



**FACULTY OF
PAEDIATRICS**

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT



Contents

ABOUT THE FACULTY AND COLLEGE	3
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN.....	5
HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT	13
HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT.....	16
NATIONAL SPECIALTY DIRECTORS' REPORTS.....	18
IMC APPLICATIONS TO THE SPECIALIST DIVISION OF THE REGISTER (SDR).....	20
EXAMINATIONS.....	21
NATIONAL CLINICAL PROGRAMME FOR PAEDIATRICS AND NEONATOLOGY.....	23
CLINICAL ADVISORY GROUPS	25
CAG in Paediatrics.....	25
BRITISH PAEDIATRIC SURVEILLANCE UNIT (BPSU)	30
RETIRED PAEDIATRICIANS GROUP.....	31
RCPI SUPPORTING FUCTIONS	32
Postgraduate Training and Education.....	32
Education.....	33
Healthcare Leadership.....	37
Global Training Partnerships (previously International Affairs).....	44
KEY CONTACT DETAILS	46
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.....	46

ABOUT THE FACULTY AND COLLEGE

Governance

The Faculty of Paediatrics was established by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) in 1982 and functions within and as an integral part of the College.

The Standing Orders of the Faculty have stated objectives which are:

- To advance the science, art and practice of Paediatrics in Ireland. To promote education, study and research in Paediatrics for the public benefit.
- To act as an authoritative body for consultation on matters of educational or public interest concerning Paediatrics.
- To represent the specialty of Paediatrics on international, national and regional councils or committees concerned with postgraduate medical education.
- To obtain and maintain recognition for itself as the body responsible for advising on all matters concerning Paediatrics under any scheme for specialist training in Ireland provided always that any benefit obtained by Members or Fellows of the Faculty as the result of such recognition should be merely incidental to the achievement of the charitable objects of the Faculty.

The Faculty acts in an advisory capacity to key stakeholders such as Government and statutory bodies in all matters pertaining to Paediatrics, which can include sitting on committees, contributing to consultation papers and advising bodies such as the Implementation Committee for the Ferns 4 Report and the National Immunisation Committee.

The Faculty is the recognised training body for postgraduate medical training in the specialty of Paediatrics in Ireland and is responsible for setting and maintaining standards for the Membership of the Faculty of Paediatrics examinations. The Faculty has developed curricula and approved posts for training, capable of furnishing all the training experiences necessary for Senior House Officers (SHO), Registrars and Specialist Registrars (SpRs) to satisfactorily meet the requirements of the Basic Specialist (BST), Registrar and Higher Specialist Training (HST) programmes.

The Faculty has developed core competencies in the specialty that the Members and Fellows are required to maintain through Continuing Professional Development and are working with the relevant bodies to fulfil the requirements of Professional Competence as laid out in the Medical Practitioners Act 2007. The Faculty of Paediatrics would like to thank its Fellows, Honorary Fellows, Collegiate Members and Associate Members.

The functions and responsibilities of the Faculty of Paediatrics are devolved within its governance structure to the Board, Specialty Training Committee and other Committees and appointed Specialists such as the National Specialty Directors and Trainers. These are in turn supported by the general management and professional services of RCPI. Consistent application and delivery of these functions and responsibilities is ensured by the reporting and accountability structure of the governance framework.

Background on RCPI

RCPI is the oldest surviving medical institution in the country, as a professional organisation for Physicians, the RCPI has been involved in the setting of and of maintaining Irish professional standards in medicine since 1692 and now includes four Faculties and an Institute, which are integral parts of the College. RCPI is Ireland's largest postgraduate medical institution and is recognised by the Irish Medical Council as the training body for 29 specialties.

From a junior doctor in their first postgraduate training post through to a senior consultant undertaking their continuing professional development, RCPI delivers a wide range of training programmes, study days, masterclasses and academic meetings to ensure the very best in-patient care.

RCPI also conducts over fifty post-graduate examinations annually in Ireland and overseas. Graduates of all medical schools on this island, and from countless overseas universities, have been achieving their MRCPI qualifications since 1879.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

This year marks 400 years since the birth of John Stearne who founded what is now the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland to promote the study of medicine, regulate the practice of physicians in Ireland and improve medical care. He truly recognised the importance of gathering as a “Fraternity of Physicians”.

The paediatricians and neonatologists throughout the country have been gathering as a Faculty since 1982 and continue to strive for the highest standards in child health. Healthy children are the foundation of a healthy society.

I would like to outline the Faculty of Paediatrics Developments this year.

Faculty of Paediatrics Board

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the board for the advice and support I have received over the past year since I took up the role of Faculty Dean. The discussions, advice and contributions have strongly supported the work of the Faculty in progressing paediatrics. The board met 5 times over the past year. One of the meetings was held in University Hospital Galway followed by a visit to the RCPI office in the hospital which is ideally placed to meet the needs of trainees onsite. RCPI has committed to a similar onsite office for Paediatric trainees in the new Hospital.

Special thanks are due to those demitting from the board this year after a 3-year term-Dr Julie Lucey (Convenor of Meetings) who has been hugely helpful organizing the faculty webinars and conferences, Dr Ike Okafor (elected Fellow representative) and Dr Montasser Gadelsayed (elected Fellow representative). I want to particularly recognize Dr Louise Kyne - Immediate Past Dean-who is demitting from the Board after her term as Dean and a further year as immediate past dean. Louise has been a stellar support to me over the past year and has been constant with her help, advice, and encouragement. Louise is remaining involved with the Faculty as our representative on the college credentials committee and the Specialist Division of the Register committee. Dr Sinead Murphy is demitting as Honorary Secretary after a 3 year term but will remain on the Board for a further year. Sinead has been a huge support as honorary secretary and I very much value all of her expertise and advice.

I would like to welcome the 3 newly elected fellow representatives to the board-joining this October-Dr Shoana Quinn, Dr Cathy Gibbons and Dr Wasim Asif. At our regional board meeting in June in University Hospital Galway, we welcomed Mr Aidan Kenny as a lay member of our board. Aidan brings a wealth of experience in business, technology and innovation to the board and his opinion and contribution is much appreciated and valued by the board. Dr Deirdre Ryan has recently joined the board as trainee representative along with Dr Emily Farnan and Dr Ruth Carey who always give the board the important perspective of the trainees on matters discussed. I would like to acknowledge their commitment to the board and their valuable contributions.

I am also delighted to announce that Dr John Fitzsimons will take up the role of Vice Dean for the year 2024-2025. John has worked with the Faculty and College over several years and has a wealth of experience in Faculty affairs. He has led on the development of the Paediatric Pocket tutorials in recent years which are a wonderful resource, and he has also significant experience in Quality improvement. He also acts as National Specialty director (NSD) for the CPS Pakistan.

Thank you to those of you who have agreed to represent the Faculty on other boards and committees over the past year:

- Prof Clodagh O Gorman- Faculty rep HIQA Mental Health Tool online Focus Groups,
- Dr Julie Lucey-Faculty rep for NIAC
- Dr Alan Finan- Faculty Rep NOCA/National Paediatric Mortality Register
- Dr Pamela O Connor-Faculty rep on RCPI Strategy group
- Dr Joanne Balfe-Faculty rep on Climate Action group RCPI
- Dr Jacqui Mc Brien-Faculty Rep on the Medical Subcommittee of the Disability Advisory Group (DAG) to

the National Clinical Programme for People with Disability (NCPDP)

- Prof Farhana Sharif-Faculty rep-Foetal Alcohol group HSE
- Prof Des Cox-Faculty rep Tobacco Policy group RCPI
- Professor Michael O Neill-Wellbeing committee of the Forum

New Faculty Initiatives this year

Faculty Communications Strategy

In collaboration with the Communications team, the Faculty of Paediatrics agreed a three-pronged communications plan focused on engagement, awareness, and advocacy. In December 2023, the Faculty of Paediatrics was the first at the college to move membership communications onto the Mailchimp platform to deliver consistent and timely communications and to better understand the needs of our membership and what resonates with them.

During the 23-24 training year, the faculty sent 15 ezines, updates and notices from the Dean through Mailchimp, with, on average, 66.2% of recipients opening these emails. This suggests a highly engaged audience compared to the average industry open rate of 28%. The average click rate, capturing how many people click on a link in the email, is 14.6% compared with the industry average of 4.2%. Links to Faculty events and webinars, advocacy calls to action, and medical updates or statements, are highly valued and tend to be the most clicked links. A suite of Faculty branded templates was created to raise awareness of the faculty and deepen engagement with external groups and societies.

Faculty Funding Initiative

The Faculty, in receipt of one-off funding, sent out a call for expressions of interest for applications from paediatric units nationally for funding events relating to education, training and research activities. The Faculty funding initiative approved funding for 10 Paediatric units to support study days, medical equipment and research supports. Many of these projects are being established and further details will be available in 2025. At the time of this report the first of these Faculty sponsored events took place in Wexford in September - Organised by Professor Muhammed Azzam and Dr Maybelle Wallis-a hugely successful study day with over 100 attendees-trainees, consultants, GP'S and Paediatric nurses. They were well supported by Dr Sorcha Parker and Dr Jane Colman-trainees in Paediatrics in Wexford- who made organisation look easy! There was a super lineup of speakers. I look forward to the other planned events sponsored by the Faculty taking place over the next few months and hosted by Cork, Limerick, Kerry and CHI.

New FPaeds Deans Award for Wellbeing

I am delighted to announce a new Deans award for wellbeing. The Faculty of Paediatrics supports the health and wellbeing of its Members, Fellows, Trainees and NCHDS and the FPaeds Wellbeing Award is part of a range of initiatives aimed at empowering FPaeds Members, Fellows, Trainees and NCHDs to lead culture change in paediatric departments, hospitals, their work outside of the clinical site and the profession as a whole.

This award, newly established in 2024, celebrates the initiative(s) of an individual Member, Fellow and NCHD or group of Members, Fellows and NCHD,s or a whole paediatric department that have resulted in the enhancement of wellbeing for their department, patients, or the wider community.

The award recognizes those who are proactively putting in place a well thought through strategy to encourage and promote the physical and mental health of paediatric staff or patients. This will be an annual Deans Award. Thank you to Maria Golden, Health and Wellbeing manager, RCPI who worked with me on the policy and criteria for this award and is a huge support to the trainees of the Faculty of Paediatrics. Details will be circulated faculty wide this month.

Advocacy

Tobacco Policy/Vaping

The Faculty of Paediatrics position paper" Disposable Vapes and Young People" was launched in September advocating for a ban on the sale of disposable vapes to children and adolescents under 18 years. The Minister for

Health announced a ban in December. In May the legal age to buy tobacco was raised to 21 years. Recently the Minister for Health has announced legislation to ban the sale of disposable vapes outright in Ireland. Professor Des Cox and Dr Louise Kyne represented the Faculty at various media events after the launch. I was invited to speak at Europaediatrics about the adverse effects of vaping in young people. There were associated news articles written in the Cork Echo and the medical independent. There was a piece written advising school principals on vaping in schools and an article was published in Global Paediatrics. The Faculty has featured prominently in the media with over 100 media mentions from 30 June 2023 to 1 July 2024. This activity is amplified across the college's social media channels.

RCPI executed an extensive media campaign for the Faculty of Paediatrics position paper, Young People and Disposable Vapes, in October 2023. With over 200 media mentions, including interviews on Morning Ireland, the Six One News and the Tonight Show, the campaign reached the general public and policy makers alike. The paper continued to capture attention in 2024. The Faculty published articles in the Medical Independent, Global Paediatrics, and regional media outlets and presented on the topic at various conferences and events. In January 2024, Prof Cox addressed the topic of tobacco control on RTE's Prime Time. Another Medical Independent article was published following the Faculty's Spring Conference, featuring international keynote speaker, Professor Paul Dimitri and his groundbreaking work in AI and paediatrics.

Autism Charity Faculty Support

In December the Faculty welcomed Ireland's Autism charity (AsIAM) to No 6 Kildare St where a sensory Santa was hosted for children with autism and their families.

Helium Arts Charity Faculty Support

On behalf of the Faculty I spoke at the launch of Helium Arts, a national children's charity committed to improving the wellbeing of children and young people living with lifelong physical health conditions through impactful creative arts workshops and programmes.

Funding Trainees to travel with PAIRS

The Faculty also funded 2 trainees who travelled to Tanzania with PAIRS-Paediatric Acute Intervention resuscitation skills group. The Faculty is working on establishing a trainee experience working in Tanzania and is collaborating with NDTP, RCPI, and Dr Trish Scanlan on this.

All Ireland Training day

In November Professor Michael O Neill and myself travelled to Belfast to support a meeting of RCPCH. Dr Camilla Kingdon, then President, was in attendance. We discussed matters relating to all Ireland education and training delivery and also met with Dr Ray Nethercott, RCPCH officer for Ireland.

Faculty Contribution to RCPI Pre election Manifesto

The Faculty contributed to the RCPI pre-election manifesto highlighting matters relating to childhood disability and waiting lists, obesity and poverty and disadvantage. These issues were subsequently discussed with politicians from various parties who requested meetings with RCPI.

RCPI Strategy Group

The Faculty contributed to the RCPI Strategy group for the next 4 year cycle with Dr Pamela O Connor as our representative.

Faculty representation - Dying with Dignity Bill Response from RCPI

I represented the Faculty on the RCPI Consultation group formulating an updated response to Dying with Dignity Bill from 2020 which will be sent to Government.

National Rare Diseases Strategy-Faculty Response

The Faculty sent a group response to the National Rare Diseases Strategy for Ireland consultation.

Highlighting Child Poverty

The Autumn conference has a strong focus on poverty and disadvantage in childhood with a specific session of speakers and a panel discussion to follow.

Advocacy for Improved Neonatal Care

The Faculty board further advocated for the progressing of a Level 4 NICU in the new children's hospital by writing to CHI in strong support. The Faculty wrote to the Clinical Lead for the National Clinical Program in transport Medicine to advocate for the urgent commencement of the Retro transport program for Neonates.

Clinical Advisory Groups

Firstly, I would like to thank Dr Paula Cahill who has been Co-Chair of the Paediatric Clinical Advisory Group (CAG) of the Faculty for 2 terms -she has given huge time and expertise to the role. She is demitting as Co-Chair but will stay on the CAG as a committee member.

The Paediatric Clinical Advisory Group of the Faculty reviewed, advised on and approved many National Clinical Guidelines including:

- Managing Children with Type 1 Diabetes who use Continuous Glucose Monitoring,
- The model of care of the emergency medicine program,
- The management of children with diabetes requiring surgery,
- The collaborative Clinical practice guidance document -Anorexia Nervosa: The Management of the Paediatric Patient,
- The investigation and management of Coeliac disease Guideline
- Paediatric Surgery Model of care HSE 2024
- Paediatric Algorithms were finalised with the help of the SPR's and consultants at the Clinical Advisory Group (CAG). The algorithms are available on the HSE website and via QR code.
- Trauma service provision for Children document.

