



FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



Cover picture: *Faculty of Public Health Medicine Conferring Ceremony, RCPI, No.6 Kildare Street, Dublin, 21 May 2024*

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About the Faculty of Public Health Medicine

The Faculty of Public Health Medicine, RCPI, has been an integral part of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland since 1976. Its aim is to advance the science, art and practice of Public Health Medicine in Ireland, and to promote education, study and research in Public Health Medicine.

The Faculty achieves this aim through:

- Acting as an authoritative body for consultation on matters of educational or public interest concerning Public Health Medicine
- Representing the specialty of Public Health Medicine on international, national and regional councils or committees concerned with postgraduate medical education
- Obtaining and maintaining recognition for itself as the body responsible for advising on all matters concerning Public Health Medicine under any scheme for specialist training in Ireland
- Acting in an advisory capacity to key stakeholders such as Government and statutory bodies in all matters pertaining to Public Health Medicine
- Setting and maintaining standards for the Membership of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine examinations.

Supporting Functions

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

- Head of Operations: Ms Muríosa Prendergast
- Director of Academic Affairs: Mr Diarmuid Breathnach
- Director of Healthcare Leadership: Dr Trevor Duffy
- Chief Technology Officer: Mr Michael Hughes
- Director of Business Development & Exams: Ms Sinead Lucey
- Corporate Services: Ms Sheila Gallagher, Chief Financial Officer
- Director of Communications & Public Affairs: Ms Siobhan Creaton

All of the above are under the management of the CEO, Audrey Houlihan

A Message from the Dean

Prof Cecily Kelleher

03 December 2024

Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to present this year's annual report for 2024 which, as you will read, is a testament to the productivity and engagement of all concerned.

The local, regional, national and global public health challenges facing us remain pressing. Over the last two years, as we are aware, there has been a significant investment in public health infrastructure and capacity in the Health Service Executive. As the body responsible for Public Health Medicine higher specialist training, we continue to see high demand for entry to the programme and employment of those emerging from the programme in consultant posts as part of the Slaintecare reformed structures.



In October this year, following on from the Public Health Reform Expert Advisory Group (PHREAG) report, the Report of the Emerging Health Threats Function Expert Steering Group (ESG) was published by the Department of Health. That report has highlighted again that Ireland performed very well during the COVID-19 pandemic and underscored the vital need for preparedness for future threats. The National Health Protection Office has a key role. The ESG has now made a number of recommendations including a new Health Security Emergency Response Service. The HSE has also recently instigated its Public Health Strategy process which will report in mid-2025. These developments will build on the renewed recognition of the importance of public health within the health system, and the significant investment made in recent years, to better enable the health of the public to be protected and improved into the future. We in the Faculty will continue to support these developments, in which our members provide significant leadership.

We also placed strong emphasis on developing international partnerships and placements this year. The World Health Organisation placement continues to be a popular option for our trainees and other sites including Malawi and Nepal are under development. In November, we welcomed at Kildare Street a delegation from the Oman Medical Specialty Board, to discuss our higher specialist training programme. The Global Health Curriculum was also launched

through Forum and RCPI. Professor Anthony Fauci, pioneer scientist of AIDS research and lead on COVID-19 in the United States was guest of honour at an RCPI event in April 2024 also.

In April, a Faculty contingent visited Northern Ireland, with a first session hosted by Peter May, Permanent Secretary for Health and the Chief Medical Officer's office at Stormont and a programme of meetings with Faculty of Public Health colleagues. We identified great potential for work programme synergies in key areas including early life healthcare investment and opportunities for data sharing in areas of health improvement and health service improvement, which we plan to develop further in 2025.

The Faculty Governance review process is now complete and the final stage is approval of the document at the Annual General Meeting. I would like to thank all the members of this group for their work on this over the past year, particularly our Honorary Secretary, Paul Kavanagh, who co-chaired this group with me and was the key lead in drafting the revised provisions and supporting documentation. We will have a new Faculty strategy group and a revised executive support structure for the board into the future.

Highlights during the year included:

- Aspire post CSCST fellowships awarded to Dr Sheila O'Hare and Dr Ellen Cosgrave.
- The Faculty winter and summer scientific programmes continue to be strongly supported with ongoing IMJ supplements of proceedings published and a scientifically high quality varied programme of invited speakers, oral and moderated poster sessions.
- Admission ceremony of 2 members, 3 CSCSTs and 10 Fellows on 21 May 2024.
- Dr Michael Hanrahan, Dr Zachary Johnson medal winner and Dr Orlaith O'Reilly, Dr Kevin Kelleher medal winner.
- Dr James Gilroy received the Dr Dorothy Stopford Price award at the RCPI Trainees day.
- Dr Abigail Collins was awarded Trainer of the Year at the Trainees Committee National Education Day.
- The Dr Emer Feely award for Trainer Excellence in the Republic of Ireland is open for application and the first inaugural award to Emer's family was presented on 12 November 2024.
- A competitive interview process for inclusion in our HST that saw eight new trainees admitted in July.

