, and having completed the RCPI approvals process has been published on the RCPI [website](#).

National Near Patient Testing Consultative Group

Summary by Prof Gerard Boran

The National Near-Patient Testing (NPT) Consultative Group met three times in 2025 under the auspices of the Faculty of Pathology. This is a multidisciplinary committee, chaired by Professor Gerard Boran, with the brief of maintaining and disseminating guidelines for NPT. An update on activities was given to the Faculty of Pathology Executive on 27 August 2025.

Ongoing Guidelines Update, 2025

The major task in hand this year has been the comprehensive update of the 2022 version of National Guidelines for Near-Patient Testing. More so than any previous ISO standard, ISO 15189:2022 promotes a patient-centered approach for laboratory testing including Near-Patient Testing (NPT) so we have taken the following developments into consideration during the update of our Guidelines:

- NPT is now included in the mainstream ISO 15189: 2022 standard, and the previous separate standard for POCT, ISO 22870, is withdrawn. By definition patients are present and directly involved in NPT and should give consent
- The test and its benefits and limitations should be explained to the patient
- NPT users and the laboratory should be linked by a service level agreement that documents the purpose of the NPT along with duties and responsibilities of both to provide it safely and effectively.
- Impartiality in service provision (especially procurement decisions) is included.
- ISO-15189:2022 places great importance upon managing patient risks and rigorously pursuing opportunities for improvement particularly when incidents occur.
- Risks associated with NPT should be managed via a risk management process similar to other laboratory tests
- NPT quality indicators should focus on reducing risks to the patient, improving patient

Recent developments in community near-patient testing are also covered in the updated guideline. The updated version will be ready in December 2025 and released in 2026.

Future of Diagnostics Meeting

A special afternoon NPT event was organized for International Pathology Day on 05 November 2025. Chaired by Prof Sean Hynes, the meeting's organizing committee included Prof Gerard Boran, Dr Rama Srinivasan, James Mc Nulty and Brian O'Murchu.

This meeting shone a spotlight on the power of Near-Patient Testing (NPT), bringing diagnostics out of the lab and right to the bedside. The inspiring program explored how NPT is transforming healthcare, from its exciting future directions to its real-world impact on patient outcomes. Participants were able to hear from experts on the clinical benefits of intraoperative parathyroid hormone detection, the role of urine toxicology in the emergency department, and advances in Microbiology and Haematology near patient testing. The hybrid format meeting was very well attended by over 140 participants.

National Seroepidemiology Unit

The Dean continued to represent the Faculty of Pathology on the National Seroepidemiology Unit Steering Group. While the Unit was initiated to support disease surveillance during Covid, the work of the group has expanded to include other vaccine preventable diseases. The Steering Group provides oversight for the Unit which operates in line with the Infectious Diseases regulations. The ability of the Unit to undertake new projects was hampered by funding issues in 2025, however it has been agreed to maintain the group, and the infrastructure to perform Seroepidemiology under the Infectious Disease Regulations, as a key part of Ireland's pandemic preparedness.

Supporting utilization of Histopathology Quality Improvement Data by Regional Group Management

As the mismatch between demand for histopathology services greatly outstrips capacity, a collaborative project was undertaken by the Histopathology QI Programme, Faculty of Pathology, the Laboratory Services Reform Programme and the Chief Clinical Officer's Office to develop a template to allow Regional Health Service Management to review QI data for the centers for which they are responsible in a timely manner. Following a significant design project and successful pilot project, the development of Regional Quarterly Reports was completed in 2025.

This has been an enormous achievement, and we would like to congratulate Dr Linda Feeley, Chair of the Histopathology Quality Improvement Programme Working Group, Aine Mitchell, NHQI Programme Manager, all Working Group members, and the Quality Leads in all participating hospitals. We look forward to seeing the data collected begin to gain traction to address the significant mismatch between demand and capacity.

MedLIS and Digital for Care Projects.

In 2024, MedLIS reached an important milestone with the first go-live for blood sciences, molecular biology and microbiology in Beaumont Hospital. The Faculty of Pathology has been involved in the MedLIS project for the last decade, providing specialty specific input at project board level.

In 2025, advocating for improvements to the Anatomic Pathology Module of MedLIS, which has not yet been deployed has been a major focus. We would like to thank our Faculty Histopathology MedLIS representatives, Prof Niall Swan and Dr Laura McKenna who have shown enormous commitment to highlighting opportunities for improvement in this module of MedLIS. Dr Laura McKenna has also kindly agreed to represent the Faculty on the Histopathology Specialty Interest Group, which will be the essential vehicle for improvement going forward. Faculty has advocated for a process risk assessment prior to deployment of this module

The Faculty has also highlighted the need for improvements in the Microbiology Module, which addresses laboratory and scientific requirements, but needs improvement to support clinical

functions. We would like to thank Dr Binu Dinesh for her tireless work on the project Board, and for agreeing to represent the Faculty on the Microbiology Special Interest Group.

The Digital for Care Implementation Group was convened in November 2025, and plays a role in advising on issues which impact on the ambitious Digital for Care programme. As this programme rolls out, patients will have access to their laboratory results. The need for education to assist with understanding the meaning of results is an area where Faculty can contribute going forward, ideally in collaboration with Public Health colleagues who have considerable education in population health education. This will be an area of focus in 2026.



Commemorate John D Kennedy medal presentation: Harriet Wheelock, James Broadhead, Linda Kennedy, Susan Kennedy, Mary Keogan, Joan Power at RCPI 02 April 2025

Education and Training

Report by Director of Education and Training, Dr Cynthia Heffron

The Education & Training Committee (ETC) met on four occasions during 2025. The Director of Education & Training, Dr Cynthia Heffron, was assisted by the following:

Table 1: Current Education and Training Committee Representatives

Role	Current Representative	Representative who demitted during 2025
Director of Education and Training (Chair)	Dr Cynthia Heffron	
National Specialty Director in Chemical Pathology	Dr Ana Rakovac	
National Specialty Directors in Clinical Microbiology	Dr Anna Rose Prior Prof Karina O'Connell	
National Specialty Directors in Haematology	Dr Eoghan Molloy Dr Kevin Ryan	Dr John Quinn
National Specialty Directors in Histopathology	Prof Niall Swan Dr Marie Staunton	
National Specialty Director in Immunology	Dr Cariosa Lee Brennan	Dr Niall Conlon
National Specialty Director in Neuropathology	Dr Michael Jansen (Dr Jane Cryan – Jan 2026)	
Lay Representative	Dr Muiris O'Ceidigh Mr Tiberius Pereira	
Trainee representative in Chemical Pathology	Dr Kevin McCarthy	
Trainee representative in Clinical Microbiology	Dr Jane O'Connor	Dr Robyn Traynor
Trainee representative in Haematology	Dr John Harford	Dr Mohamed Bakri Dr James Fay
Trainee representative BST Histopathology	Dr Hannah Ashe	Dr Saif Al Mandhari
Trainee representative HST Histopathology	Dr Richard Liddy	Dr Shima Mohammed
Trainee representative in Neuropathology	Dr Jennifer Garry	Dr Cassie Fives
Trainee representative in Immunology	Dr Colette Fogarty	Dr Rachel McDermott

Other training representative roles:

Regional Specialty Advisors (Histopathology):

- Dr Niamh Conlon (Munster)
- Dr Ciara Barrett (North Dublin) (Dr Marie Staunton demitted in July 2025)
- Dr Ciaran O'Riain (Dublin South)
- Dr Laura Aalto (Galway)

(all are members of the Histopathology Specialty Training Committee (STC)).

Lay representation:

We would like to thank our lay representatives, Dr Muiris O’Ceidigh and Mr Tiberius Pereira for their continued input into our committee. They began attending towards the end of 2024 and we are benefiting immensely from their input.

Pathology coordinator:

We would also like to thank Thiasha Cullen for all her hard work as our Pathology coordinator who supported our ETC and STCs during 2025.

Trainee representation:

Dr Robyn Traynor (Clinical Microbiology) was appointed to the position of Lead trainee representative in July 2025 taking over from Dr Susannah Sexton (Histopathology) for the Faculty of Pathology and is the trainee representative on the Faculty Board. Dr Traynor is the chair of the trainee subcommittee of the ETC. See table 2 and her report for further details.

A sincere thank you to Dr Susannah Sexton for all her hard work in this role since July 2023. We would also like to thank our outgoing Trainee representatives and welcome our new trainee representatives appointed in July 2025 (see table 1).

Trainee representatives on the RCPI Trainee Committee for 2025/2026:

- BST Histopathology Representative: Dr Catherine Stacey
- Pathology Forum Representative: Dr Sarah Kenny (Clinical Microbiology)

Trainee representatives on the RCPI Health and Wellbeing committee:

- Dr Tamara Wanigasekera (Histopathology) and Dr Ciara de Buitléir (Chemical Pathology).

Report for January 2025 to December 2025

The training and education arm of the Faculty remained busy in 2025, working through the Education and Training Committee, to continually develop and enhance the training programmes and opportunities whilst contributing also to RCPI wide activities and developments.

Medical Council Accreditation / Re-accreditation

The 6 Specialist Training Programmes in the Faculty achieved IMC accreditation following the accreditation assessment in 2020, with a few conditions assigned to same. Accreditation was achieved by HST in Chemical Pathology, Clinical Microbiology, Haematology, Immunology and Neuropathology. Re-accreditation was achieved by HST in Histopathology and BST in Histopathology.

An “Action and Implementation Plan (AIP)” advising how as a Faculty we plan to address the conditions and recommendations made has been completed and each STC is addressing the conditions and recommendations for their discipline on an annual basis.