The Neonatal Clinical advisory group of the Faculty reviewed and advised on:

- The Model of Care for Neonatal Services in Ireland
- Planning and implementation of a level 4 NICU in the new children's hospital
- The Pathfinder program on RSV immunization to all newborns from September 2024-February 2025
- The implementation of CMV testing for infants referred from the Universal newborn screening program.
- Neonatal Resuscitation program with 3,000 healthcare staff receiving training and certification.
- The new Retro Transport service to enable infants to be transferred from tertiary centres to their local hospital-currently not yet in operation.
- The appointment of a new national Retinopathy of prematurity co-ordinator.
- The Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth at the Threshold of Viability RCPI document.
- The fortification of Flour with Folic Acid steering group established by the Department of Health to advise on same.
- Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip Universal screening -HIQA did not recommend the introduction of universal screening. The next steps will be putting a structured framework around the existing selective ultrasound screening program.
- The Faculty established a multidisciplinary working group to develop a resource on the assessment and management of tongue tie in neonates and infants. Members of the group presented at the Spring Conference and a guideline is being developed for use by health professionals.

Governance

The Faculty of Paediatrics Governance document was tabled as a motion and approved at the Faculty AGM 2023. It was subsequently passed by the RCPI council in December 2023. Thank you to the Governance committee who brought this document to completion.

Faculty events-Engaging our Community

The Faculty maintained an active event schedule this year. I would like to highlight the significant time and help given to me by the organising committee of the Faculty-Dr Julie Lucey (Convenor of Meetings),Dr Louise Kyne, Dr Ahmed Khan and Dr Sinead Murphy.

Biannual Conferences

The **Autumn Conference** was held October 6th **“Paediatric Practice, Education and Trending topics”**. The 27th Ralph Counahan Lecture was given by Dr Camilla Kingdon, President of the RCPCH and Consultant Neonatologist at the Evelina London Children’s hospital **“Thriving in the midst of change-a 21st century approach to career planning”**. Professor Andrew Cant, Honorary Clinical Professor in Paediatric Immunology, delivered a keynote address entitled **“Wisdom in Immunology”**. Following the conference an admission ceremony included the awarding of honorary fellowship for Dr Camilla Kingdon and Professor Andrew Cant. The ceremony also included awards of CSCST to graduates of the training program.

The **Spring Conference** was held in May and the theme was **“Paediatrics in Evolution”**. There was a spotlight on mental health, transition of care for young people and the transformative impact of child health technology on paediatric health care. There were 2 keynote addresses. Dr Lee Hudson, Consultant Paediatrician, Great Ormond St Hospital for Children, London/UCL spoke about **“Acute Mental Health in Paediatric Settings”** Professor Paul Dimitri, Professor of Child Health, Consultant in Paediatric Endocrinology and Vice President for Science and Research RCPCH, provided insights in to **“Empowering Futures: Harnessing the Power of Technology for Better Paediatric Healthcare”**.

Faculty Webinars

Three Faculty webinars were held with excellent attendance and feedback.

In November, the **Aspire fellows** spoke about their experiences and journeys through their fellowships with helpful advice for those considering this option In the future. In January, members of the award winning 22Q deletion syndrome multidisciplinary clinic in CHI Crumlin described **“What’s New in 22Q?”**- a 3600 view of 22 Q Deletion syndrome and how the clinic functions and was developed.

In March **“Adolescent Health Matters”** was the title of a webinar focused on the particular and important health issues and needs of adolescents from a mental, physical, and psychosocial perspective.

In November the Faculty participated in a **cross-college** webinar with the Faculty of Public Health, Faculty of Pathology and the Institute of Medicine: **“Invasive Group A Streptococcus Upsurge 22/23-working and learning together”**. All the Faculty events were well attended by Trainees, NCHD’s and consultants. Paediatric doctors in non-training posts working in paediatric units can avail of free online attendance at the Spring and Autumn faculty conferences.

Education and Training

Thank you to our busy and committed NSD’S: Dr Jean Donnelly, Dr Carol Blackburn, Dr Orla Flanagan (HST General Paediatrics), Dr Orla Franklin (HST Paediatric Cardiology),Dr Lisa Mc Carthy and Dr Brian Walsh (HST Neonates),Dr Conor Hensey (BST),Dr Juan Trujillo (BST) and Dr Edina Moylett (BST).I would like to extend particular thanks to Dr Michael Boyle- who is chair of the Specialist training committee and has extensive knowledge and experience in training and trainee matters. I would also like to acknowledge Prof Michael O Neill, Director of Paediatric Education and training for the Faculty and thank him for his wisdom, insight and expertise in advancing training and education for the Faculty.

Management Consultant Fellowships

RCPI’s Management Consultant Fellowships, created in partnership with PwC Ireland and EY Ireland, offers Trainees on a HST programme the opportunity to work full-time for a one-year period as a management consultant to gain practical business and management experience in a healthcare context. In its third year, the Management Consultant Fellowships were awarded to 2 trainees from Paediatrics: Dr Claire Connellan (HST General Paediatrics), Dr Sarah Kyne (HST General Paediatrics). Dr Connellan and Dr Kyne graduated in September 2024 at a special ceremony with the business partners EY and PWC in RCPI.

Aspire Fellowships:

Doctors awarded a Certificate of Successful Completion of Training (CSCST) on completion of their Higher Specialist Training may apply for an RCPI Aspire Fellowship. Paediatrics was fortunate to obtain 7 Aspire fellowships this year- Dr Deirdre Foley, Dr Eva Forman, Dr Eoin Fitzgerald, Dr Michaela Pentony, Dr Elaine Kennedy. Dr Sarah Lewis and Dr Doireann Pereira.

International Residency Training Programme (IRTP):

Within the IRTP in Paediatrics, there are currently four doctors on the programme. All trainees to date are from Saudi Arabia, with plans to extend the programme to other Gulf countries in the near future.

International Fellowship Programme(ICFP):

The Clinical Fellowship Programme has had outstanding success in the Paediatric specialities, with thirty-six graduates and seventeen trainees currently in post. Paediatric Allergy and Pulmonology and Paediatric Palliative Medicine were recently added to the paediatric fellowship programme list.

NDTP Funding 2024 to Paediatric projects

For the 24/25 cycle of the Faculty of Paediatrics was awarded NDTP Development funding for three new projects. These projects will be completed in the 24/25 Academic year and reported to the faculty.

1. Paediatric Pocket Tutorials:

Clinical Lead: Dr J Fitzsimons

Programme Manager: Rachel Mac Donnell

The Faculty continues to develop the Paediatric Pocket tutorials under the leadership of Dr John Fitzsimons and the education division of RCPI. The aim of the pocket tutorial project is to expand and improve access to specialist and generalist paediatric tutorials for clinicians, to facilitate short and targeted learning opportunities, enhance knowledge for clinical practice and to refresh critical paediatric clinical knowledge in a variety of general and specialist paediatric care areas. Initially started in 2020 in response to Covid/changing educational environment. Please encourage your paediatric departments to use these tutorials in their teaching practice/training of NCHD's. The Paediatric Pocket Tutorial resource has grown to 14 courses with 132 videos created by more than 100 paediatric experts from children's healthcare across Ireland.

NDTP funding was awarded to upgrade 70 pocket tutorial videos, developed by consultants in various paediatric specialties. This project had four overarching pillars encompassing governance structures, development of new content, establishing an evaluation framework and expanding the offering to external learners. Additional tutorials were added and grouped in 14 new pocket tutorials courses and these are now free of charge for Trainees, Members and Fellows of RCPI Paediatrics). Selected courses are offered free to any learner. All other courses are accessible to external learners for a fee.

The 14 courses are:

- Adolescent Health
- Allergy
- Cardiology
- Child Protection
- Childhood Cancer
- Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition
- General Paediatrics
- Inclusion Health
- Medication Safety
- Metabolic Medicine
- Neurology
- Palliative Care
- Respiratory Medicine

- SLT Building Blocks

2. Paediatric Mentorship Programme-A Near-peer Mentorship Programme for Paediatric NCHDs across a hospital group.

A Near-Peer Mentorship Programme for Paediatric non consultant hospital doctors (NCHDs) across Children's Health Ireland (CHI), with 109 participants was established July 2023-24 modelled on best practice. There were 55 mentor-mentee pairs ranging from intern to senior registrar. One NCHD requested a dual role, to be both a mentor and mentee. A broad range of clinical specialities were involved with NCHDs from 22 clinical specialities- the top three being General Paediatrics (18%, n=20), Surgery (11%, n=12), and Respiratory (8%, n=9). Twenty-three percent of participating NCHDs were not on training schemes. Near-peer mentors underwent dedicated mentor training. Mentees attended a programme information session. Overall, mentors and mentees were very positive about this new, evidence based, structured, mentoring project involving regular mentor-mentee meetings and regular feedback.

This pilot project was delivered by Prof Dubhfeasa Slattery, Dr Allan Goldman CHI CMO, and the CHI professionalism team. It was funded by the National Doctors Training & Planning, with support from the RCPI Faculty of Paediatrics and the Intern Network Coordinator for the Dublin North East/RCSI Network.

3.The development of an educational training programme in Neonatology and Neonatal intubation.

Clinical Lead: Eoin O'Curraín

Comprising three distinct strands, the project intends to address critical gaps in knowledge acquisition, technical skills mastery, and preparedness for neonatal emergencies. This will be achieved through the development of innovative, evidence based educational resources for Paediatric Registrars and Specialist Registrars in Ireland.

4.Review and enhancement of Paediatric Procedural Skills training for early career Paediatrics Trainees.

Clinical Lead: Dr Conor Hensey

This project will see the upgrade of simulation equipment for BST trainees.

5.Building an Education Framework for Inclusion Health in Postgraduate Medical Training

The Faculty also collaborated with the institute of medicine on a proposal for Building an Education Framework for Inclusion Health in Postgraduate Medical Training. This collaboration also encompasses the Forum of Postgraduate training and was awarded full funding. The focus of this framework will be on identifying the capabilities required by doctors to address health inequities experienced by socially excluded groups and working towards achieving health outcomes equivalent to those of the general population. This framework will serve as a foundation for designing clinical fellowships, special interest pathways, curricula within National Training Programmes, and other educational elements.

Exams

Thank you to Dr Eoin O Curraín, Associate Dean of Examinations for Paediatrics, Dr Niamh Lynch and Dr Ngozi Oketah, our convenors, for the huge work they do in progressing the paediatric examinations and ensuring the highest academic standards in doing so. The first International clinical exam was successfully run in Suliman Al Habib Hospital, Riyadh in October 2023. Thank you to all of the staff of RCPI and special thanks to local convenor Dr Hassan Eliwan, Consultant Paediatrician, who trained in Ireland.

The work of the exams department is ongoing all year around with many members and fellows giving so generously of their time-question writing blitzes, examining and organisation in the various exam centres. These exams would not run without all of you.

Faculty Awards-Celebrating our Community:

The past year provided wonderful opportunities to celebrate the achievements of our members and fellows. Sincere Thanks to professor Basil Elnazir for chairing the awards committee and to Dr Michael Boyle (Victoria Coffey Award), Dr Jean Donnelly (Conor Ward Essay prize), Dr Annmarie Murphy and Professor Clodagh O Gorman (Sir Henry Marsh medal).

The Kathleen Lynn Medal 2023: awarded to Professor Hilary Hoey for her outstanding contribution to child health. It was presented to her at the Spring Conference in May 2024.

Special recognition awards were presented to Dr Sabine Maguire for her contribution to community child health

and Professor Des Cox for his leadership and achievements of the tobacco policy group at RCPI.

Sir Henry Marsh Medal: Dr Bryony Treston: Title “Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in the context of paediatric COVID-19 infection in the Republic of Ireland April 2020 to April 2021”

Victoria Coffey Award: Dr Aisling Smith: Title “Serial Assessment of Cardiac Function and Pulmonary Hemodynamics in Infants with Down Syndrome”

Conor Ward Essay: Dr Sally Cahill: Title “Valuable child health learning opportunities experienced whilst working in secondary care hospitals in Ireland”

National Teaching Award in Subspecialty in the tertiary Children’s Hospitals (CHI): Dr Terence Prendiville (CHI at Crumlin)

National Teaching Award in Neonatology in tertiary and regional centres: Prof Naomi McCallion (The Rotunda)

National Teaching Award in General with special interest, and Community Paediatrics (tertiary and regional centres): Dr Louise Gibson (Cork University Hospital)

National Teaching Award in General and Community Paediatrics: Prof Michael O’Neill (Mayo University Hospital)

We await this year’s winners at the upcoming Autumn Faculty Conference in October.

And finally:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of the staff in the faculty and the college who have helped me so much over the past year with their expertise and skills in so many areas.

In the Faculty-John Hunt and Darragh Whelan carefully guide me through the faculty affairs -their incredible support is much appreciated and valued. Congratulations to Darragh on his recent appointment as Faculties Manager.

Muríosa Prendergast, Head of Operations and Sinead Lucey, Business development who are always there to advise and support the faculty with their wealth of experience. The incredible events team who organise events with ease and efficiency and the communication department who advertise our faculty activities so impressively. Special thanks to Niamh O Sullivan for helping with the establishment of the new communications strategy.

The other Deans and Chairs and Senior management team who are so experienced and collegial and have given me huge support in my first year as Dean.

The healthcare leadership team.

Barry Quinlan and the finance team who guide and advise.

Maria Golden – the health and wellbeing manager.

The exams, training and education teams

Mr Colm Small, Head of Functions for his commitment to the faculty developments.

Audrey Houlihan CEO and Diarmuid O Shea President RCPI, who provide such strong leadership and support for the faculty and the college.

Magda and Linda for the welcome they give on arrival at the college.

I would like to thank everyone in the Faculty community around the country for agreeing to represent the faculty and participate so positively in faculty affairs.

I have been very fortunate to have the support and guidance of Louise Kyne over the last year as past dean and I thank her for her encouragement and guidance.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”.

Helen Adams Keller (June 27, 1880 – June 1, 1968) was an American author, disability rights advocate, political activist and lecturer.

Dr Judith Meehan, Dean of the Faculty of Paediatrics

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Faculty Board

The Board convened 5 times over the past year: 10 November 2023, 19 January 2024, 08 March 2024, 21 June 2024, and 06 September 2024.