The Faculty is all about its people and I would like to thank all of you who have made this possible and to encourage as much participation in our work programmes as possible. I would like to extend a special thank you to the members of our board, including the officers of the Faculty and those who have served as chairs and members of our committees, to those who have acted as examiners, including our external examiner Dr Derek Ward who is based in Birmingham, UK, and the administrative staff at FPHMI, particularly our Faculty coordinator, Brian O Murchu.

I would also like to thank our CEO Audrey Houlihan and our President Diarmuid O'Shea for all their support in this year which marks the 400th birthday of RCPI Founder John Stearne.

May I once again wish you and yours season's greetings at the close of this year and a happy and prosperous 2025.



Prof Cecily Kelleher

Dean, Faculty of Public Health Medicine



Faculty Representation

Expert Group	
RCPI Training Committee	Dr Anne Sheahan
RCPI Research Committee	Dr Howard Johnson
RCPI Collegiate Membership and Engagement Steering Group	Prof Patricia Fitzpatrick
Working Group for Recognition and Regulation of Multidisciplinary Public Health	Dr Caroline Mason Mohan
The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies Health and Wellbeing Committee	Dr Michael Hanrahan Dr Sheila O'Hare
The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies Quality and Patient Safety Committee	Dr Caroline Mason Mohan
RCPI Trainees' Committee's Public Health Forum Representative	Dr Ann Marie Murray
The Public Health Reform Expert Advisory Group of the Department of Health	Prof Cecily Kelleher Prof Patricia Fitzpatrick
National Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme - Clinical Advisory Group Membership	Dr Kenneth Beatty
Medical Council Consultative Forum on the Regulation of Education and Training	Prof Cecily Kelleher
National Immunisation Advisory Committee	Dr Mary Ward
Faculty in Northern Ireland (FiNI)	Dr Lourda Geoghegan
Education and Faculty Affairs Committee (UK)	Dr Triona McCarthy
National Clinical Programme for Infectious Diseases	Dr Derval Igoe Dr Ruth McDermott Dr Aileen Kitching
HIQA HTA on newborn screening for severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID)	Dr Caroline Mason Mohan
Irish Heart Foundation: Health Promotion Alliance Ireland	Dr Anne Dee
RCPI Strategy Steering Board	Dr Kevin Kelleher
RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Climate Action	Dr Keith Ian Quintyne
Smoking and Vaping RCPI advisory groups	Dr Paul Kavanagh
RCPI Advisory Group on Assisted Dying	Dr Geraldine McDarby
Medical Subcommittee of the Disability Advisory Group (DAG) to the National Clinical Programme for People with Disability	Dr Ellen Cosgrave
HSE Public Health Strategy Steering Group	Prof Cecily Kelleher
Irish Public Health Specialist in Training	Dr Lucinda Ryan
RCPI Simulation Governance Steering Committee	Prof Patricia Kearney

Business of the Honorary Secretary

Dr Paul Kavanagh

The Board met on 5 occasions between January and December 2023, on 25 January, 29 March, 14 June, 06 September, and 15 November. The names and attendance of the Board members are listed below in the accordance with Standing Order XVII (v).

The following members will be demitting from the Board upon completion of their term of office: Dr Ann Marie Murray, Dr Geraldine McDarby, Dr Douglas Hamilton, Dr Fiona Cianci. The advice and support these members have been much appreciated throughout the year.

Dr Anne Sheahan serves on the Board as an ex-officio member in her capacity as National Specialty Director (NSD). Great credit and thanks are due to Dr Sheahan and Dr Mary Ward, Deputy NSD, for their continuing commitment in supporting the Higher Specialist Training Programme.

The Faculty governance review began in May 2023. It was agreed that the Faculty's Examinations Committee, Meetings Committee, Fellowship Committee and Specialty Training Committee would be part of this Review. The chairs of these committees were asked to draft their committees' terms of reference. The review group also considered whether further committees would need to be re-established and whether new committees need to be established. A report on this governance review was considered and approved by the Board for recommendation to the Faculty. Revised standing orders will be brought to the Faculty AGM and following this committee structures will be redeveloped. The contribution of members of the Governance Review Group of the Board is acknowledged.

The Faculty admission ceremony took place in person at No. 6 Kildare Street on the evening of 21 May 2024 as part of the two-day Summer Scientific Meeting. During the ceremony, 10 Fellows, 2 Members and 3 CSCST graduates were also conferred in person. It was an evening of celebration for all conferees. Currently the Faculty of Public Health Medicine has 13 Honorary Fellows, 144 Fellows, 86 Members and 14 Diplomate Members.