Specialist Division of the Irish Medical Council

Faculty continue to work with RCPI to support the IMC in their assessment process for entry onto the specialist division of the IMC register. Assessor training can be provided by Siobhan Kearns and is needed to increase the number of assessors available to support this activity.

A working group to review the SDR process and update the SLA between PGTBs and the IMC has been convened in 2025 with the Faculty of Pathology, RCPI being represented by Dr Cynthia Heffron, Director of Education and Training.

FRCPath Examinations Update

Ireland has continued to be an exam centre for the FRCPath Part 2 exams in Histopathology and Haematology in 2025, facilitating trainees from both the North and South of Ireland. A Spring sitting of the FRCPath Part 2 in Haematology has been held annually since then, most recently in April 2025. Belfast and Galway hosted the Spring and Autumn sittings of the FRCPath Part 2 in Histopathology in 2025.

The Dean and Director of E&T, Faculty of Pathology, along with the Examinations team in RCPI, continue to have biannual meetings with the Examinations team, RCPATH UK to discuss the ongoing delivery of the exams at Irish exam centres.



Photo: Dr Nicholas Kruseman Aretz, Histopathology, receiving his FRCPath in London in February 2025 from Dr Bernie Croal, President of the RCPATH, UK.

Mandatory Courses and Taught Programmes for BST and HST

A review of mandatory courses was undertaken by RCPI. For the 2023 intake of BST Histopathology trainees, a BST taught programme was rolled out for all BST trainees in RCPI. This involves quarterly virtual tutorials with a RCPI Clinical Tutor in their BST specialty as well as assigned teaching content per quarter. Dr Lindsey Clarke, Consultant Histopathologist, SVUH was appointed to the role of RCPI Clinical Tutor for the BST Histopathology taught programme in 2023 with Dr Nicholas Kruseman Aretz appointed to this position in 2025. RCPI extended this taught programme to all HST trainees for 2024 with Dr Caoimhe Brennan, Clinical Microbiology currently is the role as RCPI Clinical Tutor for Pathology and Dr Sarah Ni Mhaolcatha currently in the role as RCPI Clinical Tutor for Histopathology for 2025/2026.

RCPI and NDTP (National Doctors Training and Planning)

There are biannual meetings of the Faculty of Pathology and RCPI with NDTP, with Prof Anthony O'Regan, as the current Head of NDTP. These meetings facilitate discussions around training, the service level agreement between the two bodies, training numbers, workforce planning, Aspire fellowships and less than full time working. Current work is focusing on numbers and the challenges of regionalisation on numbers, funding and continuation of the Aspire fellowships. We continue to work with the RCPI and NDTP on all these issues.

Fellowships

Pathology Aspire Post-CSCST Fellowships:

Funding for three fellowships was awarded in 2025 for the academic year 2025/2026.

1. Aspire Fellowship in Autopsy Pathology, St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin – Dr Claire Roberts.
2. Pathology and Molecular Diagnostics of Soft Tissue and Bone Tumours, St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin – Dr Nicholas Kruseman Aretz.
3. Fellowship in Molecular Pathology and Inherited Disease Diagnostics, St James's Hospital, Dublin – Dr Victoria Malone.

In addition, there is Perinatal Neuropathology Fellow in Cork University Hospital, Cork for 2025/2026 – Dr Cassie Fives (deferred from prior year) who has been appointed to a Consultant Neuropathology post in CUH on completion of her Fellowship.

This programme began in 2020 during the pandemic with the first fellows taking up post in July 2021. Within the Faculty of Pathology, we have appointed at least 15 fellows through this programme up to July 2025 with at least 6 now in Consultant posts.

Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) Programme

The Wellcome – Health Research Board Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) Programme is a unique all Ireland cross-institutional, comprehensive national programme for Clinician Scientists based at six major Irish universities and their affiliated hospital groups. The first cohort of fellows was appointed in 2017. The following have been appointed in the pathology disciplines since 2017:

- Haematology - Dr Sarah Kelliher (2020), Dr Dearbhla Doherty (2019), Dr Helen Fogarty (2018), Dr Mark Gurney (2018), Dr Catherine Duane (2023)
- Immunology – Dr Katie Ridge (2020)
- Clinical Microbiology – Dr Saied Ali (2024), Dr Louise Kelly (2023)

Dr Richard Steevens Scholarships and Bursaries

These scholarships and bursaries are awarded by the NDTP/HSE across all disciplines to allow trainees to travel abroad for additional training as part of their training programme.

Management fellowships

RCPI in partnership with PWC created Management Consulting Fellowships for Trainees in 2020. The RCPI Management fellowship programme continues to expand, creating further opportunities for trainees and is advertised annually. Currently, no pathology trainees are on this programme.

Faculty of Pathology Trainee Events

Faculty of Pathology Annual Symposium 2025

Congratulations to our trainees who were awarded prizes at this year's symposium

- The George Greene medal winner was Dr Anne Marie Dolan, Clinical Microbiology.
- The Rapid-Fire Poster Presentation Award 2025 went to Dr Grainne O'Keeffe, Histopathology.
- The Best Poster Award 2025 went to Dr Niamh Mooney, Histopathology.
- The Dr John O'Dowd medal went to Dr Sarah Kenny, Clinical Microbiology.

Annual Faculty of Pathology Trainee Day, 13 November 2025

The 2025 event was delivered as an in-person event our trainees in the Faculty of Pathology in the Corrigan Hall at RCPI 6 Kildare Street with many of our pathology trainees in attendance.

Programme:

Session 1: Why Civility Matters in a Complex World

Guest Workshop from Dr Chris Turner, Consultant in Emergency Medicine at University Hospitals of Coventry and Warwickshire, UK and co-founder of the Civility Saves Lives campaign



Session 2:

- Update of projects and plans in the RCPI Health and Wellbeing Department from Maria Golden, Health and Wellbeing Manager, RCPI.
- Update from the RCPI Health and Wellbeing Committee from one of our Pathology representatives on the Committee, Dr Ciara de Buitleir, Chemical Pathology.
- Introduction to the ICET programme in RCPI from Mariangela Esposito, Educational Specialist, RCPI.

Multiple other events took place over the year within the Faculty in which attendance was encouraged including webinars, International Pathology Day meeting and study days / afternoons / talks in each of our pathology disciplines.

A very successful webinar was held on 6th November 2025 on careers in Pathology – Pathfinders: Exploring Careers in Laboratory Medicine in which our trainee representatives and NSDs made extremely valuable contributions.

RCPI Training Committee

The Director of Education and Training represents the Faculty on this RCPI committee which meets 4-6 times per year. This committee addresses training issues across all the faculties and institutes within the RCPI. Some activities are summarised below:

Training Site Accreditation

The Accreditation model of training site inspections, commenced in 2021, continues into 2025 with completion of the 5 year cycle at the end of 2025. A review with feedback from NSDs and other participants will take place in 2026. In this model, the RCPI Accreditation team assess multiple specialties in a site at the same time to reduce the overall number of inspections at each site. An annual check in with each site is also undertaken by the RCPI to ensure ongoing progress on recommendations.

RCPI Report on Training Post Evaluation

The Training Post Evaluation (TPE) was launched in 2016. One of the main objectives of the TPE is to capture experiences in the past year at the site-rotation level, to ultimately improve the training environment. The initiative launch was overseen by a working group comprising National Specialty Directors, RCPI Senior Management, the RCPI Trainees' Committee and the RCPI Research Department. The RCPI Research Ethics Committee reviewed and approved the Training Post Evaluation proposal.

The evaluation is hosted online and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Trainees are asked to evaluate each training post they completed that year – their interaction with Trainers, satisfaction with the training provided, site facilities and working environment. They are also asked to rate their post out of 100, with 100 being the most positive score. All answers are anonymous.

The evaluation is open to all doctors on RCPI Basic and Higher Specialist Training programmes. The quantitative data was analysed in SPSS.

Key findings for the Faculty of Pathology:

- The majority of Pathology Trainees (BST 80%, HST 84.6%) were likely to recommend the post to their colleagues. In majority of the posts (BST 60%, HST 81.3%), doctors in training felt that their working environment fully supported the confidence-building of doctors in training.
- Many Pathology Trainees were satisfied with the support they received in their role from their Trainer and from the overall workplace and felt they were treated with respect. Importantly, one in five Basic Specialist Trainees (20%) and just over one in ten Higher Specialist Trainees (10.7%) felt their workplace was not supportive.
- In the majority of Pathology posts (BST 80%, HST 85.7%), Trainees felt they were offered exposure to a broad clinical case mix.

Other Committee Involvement includes:

RCPI Simulation Steering Committee

The Simulation Steering Committee is the decision-making body in RCPI for implementation of the simulation strategy and for on-going decisions relating to simulation based education. The first meeting took place in 2023 with the committee chaired by Prof Dara Byrne. In 2024, Prof Byrne took over the role as National Lead for Simulation with the HSE. Dr Anabela Serranito has taken over as Chair of this committee from the end of 2024. Dr Cynthia Heffron sits on this committee as the Director of Education and Training and as the Faculty representative. We continue to encourage projects involving simulation within the Faculty.

Global Training and Partnerships Committee

The Director of Education and Training represents the Faculty of Pathology on this committee which first met in July 2023 and is chaired by Prof Cecily Quinn, Consultant Histopathologist, SVUH, Dublin. This committee addresses how RCPI facilitates our international trainees and training programmes within the college to ensure they are integrated appropriately into our existing training programme. This committee meets 4-6 times per year.

Four international fellows completed their training in the Faculty of Pathology in 2025 with three further international fellows currently in training 2025/2026. 2026 is looking extremely positive with a further 10 offers being made following interviews. We would like to thank all our trainers and centres

who facilitate training for our International fellows.