Board Members were as follows:

Dr	Judith MEEHAN	Faculty Dean
Dr	Louise Kyne	Immediate Past Dean, demitting October 2024
Dr	Sinéad MURPHY	Honorary Secretary
Dr	Ethel RYAN	Honorary Treasurer
Dr	Juliette LUCEY	Convener of Meetings, demitting October 2024
Dr	Michael BOYLE	Chair of STC
Dr	Ellen CRUSHELL	Clinical Programme Lead
Dr	John FITZSIMONS	NSD (CPSP)
Prof	Hilary HOEY	RCPI Director of Professional Competence
Dr	Ahmed KHAN	Board Member
Dr	Íde NIC DHONNCHA	Board Member
Dr	Eoin Ó CURRAÍN	Associate Dean of Examinations
Dr	Michael O'NEILL	Director of Training & Education
Dr	Ahmed KHAN	Board Member
Dr	Íde NIC DHONNCHA	Board Member
Dr	Ikechukwu OKAFOR	Board Member, demitting October 2024
Prof	Clodagh O'Gorman	Board Member
Dr	Muhammad AZAM	Board Member
Dr	Basil ELNAZIR	Board Member
Dr	Ruth CAREY	Trainee Representative
Dr	Emily Farnan	Trainee Representative
Mr	James DOORLEY	Lay Person
Mr	Aidan Kenny	Lay Person

Faculty Representation

RCPI:

- RCPI Council: Dr Pamela O'Connor
- RCPI Credentials Committee: Dr Louise Kyne and Pamela O'Connor
- RCPI Education Committee: Dr Michael O'Neill
- RCPI Examinations Committee: Dr Eoin O'Curraín
- RCPI Executive Board: Dr Judith Meehan
- RCPI Fellowship Steering Group: Dr Michael Boyle
- RCPI LTFT Training Group: Dr Jean Donnelly
- RCPI Policy Group on Alcohol: Dr Turlough Bolger
- RCPI Policy Group on Obesity, Prof Hilary Hoey
- RCPI The Child Protection Peer Review Group: Dr Louise Kyne

- RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco: Dr Des Cox
- RCPI Faculty's Community Child Health (CCH)/ Neurodisability Group: Dr Nick Van der Spek and Dr Niamh Lagan
- RCPI Professional Competence Assessors: Drs Michael O'Neill and Pamela O'Connor
- RCPI Professional Policy Group on GDPR: Dr Ellen Crushell
- RCPI Recruitment & Retention Group: Dr Paul Gallagher
- RCPI Research & Ethics Committee: Prof Eleanor Molloy and Prof Clodagh O Gorman
- RCPI Simulation Group: Dr Robert Kieran
- RCPI Steering Group for National QI Programme: Dr John Fitzsimons
- RCPI National Tuberculosis Advisory Group: Dr Cilian Ó Maoldomhnaigh
- RCPI Trainees Committee: Dr Aun Muhammad i.ie (BST), Dr Alessandra Biagini (HST)
- RCPI Training Site Accreditation: Prof John Murphy, with Prof Michael O'Neill on the TSA Working Group
- RCPI Wellness Group: Dr Juliette Lucey
- The Medical Subcommittee of the Disability Advisory Group (DAG) to the National Clinical Programme for People with Disability (NCPDP) – Dr Jacqueline McBrien
- RCPI Clinical advisory group on smoking and e-cigarettes to influence national policy for tobacco endgame – Prof Desmond Cox
- RCPI Strategy Group - Dr Pamela O Connor
- RCPI Climate Action Group - Dr Judith Meehan and Dr Joanne Balfe

External Agencies

- All Ireland Paediatric Committee: Dr Judith Meehan Co Chair, Dr Ray Nethercott Co Chair
- BPSU Scientific Committee: Prof Susan O'Connell, ROI Rep
- Children's Palliative Care Policy Development Working Group: Dr Siobhán Gallagher
- Consultant Applications Advisory Committee: Dr Carol Blackburn
- Diabetes Federation of Ireland: Prof Hilary Hoey
- European Academy of Paediatrics: Dr Louise Kyne and Dr Martin White
- European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology: Prof Hilary Hoey
- EURYP: Drs Roy Gavin Stone & Marguerite Lawler
- Forum of Postgraduate Specialist Training Bodies: Dr Judith Meehan
- Forum Global Health Working Group: Dr Ikechukwu Okafor
- Forum Health & Wellbeing: Prof Michael O'Neill
- Forum Quality and Safety Subcommittee: Dr John Fitzsimons
- Joint Forum/ NDTP Protected Training Time Working Group: Dr Anne-Marie Murphy
- Services: Drs Joanne Beamish, Sinead Harty, Mathew Thomas, Padraic Curran, Siobhan Gallagher & Paul Gallagher
- Informing Families Project Steering Group: Prof Jonathan Hourihane
- Intercollegiate Transport Medicine Liaison Committee: Dr Nuala Quinn & Prof John Murphy
- Irish Paediatric Surveillance Unit: Dr Robert Cunney
- Medical sub-committee of Disability Advisory Group: Prof Denise McDonald
- National Clinical Programme for Respiratory Disease: Dr Muireann Ní Chróinín
- National Immunisation Advisory Committee: Dr Julie Lucey
- National Neonatal Transport Programme: Dr Anne Twomey
- National Office for Clinical Audit Governance Board: Dr Ellen Crushell
- National Office for Clinical Audit Steering Group on Paediatric Diabetes: Dr Orla Neylon
- National Paediatric Hospital Development Board (NPHDB): Dr Emma Curtis
- NOCA Governance Board: Dr G Dempsey
- NOCA Steering Group on Paediatric Diabetes: Dr Orla Neylon
- NOCA Audit: Dr Hilary Strokes
- Obesity Task force: Prof Edna Roche
- Royal College of Paediatrics in Child Health (RCPCH): Prof Hilary Hoey
- NOCA/NPMR Rep: Dr Alan Finan

- NIAC Faculty Rep: Dr Julie Lucey
- Hiqa/Mental Health Commission Focus group: Prof Clodagh O Gorman

Board Composition:

3 Fellow Representative have been elected on to the Faculty Board, from October 2024 to October 2027. The Board welcomes Dr Shoana Quinn, Dr Catherine Gibbons and Dr Wasim Asif. The Dean and Board thank Dr Louise Kyne, Dr Juliette Lucy, Dr Ikechukwu Okafor and Dr Montasser Gadelsayed who are demitting their elected roles.

New Associate members of the Faculty

The Board welcomes new two Associate Members Elizabeth Cahill and Karen Given

New Fellows of the Faculty

The Board and Faculty welcomes the following Fellows to the Faculty in 2024:

- Dr Aoibhinn Walsh
- Dr Danielle Vincent
- Dr Eleanor Ryan
- Dr Emma Ruth
- Dr Jennifer Finnegan
- Dr Michaela Pentony
- Dr Sean Armstrong
- Dr Sean Tamgumus
- Dr Sheiniz Remtula Giva
- Dr Siobhan Connor
- Dr Suzanne Slattery
- Dr Natalie Nanayakkara
- Dr Maria Mohammed
- Dr Neidin Bussmann
- Dr Caroline Ahearne
- Dr Sarah Lewis
- Dr Phani Sanneerappa
- Dr Gibby Koshy
- Dr Michael Carter
- Dr Angharad Griffiths
- Dr Carmel Moore
- Dr Colm Breatnach
- Dr Daryl Butler
- Dr Zaheera Yusuf
- Dr Tanveer Ashraf
- Dr Eleanor Ryan
- Dr Roin Fitzgerald
- Dr Daniel Onyekwere
- Dr Ana-Louise Hawke
- Dr Sheena Durnin

New Honorary Fellows of the Faculty

The Board and Faculty welcomes Dr Leo Varadkar, Prof Laura Viani and Prof Richard O'Reilly to Honorary Fellowship of the Faculty in 2024.

Dr Sinéad Murphy, Honorary Secretary

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

General

A deficit of €3,287 was incurred for the 12 months to end June 2024, this is a reduction of €10,276 as last year's surplus was €6,984.

Income

Total Income (excluding investment income) generated for the year end June 2024 was €149,781, a decrease of 6% on last year.

Income is classed under four broad headings:

- Subscriptions and Admission Fees
- Event Fee Income and Sponsorship
- HSE Grant Income
- Miscellaneous Income

Subscriptions and Admission Fees

Receipts from Subscriptions were €36,365 in 2023/2024 versus €44,302 in 2022/2023, a decrease of €7,937 (17.9%) on last year. Faculty admissions totalled €NIL in 2023/2024 versus €270 in 2022/2023.

In 2023/2024, 56% of Associate Members, 53% of Collegiate Members and 82% of Fellows paid their subscriptions. In 2022/2023, 60% of Associate Members, 66% of Collegiate Members and 90% of Fellows paid their subscriptions.

Event Fee Income and Sponsorship

Event fee income for 2023/2024 was €28,420 versus €32,400 in 2022/2023, a decrease of 12.3%.

HSE Grant Income

This relates to the SLA to deliver training.

The amount of €84,996 is the proportion of the grant relating to the Faculty to cover cost of overheads and administration running costs. This has increased by €1,993 when compared to 2022/2023.

Investments

Investments held by the College at the end of June 2024 were €9,771,185 of which €31,299 were apportioned to the Faculty – an increase of €2,984 when compared to 2022/2023.

Costs

Costs are categorised as follows:

- Direct Costs, which staffing and administration costs;
- Overhead recharge, which is for rent, insurance, light, heat, etc, and to cover the provision of the services of Finance, IT and HR, etc.

Direct Costs total €83,930 for the year, an increase of €1,148 when compared with 2022/2023. Included under direct costs are wages and salaries which increased by €3,269, event costs which reduced by €373, travel and subsistence costs increased by €8,946 (€2,271 hotel accommodation, €737 Mileage, €70 taxis, €366 flights, €5,502 Travel Other, administration costs decreased by €1,445, IT costs decreased by €873 (hybrid event costs) and miscellaneous costs decreased by €7,011 (history book cost in 2022/2023).

Overhead recharge of €72,104 has been charged to the Paediatrics accounts for 2023/2024 (€70,897 in 2022/2023).

Faculty of Paediatrics
DRAFT Profit and Loss - 30 June 2024

	30/06/2024	30/06/2024		30/06/2023	Variance to Prior Year
	Actual	Budget	€ - Variance	Prior Year - Actual	
Income					
Fee Income - Events	28,420	24,000	4,420	32,400	(3,980)
Subscriptions Income	36,365	26,437	9,928	44,572	(8,207)
Admissions Fees	0	0	0	0	0
Sponsorship Donations & Fundraising	0	7,500	(7,500)	0	0
Funding Income - HSE SLA	84,996	73,827	11,169	83,004	1,992
Investment Income & Bank Interest Received	2,984	0	2,984	691	2,293
	152,766	131,764	21,002	160,667	(7,901)
Direct Costs					
Direct Event Costs	(13,774)	(24,575)	10,801	(14,147)	373
Direct Staff Costs	(46,681)	(45,225)	(1,456)	(43,411)	(3,270)
Direct Other Staff Costs	(438)	(240)	(198)	(402)	(36)
Direct Professional Fees	0	0	0	(1,400)	1,400
Direct Subsistence	(9,376)	(6,140)	(3,236)	(430)	(8,946)
Direct Administration Costs	(1,560)	(1,110)	(450)	(3,006)	1,446
Direct IT Costs	(9,103)	(9,102)	(1)	(9,976)	873
Direct Miscellaneous Costs	(2,998)	(12,400)	9,402	(10,009)	7,011
	(83,930)	(98,792)	14,862	(82,781)	(1,149)
Gross Profit	68,836	32,972	35,864	77,886	(6,752)
Indirect Costs					
Finance Costs	(20)	0	(20)		(20)
Overhead Recharge	(72,104)	0	(72,104)	(70,897)	(1,207)
	(72,124)	0	(72,124)	(70,902)	(1,227)
Total Expenditure	(156,053)	(98,792)	(57,262)	(153,683)	(2,375)
Net Profit/(Loss)	(3,287)	32,972	(36,259)	6,984	(10,276)

NATIONAL SPECIALTY DIRECTORS' REPORTS

HST General Paediatrics

The past year has been another busy one for the four HST NSDs of Dr Carol Blackburn, Dr Jean Donnelly, Dr Orla Flanagan and myself and we would be at sea without the constant support of our Programme Coordinator, Ms Irene Poltonieri. In addition, Dr Ruth Carey and Dr Emily Farnan have been wonderful trainee reps feeding back to us and disseminating information as needed. The neonatal unit in Galway University Hospital was added to list of posts for first and second year trainees for 6 months credit of their neonatal year in July 2023. This has been warmly received and allowed an increase in our intake to help keep in line with work force planning. The OBE curriculum is entering in to its second year on HST in July 2024 and trainees and trainers are getting more and more familiar with it.

173 trainees are registered on the HST scheme in General Paediatrics in Ireland for the 2024-25 academic year. There were 10 HST study days in the 2023/2024 academic year. These were run as in person events and recordings of the study days are available to trainees who could not attend. This year we had our first study day hosted by Cork University Hospital, which was very well received and we hope will become an annual event. 40 candidates were interviewed over a two-day period in February 2024. 37 appointments were made with all 35 first-year trainees taking up their positions in July 2024. End of year evaluations were held in May and June including penultimate evaluations. A total of 135 trainees were assessed. Interim assessments will be held again in November/ December 2024. CSCSTs were awarded to 20 trainees in July 2024 and a further 3 trainees are scheduled complete the programme on or before January 2025. The recruitment process for July 2025 will open in October 2024.

Prof Michael Boyle, National Specialty Director

HST Neonatology

Twelve trainees are registered on the HST scheme in Neonatology in Ireland for the 2024-2025 academic year. Interviews were held on 30th January 2024 and 4 new trainees were appointed to the scheme. This equals the number of trainees appointed to the scheme in the previous academic year. Three trainees are in full-time clinical placements, two are half-time clinical, 4 are doing OCPE, in research posts, and 3 are currently on a leave of absence. There were 9 Neonatal Study Days in the 2023/2024 academic year, these were hybrid in-person and remote events. The end of year assessments were held on 28 May. There were 4 graduates from the scheme in July 2024. All four have arranged overseas clinical fellowships (1 in UK, and 3 in Australia). The recruitment process for the July 2025 intake will open in October 2024 with interviews due to be held in January/February 2025.