The Board



The Faculty is governed by the Board, the Chair of which is the Dean of the Faculty. The Dean attended meetings of the College Executive Board on behalf of the Faculty.

Board membership for the 2023/2024 period, and Board attendance, was as follows:

Board member	Position	No. of meetings
Prof Cecily Kelleher	Dean	5
Dr Mary Ward	Convenor of Exams	2
Vacancy	NI Affairs Rep	-
Dr Mai Mannix	Fellow	2
Dr Ann Marie Murray	SpR	2
Prof Alan Baird	External member	3
Ms Janis Morrissey	External member	5
Dr Anna Clarke	Faculty rep on Council	5
Dr Lourda Geoghegan	Fellow	4
Dr Anne Sheahan	NSD	4
Dr Kevin Kelleher	Honorary Treasurer	5
Prof David Weakliam	Fellow	3
Dr Anne Dee	Fellow	3
Dr Geraldine McDarby	Member	2
Dr Douglas Hamilton	Member	5
Dr Fiona Cianci	Member	3
Dr Paul Kavanagh	Member	5
Dr Keith Ian Quintyne	Fellow	4
Dr Aoife O'Connell	SpR	1

I am grateful to Faculty Officer, our Treasurer, Dr Kevin Kelleher, for his support with finances during the year, and also to other Board Members for their invaluable input into the Faculty's work.

Sincere thanks also to the chairs of the Faculty's subcommittees, including Dr Anna Clarke, Chair of the Fellowship Committee, Dr Derval Igoe, Chair of the Public Health Medicine Examinations Committee, Dr Emer O'Connell, Chair of the Meetings Committee, for their tremendous contributions in the past year, and also to all those who participate in these committees, your dedicated time and expertise have been appreciated.

Special thanks to Dr Paul Kavanagh, Convenor Part I, Dr Lourda Geoghegan, Convenor Part III, and especially Dr Mary Ward, Convenor of Examinations and Convenor Part II, who have done an excellent job in holding examinations with such high standards.

I would also like to thank President Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, Ms Audrey Houlihan, and Ms Sheila Gallagher for their support and counsel. Acknowledgement and gratitude also to college administration staff, Ms Muriosa Prendergast, Ms Kelly Webster, Mr Darragh Whelan and most especially to Mr Brian O'Murchu for their hard work and organisation during 2024. Thanks also to Mr John Fogarty, Membership Coordinator, Mr Barry Quinlan, Finance Manager, Ms Maria Golden, Health and Wellbeing Manager, Ms Jemma Smith and Ms Roisin O'Donnell in the events team, Ms Niamh O'Sullivan, Communications Manager, and all RCPI colleagues for their ongoing support.



Faculty of Public Health Medicine Summer Scientific Poster Presentations, RCPI, 6 Kildare Street, Dublin, 21 May 2024

Honorary Treasurer and Finance Report

*Dr Kevin Kelleher, Honorary Treasurer,
Mr Barry Quinlan, RCPI Head of Finance,*

Income and Expenditure for Financial Year ended 30 June 2024 Commentary

General

A surplus of €2,842 was generated for the 12 months to end June 2024. This is an increase of €6,457 (179%) on last year's deficit of €3,616.

Income

Total Income (excluding investment income) generated for the year-end June 2024 was €149,509. This is an increase of €4,254 (3%) on last year and is due to a slight increase in Event Fee income and HSE Main SLA Funding.

Income is classed under three broad headings:

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

Subscriptions and Admission Fees

Receipts from Subscriptions were €22,887 in 2023-24 versus €25,914 in 2022-23, a decrease of €3,027 (12%) on last year.

Admission income was €3,004 in 2023-24 versus zero in 2022-23.

In 2023-24, 85% of Fellows, 68% of Members, and 17% of Diplomats paid their subscriptions. In 2022-23, 94% of Fellows, 72% of Members, and 33% of Diplomats paid their subscriptions.

Event Fee Income and Sponsorship

Event fee income for 2023-24 was €39,764 compared with €38,443 in 2022-23. The slight increase is due to a high turnout for the Summer Scientific meeting.

HSE Grant Income

This relates to the SLA to deliver training.

The amount of €83,854 is the proportion of the grant relating to the Faculty to cover cost of overheads and administrative running costs. This has increased by €2,956 when compared to 2022-23.

Investments

Investments held by the College at the end of June 2024 were €9,771,185, of which €201,905 was apportioned to the Faculty. The investments apportioned to the Faculty have increased by €19,252 in 2023-24, compared to an increase of €4,458 in 2022-23.