RCPI Advisory Group on Climate Action

Our NSD in Chemical Pathology, Dr Ana Rakovac, Consultant Chemical Pathologist, co chairs this committee which is currently reviewing all RCPI curricula with a view to suggesting sustainable healthcare advice for each specialty within the RCPI. Our Faculty of Pathology trainees formed a strong group to review the available literature and provide advice of the pathology specialities.

Core Professional Skills Working Group

A project to update the Core professional skills component of the RCPI curricula set up within RCPI with the following project mission:

To design an updated Core Professional Skills framework that reflects the standards of practice and professionalism established by all RCPI specialties, aligns with current best practices and guidance, responds to evolving healthcare needs, and provides clear pathways for trainees' progression. Developed with broad stakeholder input, we will establish attainable, measurable, and patient-focused standards that promote professional development and excellence across specialties.

This was led by Dr Maeve Doyle, Dean of Education and Academic Programmes and Consultant Clinical Microbiologist in UHW together with Maurice Kinsella, Education Team in RCPI. Work was ongoing during 2025 with an aim of having the updates ready for 2026/27. The Faculty of Pathology was represented on the group by Dr Cynthia Heffron. Our lay representative, Tiberius Pereira, also made significant contribution in the patient representative component.

Conclusion

This last year has again been a very busy year for trainers and trainees within the Faculty of Pathology. The Faculty has continued to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders, both internal and external to the RCPI, in its mission to the continual improvement of its programmes and the creation of additional opportunities for trainees. We continue to engage with the RCPIs strategy to improve training through active involvement in RCPIs projects, working groups and committees to ensure the unique needs of laboratory medicine training is considered. We continue to listen to and adopt feedback from the trainees, trainers, NDTP and the Irish Medical Council, and we use this information to direct training and progress workforce planning to ensure that we will have the manpower and skills to continue to deliver quality training and Pathology services in the future.

Trainee Report

Report by Dr Robyn Traynor, Lead Trainee Representative for the Faculty of Pathology

I represent pathology trainees at the Faculty of Pathology Board and Executive Committees to highlight trainee issues and to give a voice to the trainees at an executive level. I also chair the Faculty of Pathology Trainee Committee which was founded in 2024 to improve communication between pathology trainees of all specialties, the Faculty of Pathology, and RCPI. The committee includes the trainee representatives from a broad variety of trainee committees (see below).

Role	Representative
FPath Board rep	Dr Robyn Traynor
BST Histopathology STC rep	Dr Hannah Ashe
HST Histopathology STC rep	Dr Richard Liddy
HST Clinical Microbiology STC rep	Dr Jane O'Connor
HST Haematology STC rep	Dr John Harford
HST Immunology STC rep	Dr Colette Fogarty
HST Chemical Pathology STC rep	Dr Kevin McCarthy
HST Neuropathology STC rep	Dr Jennifer Garry
BST Pathology Trainee Committee rep	Dr Catherine Stacey
HST Pathology Trainee Committee rep	Dr Sarah Kenny
BST Pathology Health and Wellbeing rep	Dr Tamara Wanigasekara
HST Pathology Health and Wellbeing rep	Dr Ciara de Buitlir

The Trainee Committee has been involved in a number of trainee focused activities this year.

- The annual Faculty of Pathology Trainee Day was held on the 13 November 2025, chaired by Dr Cynthia Heffron and co-chaired by Dr Robyn Traynor. The day was divided into two sessions. In session one Dr Chris Turner spoke about “**Why Civility Matters In A Complex World**”. This session was very highly received and provided a lot of discussion. In session two trainees received talks from Maria Golden, Health and Wellbeing, Dr Ciara de Buitlir, Pathology Health and Wellbeing Rep and from Mariangela Esposito, Educational Specialist RCPI on the ICET program (Irish Clinician Educator Training). Feedback from this event has been obtained to inform next years event. We hope that the Trainees Committee will take a more active role in the organisation of the trainee day in future years.
- The Trainees Committee participated in two very successful events to promote Pathology specialties to younger trainees – the RCPI Intern Open Day and the Faculty of Pathology Webinar - Pathfinders: Exploring Careers in Laboratory Medicine which took place on November 6th and was organised by Dr Sean Hynes.

In the year ahead the Trainees Committee plans to explore additional educational activities for trainees including a critical appraisal workshop, a pathology ejournal club and the development of online resources for trainees. We are also focused on the health and wellbeing of trainees and plan to survey trainees to evaluate interest and access to less than full time working opportunities.

2026 has several educational events including the Faculty of Pathology Annual Symposium on the 12 and 13 February and the Trainee Day in the Autumn. I encourage trainees to engage with the Faculty of Pathology by attending and contributing to these events, becoming an Associate Members of the Faculty, and by applying to become a trainee representative on one of the many committees which are available to support trainees.

Standing Committees

Faculty Histopathology Standing Committee

Report by Prof Paul Hartel

The Histopathology Standing Committee (HSC) met regularly throughout 2025. We have added three new members recently and our meetings continue by Zoom, likely the best way to get diverse and effective geographical representation.

Public consultation, the Department of Justice, Health Service Executive (HSE) and Faculty of Pathology continue work and discussion around reform of the coroner service and standardisation of autopsy practice including a recent position paper. Autopsy training of Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (NCHDs) remains a challenge, however simulation training has received positive feedback and likely can be effectively utilised. The Royal College of Physicians in Ireland (RCPI) and Technical University Dublin (TUD) will continue their collaboration in histopathology dissection courses for laboratory scientists, both public and private.

The HSC also continues to engage with National Cervical Check Screening. European Standards for Cervical Screening were recently published.

MedLIS role out has begun, with some challenges and concerns highlighted by the Faculty of Pathology. A Clinical Advisory Group is being formed to liaise with HSE Administration and MedLIS Clinical Lead. An independent process risk assessment for MedLIS has been put forward at a recent Faculty Board meeting.

The National Histopathology Quality Improvement (NHQI) Programme has launched an improved, user-friendly National Quality Assurance Information System (NQAIS). Following the 12th National Data Report, an excel tracker sheet has been distributed to laboratories to assist sites with documenting their progress with implementation of the recommendations made in the report. Regional Executive Officers (REOs) will communicate with local clinical leads and, in line with the HSE's Laboratory Services Reform Programme, the HSC strongly encourages use of this data by HSE and REOs to increase pathology laboratory funding and resources to include consultant and scientific staff, equipment and new technology. The 'business case' for these additional resources is evident in the up to 25% national increase in histopathology workload over the last two year period, and a national 25% increase in immunohistochemistry, a reflection of increasing case complexity. The HSE's Laboratory Services Reform Programme document and the 12th National Data Report also discuss laboratory centralisation, including cytology and ever-increasing molecular diagnostics.

In the coming year, the HSC will continue its efforts in conjunction with the Faculty of Pathology, HSE and Dept. of Justice to ensure and improve the quality of pathology practice and reporting, encourage and enable new technologies and further instill the public's and other service users' confidence in pathology practice in Ireland. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to fellow members of the HSC for their work and dedication. I would also like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of our Coordinator, Brian O'Murchu.

Chemical Pathology Standing Committee

Report by Dr Clodagh Loughrey

The Faculty Chemical Pathology Standing Committee met on 4 occasions 28/01/2025, 01/04/2025, 10/06/2025 (hybrid meetings) and 11/11/25 (in-person), under new chair (self). A meeting planned for 09/09/2025 was cancelled due to lack of quoracy. At the December meeting, a core committee was agreed, to facilitate meetings proceeding by achieving quoracy in a small specialty. New membership to represent all 5 training sites plus Munster region.

Chemical pathology SC representatives continue to work with a number of groups including IEQAS, MedLIS, NPT, INAB MSAC, and the National Sero-surveillance Programme.

MedLIS - now has an oversight committee on which the faculty is represented. There may be Special Interest Groups set up for each discipline in the future but current priority is to Histopathology & Microbiology. Dr Ana Rakovac is happy to represent us on any future Chemical Pathology SIG.

NPT Guidelines were launched at International Pathology Day (5th Nov, RCPI), delivered by Dr Gerard Boran.

HSE Gender Healthcare Clinical Advisory Group sought nomination from Chemical Pathology and Dr C Loughrey now sits on this and also the Working Group (not RCPI committees).

HSE Laboratory Reform Programme – Dr Shari Srinivasan has completed a 3 year term of office as Clinical Advisor and now requires to be replaced – nominations have been sought.

Comments made on

1. Patient Safety (Licensing) Bill and high-risk activities outside a hospital setting
2. National regulations regarding the use of residual biological samples (EFLM request).

The Standing Committee acknowledges the assistance of and would like to thank Brian O’Murchu and Thiasha Cullen for very helpful administrative assistance over the past year. We would also like to thank Dr Mary Keogan for all her support during her tenure as Dean of the RCPI Faculty of Pathology as she steps down from the role in February, and our best wishes go with her. The Chemical Pathology SC is proud of her successor Dr Shari Srinivasan, a highly engaged member of the committee, for taking on this role with all its challenges, and we wish her well also.

Haematology Standing Committee

Report by Dr Sorcha Ni Loingsigh

As part of the Faculty Governance review, the need for standing committees in all disciplines was recognised to develop an appropriate structure for advocacy and professional affairs. Development of Standing Committee in Haematology is in progress.

We would like to thank Prof Ronan Desmond for his contribution to the development of the Haematology Standing Committee, during his tenure on the Board. Dr Sorcha Ni Loingsigh will now take this work forward.

On review of the Haematology Fellows, it was noted that there was a dearth of Haematology Fellows in early to mid-career. Efforts were made to increase the number of Fellows of the Faculty of

Pathology/Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and we welcome a number of new Fellows at the next conferring ceremony. The aim is to set up a Standing Committee in Haematology in 2026 and have a meeting before the end of the year.