Prof Brian Walsh, National Specialty Director

HST Paediatric Cardiology

The HST All Island Paediatric Cardiology programme continues to successfully train SpRs both north and south of the border on the CHI@Crumlin, Dublin and The Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast sites. The third CCST was awarded this year to Dr Niall Linnane who has relocated to Texas Children's Hospital in Houston to pursue a fellowship in Paediatric Interventional Cardiology. We are also delighted to announce that Dr Sophie Dignan has been awarded an ICAT fellowship to pursue her PhD, which will involve a collaboration between the department of computer science in UCD as well as the imaging and fetal medicine departments at CHI@Crumlin and The Evelina Hospital in London. We are grateful for the help of the educational team in RCPI for their considerable assistance in the development of the new curriculum for training launched this summer.

We continue to work with the college to restore GMC recognition for training in paediatric cardiology and would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Dean of the Faculty of Paediatrics Dr Judith Meehan in this regard. Our link with the Faculty of Paediatrics has been very fruitful this year and we have benefited greatly from joint participation in training days with both the general paediatric and neonatal HST groups. We have also linked with the RCPCH training programme for paediatric cardiologists in the UK to allow our trainees to attend their SpR

training days and will hold a first joint SpR training day in November to align with the British congenital Cardiac Association annual meeting which we are pleased to host in Dublin this year.

Dr Orla Franklin, National Specialty Director

BST

There are currently 106 trainees enrolled in the paediatric BST scheme. Fifty-three trainees are commencing year one this July, of which 16 are non-EU citizens and 37 EU citizens. Interviews for BST took place via video conference in January and early February 2024. We had a high number, and calibre of applicants with many having gained experience in Paediatrics overseas or within Ireland prior to interviewing. We still wish to support trainees joining the scheme direct from intern year if it is their preference. This year 175 candidates were interviewed. Each of the successful candidates was assigned a 2-year rotation with posts in neonatology, general paediatrics, and specialty paediatrics. A very successful orientation day for incoming BSTs took place on the 5th of July.

Drs. Edina Moylett (Galway), Conor Hensey (Dublin), and Juan Trujillo (Cork) continue as BST NSDs; Ms. Tina Balogun is the Programme Coordinator. There are virtual monthly NSD meetings during the training year to review and discuss acute trainee concerns; address issues arising with the training programme; and feedback to trainees efficiently. Training sites are inspected as per RCPI schedule in addition to site inspections triggered by trainee feedback.

There were eight BST study days in the 2023/2024 academic year, these are in person events giving trainees the opportunity to meet and develop with their peers and to support each other as a network. The study days are generally very well attended. A new online BST Taught Programme with regular tutorials has now been launched to support professional development of trainees. There have been further revisions to the E-Portfolio to help with ease of use.

We continue to support trainees with flexible training requirements with the support of the RCPI Health and Wellbeing Department. Annual trainee assessments took place virtually in June, inclusive of feedback from trainers, review of logbook and training progress. Approximately 80% of trainees plan to apply directly to HST with most others taking the opportunity to travel or gain additional experience prior to HST. A smaller number of trainees opt to continue training in other specialties.

We appreciate the support trainers and colleagues have provided to the BST programme, and to trainees over the past year, and we welcome any feedback.

Dr Conor Hensey, National Specialty Director

Dr Edina Moylett, National Specialty Director

Dr Juan Trujillo, National Specialty Director

IMC APPLICATIONS TO THE SPECIALIST DIVISION OF THE REGISTER (SDR)

Applications numbers from July 2023 to July 2024:

New Applications Received: 12 in total (11 Paediatrics; 1 Paediatric Cardiology)

Written Reviews/Re-Apps Received: 9 in total

Recommendations made during this period

***Note recommendations made during period may not reflect the number of applications above as these reflect the outcomes being returned to the IMC during this period.**

Initial Assessments (New applications):

Recommended – 0

Not Recommended - 11

Written Reviews

Written Reviews: Recommended - 7

Not Recommended - 2

Re-Applications:

Recommended: 0

Not Recommended: 0

Data Retention Policy:

In line with the RCPI Data Retention policies, retention periods have been approved with the IMC for SDR applications as follows:

- Successful Applications – 13 months
- Unsuccessful applications – 5 years
- Successful/Unsuccessful Applications - Entry on RCPI Applications Log (Including reasons for rejection of the application) - indefinitely.

SDR Subcommittee:

In line with the new Terms of Reference for the SDR Subcommittee all National Specialty Directors along with the Director of Education and Training have joined the committee. Training was provided to all new members.

The Faculty are always happy for new members to join the panel of assessors for the assessment of applications received from the IMC. Training will be provided. If you wish to join please contact us at sdr@rcpi.ie

Information and Guidance for Applicants along with a recording of the Webinar held in October 2022 with the IMC are available on the RCPI website [Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Website > Learn and Develop > SDR Advice \(rcpi.ie\)](#)

Ms Siobhán Kearns, Specialist Register Applications & IMC Accreditation, Accreditation & Improvement Projects, RCPI

EXAMINATIONS

In this past year the Paediatric Examinations Committees have focused on content development and the national and international expansion of our clinical exam centres.

Committees:

A small group of paediatric consultants from around the country voluntarily contribute their expertise to ensure the successful facilitation of the examination to high standards. The group is organised into two committees, each with a convenor. The work of the committees includes question writing, editing, review and approval, standard setting, corrections, and preparation for and facilitation of clinical examinations. I wish to extend my gratitude to Dr Niamh Lynch, clinical examinations convenor and to Dr Ngozi Oketah, single best answer committee convenor, for their dedication and substantial commitment to organising and facilitating the written and clinical examinations.

Single best answer (SBA) committee: Dr Ngozi Oketah(Convenor), Dr Ciara McDonnell, Dr Michael Riordan, Dr Turlough Bolger, Dr Clodagh Sweeney, Dr Joanne Beamish, Dr Ciara Martin, Dr Sheena Durnin, Dr Emer Ryan, Dr Bridget Freyne and welcome to Dr Roy Gavin Stone and to Dr Sarah Lewis who joined the committee in 2024. Short answer question (SAQ)/Clinical examination committee: Dr Niamh Lynch (Convenor), Dr Cathy Gibbons, Dr Muhammad Azam, Dr Louise Kyne, Prof Naomi McCallion, Dr Juan Trujillo Dr Madeleine Murphy and Dr Orla Walsh.

The examinations would not be possible without the hard work, dedication, and commitment of the Examinations Team (Sinead, Louise, Rachel, Virginia, Sirpa & Rebecca) and the Education team (Aisling, Keith & Maurice) who support the committees and facilitate the efficient running of the examinations.

Examination Format: Written exams are computer-based and run by remote invigilation allowing access to candidates worldwide.

Table 1. Examination Schedule

Examination	Format	Dates
MRCPI Part I Written	100 question Single Best Answer (SBA)	Held in January & April/May
MRCPI Part II Written	Paper 1: 20 Short Answer Question (SAQ) Paper 2: 80 SBA	Held in March & August
MRCPI Part II Clinical	6 clinical stations	Held in May & November

Clinical examinations: There is an agreement in place with Children’s Health Ireland (CHI) to host the examinations at Tallaght Hospital twice per year in May and November. My sincere thanks to Dr Emer Ryan, Dr Jean Donnelly, Dr Joanne Beamish and Dr Maeve Kelleher for their diligence and hard work as patient recruiters for the examinations.

In May 2024 we successfully held the new format examination in University Hospital Limerick for the first time. The examination was coordinated by Drs Lynch and Trujillo with excellent local representation for clinical examiners and local convenor Professor Clodagh O’Gorman. This centre ran extremely well and we had very positive feedback from all involved. We plan to establish further new centres in Ireland in the second half of the year.

International sitting for the clinical examinations: A number of candidates each year travel to Ireland to take the clinical examination. To help to facilitate these candidates we have aimed to establish international examination centres. After successfully running our first International Exam in Suliman Al Habib Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 2023, the examinations department have met with representatives from Royal Hospital in Muscat, Oman where

the RCPI currently run clinical examinations in General Medicine and Obstetrics & Gynaecology, who kindly agreed to facilitate the Paediatric Clinical examination. Dr Tariq Al-Farsi, Consultant Paediatrician, was appointed as the local organiser. Dr Tariq travelled to Riyadh in October 2023 to observe the paediatric clinical examination. Our first sitting in Muscat, Oman will be held on 29 November 2024. Members of the examination department and nominated committee members/convenors will travel to the centre to support the exam, complete examiner training and standard setting.

Governance: The Associate Dean of Examinations reports to the Board of the Faculty of Paediatrics and to the RCPI Examinations Committee. The RCPI Examinations Committee finalised and accepted the Examination Appeals policy in December 2022. The RCPI Examinations Regulations, covering issues such as candidate conduct and restrictions on mobile phone use, were also updated in 2023. All candidates applying to sit an exam must agree to abide by all applicable college policies and regulations. The Paediatric Examination review conducted in 2019-2020 included the creation of terms of reference for both committees as well as a blueprint for the examination process. The terms of reference were updated in 2023.

Fees: In line with RCPI policy, examination fees increased by 3% for all examinations taking place after 1st January 2024. The overall increase reflects rising costs driven by inflation. The examination fee structure is available on the relevant exam page on the RCPI website. An examination candidate working in Ireland can apply for a refund upon successfully passing an examination, under the HSE Clinical Course and Examination Refund Scheme.

Outcomes: Following examination data feedback requests by the Trainee Committee, the Examinations Committee has approved the publishing of pass rates on an annual basis. From August 2022, the pass rate data is made readily available to candidates, their supervisors and the wider public on the RCPI website. The pass rate reflects the number of candidates who met the specified standard of the examination.

Table 2. Examination candidates and pass rate 2023/2024

Examination	Date	Candidates	Pass Rate
Part I Paediatrics	26 January 2024	90	69%
Part I Paediatrics	3 May 2024	80	74%
Part II Written Paediatrics	25 August 2023	87	55%
Part II Written Paediatrics	8 March 2024	77	78%
Part II Clinical Paediatrics	24 November & 1 December 2023	55	89%
Part II Clinical Paediatrics	24 May- 7 June 2024	56	88%

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the College for their wholehearted support, in particular to Dr Judith Meehan, Dr Louise Kyne, the examinations department, the examination committees and my paediatric consultant colleagues who continue to show such commitment to ensuring the ongoing success of the examinations. I would encourage all Fellows of the Faculty to contribute to the examinations process through question writing, examining or committee membership so we can continue to consolidate the strong standards set for our trainees in future years.

Is mise le meas

Dr Eoin Ó Curraín, Associate Dean of Examinations, Sept 2023

NATIONAL CLINICAL PROGRAMME FOR PAEDIATRICS AND NEONATOLOGY

NAME OF CLINICAL PROGRAMME: NCP Paediatrics and Neonatology

Clinical Programme Leadership:

Clinical Advisory Group Chairs: Dr Judith Meehan, Dr Paula Cahill

Clinical Leads: Dr Ellen Crushell, Prof John Murphy, Prof Michael O' Grady

Programme Manager: Ms Jacqueline de Lacy (HSE PM).

Key Activities and Achievements:

1. National Clinical Guideline: Anorexia Nervosa: The Management of the Paediatric Patient developed in collaboration with CHI and launched in Q1 2024
2. Twenty Two Paediatric Algorithms and a poster (with QR codes for algorithms) published, uploaded and circulated to 19 Units
3. Service Specifications for Child and Adolescent Forensic Medical Services following concern or disclosure of Sexual Assault/ Abuse published in October 2023> Barnahus project proceeding nationally
4. Standard Operating Procedure for Testing infants for Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV) following hearing concern on Universal Newborn Hearing Screening pilot commenced in November 2023. A Parent information leaflet was developed and received the Plain English Mark from the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)
5. National Coeliac Algorithm developed with CHI, published and distributed
6. NCPPN was awarded an Irish Healthcare Centre Award (IHCA): Healthcare Initiative- Infectious Disease Prevention for the Standard Operating Procedure for Testing infants for Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV) following hearing concern on Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
7. In collaboration with the National Clinical Programme for People with Disability, funding was granted for 3.0 WTE Consultant Paediatricians SI Neurodisability to improve Paediatric Support to CDNTs
8. Site visits concluded to all local and regional paediatric and maternity units. Commenced visits with CHI- Neonatology and neurology to date
9. Paediatric Assessment Unit (PAU) working group established to assess current PAU configurations with the aim to develop high level Guiding Principles to support units currently operating as PAUs and to provide a framework for future development of PAUs
10. PAU survey developed and distributed to local and regional sites
11. Discussions with the Rehabilitation Programme in relation to establishing a Transitional working group for young adults with neuro conditions with rehabilitation needs
12. Initiated (letter to Dr Colm Henry, CCO) and supported the development of the General Paediatric Surgery Model of Care in collaboration with the National Clinical Programme for Surgery due to be published in Q3 2024
13. Paediatric Model of Care Summary Update completed for the Department of Health in collaboration with HSE Change Planning and Delivery
14. Palliative Care: Consultants Paediatricians SI Palliative Medicine approved for Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway. Educational resources published and education programme and discharge pathway guidelines development nearing completion
15. Discussions with CHI, Cork, Limerick and Galway regarding development of Tertiary Specialty Networks initiated
16. Submission to NSAC to consider universal hip ultrasound screening programme for DDH. HIQA review and NSAC committee did not recommend universal screening at this point in time. The Minister for Health recommended the systematic application of the current selective screening programme, as outlined in the 2017 guidelines published by the NCPPN
17. Second edition Neonatal Model of Care near completion
18. Neonatal Seizure Management guideline draft developed, awaiting CAG review
19. National ROP Co-Coordinator appointed. Workshop delivered in May 2024
20. Funding for Programme Manager for the National Paediatric Diabetes Audit approved- NOCA processing recruitment
21. Paediatric Diabetes Programme had preliminary discussions with Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda and University Hospital Waterford with clinicians re: the establishment of 'hub and spoke' model of Paediatric Diabetes Care Networks
22. National Clinical Guideline: Annual Review and Co-morbidity screening in Paediatric Type 1 Diabetes revised and updated. Published June 2024

23. National Clinical Guideline for Managing Children with Type 1 Diabetes who use Continuous Glucose Monitoring revised and updated. Published June 2024
24. Revision of National Clinical Guideline: General Principles in the Management of Children with Diabetes Requiring Surgery- consultation with National Clinical Programme for Surgery and National Clinical Programme for Anaesthetics. Submitted for CAG review
25. Revision of National Clinical Guideline: Management of Paediatric Diabetic Ketoacidosis. Submitted to Paediatric CAG for review
26. Paediatric Diabetes Network development in Cork University Hospital with outreach to Clonmel and Kerry University Hospital. Discussions ongoing with Our Lady of Lourdes, Drogheda, Cavan General Hospital, University Hospital, Waterford and St Luke's Kilkenny.