Costs

Costs are categorised as follows:

- Direct Costs, which are attributed to 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

Direct Costs total €93,815 for the year, an increase of €11,383 (14%) on last year.

- Catering, which decreased by €5,191,
- Wages and Salaries, which increased by €3,892,
- Travel & accommodation, which increased by €2,143,
- and other direct costs, which increased by €2,419; for photography, speakers' fees, AV requirements, and subscriptions,
- bursaries, which increased by €8,120.

The higher spend in 2023-24, versus 2022-23, is due to overall increased event activity, especially payment of bursaries for the EUPHA conference, the PHM Higher Specialist Training Scheme, and the Dorothy Stopford Price award.

Overhead recharge

Overhead recharge of €72,104 has been charged to the Faculty of Public Health Medicine accounts for 2023-24, compared with €70,897 in 2022-23. The small increase relates to overheads associated with rent, utilities, and insurance. This constitutes 0.8% of the overall College overhead.

Profit & Loss

Company: Faculty of Public Health Medicine

Financial Year Ending: 2024

Calendar Period: 12 - June


 FACULTY OF
PUBLIC HEALTH
MEDICINE
ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

	Actual 30/06/2024	Budget 30/06/2024	€ Var	Prior Yr Actual 30/06/2023	€ Var
Income					
Fee Income	39,764	22,600	17,164	38,443	1,321
Subscriptions Income	22,887	20,408	2,479	25,914	-3,027
Admissions/Conferring Income	3,004	2,000	1,004	0	3,004
HSE Main SLA Funding	83,854	68,836	15,018	80,898	2,956
	149,509	113,844	35,664	145,255	4,254
Direct Costs					
Direct Catering	-15,449	-16,500	1,051	-20,640	5,191
Direct Wages & Salaries	-39,931	-38,418	-1,512	-36,152	-3,778
Direct PRSI	-4,396	-4,245	-151	-3,995	-401
Direct Pension	-1,694	-2,561	867	-1,964	269
Direct Employee Benefits	-402	0	-402	-420	18
Direct Professional Fees	0	0	0	-1,400	1,400
Direct Accommodation	-2,290	-4,500	2,210	-647	-1,644
Direct Travel - Mileage	-150	0	-150	0	-150
Direct Travel - Taxis	-56	0	-56	0	-56
Direct Travel - Other	-375	-8,800	8,426	-81	-294
Direct Subsistence	0	-1,500	1,500	0	0
Direct Stationery	0	-920	920	0	0
Direct Photography	-492	0	-492	-1,722	1,230
Direct Presentations, Gifts, Medals	-1,434	-1,000	-434	-151	-1,283
Direct IT Telecommunications: Data	-13,654	-13,653	-1	-14,373	719
Direct Subscriptions	-1,400	-1,400	0	-120	-1,280
Direct Bursaries	-8,120	-10,000	1,880	0	-8,120
Direct Miscellaneous Costs	-3,972	-9,000	5,028	-768	-3,204
	-93,815	-112,498	18,683	-82,432	-11,383
Gross Profit	55,694	1,347	54,347	62,823	-7,129
Indirect Costs					
Overhead Allocation	-72,104	0	-72,104	-70,897	-1,207
Investment Income & Bank Interest Received					
Unrealised Gain/Loss on Valuation of Investments	19,252	0	19,252	4,458	14,794
NET INCOME(LOSS)	2,842	1,347	1,495	-3,616	6,457

National Specialty Director

Dr Anne Sheahan, NSD

Dr Mary Ward, Deputy NSD

Overview

Special acknowledgment and thanks are given to Heads of Departments and Trainers for the continuation of the important function of specialist training as Crowe Horwath Reform and Slatintecare is progressed. There has been a lot of movement of staff with the establishment of the wider domains of public health over the past year and this will continue to impact on management of the training programme over the next year. But it has provided huge opportunity for trainees to gain experience in all public health competencies.

Special acknowledgement must be given to Dr Triona McCarthy who has stepped down as Deputy NSD at end of March 2024. She has contributed hugely to the HST programme and has supported trainees throughout their training. She continues to be a trainer and supporter of the programme. Dr Mary Ward has been appointed as Deputy NSD from June 2024.

Congratulations and all good wishes for the future to those who obtained their Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Specialist Training since the last AGM: Dr Niamh Dever, Dr Ciara Kelly, Dr Sheila O'Hare and Dr Catriona McNicholls.

We welcome the trainees who started Higher Specialist Training (HST) in July 2024: Dr Ralph Hurly O'Dwyer, Dr Rebecca Marshall, Dr Mark McLoughlin, Dr Irene Gorman, Dr Diane Bredin, Dr John Gannon, Dr Kevin Browne, Dr Domhnall McGlacken-Byrne & Dr Shaunna Kelly.