Microbiology Standing Committee

Report by Dr Helene McDermott

- The Microbiology Standing committee met 4 times in 2025.
- We have 11 members from multiple hospitals including paediatric and maternity representation. The AMRIC fellow is also a member of the committee, as is the Microbiology trainee representative from RCPI.
- Collaborated with AMRIC team on the updated CPE guidance, and awaiting review of other guidance.
- Compiled reports for ISCM on Faculty of Pathology matters
- Nominated members of the specialty to be microbiology representatives on the National team for development of Antimicrobial calculator, as a consequence of the new European IVRD regulations, on re-established NPT group of Faculty of Pathology and Antimicrobial Stewardship Advisory Group
- MedLIS- microbiologists met with the CMO to discuss concerns regarding the system. In the meeting, the CMO stated that he was planning to convene a working group to address concerns. Request to pause roll out until working group changes made, got no response. Microbiologists from hospitals next in line for implementation corresponded with the Regional executive officer, expressing their concerns.
Submitted microbiology specialist concerns to Dean of Faculty of pathology, Prof M Keohan for presentation at the quarterly MedLIS National oversight committee meeting.
- Hospital Point prevalence survey on Surgical Antimicrobial prophylaxis duration and choice, and IV to PO switch took place in September, with submissions to AMRIC in October.
- Members of the Microbiology SAC attended and submitted reports to the Faculty of Pathology, RCPI Board and Executive meetings.

The Vintage Pathologists

Report by Prof Sean O'Briain

The Vintage Pathologists, a group founded in 2018, is associated with the Faculty of Pathology. The members come from all specialties of pathology and are retired, semi-retired, or musing about retirement. It meets over lunch, twice a year, with short presentations, broadly or tenuously related to pathology. New members are welcome and can join by contacting the Faculty Officer at pathology@rcpi.ie.

There were 2 meetings in 2025 at RCPI, Kildare St. Both were preceded by fine lunches at Dunne and Crescenti Restaurant in South Frederick St.

The May meeting was organised by Philip Mayne and had 3 short talks:

- Mary Cafferkey – *Five years working experience as an academic microbiologist in Kuala Lumpur*. This presentation was dedicated to the late Conor Keane and Rosemary Hone.
- Helena Daly - *A potentially fatal complication of Glandular fever*
- David Thomas – *Sir William Wilde 1815 – 1876*. Dr David Thomas is a former Director of the Dublin University Health Services. He has a long interest into the medical career of Wilde, having been introduced to the topic by his mentor Prof Nigel Kinnear.

The November meeting had 3 talks and was organised by Helena Daly.

- Marie Therese Clancy Floyd Consultant Microbiologist & Lecturer Clinical Microbiology UCD - *Mrs. Delaney of Delville*. Mrs. Delaney of Delville was the second wife of an Anglican clergyman Dr Patrick Delaney a friend of Dean J Swift of St. Patrick's Cathedral. She was an artist and very gifted at needlework and embroidery. A quilt she made for her godson is on permanent display in the Ulster Museum. In later life she developed the artistry of paper flower mosaics (collages). They show her excellent observation of botanical detail and her highly developed sense of colour. Many are on permanent exhibition in the British Museum. Her former residence, Delville, was demolished in the late 1950's and is now the site of the Bon Secours Private Hospital in Glasnevin Co. Dublin.
- Anne Moloney Consultant Clinical Microbiologist - *A Surgical Conundrum during the Risorgimento*. Dr Anne Moloney's presentation described the management of a gunshot wound in the right ankle sustained by Giuseppe Garibaldi in 1862 during the campaigns for the Unification of Italy. The incident provoked interest in surgical, political and some social circles in Europe. Over a four-month period, despite probing of the wound and use of Favé's method of metal detection, it was not possible to determine if the bullet was still in the tissues. The dilemma was solved by use of a porcelain-tipped probe designed by Professor Auguste Nélaton. The incident demonstrates the difficulties encountered by surgeons before the availability of X-rays, antibiotics and established antiseptic techniques. It also demonstrates the surprising speed of European communication and travel at that time.

- Gerard Crotty Consultant Haematologist - *A new disease- Monoclonal Gammopathy of thrombotic significance*. VITT-like Monoclonal Gammopathy of undetermined significance: Monoclonal Gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) is a common condition which is a precursor of Multiple Myeloma. A population based study has identified an association with venous thrombosis, which overall is a weak association. A small number of MGUS cases have a strong association with thrombosis via several mechanisms. A new mechanism has been recently described where a syndrome of refractory thrombosis occurs due to a monoclonal IgG with platelet independent anti-Platelet Factor 4 activity. This extends the spectrum of anti-PF4 disorders previously encompassing HITT (heparin dependent antibodies) and VITT (heparin independent antibodies and occurring after adenovirus based vaccines (e.g. one of the early Covid vaccines) and other triggers).

Anne Moloney will organise the next meeting on Monday 20 April 2026 assisted by Derval Royston who will then organise the Autumn 2026 meeting.



Dr Sean O'Brian

International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting (ICCR):

Report by Prof Kieran Sheahan

The ICCR was founded in 2010 by the Australasian, US and UK Colleges of Pathology and the Canadian Association of Pathologists. The Faculty of Pathology, RCPI became a member in 2018. Faculty Fellows are on the Board & Council (Prof Kieran Sheahan, Director/President, Prof Louise Burke, Council) & the dataset steering committee (DSC) (Prof Niall Swan). Specifically, for the Republic of Ireland, ICCR is keen to promote & facilitate the use of the ICCR datasets within the ongoing MEDLIS implementation project. ICCR is also liaising with the National SNOMED committee to ensure SNOMED-CT is implemented into MEDLIS in a machine-readable format.

The International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting (ICCR) has made significant progress in meeting our goals in the four strategic workstreams in 2025. As in previous years, our principal focus has been on the development of new datasets and on updating existing datasets to maintain currency with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Classification of Tumours, 6th edition (pending) & UICC TNM 9th edition (published). There have also been significant achievements in three other workstreams, i.e., Dataset translation, Implementation and Education, and in developing a Fundraising Strategy aimed at ensuring the ICCR’s sustainability.

1.1 Four Workstreams

Our work			
<p>1. Reporting Standards</p> <p>development of cancer pathology reporting datasets</p>	<p>2. Translation</p> <p>of datasets into multiple languages</p>	<p>3. Implementation</p> <p>of ICCR datasets into electronic forms for integration into electronic health databases/ records</p>	<p>4. Education</p> <p>to increase awareness of the ICCR datasets and their use to increase patient health</p>

1.2 Dataset development

The development of international standards for pathologists reporting cancers globally is a key pillar of the ICCR’s core business. The Dataset Steering Committee (DSC) and various Dataset Authoring Committees (DAC) have been busy in 2025 developing cancer pathology datasets. The ICCR is very grateful to the Chairs and members of the authoring committees for their time and expertise in developing and updating the global minimum datasets. The ICCR work closely with partner organisations, including the International Agency on Cancer Research (IARC), WHO, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), specialty pathology Societies and Colleges, as well as other major cancer organisations globally. Global standardisation of pathology information on tumour classification, staging, prognostic and predictive information forms the basis for best practice in patient care and ultimately improves patient outcomes worldwide.

The ICCR has 62 published datasets to date, with a total of 118 dataset editions published, including updates. The ICCR datasets cover the top ten solid tumours worldwide. Twelve ICCR datasets have also been updated in the last 12 months to reflect the latest WHO Classification of Tumours and TNM staging, and a further eight updates are in progress. Thirteen new datasets are also in development.

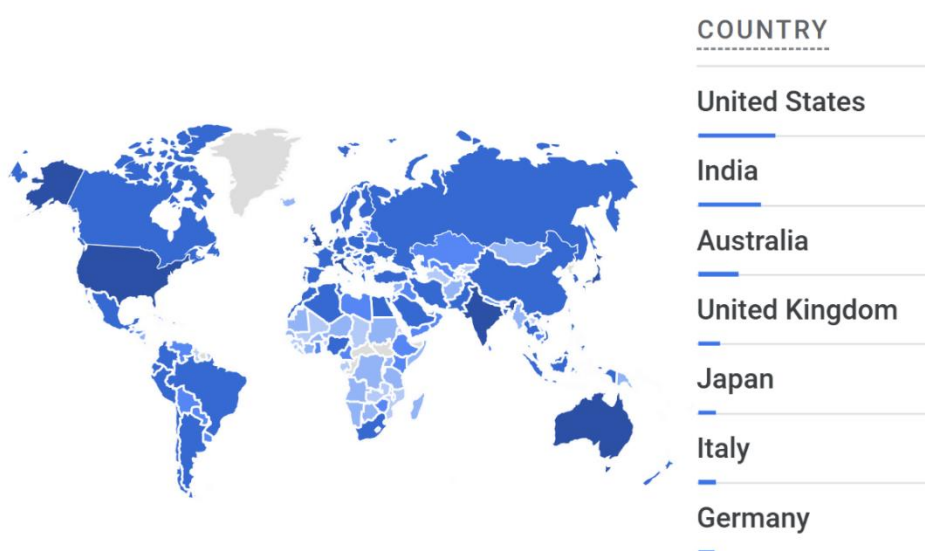
A total of 68 peer-reviewed journal articles related to the ICCR datasets or the work of the ICCR have been published.

The DSC Quality Assurance Sub-committee, led by Ekkehard Hewer, helps to ensure that the datasets are of the highest quality and fit-for-purpose. This is one of the unique strengths of the ICCR dataset development process overseen by the DSC.