Dr Ellen Crushell, Clinical Lead for Children

Prof John Murphy, Clinical Lead for Neonatology

Prof Michael O' Grady, Clinical Lead for Paediatric Diabetes

CLINICAL ADVISORY GROUPS

CAG in Paediatrics

Remit of Clinical Advisory Group in Paediatrics: The CAG is a subcommittee of the Faculty of Paediatrics and is in place to provide medical oversight for the development of National Clinical frameworks/pathways along with providing support and advice to the National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics and Neonatology (NCPN) and the NCP for Paediatric Diabetes. The Clinical Advisory group reports to the Board of the Faculty of Paediatrics, RCPI. The role of CAG has shifted from the design of the model of care to supporting its implementation.

Membership: All the members of CAG are medical practitioners working in child health. The membership is reviewed every 3 years. There are representatives from tertiary, regional and local units, also Northern Ireland. Representation was sought from GP, paediatric surgery and Public Health. Terms of reference for CAG were updated 2023 as part of the Faculty of Paediatrics Governance document.

Meetings of CAG: The CAG convened in person and online: 22/9/23,1/12/23,1/3/24,7/6/24

Co-Chairs: Dr Judith Meehan and Dr Paula Cahill

CAG Activity:

Over the past year the Paediatric CAG reviewed, advised and approved the activities of the National Clinical program (listed under National Clinical Program for Paediatrics and Neonatology [page](#)) to enable national approval for the HSE.

1. CAG advised on the National Clinical Guideline: Anorexia Nervosa: The Management of the Paediatric Patient developed in collaboration with CHI and launched in Q1 2024
2. The Model of Care for General Paediatric Surgery in Ireland 2023 was sent to CAG for feedback which was collated and incorporated. The Model of care was launched in Q3 2024.
3. The updated document on- Rehabilitation for Children and Young People in Ireland following an acquired brain injury -Client services and Potential future directions- was circulated and feedback sent to Dr Irwin Gill.
4. The Clinical Practice Guidelines and Algorithms were finalized and approved by CAG. These are relevant to all health care professionals dealing with children. They are available on the HSE website and QR codes were also developed for ease of access.
5. Professor Brian Walsh and Professor Deirdre Murray presented to CAG on the Early detection of Cerebral Palsy Project -aiming to reduce the age of diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy using evidence based standardized assessments.
6. Professor Billy Bourke presented to the CAG on the new Guideline for the Diagnosis of Coeliac Disease. Feedback was subsequently given and the Guideline was finalized and presented at the Faculty of Paediatrics Spring Conference in May 2024 and included on the HSE website.
7. Ms Irene O'Brien, Clinical Nurse Co-ordinator, Children with Life-limiting conditions North East, presented on the Emergency Care Plan, Ambulance Care Directive. The document was discussed and feedback given. There was an update provided at a later CAG.
8. Dr Ciara Martin, National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead for Children and Young People, presented to CAG on the draft National Framework document: Transition of Care to Adult Services: building on the work done by the Faculty in 2018 to devise standards to any specialty incorporating Transition of Care.
9. Expressions of interest were sought for paediatric representatives for work being done on Alcohol damage across the lifespan, Foetal Alcohol and Secondary damage. Suitable representation from Paediatrics and the College of Psychiatrists was discussed.
10. Reviewed and approved National Clinical Guideline: Annual Review and Co-morbidity screening in Paediatric Type 1 Diabetes revised and updated. Published June 2024
11. National Clinical Guideline for Managing Children with Type 1 Diabetes who use Continuous Glucose Monitoring revised and updated. Published June 2024
12. Revision of National Clinical Guideline: General Principles in the Management of Children with Diabetes Requiring Surgery- consultation with National Clinical Programme for Surgery and National Clinical

Programme for Anaesthetics. Submitted for CAG review

13. Revision of National Clinical Guideline: Management of Paediatric Diabetic Ketoacidosis. Submitted to Paediatric CAG for review

14. Neonatal Clinical Advisory Group updates were provided by Prof John Murphy on:

- a) The Model of Care for Neonatal Services in Ireland 2024
- b) Planning and implementation of a level 4 NICU in the new children's hospital
- c) The Pathfinder program on RSV immunization to all newborns from September 2024-February 2025
- d) The implementation of CMV testing for infants referred from the Universal newborn screening program.
- e) Neonatal Resuscitation program with 3,000 healthcare staff receiving training and certification.
- f) The new Retro Transport service to enable infants to be transferred from tertiary centres to their local hospital-currently not yet in operation.
- g) The appointment of a new national Retinopathy of prematurity co-ordinator.
- h) The Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth at the Threshold of Viability RCPI document.
- i) The fortification of Flour with Folic Acid approved by the Department of Health.
- j) Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip Universal screening -HIQA did not recommend the introduction of universal screening.The next steps will be putting a structured framework around the existing selective ultrasound screening program.

Finally, thank you to Jacqueline De Lacy, Programme manager, National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics & Neonatology and Paediatric Diabetes. and Sandra Cavanagh for their ongoing support of the CAG in Paediatrics

Dr Judith Meehan- Co Chair

Dr Paula Cahill -Co Chair

Faculty of Paediatrics Clinical Advisory Group Committee Members:

Name	Position
Dr Judith Meehan	Co-Chair
Dr Paula Cahill	Co-Chair
Dr Ellen Crushell	Clinical Lead for Children/ Member
Prof John Murphy	Clinical Lead for Neonatology/ Member
Dr Louise Kyne	Member
Dr Aideen Byrne	Member
Dr Ann Hickey	Co-Chair Neonatal CAG
Dr Mathew Thomas	Co-Chair Neonatal CAG
Dr Aoife Carroll	Member
Dr Brendan O'Hare	Member
Dr Clodagh O'Gorman	Member
Dr David Mullane	Member
Dr Davina Healy	Member
Dr Edna Roche	Member
Dr Elizabeth Barrett	Member
Dr Ethel Ryan	Member
Dr Hilary Hoey	Member
Dr Jacqueline McBrien	Member
Prof John Murphy	Member
Dr John Twomey	Member
Dr Karl McKeever	Member
Dr Martin White	Member
Dr Mary Devins	Member
Dr Muhammad Azam	Member
Dr Niamh McSweeney	Member

Neonatal Clinical Advisory Group (NCAG)

Dates of meetings: 19 October 2023, 06 February 2024, 19 April 2024 28 June 2024.

The NCAG group met four times during the year continuing their remit to ensure structured and formal professional involvement in and support for the programmes being developed in neonatology. The group determines and inputs into to the development of the clinical management guidelines under the governance structure of the Clinical Care Programmes developed between the HSE and faculty of paediatrics at RCPI.

Meetings included representation from the 19 maternity hospitals and Children's Health Ireland (CHI) neonatal services.

Co-chairs: Dr Ann Hickey and Dr Matthew Thomas

Clinical Programme lead: Professor John Murphy

The Model of Care for Neonatal Services in Ireland 2024:

The second draft, taking in all the comments and feedback, is almost completed and will be circulated in the second half of September 2024. The major drivers for change are the increased complexity of obstetric care, the acuity of neonatal care, lowering of the threshold of viability, the implementation of new operating systems, introduction of quaternary neonatal intensive care to Ireland, and the practice of family centred care.

Level 4 NICU at CHI

A Level 4 NICU is planned for the children's hospital. It will be a new national neonatal intensive care service provided by neonatologists, neonatal nurses and AHCPs. There will be an 18 bed NICU as well as neonatal cots for high dependency and specialist low acuity neonatal care.

A steering committee has been established to spearhead the planning and implementation of the service which will develop incrementally.

Nirsevimab immunisation to reduce RSV infections and associated hospitalisations in infants:

Nirsevimab, an RSV monoclonal antibody, will be administered to all newborn infants this coming winter from September 1, 2024 to February 28, 2025. It will be offered to every infant before they are discharged home from maternity hospitals or CHI neonatology. The research trials and real world experience in Spain and France is that it leads to an 80% reduction in RSV hospitalisations in infants. It is a pathfinder programme and it will inform how the service can be best implemented in future years.

Testing infants for CMV following hearing concern on universal newborn screening:

This programme is now live. All 19 maternity hospitals are now live. Any infant with a suspected hearing loss on the universal newborn hearing test have a urine sent for CMV testing. If the infant is CMV positive they are referred to ID for anti-viral therapy consideration. The programme's first report will be circulated at the end of 2024.

NRP (neonatal resuscitation programme)

A total of 3,000 healthcare staff have NRP training and certification. Each year 1,144 staff receive either initial or recertification training. There are 155 NRP instructors. All maternity have been supplied with mannequins and air compressors for resuscitation simulation. There is an NRP training steering committee.

NNTP and the Retro-transfer service:

A retro-transfer service for newborn infants was proposed more than 3 years ago. It will enable infants to be repatriated from the tertiary centres in a timely, safe, effective manner. It will be a 5-day service, 9am to 5pm. The project is currently stalled because of some staff IR issues which will hopefully resolved in the near future.

Perinatal Genetics Service:

A perinatal genetics service has been established. It consists of two hubs nationally with each hub being led by a newly appointed consultant clinical geneticist supported by a genetic counsellor. Hub A will provide perinatal genetic services to the fetal medicine centres at the NMH, Cork and Limerick. Hub B will provide services to the Rotunda, Coombe, and Galway.

DDH Ultrasound Screening:

A selective ultrasound screening for DDH implementation steering group was established 10 years ago. This group has supported and enabled selective ultrasound hip of infants at increased risk of DDH. The data for 2023 reports that 10,239 (18.7%) of the 54,678 infant cohort had a hip ultrasound.

On May 10, 2024, HIQA published its health service technology report on 'Evidence review of universal ultrasound screening for developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) in infants in Ireland. It did not recommend the introduction of universal ultrasound screening. Its reasons included a) the high rate of spontaneous resolution of hip instability b) over-diagnosis leading to the potential complications of unnecessary treatment c) the absence of representative data of outcomes of the current selective screening programme.

The next steps will include putting a structured governance framework around the existing selective ultrasound screening programme.

ROP (retinopathy of prematurity) screening:

An national ROP co-ordinator has been appointed. A standard pathway for ROP screening and treatment indications is being developed. An ROP steering group is in place. The potential role of remote Ret-Cam screening and central analysis is being explored for peripheral centres. The system is being employed successfully in Northern Ireland.

SUPC (sudden unexpected postnatal collapse):

A memo has been issued to all maternity hospitals about SUPC. SUPC is a condition encountered in term infants well at delivery who inexplicably collapse in the early hours after birth – 1/3 within 2 hours, 1/3 at 2-24 hours, 1/3 at 24 hours – 7 days. There are at least 4 cases annually. Ensure that the infant is held correctly by the parent avoiding chin to chest. Passive observation of all infants particularly in the first 1-2 hours is advised.

IMIS (Irish Maternity Standards System) – NWIHP Report 2023

IMIS system for maternity hospital perinatal local performance and national overview was established in 2014.

Some of the relevant neonatal outcomes are:

- a) The number of in-utero transfers from one maternity hospital to another in the fetal interest are 345 (6.5/1000 births) annually.
- b) The number of cases of early neonatal bacteraemia (<72 hours) are 37 (0.9/1000 births) annually
- c) The number of infants who received TH (therapeutic hypothermia) are 58 (1.06/1000 births) annually
- d) The proportion of infants breastfed at first feed following birth was 64%.
- e) The number of cases of brachial plexus injury is 51 (0.84/1000 births) annually.

The Threshold of Fetal Viability:

The 'Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth at the Threshold of Viability' RCPI document (2020) recommended a change in the threshold of fetal viability from 24+0 weeks to 23+0 weeks gestation. This directive has been adopted nationally.

In the intervening 4 years there have been a number of international studies and reports which have pointed to an increased survival for infants born at 22+0 – 22+6 weeks gestation. In Ireland there have been anecdotal communications about survival of some of these very immature infants.

On foot of the continually changing landscape in relation to extreme prematurity a working group of neonatologists has been set up to discuss whether there should be any change in the approach to the management of infants born at 22 weeks gestation. A decision statement will be made in Q4, 2024.

Frameworks for Practice

A process for ratification of frameworks for practice and has been established. Guidelines will be accessible on the NWIHP site. An updated parenteral nutrition guideline has been completed and uploaded. Management of neonatal seizures, Erb's Palsy and an update of the previous guideline on gastroschisis are approaching final ratification.

Dr Ann Hickey Co-Chair
Dr Mathew Thomas Co-Chair

BRITISH PAEDIATRIC SURVEILLANCE UNIT (BPSU)

The BPSU is a world leading centre for rare paediatric disease surveillance. It enables doctors and researchers to investigate how many children in the UK and Republic of Ireland are affected by particular rare diseases, conditions or treatments each year, using epidemiological surveillance to record new cases.

The BPSU was founded in 1986 by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health in the UK, The Health Protection Agency and The Institute of Child Health (London). Participation of paediatricians in Ireland in the BPSU is supported by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) Faculty of Paediatrics, in collaboration with the Irish Paediatric Surveillance Unit (IPSU) which is led by Dr Robert Cunney. Professor Susan O'Connell represents Ireland on the BPSU Scientific Committee.

Each study has a lead investigator who has been granted ethical approval from their local/national research and ethics committee. The BPSU provides the most effective and efficient platform for notification of new cases of the particular condition. Investigators can then directly contact the reporting clinician for further details on the particular case using a short confidential questionnaire which is compliant with data protection legislation. This centralised reporting system ensures a broad reach across paediatricians in the UK and Ireland, and ultimately better case ascertainment for incidence calculation of rare conditions.

What has the BPSU achieved? The BPSU has facilitated research into over 100 rare conditions. In many instances, the findings have had an immense influence over decisions relating to the condition and patients. In recent times, the BPSU has been the most effective for the rapid surveillance and reporting of new emerging situations such as neonatal complications of COVID-19 and acute hepatitis. The results of these studies have informed public health decisions.

Irish participation in BPSU. In recent years there has been a relatively low response rate from paediatricians in Ireland compared to other regions, most likely due to retirements and new appointments of consultants who are not aware of the BPSU. The data we collect from Irish consultant paediatricians are central to the BPSU's methodology and will inform scientific knowledge and clinical management of various conditions. It is vital that all BPSU publications are reflective of both UK and Irish incidence rates. These studies impact positively on patient care, training and research. Those enrolled in BPSU can become lead investigators collaborate with colleagues in the UK, and all participants can access the BPSU educational webinars. The BPSU awards annual certification for participation, which can then be used as part of personal learning/research domains under the RCPI Continuing Professional Development Scheme. An awareness campaign was established over the past 2 years supported by the Faculty of Paediatrics, and Dr Ifeanyichukwu Okike, Deputy Chair British Paediatric Surveillance Unit (BPSU) Scientific Committee was a guest speaker at the autumn study day of the Faculty of Paediatrics in October 2023. Dr Ifeanyichukwu gave an overview of Irish involvement in BPSU, highlighted the importance of this ongoing collaboration and ideas for the future in terms of increasing participation. As a result of these initiatives we have noted an increase in participation by Irish consultants in the BPSU studies, and report cards.