With the above 9 trainees starting the Programme, there are 47 Specialist Registrars in Public Health Medicine. We have two trainees completing the scheme at the end of this month, Dr Philippa White and Dr Ellen Cosgrave. It is positive to see those finishing the scheme being successful in securing Consultant in Public Health Medicine roles and also having an opportunity to pursue Fellowships.

Induction

The Faculty and RCPI support staff provided an in-person induction day on 09 July 2024 for incoming first year SpRs. The induction day was also attended by a number of trainees from years 2, 3 and 4 and a number of trainers. The attendees were welcomed by the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Cecily Kelleher, who commented on the depth and wealth of experience brought to the Programme by these new trainees. They were also welcomed by Sheila Gallagher CFO of RCPI and by Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President of RCPI. He advised them to embrace the training programme and said that they would be the future leaders in Public Health and also the future trainers for the Faculty. The National Director of Health

Improvement Prof Diarmuid O'Donovan presented an overview of the domain of HI and outlined the many opportunities for training.

Maria Golden, Health & Wellbeing Manager in RCPI gave an overview of her role in supporting trainees throughout the programme and advised them to make contact with her for advice or support.

Presentations on the day focused on trainee experiences using the new OBE Curriculum and use of the ePortfolio to record progress. They also discussed the importance of balancing the Master's in Public Health course with service and educational requirements during the first year of training. More senior trainees discussed their experience of identification and completion of Part II Public Health Reports. Dr Ian Quintyne gave an overview of the role of a trainer. Dr Declan McKeown who has led the weekly Study Day education sessions gave an outline of the topics dealt with in the past and welcomed input on what areas of interest could be addressed during these sessions.

Dr Niamh Bambury, who has been leading a review of the OBE Curriculum gave an update of changes and updates to the HST Core Curriculum and welcomed them to join the working group. She also advised that she has established a subgroup to review delivery of the current teaching and Study Days and will a plan for next number of years.

The latter part of the day focused on the business and HR processes associated with training, with presentations given by Edel Martin, HR Officer, and Sinead Keaveney and Katie Manning from the Medical Resource Unit in the Office of the National Director of Public Health.

Curriculum Review

The new outcome-based Curriculum for Higher Specialist Training had been in place for two years and incoming trainees are also using this. A training session for trainers and trainees was provided by Aisling Smith from the RCPI Education Department who continues to support this work. Dr Niamh Bambury chairs a subgroup of the Board on review and development of the curriculum. This group continues to review the updated OBE and address wider competencies such as professionalism and leadership. Membership includes 1st and 2nd year trainees, trainers who have used the new curriculum and members of the RCPI Education Department.

Study Hours

Thursday afternoons continue to be used as protected time for trainees. A schedule of study session topics and training days have been organised. This forum is now being used as an opportunity for teams working within the wider domains of public health to present on their work and a huge thank you to all speakers who contribute. A special thanks also to our Lead NCHD, Dr James Gilroy and former Lead NCHD Dr Catriona Kelly for organising the sessions.

A particular thank you to Dr Declan McKeown of the Public Health Intelligence Unit who has provided detailed sessions for many of the study sessions and has also facilitated other contributions.

Progress in Training

End of Year Evaluations with trainees and trainers took place in May and June this year. A small number of mid-year assessments must be completed. We thank the Extern assessor Dr Lourda Geoghegan, and special thanks also to RCPI support staff and to all trainees. The assessments were undertaken virtually but the plan is to move to in-person assessments in 2025.

Training Sites

Specialist Registrars in Higher Specialist Training are in training posts in regional Departments of Public Health and in specialty placements in the National Office of Health Protection, the National Immunisation Office, the National Cancer Control Programme, the National Screening Service, the National Health Intelligence Unit, Health Service Improvement and Health Improvement domains and the Office of the National Clinical Director for Health Protection. Thanks to Prof David Weakliam who facilitated liaison with a division in WHO Geneva to agree to a two-year training programme, for four six-month placements, to work on Quality Systems and Resilience. A fifth trainee is now on this placement and it has now returned to in person attendance in Geneva. It had moved to virtual during the pandemic. We are working towards increasing the number of specialty placement sites for the Programme with a site accreditation process in place.

Training Site Inspections and Accreditation

Each site providing training has to undergo a site inspection process to determine its suitability to deliver Higher Specialist Training according to the requirements set out in the training curriculum. The inspection panel (NSD, RCPI Chair) carry out a detailed interview with trainers, trainees and management representatives, and an inspection of the facilities every five years and each new site has to be accredited.

Site inspections had been paused during the pandemic but recommenced in 2023. The accreditation process took place during June 2023 with virtual meetings with each site and also with trainees. There are a number of sites that have applied for accreditation and this is in progress. The importance of on-site training for all trainees has been part of this process.