1.3 Translation

Translation of the datasets has been identified as a key priority for the ICCR, especially with the feedback that ICCR datasets are valued globally. The ICCR website has been accessed from 185 countries to date, and in the last 12 months, we have seen 47,000 active users, indicating the traction these datasets are receiving worldwide. The top 10 countries of users include the United States, India, Australia, United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, Germany, Brazil, China and France, and the top 3 dataset suites being accessed are for Breast, Female Reproductive Organs and Digestive Tract cancers.

The image below was generated using Google Analytics data from the ICCR website, and illustrates the number of users, by country, who visited the ICCR website in the last 12 months.



A number of collaborations are in development with the goal to accomplish translations of ICCR datasets into German, Italian and Ukrainian.

The ICCR continues to pursue collaborations with member pathology organisations, middleware and laboratory information system (LIS) vendors to discuss further opportunities for future translations.

1.4 Implementation

Electronic implementation of the ICCR datasets is a vital step towards their integration into routine reporting practice and utilisation worldwide. The Structured Reporting Implementation Committee (SRIC), which was convened in 2021 to guide this process, has been investigating potential structured reporting tools for low and middle-income countries (LMICs) and requirements for electronic versions of the ICCR datasets for upload into Laboratory Information Systems (LIS). The focus of the SRIC committee has been surrounding the requirements for transposing the PDF ICCR datasets into electronic formats, which could then be used in future within electronic health records/databases and

continued engagement with software vendors.

In collaboration with our partners, this work has developed terminology to support analysis and comparison of data, quality assurance, overseeing of implementation projects, and improving cancer registry interface standards. The ICCR and SNOMED International have drafted a set of principles to lay the groundwork for a collaboration agreement for SNOMED CT reference sets for all ICCR datasets to be made available globally at no cost.

The SNOMED-CT coding of ICCR datasets continues to progress and forms a key component of the collaboration with SNOMED International and will assist with the standardisation and interoperability of cancer reporting data worldwide. Coding for several datasets has been carefully reviewed by the SNOMED-CT Validation Standing Committee in their fortnightly meetings. This important work could not take place without the generous support of our collaborators at the University of Nebraska Medical Centre. The ICCR is also one of the Participating Organisations in the NCI's Cancer PathCHART group (Cancer Pathology Coding Histology and Registration Terminology), which aims to develop a unified resource for deriving public health statistics from pathology reporting for cancer prevention programs and research.

1.5 Education

This year a focus on the education stream was on presentations at conferences globally. The ICCR has been represented at the UICC TNM Annual meeting, IC3R Annual meeting, WHO Editorial Standing Committee meetings, SNOMED International meeting, and at a joint session at the European Congress of Pathology (ECP) with the European Society of Pathology (ESP) and IARC.

The ICCR will continue to seek partnerships with relevant organisations to continue the development of the Education workstream. We aim to facilitate educational events such as webinars for professional development, University and College lectures, outreach sessions and conference presentations.

1.6 Sustainability

The ICCR is grateful for the indispensable support of 17 international pathology organisation members, and the membership fees have continued to drive the maintenance and growth of the four workstreams of the ICCR. Future funding is crucial to the delivery of key projects within the four workstreams.

Additionally, the ICCR thanks Donna Meredith, the Managing Director of Keystone Corporate Positioning, who has offered her services pro bono, to develop ICCR's Philanthropic Approach strategy.

1.7 Thank you

On behalf of the ICCR Board and Council, I would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all our members, sponsoring organisations and strategic partners for their invaluable support this year. Their contributions and those of the numerous pathologists from our membership, who have voluntarily contributed their time and expertise, have enabled the ICCR to make significant progress in all four workstreams. We are especially thankful to the Chairs of both the Dataset Steering Committee, Professor Sigurd Lax, and of the Structured Reporting Implementation Committee, Professor George Birdsong, for their vital work and expert input. Finally, we are grateful to our General Manager, Rajuel Nandakumar, our Dataset project manager, Fleur Webster, as well as all the project managers and assistants for their tireless efforts over the last year.

Kieran Sheahan, President ICCR

The Office of the State Pathologist (OSP) – 2025 Update

Report by Prof Linda Mulligan, Chief State Pathologist

Introduction

The national forensic pathology service is delivered by the Office of the State Pathologist (OSP) which is an independent non-statutory body under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. The Chief State Pathologist, Professor Linda Mulligan, State Pathologists Dr Heidi Okkers, Dr SallyAnne Collis and Dr Yvonne McCartney and the Assistant State Pathologist, Dr Margot Bolster continued to provide this service throughout 2025, assisted by a small team of administrative staff and a facility's manager. A fourth state pathologist post remains vacant. The senior medical scientist was joined by a summer intern due to an increase in workload because of supporting the forensic neuropathology service at Beaumont Hospital, and this post will be converted to a full-time medical laboratory scientist in 2026.

The OSP's central role is the provision of a forensic autopsy service to the Republic of Ireland, the Coroners around the country, An Garda Síochána and the criminal justice system. In a small number of cases, this will involve a visit to the scene of death. Forensic pathologists deal with homicides as well as a wide range of natural and unnatural deaths as instructed by the coroner. Alongside undertaking forensic post-mortem examinations, in 2025, the State Pathologists were involved in numerous facets of autopsy practice, education and training.

The Human Tissue Act came into law in 2025 and there are ongoing moves towards coroner's reform, with an update to the Coroner's Act being proposed. This is timely given that there is a crisis currently in the provision of the coronial autopsy service in Ireland. The OSP does not have a mortuary yet and currently relies on access to HSE facilities, specialist expertise such as neuropathology/paediatric pathology/perinatal pathology and mortuary staff around the country to perform PME's in suspicious deaths. If access became restricted or ceased, this would have a direct effect on homicide investigations the coronial system and the criminal justice system. This situation may also result in increased or inappropriate referral of cases to the OSP. Prof. Mulligan has been working with the Faculty of Pathology to highlight these and other major issues arising from the cessation of the provision of autopsy services by some hospitals.

Teaching

Prof Mulligan continued her role as Clinical Professor at University College Dublin School of Medicine. In conjunction with our ongoing affiliation with RCSI and other medical schools, this helped to strengthen the links between medical undergraduates and the OSP. Dr. Okkers and Dr. McCartney were involved with undergraduate teaching and examinations for several medical schools, including Trinity College Dublin, The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and the University of Galway. The whole team at the OSP contributed to talks and lectures for crime scene managers, photographers, family liaison officers, senior investigating officers and the military police among others. All of this work contributes to improving communication, team building and developing strategies for our common goals.

Research

Dr Niamh McCullagh, PhD, in collaboration with UCD and the OSP, completed her post-doctoral research project to develop a search paradigm for missing persons presumed to be victims of homicide. This is funded by the Irish Research Council Enterprise grant and by her enterprise partner, the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. The result is a working database held at the OSP which can now be added to in real time. The continued gathering of information around concealed homicides is vital to inform future searches for these missing individuals.

Unfortunately, in 2025, an increased caseload and the continued vacancy in the OSP for a fourth state pathologist meant that we could not accommodate student summer electives. However, Dr. SallyAnne Collis was part of the organizing committee for the International Association of Forensic Science meeting which was held in the Convention Centre in Dublin in June 2025. The OSP supported three keynote talks at this conference from Dr. Niamh McCullagh around her postdoctoral project and Claudio Tesaruolo with whom the OSP is developing a national forensic entomology service. Publications from the OSP in 2025 included:

1. **Paediatric and perinatal deaths by the Office of the Irish State Pathologists: a 5-year retrospective cohort study.** Danielle Moran, Michael J Barrett, Heidi Okkers, Linda Mulligan. Arch Dis Child. Epub ahead of print: doi:10.1136/archdischild-2024-328411.
2. **Femicide in Ireland 2012-2023 – Response to Letter to the Editor from A Brailon.** Kate McGoldrick, SallyAnne Collis, Linda Mulligan. Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine. 112 (2025): 102858.

Quality Improvement in Autopsy

Quality assurance in autopsy practice is an essential part of OSP service provision. Dr. Collis continues to develop her role as departmental lead for quality assurance and currently chairs the Autopsy Quality Improvement Committee (AQIC). A new case management spreadsheet has been introduced in order to support coding and data formatting so that the information can be submitted to the National Histopathology Quality Improvement Programme (NHQIP).

2025 was a challenging year but the OSP worked hard to ensure that the high standard of practice in forensic pathology was maintained. The changing landscape of general autopsy practice and the proposed reform of the coronial service will both have significant effects on forensic pathology in Ireland. The OSP continues its work with the Faculty of Pathology RCPI and with the numerous stakeholders in the death investigation process to promote quality improvement and assurance. High quality autopsy practice in both histopathology and forensic practice is essential to promote autopsy as a potential career path. The OSP will continue to play its role in providing exposure to, education in and understanding of forensic pathology and its practice in Ireland.

Global Training Partnerships

Report by Sinéad Lucey

Membership and Fellowship

The Fellowship recruitment campaign continued with targeted invitations being sent to eligible candidates. From the invitations sent from the Faculty of Pathology, 19 candidates applied and were approved for Fellowship in December 2025. They will be invited to confer at the Faculty ceremony in February 2026. The campaign remains ongoing, with each Faculty and Institute deciding who they would like to invite annually.

The Trueology Research Project commenced in July 2024 and was delivered in February 2025. This consisted of an updated state of the nation data analysis, a membership survey and focus groups. The results of these findings have been presented to Faculty and Institute Boards and Council and Executive of the college. Recommendations from this project and the Membership and Engagement Steering Group report will continue to be explored and developed for implementation where possible.

International Alumni Network activity commenced with an event in Riyadh in February 2025. This was held at the Embassy of Ireland and hosted by H.E Ambassador Gerry Cunningham and RCPI President Dr Diarmuid O'Shea. There was a strong turn out with 63 Members and Fellows attending and attendance from local stakeholders and Irish Business Network members taking the attendance to over 80 people. There was positive and constructive feedback received about during and after the event. The second International Alumni Network Meeting was held in Bahrain on Wednesday 5 November 2025 at Crown Prince Center for Training and Medical Research, which is also the location of our exams in Bahrain.