Ultimately, we would like to see an integrated system that maximises and facilitates participation in BPSU and IPSU by all Members and Fellows of the RCPI Faculty of Paediatrics. Applications are now open for BPSU's bursary to run a rare disease study (the Sir Peter Tizard bursary) and Irish trainees are encouraged to apply (deadline is 21st October 2024).

If you are currently a practising paediatrician or neonatologist in Ireland, please sign up to the BPSU or update your contact details at <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/form/bpsu-sign-up-ereporting>. Monthly reporting cards are received electronically and do not add to significant workload. For further information, please email: bpsu@rcpch.ac.uk.

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/work-we-do/british-paediatric-surveillance-unit>
<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/bpsu-i>

Prof Susan O'Connell, BPSU ROI Representative

RETIRED PAEDIATRICIANS GROUP

The Retired Paediatric Group (RPG) met twice during the past 12 months.

The first meeting was held on October 25th, 2023 in The College. This event was honored by the presence of incoming Dean of The Faculty of Paediatrics Dr. Judith Meehan who addressed the group. There were two guest speakers: Professor John Murphy who, as editor of The I.M.J., informed the group about the complexities, challenges and changes of Medical Publication and Dr. Margo Anglim who outlined the history of the process, changes and intricacies of childhood adoption in Ireland.

The second meeting, which was very efficiently arranged by Dr. Michael Mahoney, was held in The Perry Square Hotel, Limerick on May 15th, 2024. After a convivial lunch in the hotel Professor Pierce Grace, who is a retired Limerick general surgeon with an interest in paediatric surgery, gave a talk entitled “Six Doctors, six hospitals” which outlined some of the medical history of Limerick over the last millennium. Dr. Michael Mahoney talked about the fantastic developments in the management of patients with Cystic Fibrosis over the past half century in a presentation entitled “Three eras of Cystic Fibrosis – a brave new world”.

The RPG provides an opportunity (for those who are interested) for retired paediatricians and allied, retired medical professionals who were heavily involved with the care of children during their professional career, to meet previous colleagues, discuss some of their post-retirement ventures and adventures and catch up with some of the developments occurring within The Faculty of Paediatrics and more broadly the Irish child health service. It is not necessary that those who wish to attend the RPG meetings remain members of The Faculty. Those who want to have information about the RPG activities and are no longer members of The Faculty can give their contact details to The Faculty of Paediatrics Co-Ordinator in The College who will enroll them on the RPG mailing list.

The next RPG meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 25th and we plan to have another ‘away meeting’ in the spring of 2025.

Dr Terry Bate, RPG Convenor

RCPI SUPPORTING FUCTIONS

Postgraduate Training and Education

Background

Over the last year there have been two organisational restructures involving the Postgraduate Training Function (formerly known as PTE). In January 2024, the Examinations Department moved from PTE to sit under the Director of Business Development.

Secondly, the RCPI as part of the Connect Project is going through transformational change. Following significant consultation and engagement with staff and stakeholders through the first half of 2024, a substantial organisational change process commenced from 1 July 2024. As part of this, a new Operations Department subsumed the the work of the previous Training and Faculties Office (TFO). This Department has a Head of Operations and they report to the Chief Financial Officer

Overall Purpose

The overall purpose of the Postgraduate Training (PGT) Function is to pursue excellence in all that we do as we support all those involved in our Training Programmes. Key areas include: our accreditation with the Irish Medical Council, cross-college projects and individual initiatives related to training and quality improvement, quality assurance / quality improvement as it relates to our training sites, supports in health and wellbeing and developing best practice in that area, and a range of strategic projects as they relate to training,

Accreditation and Improvement Projects Department

As part of an overall approach to improving quality in postgraduate training, RCPI and its six constituent training bodies are committed to a programme of continuous quality improvement. This Department leads out on some key projects as we support and develop the best training we can provide as a college. Current projects include the Optimise project (Internal Medicine) and previously the Trainer Project as major examples.

A key priority for this Department is our system of Training Site QI. This model works on a five-year timeline for each training site and it is chaired by an extern from outside of Ireland with a final overall report with generic and speciality recommendations. There are embedded annual quality checks and follow up procedures for issues identified at the visits.

The Department coordinates and supports Medical Council accreditation for Paediatrics and all of the RCPI's postgraduate training bodies, and programmes, including new programmes, and management of the Annual Return of key data. The Department also assists in tracking and managing key areas of improvement identified within these processes.

The Accreditation and Improvement Projects Office is also responsible for the management of Specialist Division of Register (SDR) applications of the Medical Council.

Health and Wellbeing Department

Our health and wellbeing service is a key support for those trainees who are experiencing challenges or difficulties or just need a little support during their training programmes. Apart from supporting individual doctors, this office is very proactive with various initiatives and projects related to health and wellbeing and improvement of the training experience overall. It is also supporting a number of trainers in challenges they may have or supporting them with trainees.

In supporting trainees via a number of pathways (e.g. reasonable accommodation), we deliver an infrastructure to back up trainees and those who support them (e.g. NSDs, RPDs, Deans, Directors of Education and Training, RCPI staff). The Department also ensures that there is excellent communication transfer between the RCPI, hospital sites, the HSE NCHD Hub (this sits under the Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit) and the HSE National Doctors Training Programme to ensure that supports are maintained throughout the individual's training programme. Appropriate referrals for additional care are advised to the HSE as the employer.

Colm Small, Head of Function
Education

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) continues to play a crucial role in providing avenues to training and upskilling, allowing doctors and other healthcare professionals to evolve as part of an innovative health sector.

Equipping professionals with the tools to provide world-class healthcare to patients, RCPI delivers a range of lifelong learning and education opportunities.

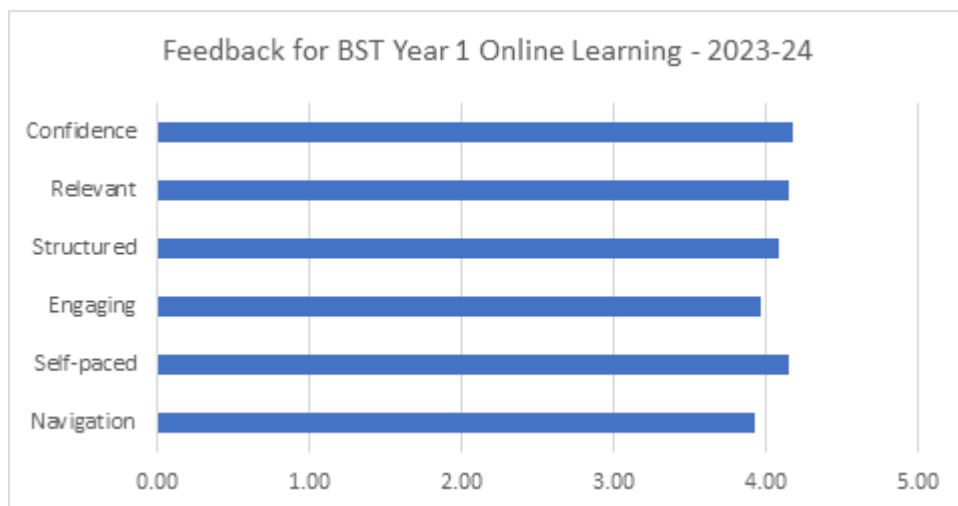
INFOGRAPHIC:

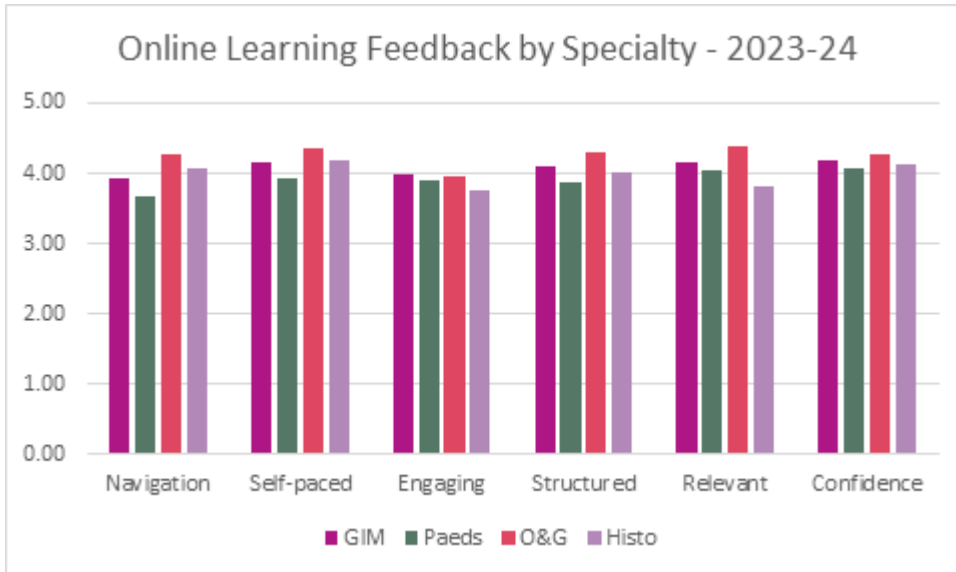
- Over 11,700 learners accessed Brightspace
- 134 tutorials and workshops delivered
- 6,299 attendees at 58 CPD events
- 5,811 total attendees
- 81% of participants across 11 Professional Competence Schemes met the PCS requirements
- 1,086 new enrolments across 11 Professional Competence Schemes
- 2,335 participants on RCPI Courses
- 2,043 participants on RCPI ihed programmes

TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

In the 2023-24 college year, RCPI’s BST programmes moved away from a model of mandatory courses into a new Taught Programme consisting of modular elements wherein curriculum components are provided at correct, relevant stages of training.

Trainees were asked to complete a feedback survey each quarter. From a total of 951 responses, feedback was positive, with participants articulating high levels of confidence in the programme. Relevance, structure and the self-paced nature of the programme were also scored highly.





In the 2024-25 training year, Taught Programmes will be rolled out to Year 2 of BST and Year 1 of Higher Specialist Training (HST).

IRISH CLINICIAN EDUCATION TRACK (ICET)

In the 2023-24 college year, RCPI piloted a new Irish Clinician Education Track (ICET) through Higher Specialist Training. This innovative programme, appealing to Trainees seeking professional development as clinical educators, provides to doctors on a HST programme funding towards two years of out-of-clinical-programme experience (OCPE), wherein they'll be involved in supervised teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Two Trainees participated in the ICET pilot in the 2023-24 training year: Dr Karen Dennehy (HST Geriatric Medicine) and Dr Clare Kennedy (HST Obstetrics & Gynaecology). Four more Trainees joined the programme in July 2024.

STUDY DAY PROJECT

From October 2023-May 2024, RCPI conducted a new Study Day project, reviewing current Study Day models and making recommendations for improvement. A survey assessing stakeholder needs received a significant number of responses across the college's institutes and faculties.

Following analysis of data, emerging themes and key issues were identified and reports written to summarise findings and form extensive recommendations to help support the delivery of this essential component of BST and HST programmes.

Among those recommendations was the alignment of RCPI Study Days with national guidelines on best educational practice, and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Study Day events in meeting the educational needs of Trainees and supporting their professional development.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT FELLOWSHIPS

RCPI's Management Consultant Fellowships, created in partnership with PwC Ireland and EY Ireland, offers Trainees on a HST programme the opportunity to work full-time for a one-year period as a management consultant to gain practical business and management experience in a healthcare context.

In its third year, the Management Consultant Fellowships were awarded to six Trainees, a 50% increase on its first cohort in July 2001: Dr Claire Connellan (HST General Paediatrics), Dr Claire Mc Ateer (HST Geriatric Medicine), Dr David Tansey (HST Endocrinology and Diabetes Mellitus), Dr Jane Noble (HST Endocrinology and Diabetes Mellitus), Dr Patrick Coughlan (HST Respiratory Medicine); and Dr Sarah Kyne (HST General Paediatrics).

ASPIRE FELLOWSHIPS

Doctors awarded a Certificate of Successful Completion of Training (CSCST) on completion of their Higher Specialist Training may apply for a RCPI Aspire Fellowship.

Created by RCPI in partnership with HSE National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP), this 12-month Fellowship offers exceptional individuals high-quality training and exposure to speciality training and advanced clinical skills, in addition to a Specialist Registrar (SpR) salary for the duration of the fellowship.

RCPI had 23 doctors on its Aspire Fellowships in the 2023-24 training year.

NEW CONTRACT WITH TEST REACH

In June 2024, RCPI entered a new remote invigilation supplier contract with its ongoing delivery partner Testreach. As part of the partnership, the college plays a role providing feedback on product development and design, to ensure that TestReach's services continue to provide innovative and best-in-class tools to run high-stakes, online medical examinations, now and into the future.

NATIONAL EDUCATION DAY

The Annual National Education Day, organised by RCPI Trainees' Committee, took place on 24 May 2024.

Under the theme "Inclusion & Diversity in Medicine," this year's event featured a series of compelling talks from a diverse group of speakers capturing key themes in medical training, to presentations by finalists for the Trainee Awards.

The event included the Trainee Awards prize ceremony, highlighting outstanding achievements from within the RCPI Trainee Group.

ENHANCING OUR EDUCATION OFFERING

RCPI's Postgraduate Certificate in Cancer Genetics and Genomics, accredited at QQI Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualification, was launched in September 2023. It had 25 learners registered to the programme in the 2023-2024 training year.