Trainer Development Project

The RCPI Trainer Engagement Project continues. A Refresher Course for all trainers approved pre-2019 was designed and launched in October 2022. This course is available on Brightspace.

A repository of resources was created in The Trainer Hub, and also on Brightspace. This project has continued throughout the year and aims to improve access to resources and training for all trainers across all Training Bodies in RCPI.

Specialty Training Committee

The Specialty Training Committee (STC) meet on a quarterly basis. It is chaired by the NSD, with trainee representatives and trainers in attendance. The trainee representatives report on key points arising from the Trainer-Trainee Subcommittee which is co-chaired by the Deputy NSD and a trainee representative. Dr Rachel McNamara has agreed to co-chair for this year.

Trainers have continued to be engaged with the Programme and will be provided with additional training on the new Curriculum. The Convenors of Examinations have been providing information to trainees, including sharing feedback from the Extern. They have provided sessions for both trainees and trainers on the format and the requirements for all three parts of the MFPHMI exams. Thanks to Dr Derval Igoe, Dr Mary Ward, Dr Paul Kavanagh, and Dr Lourda Geoghegan for their work. With the increase in trainee numbers, there has been an increase in the number of Public Health Reports submitted for examination. This has led to a call for more trainers to become examiners and thanks to all to continue to examine and who have offered to become examiners. Again thanks to the Examinations Committee for all their work. Having increased the number of training places, further work is required to expand training opportunities and to support trainees as much as possible to balance training requirements with personal responsibilities.

Acknowledgments

We wish to extend thanks to all our colleagues who contribute as trainers, Training Leads in their departments, as well as to trainers who have supported and evaluated the progress of trainees, including supporting them during exam preparation. We have several new trainers who are very welcome. Trainer courses run by RCPI are valuable for upskilling and for learning about the latest developments to provide training and support trainees.



Faculty of Public Health Medicine Conferring Ceremony, RCPI, 6 Kildare Street, Dublin, 21 May 2024

Examinations

Dr Derval Igoe, Chair Public Health Medicine Examinations Committee

Dr Mary Ward, Convenor of Examinations and Convenor Part II

Dr Paul Kavanagh, Convenor Part I

Dr Lourda Geoghegan, Convenor Part III

Committee: Anne Dee, Anne Sheahan, Derval Igoe, Eibhlin Connolly, Fiona Cianci, Keith Ian Quintyne, Lois O'Connor, Lourda Geoghegan, Mary Ward, Mary Clarke, Peter Barrett, Regina Kiernan, Patricia Fitzpatrick, Paul Kavanagh, Sarah O'Brien, Zubair Kabir

Online and In-Person Examinations

In April 2024, the **MFPHMI Part I** was again successfully delivered online using remote invigilation, which means that candidates sat the same examination (structure, format and length), in a quiet, secure place of their choosing on a platform provided by TestReach. Rest day has been introduced between Day 1 and Day 2 following the SpRs feedback in 2023. In 2024, processes regarding verification of candidates' primary medical qualification were reviewed and a benchmarking exercise was conducted between MFPHMI and DFPH focused on Paper 4 and Paper IIb respectively. No further developments to MFPHMI were recommended at this time.

The **MFPHMI Part II** Public Health Reports (PHRs) examinations were held in person this year in April and October. Due to increase in number of candidates presenting for examination there is an on-going need to recruit new examiners in order to facilitate the examination process in a timely manner.

So far there has been one sitting of the **MFPHMI Part III** oral examination of professional competence (OEPC) this year in June with the second sitting taking place in early December.

Dr Derek Ward continued as Extern Examiner for the MFPHMI Examinations in 2024. He is a Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Applied Research in the University of Birmingham and has an honorary contract with Public Health England. He is also Chair of Examiners for the UK Faculty of Public Health Diploma Examination (equivalent to Part I MFPHMI).

Examinations Statistics

MFPHMI Part I				
Date	Candidates*	Pass	Fail	Pass rate
23 & 25 April 2024	16	16	n/a	100%

*10 trainees / 6 non-trainees

MFPHMI Part II				
Date	Candidates	Reports	Pass (reports)	Pass rate for reports
9 April 2024	12	12	11	92%
23 October 2024	16	17	15	88%

MFPHMI Part III				
Date	Candidates	Pass	Fail	Pass rate
11 June 2024	2	2	0	100%
3 December 2024	7*			

*applications close on 20 November

MFPHMI Plagiarism Policy

The MFPHMI Plagiarism Policy has been finalised and Turnitin, which is a similarity detection service, has been introduced as part of the application process. The October 2024 sitting was considered a pilot. Formal review of the Turnitin similarity report as part of the examination process will be officially implemented from the April 2025 sitting. The MFPHMI Plagiarism Policy is accessible on the College website.