EQUALS Initiative

In February 2025 and June 2025 two more 40ft containers of equipment were shipped to Zambia. This will take the total number of 40ft containers shipped since 2013 to 19 (18 to Zambia and 1 to Uganda). 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.

ZACOMS invited delegates from EQUALS Initiative to attend the June 2025 graduation ceremony for their trainees. Prof David Weakliam and Prof Diarmuid O'Donovan attended on behalf of EQUALS. While there they met with key stakeholders, including the Irish Embassy in Zambia. Separately in June 2025, a delegation of 4 biomedical engineers from EQUALS travelled from Ireland to Zambia and presented at the Biomedical Engineers Association of Zambia annual symposium. While there they also met colleagues from the Zambian Ministry of Health and visited hospitals to see the equipment that has been donated through EQUALS in use.

In October 2025 RCPI hosted Prof Victor Mukonka, Dr Jonathan Sitali and Dr Kweku Gaisie from the Zambian Ministry of Health and ZACOMS. Prof Mukonka spoke at the RCPI Annual Conference and was conferred as an Honorary Fellow. Whilst here they participated in several meetings aimed at supporting the ongoing development and growth of ZACOMS.

Global Health

The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies 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 in November 2024. 140 learners have enrolled on the course to date and 50 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. There were 13 successful applications and all funds have now been claimed.

International Medical Graduate Training Initiative - Sponsored

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative continues to provide a route for sponsored overseas doctors to experience structured postgraduate medical training in the Irish Public Health service. It enables suitably qualified medical Trainees from the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates) to undertake a fixed period of training in clinical services in Ireland. Trainees participating within these programmes are fully sponsored by their governments for the duration of their training. Income generated through the programme is invested into improvement projects that benefit all RCPI training programmes.

RCPI offers two streams of training under this Initiative, Residency and Clinical Fellowship training, and interest in these programmes has been building steadily since their introduction.

International Residency Training Programme

Our International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) is offered to doctors upon completion of their Internship. This programme enables doctors to complete Residency training in Ireland before returning to their home country with a Saudi/Arab Board equivalent qualification and Membership of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. The doctors can undertake the IRTP in General Internal Medicine, Paediatrics, Histopathology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Currently there are 22 graduates. Applications for the new Histopathology programme are currently open.

International Clinical Fellowship Programme

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) offers structured, curriculum-based specialist training at a senior level for doctors who wish to pursue higher training in their chosen specialty or sub-specialty. These programmes are now available in 58 specialty and subspecialty areas, including Pathology. The total number of trainees across all RCPI faculties and institutes is 69 and the number of graduates to date from all specialities is 191. Within the faculty of Pathology there are 3 trainees currently in training, with 3 more due to commence in July 2026. A total of 33 trainees have graduated from the programme since 2015.

International Medical Graduate Training Initiative - Scholarship

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. The Sudan Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB) joined the CPSP in offering the programme in 2018. To date there are over 40 graduates of the programme and the current cohort are training in GIM, Paediatrics and O&G.

Healthcare Leadership

Report by Prof Trevor Duffy, Head of Healthcare Leadership

Overview

Clinical leadership is at the heart of the college's mission to advance healthcare. We are committed to supporting our members and fellows throughout every stage of their careers, offering meaningful opportunities to engage with the College and shape the future of medicine. Through dedicated leadership forums, and a strong professional network, RCPI empowers physicians to lead with confidence, drive innovation, and influence positive change across the healthcare system.

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 and National Clinical Programmes. The Healthcare Leadership function aims to strengthen formal leadership education, in addition to supporting doctors in their day-to-day roles as leaders, while equipping doctors with the skills to become future leaders. RCPI strives to enhance its established leadership role with a strategic approach to advocacy.

Healthcare Leadership Initiatives

Regional Engagement

In January and February 2025, Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President of RCPI, Audrey Houlihan, CEO, and Professor Trevor Duffy, Director of Healthcare Leadership, along with other College officers and staff, visited Tipperary University Hospital, Wexford General Hospital, and University Hospital Limerick. During these visits, the RCPI delegation engaged with trainees, trainers, consultants, and NCHDs to better understand the current challenges facing medical teams across the country. The discussions focused on identifying opportunities to strengthen medical training and service delivery, with a strong emphasis on enhancing the quality and structure of postgraduate training.

Leadership Forum

The RCPI Leadership Forum was established in 2024 with three core objectives.

- To educate and empower leaders by developing new leadership courses for members.
- To provide leadership support and strengthen understanding of governance for those in key roles, including Clinical Leads and Clinical Advisory Group Chairs.
- To build a connected community of members interested in contributing to the work of the college.

Engagement during the year was strong, with 35 Clinical Leads and CAG Chairs actively participating in forum meetings. This year will see enhanced communication and collaboration within this leadership group through networking events, seminars, and targeted training to support them in their roles.

Mentorship Programme

Mentorship for early-stage consultants was piloted in 23-2024, the second phase of the mentorship programme commenced with an additional eleven retired doctors trained as mentors this year. Twenty-five early-stage consultants from all regions sought to participate in this phase. Feedback from the first cohort of mentors and mentees was very positive and provided valuable insights on the considerable benefits of mentorship to new consultants, which has further

informed the programme.

RCPI Academy for retired doctors

The Academy, established in 2023, is a unique opportunity for retired members and fellows to share their expertise and stay connected with the college. During St Luke's Symposium in 2024, RCPI hosted a social event for academy members, many of whom now contribute greatly to the college through their involvement in mentorship, examinations, CPD audits, representation on committees and heritage projects. To date, twenty retired members have participated in mentorship training to support early-stage consultants.

Advocacy

RCPI regularly contributes to health policy and legislation through expert input, public consultations, and media engagement. It raises awareness among members via events and educational masterclasses. RCPI is part of several alliances, including the Alcohol Health Alliance, Health Promotion Alliance, Tobacco 21 Alliance, and Climate and Health Alliance.

Details of lobbying activities undertaken by RCPI are available at www.lobbying.ie

Engaging in Online Activity: Prioritising and protecting the physical and mental health of children and young people

In May 2025 at its Spring Conference, the Faculty of Paediatrics launched a position paper on the impact of online activity on young people's wellbeing. It called for ethical platform design, restrictions on harmful content, and accountability from online platforms. It is intended that the paper will inform the work of the Online Health Taskforce and the recommendations to the Minister for Health Jennifer Carroll MacNeill. The paper was published online and covered in the Irish Medical Independent and in an Editorial in the IMJ.

Priorities for Health for the Next Government

RCPI's 2024 manifesto, developed with its Faculties and Members, outlined key health priorities for the next Government. These include increasing healthcare capacity in both community and hospital settings; keeping people and the planet well; public health legislation to reduce harms from tobacco, vaping, and alcohol; addressing health inequalities; and additional resources for services meeting needs of children with disability. The manifesto also called for scrutiny of corporate influence in health policymaking.

Advocacy Achievement – Passing of Tobacco 21 Legislation

In Nov 2024, the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2024 was passed into law, raising the legal age of sale of tobacco to 21 years. This was a major advocacy achievement for RCPI, following years of work via the RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco (now reconstituted as the RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Smoking and E-Cigarettes) and as an instrumental partner in the Tobacco 21 Alliance.

Healthcare Sustainability and Climate Action

A Clinical Advisory Group on Climate and Health was formed in 2024 to implement RCPI's 2023 position paper. Dr Ana Rakovac is the Faculty of Pathology representative on this group and is also its co-chair. This group has advised internally on integration of healthcare sustainability into core professional skills, simulation opportunities, and is working on speciality specific curricula recommendations for healthcare sustainability, engaging via National Specialty Directors and nominated SpRs in Pathology specialities and across RCPI Institutes and Faculties in this work.

With the Irish Climate and Health Alliance RCPI supported a position paper on Active Travel,

launched in Oct 2025. RCPI has contributed to The Irish Climate and Health Alliance manifesto.

Consultation Submissions

In 2024/25, RCPI made submissions on the national obesity strategy, social inclusion, procurement, climate strategy, transport, tobacco legislation, and rare diseases. These reflect its commitment to shaping health policy across sectors.

Prebudget Submission

In August 2025, RCPI released its pre-budget submission, calling for investment in health services, expanding workforce capacity, consultant posts, hospital beds, and community care. It called for improved disability services for children, support for transition from adult to paediatric care, chronic disease programmes, and universal occupational health access. Additional budget priorities include climate action, digital health, fiscal measures to reduce tobacco use and alcohol harm.

Masterclasses – raising awareness and building advocacy capacity

RCPI hosted several masterclasses in 2024/25 to engage members on advocacy topics. These included sessions on paediatric-to-adult care transition, healthcare sustainability, cannabis and health, and the Coroner's Court. A paper from the January masterclass (paediatric-to-adult care transition) will be published in Q3 2025.



Annual Faculty Symposium at RCPI, 14 February 2025

National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes

RCPI oversees four National Specialty Quality Improvement (NSQI) Programmes in histopathology, gastrointestinal endoscopy, radiology, and bronchoscopy, which are funded by the HSE National Quality and Patient Safety. Through facilitation of evidence-based quality improvement of diagnostic services and reporting, these programmes aim to enhance patient care and safety and ensure the highest standards are both measured and achieved.

Data collected through these programmes are used to generate reports locally and consolidated into annual national reports, which inform quality improvement strategies across public, voluntary, and private hospitals.