The past 12 months have been marked by a series of impactful activities and new releases, underscoring RCPI's commitment to excellence in medical education. Central to our progress has been the consolidation of the Education Development team and the establishment of online learning as a core delivery mode:

- Health Economics
- An Introduction to Medicolegal Report Writing
- An Introduction to Medical Consent
- Effective Teaching Skills: Workplace Based Assessment (WBA)
- Effective Teaching Skills: Directly Observed Procedural Skills (DOPS)
- Effective Teaching Skills: Giving a Lecture
- Effective Teaching Skills: Mini Clinical Evaluation Exercise (Mini-CEX)
- Effective teaching skills: Techniques for effective bedside teaching
- Physicians as Trainers: Clinical Supervision
- Physicians as Trainers: Conducting Skills Training in a Clinical Setting
- Seven new Obstetrics and Gynaecology "practical scenario" modules provide practical information regarding specific pregnancy and delivery issues that Obstetrics & Gynaecology Trainees face during their training.
- Family Planning
- A simulated training course Intrapartum Simulated Obstetrics Training (ISOT) has been developed to support RCPI Obstetrics and Gynaecology BST Trainees as they transition to Junior Registrar year.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SCHEME (CPD-SS)

A total of 983 Learners were enrolled on the Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme (CPD- SS) in the 2023-24 training year, representing an all-time high for RCPI – a 25 per cent in enrolments on last year.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (QI) PROGRAMMES

Since 2011, RCPI's Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership in Healthcare has been making significant strides. This year marked the 26th intake of the programme, welcoming 10 teams from various healthcare settings nationwide. To date, over 750 healthcare professionals have been trained in Quality Improvement (QI) through this initiative.

So far, Situation Awareness for Everyone (S.A.F.E.) Collaborative – a programme designed to build a safety culture, funded by HSE National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate – has been delivered to over 70 clinical teams representing 37 hospitals and more than 280 clinical staff from medical, nursing, ambulance service, administrative, psychology, dietetics, physiotherapy and pharmacy backgrounds. Nine clinical teams completed the programme in the 2023-24 training year.

A new course Embedding QI, designed to deliver bespoke QI tools to a specific cohort of clinical staff, had 24 learners, coming from Critical Care Outreach Advanced Nurse Practitioners (CCO ANP). A second cohort, dedicated to CCO ANP and CCO colleagues as project partners, is funded for 2024-25 by the HSE National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate (NQPSD).

QI in Action, a virtually delivered course designed to provide quality improvement methodology that can lead to measurable outcomes, had 20 learners from medical, nursing and HSCP backgrounds.

IHEED PARTNERSHIP

Under RCPI's ongoing, successful partnership with iheed, 2,043 Learners participated across our six programmes in the 2023-24 training year, an increase on 1,973 in the previous year.

RCPI and iheed currently offer; Professional Diploma in Paediatrics, Professional Diploma in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Professional Diploma in Dermatology, Professional Diploma in Medicine for the Older Person, Professional Diploma in Infectious Diseases, and Professional Diploma in Occupational Medicine.

The longest established programme in the RCPI / iheed partnership is the Professional Diploma in Paediatrics. Since March 2020, this wholly online programme has recruited 2,068 learners who are supported by 21 tutors. Learners are recruited from Ireland, UK, Middle East and South-East Asia. Within this population over 100 Irish doctors working in Australia / New Zealand have enrolled on the programme, maintaining a valuable connection to RCPI while working abroad.

[Dr Diarmuid Breathnach, Head of Education](#)

Healthcare Leadership

Dr Trevor Duffy, Head of Healthcare Leadership

The Healthcare Leadership Department was established in June 2022. RCPI provides healthcare leadership broadly through advocacy, influence, expertise and support. In partnership with a range of stakeholders, RCPI actively leads via the National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes, the National Immunisation Advisory Committee and National Clinical Programmes.

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

Healthcare Leadership Projects

Pilot Mentorship Programme for Early-Stage Consultants

This pilot mentorship programme has been underway since July 2023. There has been positive feedback from both mentors and mentees. From the feedback we have received to date, the mentees have benefited from the ongoing support and guidance of experienced semi-retired and retired doctors. This is tailored to the individual needs of the mentee; it has helped participants with various management aspects of their consultancy posts as well as broadening their network. The RCPI Research Department created a mentorship evaluation survey in which the consultants self-assess progression over time in ten different aspects of their role. The final report will be shared on completion.

RCPI Academy for Retired Doctors

The establishment of the Academy provides an instrumental vehicle for retired RCPI members and fellows to add value and stay connected with the College. The Academy offers a network and social outlet for retired doctors as well as opportunities to use their expertise to get involved in different areas of the college. Retired members are now contributing to the College through their involvement in mentorship, examinations, CPD audits, representation on committees and heritage projects. The social events organised in RCPI have had a good level of engagement and participation.

To date, fourteen members participated in mentorship training to support early-stage consultants, six Examiners and six Reviewers participating in the verification process. Other Members are involved in education, Faculty and Institute Boards, RCPI Committees, volunteer work with EQUALS and College representation. Volunteers participated in membership graduation ceremonies, invigilation at Climate Change Art Exhibition and others have contributed to various heritage projects. RCPI will provide ongoing support to the committee as the Academy evolves.

Leadership Forum

RCPI Leadership Forum is in the early stages of development. The Leadership Forum group consists of National Clinical Programme Leads, Chairs of Clinical Advisory Groups and other RCPI Chairs of Committees. The first meeting of this group took place on 1 May. The Leadership Forum has three core objectives. Firstly, educating leaders by developing and offering newly designed leadership courses to members. Secondly, providing adequate leadership support and knowledge of governance to members in leadership roles, this would include Clinical Programme Leads, Chairs of Clinical Advisory Groups, RCPI Committees and external College Representatives. Thirdly, to create a network or community of Members interested in getting involved and participating in RCPI activities and perhaps taking on leadership roles in the future. This would be valuable in identifying those Members interested in participating in RCPI advocacy agendas. The College will plan networking events, seminars and training to support these leaders in their roles.

A Leadership Survey has been carried out by RCPI Research Department to better understand the needs of those in leadership roles for the college. This will help us to identify any gaps with a view to creating the right tools for our leaders to feel supported by RCPI in the extensive work that they do. We are also looking at how to improve communication and connectivity within this leadership group.

Sabbatical Pilot Project

This project is aimed at mid-career consultants.

A new project is at development stage which aims to enhance personal job satisfaction and reinvigorate the individual by enabling them to step away from the constant demands of their day job. Stakeholder engagement is ongoing as we scope out the various aspects of delivering this multilayered project.

RCPI President Hospital Visits and Quality Improvement Workshops

Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President RCPI and Prof Trevor Duffy, RCPI Director of Healthcare Leadership, led a delegation visiting University Hospital Kerry, Regional Hospital Mullingar and Cavan General Hospital (Jan-Feb 2024). Dr Diarmuid O'Shea discussed developments and updates on key functions of the College. There was a high level of engagement with medical teams on current challenges within the hospitals and the feedback received by the College was invaluable. Leadership Faculty in the College facilitated QI/Leadership Workshops which gave further opportunities to discuss key hospital projects and how to lead changes and improvements to services.

Professional Competence

Summary of Key Activities – August 2023 to August 2024

The number of doctors enrolled in RCPI Professional Competence Schemes (PCS) increased to 5,901 in the PCS year May 2023 - April 2024. A total of 584 doctors were enrolled in the Faculty of Paediatrics Schemes (386 on the Specialist Division Scheme and 198 on the General Division Scheme).

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

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

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

Compliance with Scheme Requirements for 2023 – 2024 PCS Year

The overall percentage of participants across RCPI's 11 Professional Competence Schemes who met the PCS requirements for the 2023 – 2024 PCS year is 81%, which is slightly lower than last year, where the compliance rate was 82%. The individual scheme compliance rates for the 2023 - 2024 year ranged from 74% to 94%. The percentage of participants in the Faculty of Paediatrics Schemes who met the PCS requirements for the 2023 – 2024 PCS year is 88% in the Specialist Division and 79% in the General Division.

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

Annual Verification Process (AVP)

281 doctors were selected for the 2022 – 2023 process. During the review stage, 13 of the selected doctors withdrew from their Scheme and 2 doctors were exempted due to ill health. Result reports were issued to selected doctors at the end of October 2023 with a deadline of 30 November to complete corrective actions.

At the conclusion of the process, 264 (94%) of the initial group of 281 participants remained enrolled on a Professional Competence Scheme. 2 of this number had been exempted at the first stage, and 1 of this group had their previous year verified. This left 261 participants in the process. Of the remaining 261 participants, 183 (70%) have been verified with no further action required (3 {30%} from the Faculty of Paediatrics General Division Scheme

and 14 {82%} from the Faculty’s Specialist Division Scheme).

Doctors who were verified with no further action received an annotation on their 2023 - 2024 Annual Statement. Doctors with outstanding corrective actions will be checked again for the 2023 - 2024 process and if they have not successfully completed their corrective actions at that time, they will be re-selected for that process.

Strengthened Model for Maintenance of Professional Competence

The Medical Council approved the new Maintenance of Professional Competence Rules and Guidelines on 12 December 2023, representing an important step to bring Maintenance of Professional Competence (MPC) in line with international practice and incorporate right touch and compassionate regulation. The Rules and Guidelines associated with the evolved MPC Framework Model will commence in May 2025.

The new 5 Year Arrangements which formalise the operation of the evolved MPC Model will commence in May 2024 with the first year focusing on developments and to support implementation for May 2025.

The Council have reinitiated their collaboration with the ACCME regarding the CPD accreditation model. The initial phase of this work will be to develop a governance model around the decision-making process leading to receiving accreditation from the Medical Council. Postgraduate Training Bodies (Scheme Operators) will be invited to be part of this process and training will be provided on this.

The Professional Competence Department will continue to collaborate with our Training Bodies, the Forum and the Medical Council on the implementation of the new MPC Framework in May 2025. We will also collaborate with the Medical Council and with the ACCME relating to the evolving governance model and decision-making process associated with receiving accreditation from the Medical Council.

Professional Competence Requirements for 2024 - 2025

Professional Competence Requirements for the current year 2024 – 2025 are:

40 CPD Credits in any category (External, Internal, Personal Learning, Research or Teaching)

and

One Audit or Quality Improvement Project

CPD Event Approval

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

Outlined below is a summary of activity for the period 1 June 2023 to 31 May 2024:

Type	Applications Approved	Credits Allowed
RCPI	294	2232
Non RCPI	372	2156
TOTAL	666	4388

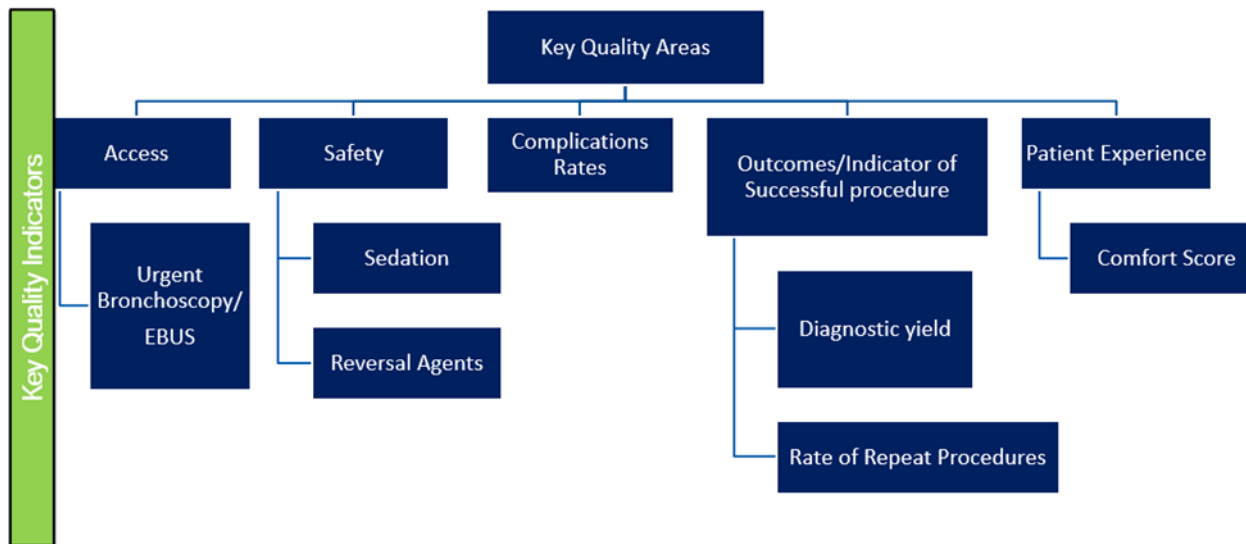
National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes

RCPI currently manages four National Quality Improvement (NSQI) Programmes in Histopathology, Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, Radiology and Bronchoscopy. The goal of these programmes, three of which are funded by the HSE National Quality and Patient Safety Team and Bronchoscopy which is funded by HSE Acute Operations and the NCCP, is to optimise patient care through facilitating and supporting the use of evidence-based quality improvements in diagnosis and reporting. The data gathered via these programmes are also reported on locally and are aggregated in annual national data reports, which are used to drive quality improvement in participating public, voluntary and private hospitals. Based on findings from analysis of 2022 data, the programmes

assigned specific owners to several report recommendations in their national data reports in line with a newly developed HSE procedure. It is hoped that assigning ownership to recommendations can ensure a suitable implementation plan is developed, actioned and monitored.

National Bronchoscopy Quality Improvement (NBQI) Programme

The NBQI Programme has, over the course of the previous year identified five key quality areas within which they are developing key quality indicators (KQI) for adult bronchoscopy and EBUS procedures. The five areas are 1) Access to Procedures, 2) Safety, 3) Complication Rates, 4) Patient Experience and 5) Indicators of Procedure Success.



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, with 24 out of a possible total of 27 respiratory consultants to date. This network will be key in ensuring the programme can be run locally. Discussions are underway regarding the development of a data collection 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.

National GI Endoscopy Quality Improvement (NEQI) Programme

In November 2023, the NEQI Programme published its 9th national data report releasing it at the annual conference. The report, presenting findings from data collected in 2022, highlighted increases in targets being met for the following key quality indicators compared to 2019, the percentage of endoscopists meeting the target for caecal intubation rates, comfort scores, sedation doses, polyp detection rates and duodenal intubation rates. A very minor decrease of 1% was seen in the bowel preparation target. The report analysed data from 36 public and voluntary hospitals and 12 private hospitals, accounting for 256,409 procedures performed by 794 endoscopists across the country over the year. A new key quality indicator has been under development, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) and is in the final stages with recommended targets being set before it is released for data collection.

National Radiology Quality Improvement (NRQI) Programme

The NRQI Programme published its 4th national data report in November 2023. This report presented anonymous quality improvement data collected from 48 participating public and voluntary hospitals from 1 January to 31 December 2022. Findings revealed an 8.8% increase (representing over 3m cases) in workload between 2022 and 2021 in participating radiology departments. The highest increase in referrals was from GPs (19.1%). The NRQI Programme reported on four KQIs including turnaround times (TAT) and peer reviews. The findings for TAT were found to be similar to the previous year with almost half of hospitals meeting the recommended target.

Participating hospitals continue to face challenges in meeting the recommended target for the authorisation of X-ray cases. The NRQI Programme continues to highlight the challenges faced by radiology departments by rising workload (data for 2018-2022 presented), growing complexity of cases and the need for adequate resourcing.