Move of the Part II MFPHMI to a new platform

The plan to move the delivery of the Part II exam to Brightspace arose from a review of all exam processes as part of the Connect Programme. The Connect Programme aims to modernise the work of RCPI, through new interconnected systems, streamlined work processes, and organisational change. Moving the Part II exam to Brightspace will eliminate most of the process complexity and manual work, by bringing everything into a single, secure system. It will also allow future integration with the Connect platform, allowing for a smoother experience for candidates from initial application to final results.

The College proposes to transition the Part II MFPHMI exam process to the Brightspace platform and to introduce the new process in Spring 2025. The system is being piloted currently to inform this transition. All public health reports will be uploaded to Brightspace by the candidates, and all plagiarism checking, viewing, marking and revising of these documents by the examiners will take place within this platform.

Meetings Committee

Dr Emer O'Connell, Chair

Committee: Dr Mary T O'Mahony, Dr Howard Johnson, Dr Caroline Mason Mohan, Dr Declan McKeown, Dr Helen McAvoy, Dr Kenneth Beatty, Dr Peter Barrett, Dr Ciara Kelly

Overview

The Committee was supported by Ms Mary Hernandez, RCPI Events Coordinator. Ms Hernandez is no longer with RCPI. We wish her well in her career and thank her for her expertise and guidance. Ms Roisin O'Donnell is now assisting us.

I am very grateful to the RCPI Events Team, our Dean Prof Cecily Kelleher, Ms. Ritika Sureka, Training and Faculty Coordinator, and the members of the Meetings Committee for their ongoing support to these meetings. Ms Sureka is also no longer with RCPI and we wish her well in her career and thank her for her expertise and guidance. Mr Brian O'Murchu is now assisting us. Dr Heidi Pelly is standing down from the committee, our thanks to her excellent contribution.

2023 Summer Scientific Meeting

The Faculty of Public Health Medicine welcomed a full house to No. 6 Kildare Street on Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 May 2023 for its Summer Scientific Meeting.

Health is better than wealth or as Gaeilge *Is fearr an tsláinte ná na táinte*, was the theme for the two day conference which featured guest speakers, as well as oral and poster presentations.

Frontline workers provided a series of presentations on health service utilization, the impact of respiratory viruses, health service improvement, and recent insights from health protection.

Dr Elise Crayton, Faculty of Brain Sciences Disability Equity Lead and Research Fellow at the University College London (UCL) Centre for Behaviour Change lead a riveting discussion on applying behavioural science frameworks to drive change in public health behaviours.

Later we heard from Mary O'Meara, Director of Public Health, National TB Lead, and Dr Emma Roycroft, Specialist Medical Scientist at the Irish Mycobacteria Reference Laboratory in St. James's Hospital. They explored TB clusters in Ireland, followed by a discussion chaired by Dr Anne Sheahan, Area Director of Public Health, Area D.

Dr Abigail Collins, National Clinical Lead, Child Health Public Health, and Jackie Austin, Director of Public Health Nursing, spoke about inequalities and inequities in child health, with a focus on children's screening services, and the impact of poverty.

Dr Ina Kelly, incoming Consultant in Public Health Medicine – Environmental Health, explored climate change and the public health impact in Ireland.

The event also featured a wide array of poster presentations.

The Faculty of Public Health Medicine welcomed three new Fellows, four Collegiate Members, and five Diplomate Members, and conferred three CSCSTs.

Congratulations to our newest Members and Fellows, who join our globally connected community of doctors learning together to improve people's health.

2023 Winter Scientific Meeting

The WSM 2023 took place on 6 December 2023. We received again a significant number of abstracts. There will be extended short oral presentations and active poster tours led by our Dean. The event promises an insightful and informative programme of speakers covering topics of mortality surveillance and health protection insights including:

- Dr Tracey Cooper
- Professor Breda Smyth, Chief Medical Officer, CMO
- Dr John Cuddihy, National Director of Public Health
- Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick, UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sport Science



Faculty of Public Health Medicine Conferring Ceremony, RCPI, No.6 Kildare Street, Dublin, 21 May 2024



The Inaugural Dr Emer Feely Trainer Excellence Award RCPI, No.6 Kildare Street, Dublin, 12 Nov 2024 presented to Prof Tony Holohan and Family.

Faculty Events Report

Ms Roisin O'Donnell, RCPI Events Team

Summary Overview

The following report outlines the events activity for the training year 2023-24.