In 2025, the NSQI Programmes continued the practice of assigning owners to key recommendations published in three national data reports in histopathology, radiology and GI endoscopy. Many recommendations are specific to local settings, with the responsibility for their implementation resting with Regional Executive Officers (REOs) in each of the six HSE Health regions, with the hope that their offices will provide appropriate support structures to individual hospitals. This approach aims to ensure that these recommendations are recognised, prioritised as needed, and that appropriate action plans are developed, implemented, and monitored effectively. Second issue of Summary Reports has been also published in November 2025, providing patients and public with easy to understand summary of findings and recommendations from the national data reports.

National Histopathology QI (NHQI) Programme Highlights 2025

- The 12th national data report (NDR) was released by the National Histopathology QI (NHQI) Programme in November 2025 and presented by Dr Linda Feely at the NSQI annual conference. The report presented aggregated findings from 21 public and voluntary and seven private laboratories on national data collected between 1 January and 31 December 2024.
- In 2024, data were recorded for 583,482 cases, 1,050,191 specimens, and 1,665,845 blocks, reflecting the continued year-on-year escalation in laboratory workload. The increasing number of specimens submitted, together with the requirement for more extensive examination of tissue blocks, highlights both the growing complexity and the expanding volume of work undertaken within laboratories. The average findings of all sites combined were above targets for the peer review QI activities of intradepartmental consultation (IDC), multidisciplinary team (MDT) review and addendum reporting for histology, cytology and where relevant, autopsy cases. Laboratories continued to face challenges in meeting the turnaround time (TAT) targets for histology, cytology and autopsy cases in 2024.
- For the third year, responsibility for recommendations was formally assigned to designated owners. These recommendations emphasise the importance of protected time for clinicians participating in the programme, the establishment of a national framework for turnaround times, and the systematic capture of autopsy data. The programme anticipates that these measures will be advanced in the year ahead, supported by the newly implemented regional executive officer structure and the introduction of NHQI regional quarterly reports. The report highlights the significant challenges currently facing many Irish laboratories, with rising workloads and increasing complexity placing pressure on TAT.

- The NHQI regional quarterly reports are now active within the National Quality Assurance System (NQAIS-Histopathology) and can be generated by Regional Executive Officer nominees. These reports have been circulated to support the identification of areas where laboratories in each region may require assistance in developing and implementing improvement plans.
- Ten local clinical audit and quality improvement projects were submitted by participating laboratories to be displayed at the NSQI annual conference. These projects took place locally with the use of NQAIS-Histopathology data.
- Dr Gréta Galambosi presented the NHQI research study “Rising Workload and Diagnostic Complexity in Histopathology and the Impact on Turnaround Times in Ireland” and the European Congress of Pathology in Vienna and at the NSQI annual conference in 2025.
- The NHQI research team are currently drafting a paper for publication on “Rising Workload and Diagnostic Complexity in Histopathology and the Impact on Turnaround Times in Ireland”
- The NHQI research team look forward to further research projects with the use of NHQI data (pending approval).
- The Programme will continue to promote a culture of quality improvement at a local level in laboratories across the country.
- The Office of State Pathology to share data for 2025 for inclusion in the 13th National Data Report.
- Updated paediatric and perinatal autopsy codes will go live in NQIAS-Histopathology in early 2026.
- The programme will continue to collaborate with the autopsy community to advance the development of more comprehensive national autopsy data collection.

National GI Endoscopy QU (NEQI) Programme

In November 2025, the NEQI Programme published its 10th national data report releasing it at the annual conference. The report, presenting findings from data collected in 2024, highlighted increases in targets being met for the following key quality indicators compared to 2023, the percentage of endoscopists meeting the target for caecal intubation rates, comfort scores, sedation doses, polyp detection rates and duodenal intubation rates. The report analysed data from 36 public and voluntary hospitals and 15 private hospitals, accounting for 313,106 procedures performed by 944 endoscopists across the country over the year. New key quality indicators have been developed for endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) and will be released as part of the NEQI Guidelines V7 which are due to be published in Q1 2026.

National Radiology QI (NRQI) Programme

The NRQI Programme published its 6th national data report in November 2025, presenting aggregate QI data collected from 1 January to 31 December 2024 across 48 participating public and voluntary hospitals. The data indicates a total caseload of 3,535,361 radiological examinations, representing a 9.0% increase in workload compared to 2023. The report Turnaround Time (TAT) findings show an improvement from last year, with more than half of the sites, met or exceeded the recommended target. For OP, GP, and IP referrals TAT remained above 90% for CT, MR, and US. While XR is still below target, it demonstrated improvement across all referral sources. ED referrals also showed continued progress, with CT, MR, US, and XR improving

overall, though MR and XR remain below target. A significant development this year is the introduction of revised, explicit TAT targets, following a comprehensive process of research, data analysis, several consultations and formal approval. These targets will act as a guide for future quality improvement efforts, providing a consistent reference point for quality assurance across radiology departments nationally. The NRQI Programme remain dedicated to fostering a culture of quality improvement and patient safety across radiology services in Ireland.

National Bronchoscopy QI (NBQI) Programme

The NBQI Programme's work in 2025 has been focused on technology development to facilitate data collection for the Key Quality Indicators (KQI) identified across five key quality areas for adult bronchoscopy, EBUS and combined procedures:

1. Access to procedures
2. Safety
3. Complication rates
4. Patient experience
5. Indicators of procedure success

The need to include combined procedure type became evident from findings of local clinical audits conducted by working group member hospitals.

The work continues to develop the quality framework for each hospital to routinely review standards and drive improvement in key quality areas locally and against national performance. The working group have commenced a first round of target setting for KQIs using local clinical audit findings, national and international best practice and clinical expertise.

A network of local QI clinical leads has been established, which will be key in ensuring the programme can be run locally. Discussions are underway regarding the development of a national data collection and reporting module which will enable participating hospitals to collect and upload data to a national dataset. The NBQI Programme have also been instrumental 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.

Quality Improvement

RCPI SAFE Collaborative

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.

At Wexford General Hospital, the introduction of structured safety huddles, ISBAR tools, and multidisciplinary escalation processes has significantly improved early identification and management of the deteriorating child, with measurable gains in communication, compliance, and safety culture. This paediatric-focused initiative has fostered a proactive, collaborative approach to patient care, embedding shared situational awareness into daily ward practice.

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.

RCPI Quality Improvement in Action

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.

Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership

The 2024-2025 cohort of the Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership comprised 10 multidisciplinary teams from specialties including Paediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, 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.

Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence

A new bespoke programme, Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence (ALICE) was launched in partnership with the National HSCP Office (NHSCPO). 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. Half of the cohort teams represented paediatric care services.

Across paediatric services, quality improvement projects have driven more timely, coordinated, and family-centered care. In the South West, CAREDS enhanced communication for young people with eating disorders admitted to hospital, achieving near-universal uptake of personalised communication packages. Monaghan CDNT increased Individual Family Service Plans for 16 –19 year olds from 30% to over 80% through IFSP clinics and team training, while the North Inner City CDNT ensured all babies under one with complex needs were seen within 14 days of referral.

At CHI Crumlin, delays in the Combined Orthoptic and Optometry Clinic were reduced through triage, scheduling improvements, and regular huddles, with progress toward reducing overdue reviews from 48% to 25% by late 2025. Cork North Lee introduced a joint SLT/OT assessment

model that halved service touchpoints, improved efficiency, and raised parental confidence in needs being met from 54% to 94%. In Donegal South and West, a single referral pathway for children's therapy services is streamlining access and supporting multidisciplinary care in line with Sláintecare.

Building on the success of Cohort 1, a second cohort will launch in late 2025, with refinements to structure, evaluation and follow-on supports. A new, NHSCPO funded 12-month Leadership in Practice component for the initial cohort will deepen the impact of learning, promote project sustainability, and expand a national community of HSCP-led QI leaders.



International Pathology Day at RCPI, 05 November 2025

Faculty Finances

Faculty of Pathology, RCPI Income and Expenditure for Financial Year ended 30 June 2025

Income

Total Direct Income for the year was €118,175. This is an increase of €37,730 (47%) on last year. Income is classed under three broad headings:

Subscriptions and Admission Fees

Receipts from Subscriptions were €70,840 in 2024-25 versus €64,550 in 2023-24, an increase of €6,290 (10%) on last year.

Faculty admissions totalled €8,020 in 2024-25 versus €4,975 in 2023-24, a 61% increase.

In 2024-25, 72% of Fellows and 52% of Associate Members paid their subscriptions. In 2023-24, 78% of Fellows and 68% of Associate Members paid their subscriptions.

Event Fee Income and Sponsorship

Event fee income for 2024-25 was €15,315 compared to €10,920 in 2023-24 (an increase of 40%). This was all registration fees for the Annual Symposium.

Sponsorship income for 2024-25 was €24,000 compared to zero in 2023-24. This is made up of €11,500 for the Annual Symposium and €12,500 for the International Pathology Day.

Indirect Income from HSE grants allocated to the faculty by trainee numbers was €506,480. Costs associated with training exceed funds provided leading to a deficit in training of €112,538. Investment by the College to automate its processes through the Connect Project is focused on reducing costs and bring funding in line with costs. Advocating for protected time for clinicians engaged in training is also a priority.

Costs

Direct Costs

Direct Costs total €100,656 for the year, an increase of €15,913 (19%) on last year's total of €84,743.

- catering, which increased by €8,079,
- wages & salaries, and other staff costs, which increased by €10,542,
- travel & accommodation, which decreased by €5,832,
- administration costs, which decreased by €1,294
- AV cost, which increased by €3,974,
- miscellaneous costs, including subscriptions and bank charges, which increased by €444.

The higher spend in 2024-25, versus 2023-24, is due to overall increased activity, especially increases in catering, salary and training, and AV requirements.