National Histopathology Quality Improvement (NHQI) Programme

The 10th annual national data report was released by the NHQI Programme in November 2023 and presented at the 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 2022. In 2022, data were collected on 515,786 cases, 920,694 specimens and just over 1.4M blocks highlighting the steadily growing workload year on year. Average aggregated findings presented in the report revealed that laboratories met targets for intradepartmental consultations, multidisciplinary team reviews, addendum reporting and frozen section concordance rates. Report findings also indicated that laboratories continue to face challenges in meeting the turnaround time (TAT) targets for histology, cytology and autopsy cases. The NHQI Programme has been working with the HSE regarding a key recommendation made requesting that an action plan be put in place to assist those laboratories facing difficulties reaching TAT targets. This work is ongoing.

Quality Improvement

RCPI's Situation Awareness for Everyone (SAFE) collaborative programme completed the 6th Irish cohort in 2023-24 and commenced the 7th in April. SAFE teaches teams how to improve communication, build a safety culture and enhance outcomes for patients in their clinical settings. To date, 80 clinical teams have participated in SAFE, representing 37 hospitals and more than 300 clinical staff from medical, nursing, ambulance service, administrative, pharmacy and health and social care professions.

Two cohorts of Quality Improvement in Action were run with 40 novel Learners, 28 of whom were 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 increasing timely removal of urinary catheter post-surgery, increasing the completion rate of ICU electronic discharge summaries, reducing unnecessary IV fluid bolus in an emergency department and reducing wait times for scans in one oncology specialty.

One cohort of the Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership was conducted, involving 10 teams from specialties such as obstetrics and gynaecology, neonatology, and gerontology. As part of the programme, learners completed a Quality Improvement (QI) project as a team and engaged in various formative and summative assignments.

A new bespoke programme, Embedding QI, was conducted with a cohort of Critical Care Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Sepsis and Deteriorating Patient Nurse Leaders. Areas of focus during the 5-month course included ingress and egress to Critical Care. A second cohort will be launching in September 2024. The new cohort invites ANP CCO to apply with a clinical project partner including medical registrars in anaesthesiology or critical care.

RCPI's Paediatric Pocket Tutorial online series was rebranded and relaunched as 14 new courses, available through RCPI's webpages. All courses remain as a free resource for those registered as RCPI Paediatric Trainees, Members or Fellows. Some essential modules are available as open access to anyone registered with an RCPI ID – Adolescent Health, Child Protection, Inclusion Health, Medicines Safety, Speech & Language Therapy. All other courses are open to any other healthcare professional for a small fee. All carry CPD for completion or can be claimed under Personal Learning for individual topics.

Advocacy

Advocacy refers to actions to influence people, primarily decision-makers, to create change. For RCPI this change may be in legislation supporting healthcare and health and wellbeing; health sector plans and actions; or plans and actions in other sectors - impacted by, or which have an impact upon, health or healthcare. RCPI engages in advocacy by defining the issue or desired change through the development of position papers and reports, through communication of these issues directly to stakeholders and decision-makers, and by using media to promote messages or recommendations on the issue. RCPI also responds to relevant national consultations as they arise.

RCPI current advocacy priorities and related actions for this period (Jul 2023- Jul 2024):

Patient Safety and Dignity	‘Changing Horizons Framing the Delivery of Training to 2030 and Beyond’. Developed report from discussions convened by RCPI president in March 2024. Report highlights future population health needs and training response, supporting patient safety and dignity with high-quality patient-centred care. Report to be launched in Oct 2024.
Health Equity	Discussion paper published July 2023 - Equity in Healthcare “More than just an appointment”, capturing discussions from March 2023 Masterclass on this topic and highlighting inclusion health, trauma informed care and what clinicians can do to advocate for health equity. A follow on from this workshop is that RCPI is supporting development of a model of care for inclusion health. Work done to highlight relationship between health equity, health outcomes, and health literacy. Masterclass: health literacy and communication in the misinformation age was held in April 2024. Discussion paper from this masterclass is under development.
Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)	Position paper (Oct 2023) from Faculty of Paediatrics and with support from RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco – calling for ban on disposable vapes to protect health and wellbeing of young people and to protect the environment. Consultation submission made by RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco and by Faculty of Paediatrics to Department of Environment, Climate and Communications consultation on Disposable Vaping Devices (July 2023). Paper published in Global Paediatrics The adverse effects of vaping in young people - ScienceDirect. Lead author Dean of Faculty of Paediatrics. Prevention of NCDs/keeping people well is a major theme of ‘Changing Horizons’ discussion and report to be launched Oct 2024 RCPI Manifesto ‘Priorities for Health for the Next Government’ July 2024 – highlighting the need for cross-government policy response to prevent ill health. RCPI joined the Irish Health Promotion Alliance in 2024.
Climate Change and Healthcare /Sustainable Healthcare	Paper on Climate Action published Oct 2023 Climate and Sustainability theme for St Luke’s Symposium Oct 2023: Session at St Luke’s Day, Climate and Health Art Exhibition, Public meeting – “Healthy Planet, Healthy You”. Advisory group with cross faculty representation convened to progress actions of Position Paper. Faculty represented in this group. RCPI as member of Irish Climate and Health Alliance developing a position paper on Active Travel.
Influencing Public Health Legislation	RCPI presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Assisted Dying (JCAD) in Oct 2023. RCPI position from 2017 is that it opposes introduction of legislation supportive of assisted suicide. In Sep 2023, RCPI council agreed to convene a high-level cross faculty group to review the work to date. A researcher has been appointed to carry out a comprehensive literature review to support this work.

National Immunisation Advisory Committee (October 2023 - August 2024)

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) continues to play an essential role in Irish healthcare. This expert group comprising members nominated by a range of healthcare professional bodies and lay members provides independent, evidence-based advice to the Chief Medical Officer and Department of Health on vaccines, immunisation, and related health matters.

The work of NIAC in the last year has remained consistently high, and regularly performed under tight time constraints and considerable pressures. This has relied upon the dedication and availability of respected and experienced voluntary members, supported by the strength and depth in expertise of the Secretariat.

Governance and Operations

NIAC welcomed the appointment of Ms Trish Clarke as Programme Coordinator to NIAC in May 2024. NIAC expressed thanks to outgoing Programme Coordinator, Ms Grace Horan, for her contributions and expertise.

NIAC has continued to host Full Committee meetings on a bimonthly basis, with working group meetings (e.g., COVID-19, RSV, pneumococcal, gonococcal, mpox) hosted as required to discuss relevant topics.

Advice provided to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and Department of Health (DOH)
 NIAC issued eight separate recommendations to the CMO and DOH in the past year, which included immunisation advice for COVID-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Herpes zoster, and measles. (Table 1)

Table 1. Examples of NIAC recommendations issued in past year.

Date of Issue	Recommendation
12 October 2023	NIAC Letter, Evidence Synthesis, and Recommendations re. RSV
19 December 2023	NIAC Letter to CMO and updated recommendations for primary series COVID-19 vaccination
12 February 2024	NIAC Letter and Recommendations to CMO re. Herpes Zoster vaccination

NIAC has also been involved in updating the Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 vaccines for people with pre-existing allergic conditions, and Questions and Answers for pregnant and breastfeeding women about COVID-19 vaccination.

National Immunisation Programme

NIAC has reviewed vaccines for suitability for inclusion or removal (in the event they are no longer available/needed) in the national vaccine schedule. NIAC has examined RSV vaccination, with a recommendation issued in October 2023 and further recommendations regarding the passive immunisation of infants against RSV during the 2024/2025 season, issued in April 2024.

Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland

The Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland have been prepared and maintained by NIAC as a robust and reliable immunisation resource for healthcare professionals. Seven of the 27 chapters have been updated since October 2023, encompassing a total of 18 individual updates across the seven chapters.

National Resource, Stakeholder Support and International Collaboration

NIAC has continued to serve as a trusted and respected national resource for healthcare professionals and the public. Over 100 queries have been received pertaining to immunisation and national recommendations in the past year. These have been addressed by NIAC or referred to the appropriate agency for response in a timely fashion.

NIAC continues its strong collaborative working relationship with stakeholders including the DOH and the HSE. The HPRA, with which NIAC has had an excellent long-standing relationship, has also been a key support to NIAC.

As a standing committee of RCPI, NIAC has profited from being sited in a collegial setting at the forefront of postgraduate medical education. This has facilitated critical inputs from the institutes and faculties of the college and also supported dissemination of NIAC’s outputs. At a time when trust in vaccination information is so important, NIAC as a committee of RCPI, is further validated because of that association as a trusted information source.

NIAC has engaged with the wider international immunisation community and participated in the EU NITAG meetings as well as national and international meetings as appropriate (for e.g., EU NITAG, WHO SAGE).

NIAC continues to reinforce these relationships with regard to general immunisation practices through continued engagement, participation and advocacy.

International Medical Graduate Training Initiative – Sponsored

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative continues to offer a pathway for sponsored doctors from overseas to gain structured postgraduate medical training within the Irish public health system. This initiative allows qualified medical trainees from the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates) to complete a designated period of training in clinical services in Ireland. These trainees are fully sponsored by their respective governments throughout their training period. The income generated from the programme is reinvested into enhancement projects that benefit all RCPI training programmes. RCPI provides two training streams under this initiative: Residency and Clinical Fellowship training, with growing interest in both since their inception.

International Residency Training Programme

The International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) is designed for doctors who have completed their internship. This program allows doctors to do their Residency training in Ireland, enabling them to acquire a qualification equivalent to the Saudi/Arab Board and become members of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. Currently, this programme is available for Internal Medicine and Paediatrics, with plans for Histopathology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology to be offered later this year. Within the IRTP in Paediatrics, there are currently four doctors on the programme. All trainees to date are from Saudi Arabia, with plans to extend the programme to other Gulf countries in the near future.

International Fellowship Programme

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) offers structured, curriculum-based specialist training for post-Residency doctors who wish to pursue higher training in their chosen speciality or sub-specialty. There are currently fifty-five trainees on the programme across all specialities. There are forty-four specialty programmes offered across RCPI Faculties and Institutes. Now in its tenth year, one hundred and eighty trainees have graduated from the Clinical Fellowship Programme and returned home to embed their newly acquired knowledge and skills in the health services of their home countries.

Paediatric Allergy and Pulmonology and Paediatric Palliative Medicine were recently added to the paediatric programme list. The Clinical Fellowship Programme has had outstanding success in the Paediatric specialities, with thirty-six graduates and seventeen trainees currently in post. Feedback received in the Residency and Clinical Fellowship Programmes has consistently reflected excellence. Both trainees and sponsorship bodies have expressed their appreciation for the high quality of training and support received. Special recognition and gratitude are extended to key individuals who have played pivotal roles in developing recently added programmes and those who continue to support international trainees.

EQUALS Initiative

RCPI and HSE agreed to jointly assist in funding the 5 year strategy development plan for the Zambia College of Medicine and Surgery (ZACOMS). As well as providing funding, resourcing support for planning and workshop delivery was given. Dr Diarmuid O'Donovan (HSE) and Ann O'Shaughnessy (RCPI) travelled to Zambia in April 2024 for the workshop to develop this plan.

In February and June 2024 two more 40ft containers of equipment were shipped to Zambia. Another container is being shipped in August 2024. This will take the total number of containers sent to Zambia since 2013 to 17. The equipment was tested pre shipment by clinical engineers of the EQUALS Initiative and on arrival it will be distributed across the country to larger teaching hospitals and smaller health clinics.

Through the collaboration between RCPI and ZACOMS, RCPI continues to provide access to online courses to Zambian trainees on various specialist training programmes, which comprises part of their core curriculum. ZACOMS invited delegates from EQUALS Initiative to attend the 2024 graduation ceremony for their trainees in June. Donna Wrightson (RCPI) attended on behalf of EQUALS. Whilst there she met with key stakeholders,

including the Irish Embassy in Zambia.

Global Health

In August 2024 we conducted a survey to find out about the Global Health initiatives and projects our members, fellows, trainees and learners are involved in. The results of the survey will be collated and analysed to help us better support further engagement in these activities.

Membership and Fellowship

101 new members conferred in Paediatrics in between June 2023-June 2024. This number remains strong, driven by the continued growth of RCPI examinations, particularly overseas. A recruitment campaign for Fellowship began in February 2024, with targeted invitations being sent to eligible candidates. 12 new Fellows from Paediatric specialties were approved for FRCPI by Credentials in May 2024 and will be invited to confer at the Paediatrics Autumn conference in October 2024. The campaign remains ongoing, with another Credentials meeting in September 2024 where we expect more candidates to be approved. Any of those approved in September 2024 will also be invited to confer in October 2024.

The Collegiate Membership and Engagement Steering Group Report was completed and approved through Council in June 2024. As per one of the recommendations, Trueology have been commissioned for an updated research piece on our members and fellows database. Trueology last completed this research on our behalf in 2019/2020. This updated state of the nation aims to find out more about the changing needs of our members since COVID, and what impact the changes the college has made in that time have had on our engagement with our members and fellows. This work began in July 2024 and is due to be completed by December 2024.

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

KEY CONTACT DETAILS

Key administrators in RCPI who conduct work on behalf of the Faculty of Paediatrics include:

Faculties Manager:	Darragh Whelan	01 4853 461 darraghwhelan@rcpi.ie
Programme Coordinator:	John Hunt	01 8639 633 johnhunt@rcpi.ie
Training Coordinator:	Irene Poltronieri	01 863 9630 irenepoltronieri@rcpi.ie
Examinations Administrator:	Louise Treacy	01 8639 614 LouiseTreacy@rcpi.ie
Head of Operations	Muríosa Prendergast	01 8639 711 muriosaprendergast@rcpi.ie
Professional Competence Scheme Administrator:	Deirdre Donegan	01 8639 703 DeirdreDonegan@rcpi.ie
Specialist Division of the Register	Siobhán Kearns	01 863 9720 SiobhanKearns@rcpi.ie
Training Site Accreditation	Georgina Farr	01 8639 695 GeorginaFarr@rcpi.ie

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Conferences

- Spring Conference 9 May 2025
- Autumn Conference 3 October 2025

Webinars:

- 12 November 5-6.30pm 2024
- 21 January 5-6.30pm 2025
- 11 March 5-6.30pm 2025



FACULTY OF PAEDIATRICS

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

19 South Frederick Street, Dublin D02 X266, Ireland

Email: paediatrics@rcpi.ie

Tel: +353 (0)1 8639 728

Social Media links:

www.rcpi.ie | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#) | [LinkedIn](#)