Costs after allocations

Total costs after allocations are €250,585. Allocations are based on membership and spread the costs of the College across its six institutes and faculties in an equitable way.

The result is an overall deficit for the Faculty of Pathology of €244,483. It is important to note that the College is committed to all its Institutes and Faculties and investment in system improvements and growth in revenue is to benefit all members.

Appendix 1

Income and costs are classified and allocated as follows:

Income	Basis of Allocation
Subscriptions	Per Faculty
SLA	Trainee Numbers
Exams	By Speciality/Faculty
International	International Trainee Numbers
Independent Courses	PCS Registrants
Faculty Courses	By Speciality/Faculty
Other Costs	
Other - Communications, Professional Competence Scheme, Specialist Division of the Register, National Quality Improvement SLA, Speciality Quality Improvement SLA, Private Income, Clinical Care, Forum, National Immunisation Advisory Committee, Medical Training Independent, Finance, Heritage, Executive Office, Equals, Research & NDTP Development	Membership/Fellowship numbers

PAT Pathology

Net Contribution Statement for Year Ended 30 June 2025



	12 Months to June 2025		
	Income	Total Costs	Net Contribution
Faculty Subscriptions	70,840	-7,423	63,417
SLA	506,480	-619,018	-112,538 *
International	191,114	-122,188	68,926
	768,434	-748,628	19,806
Independent Courses	46,009	-114,700	-68,691
Events & Faculty Activity	47,335	-173,812	-126,477
Events - No.6 Kildare St	4,986	-15,604	-10,618
	98,330	-304,116	-205,785
Other	211,765	-276,370	-64,605
	211,765	-276,370	-64,605
Surplus/(Deficit) before Investment Gain	1,078,529	-1,329,114	-250,585
Investment Income & Bank Interest Received	6,102	0	6,102
Net Surplus/(Deficit) including Investment Gain	1,084,631	-1,329,114	-244,483

* Income earned from international activities contributes to the costs associated with the national training scheme.

Governance

Faculty Board:

The Faculty is governed by the Board, the Board met 5 times in 2025.

Board Meetings:

15 January 2025
02 April 2025
28 May 2025
24 September 2025
04 December 2025

Board Members:

Prof Mary Keogan	Dean
Dr Cynthia Heffron	Director of Education and Training
Prof Linda Mulligan	Honorary Treasurer
Dr Bernie Croal	President of the Royal College of Pathologists, UK (Observer)
Dr Shari Srinivasan	Dean Elect
Prof Karina O'Connell	Fellow (Elected)
Prof Aurelie Fabre	Fellow (Co-opted)
Dr Sine Phelan	Fellow (Elected)
Prof Sorcha Ni Loingsigh	Fellow (Elected)
Prof Vincent Tormey	Fellow (Elected)
Dr Joan Power	Fellow (Council member), demitted October 2025
Dr Michael Farrell	Fellow (Council member), commenced October 2025
Dr Anna-Rose Prior	Fellow (Elected)
Dr Gareth McKeenam	RCPATH Northern Ireland (Observer), demitted December 2025
Dr Alison Watt	RCPATH Northern Ireland (Observer), commenced December 2025
Prof Sean Hynes	Fellow (Chair Scientific Meetings Committee)
Dr Helene McDermott	Fellow (Elected)
Dr Susannah Staunton	Lead Trainee Representative, demitted July 2025
Dr Robyn Traynor	Lead Trainee Representative, commenced July 2025
Dr Muiris O'Ceidigh	Lay Member
Mr Tiberius Pereira	Lay Member

Representation within RCPI and External Committee

EFLM Green Lab Taskforce	Ana Rakovac	Chemical Pathology
Chair of the RCPI Advisory Group on Climate Action	Ana Rakovac	Chemical Pathology
NQI Programme Working Group Chair	Ann Treacy / Linda Feeley	Histopathology
NCCP Therapeutic Molecular Working Groups	Anne Marie Quinn	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Barbara Dunne	Histopathology
MedLIS Project Board (Microbiology)	Binu Dinesh	Microbiology
National TB Advisory Committee	Breida Boyle	Microbiology
NCCP Working Group	Brendan Doyle	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Brian Hayes	Histopathology
NCCP National Haematology Dataset Working Group	Brian Hayes	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Caroline Brodie	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Clive Kilgallen	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Conor O'Keane	Histopathology
Interval Cervical Cancer Implementation Committee	Conor O'Keane	Histopathology
HSE Gender Healthcare Model of Care Project Board and Working Group	Clodagh Loughrey	Chemical Pathology
NCCP Skin cancer (Dermatopathology)	Cynthia Heffron	Histopathology
<i>Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels</i>	David Gibbons	Histopathology
NPEC Perinatal Working Group	Emma Doyle	Histopathology
Chair, National Near-Patient Testing Consultative Group	Gerard Boran	Chemical Pathology
Faculty Representative, EFLM	Gerard Boran	Chemical Pathology
Co-ordinator, Core Pathology Skills Training Course (Faculty-organised)	Gerard Boran	Chemical Pathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Helen Ingoldsby	Histopathology
National Trauma System Implementation: Clinical Advisory Group	Joan Power	Haematology
NCCP Molecular Diagnostic Advisory Group	John Aird	Histopathology
NCCP PD-L1 Gastric group	John Aird	Histopathology
Forum Global Health Membership	Kieran Sheahan	Histopathology
MedLIS Project Board (Histopathology)	Laura McKenna	Histopathology
HSE Chair Post Mortem Standards Review	Linda Mulligan	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Lindsey Clarke	Histopathology

Chair of the Advisory Committee of National Cancer Registry	Louise Burke	Histopathology
ICCR Observer to the Board	Louise Burke	Histopathology
HSE Investigation Review Team for Thrombotic Microangiopathy	Maeve Crowley	Haematology
RCPI Trainees Committee	Leah Timon	Histopathology
HIQA Expect Advisory Group for Gene expression profiling tests with early-stage invasive breast cancer	Marie Staunton	Histopathology
RCPI Research Committee	Mary Keogan	Histopathology
INAB Medical & Scientific Advisory Committee (Faculty)	Mary Keogan	Immunology
RCPI Collegiate Membership and Engagement Steering Group	Mary Keogan	Immunology
CervicalCheck Laboratory Advisory Group	Mary Keogan (temp)	Immunology
RCPI Executive Board	Mary Keogan	Immunology
Forum of Post Graduate Training Bodies	Mary Keogan	Immunology
SQI Steering Committee	Mary Keogan	Immunology
Consultant Appointments Advisory Committee	Mary Keogan	Immunology
MedLIS Project Board	Mary Keogan	Immunology
ICCR Paediatric Authoring Committee	Maureen O'Sullivan	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Michael Jeffers	Histopathology
ICCR Paediatric Authoring Committee	Michael McDermott	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Niall Mulligan	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Niall Swan	Histopathology
Cervical Check National Quality Advisory Group	Niamh Conlon	Histopathology
Cervical Check Lab Advisory Group & Cervical Check clinical advisory group	Niamh Conlon	Histopathology
Dep of Justice Review of the Coronial Service	Niamh Nolan	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Odharnaith O'Brien	Histopathology
ACP Council Member, Chair of the Chemical Pathology Specialist Advisory Committee	Patrick Twomey	Chemical Pathology
President of the Board UEMS Laboratory Medicine	Patrick Twomey	Chemical Pathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Paul Crotty	Histopathology
INAB Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee (Histopathology)	Paul Hartel	Histopathology
Faculty of Pathology Credentials Committee (Chemical Pathology)	Rama Srinivasan	Chemical Pathology

National Near-Patient Testing Consultative Group (Chemical Pathology – second representative)	Rama Srinivasan	Chemical Pathology
INAB MSAC (Chemical Pathology)	Rama Srinivasan	Chemical Pathology
<i>Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels</i>	Richard Flavin	Histopathology
MedLIS Project Board (Haematology)	Rob Henderson	Haematology
Forum: Global Health	Shari Srinivasan	Chemical Pathology
INAB Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee (Haematology)	Sorcha Ni Loinsigh	Haematology
INAB Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee (Microbiology)	Susanna Frost	Microbiology
ICCR Genitourinary cancer dataset authoring committee	Niall Swan	Histopathology
Haemato-pathology Panel Leads and members of regional panels	Thomas Crotty	Histopathology



Annual Faculty Symposium 13 February 2025

External

The Faculty has ongoing links with a number of external committees and other entities, including:

- Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee, Irish National Accreditation Board.
- International Liaison of Pathology Presidents
- Union Européenne Des Médecins Spécialistes (UEMS) Laboratory Medicine section & Section of Pathology
- National Cancer Control Programme
- Irish Haematology Society
- Irish Society of Clinical Microbiologists
- MedLIS (National Medical Laboratory Information System)
- International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting
- Health Service Executive
- Cervical Check
- Health Information and Quality Authority
- National Cancer Registry of Ireland
- Association of Clinical Pathologists
- European Federation of Laboratory Medicine

Administration

Key personnel in RCPI who conducted work on behalf of the Faculty during 2025:

Faculty Officer	Brian O'Murchu	01 8639 795 pathology@rcpi.ie
Faculty Manager	Darragh Whelan	01 4853 461 darraghwhelan@rcpi.ie
Training Coordinator	Thiasha Cullen	01 8639 750 thiashacullen@rcpi.ie
Professional Competence	Thelma Russell	01 8639 758 professionalcompetence@rcpi.ie
Accreditation	Siobhán Kearns	01 8639 720 siobhankearns@rcpi.ie
Conferences and Events	James McNulty	01 8639 700 conferences@rcpi.ie
Registry & Support Team Manager	Kelly Webster	01 8639 700 kellywebster@rcpi.ie