The topics covered were:

1. **06 December 2023:** *Faculty of Public Health Medicine Winter Scientific Meeting*
2. **05 March 2023:** *Faculty of Public Health Medicine 'The New Public Health: Rolling Out reform Webinar'.*
3. **21 May 2024:** *Faculty of Public Health Medicine Summer Scientific Meeting Day 1*
4. **22 May 2024:** *Faculty of Public Health Medicine Summer Scientific Meeting Day 2*

Feedback Survey

1. **6 December 2023 - Faculty of Public Health Medicine Winter Scientific Meeting.**

In total there were:

- 62 Abstract submissions.
- 32 Posters presented on the day.
- 21 Short oral presentations.
- 5 Long oral presentations.

Topics Suggested for future:

1. Climate change, health promotion.
2. It would be good to vary the topics or give importance to certain topics e.g. Climate change, health services, mental health.
3. Emergency preparedness. Social Inclusion / How to tackle health inequity in Ireland. More sexual health.

Feedback included:

- Start a little later (9am is too early for those commuting from outside Dublin (eg Cork!) and Perhaps not a many 4 min presentations together (a run of 12 in the afternoon was intense).
- Extremely interesting, well organised and punctual delivery of varied topics. Many thanks to all.

2. 5 March 2023: Faculty of Public Health Medicine 'The New Public Health: Rolling Out reform Webinar'.

Topics Suggested for future :

1. More public health promotion ideas
2. Health promotion and improvements strategies
3. Health Improvement in practice.

Feedback included:

- RCPI Webinar series are excellent and appreciated. Thank you.
- Dr Mai Mannix gave a great talk on embracing system change in a proactive way. Her work on engaging with schools in a local disadvantaged area is a wonderful example of how public health should engage with our communities. Also, Dr Paul Kavanagh was an excellent moderator and did a great job of managing the discussion.

3. 21 May 2024: Faculty of Public Health Medicine Summer Scientific Meeting Day 1

Topics Suggested for the future:

1. A focus on health of homeless and immigrants in Ireland; Health systems analysis; perhaps a session on commercial determinants of health
2. Appreciated the relevance of the topics to current Irish and International issues. Suggested topics: Health Economics; How decisions about Healthcare Expenditure for the population are made? Some examination of 'reform' - assessing all costs, benefits, and harms. Ethics in Public Health Practice.

Feedback included:

- It was a really good two days with a good selection of topics, excellent keynote speakers and ready high-quality papers being presented. The 4-minute short orals worked well. It was a thoroughly enjoyable event
- Great event well-paced. Session on Gaza was excellent.
- The section on the war in Gaza was excellent- emotive & informative

4. 22 May 2024: Faculty of Public Health Medicine Summer Scientific Meeting Day 2.

Topics suggested for future:

- Wider mix of health service improvement, health improvement and health intelligence (appreciate choice of topics limited by abstracts received)

- Chronic Diseases and public health implications of these diseases
- Themed topics - suggest invitation of submissions on a theme, at least 6 months ahead of the event: e.g. impact of audit; effective advocacy; data influencing policy etc

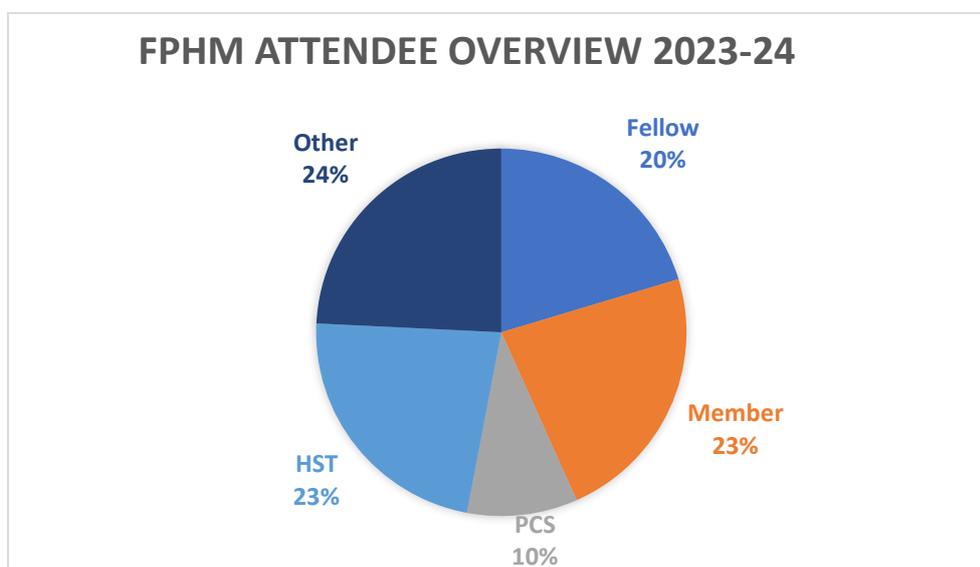
Feedback included:

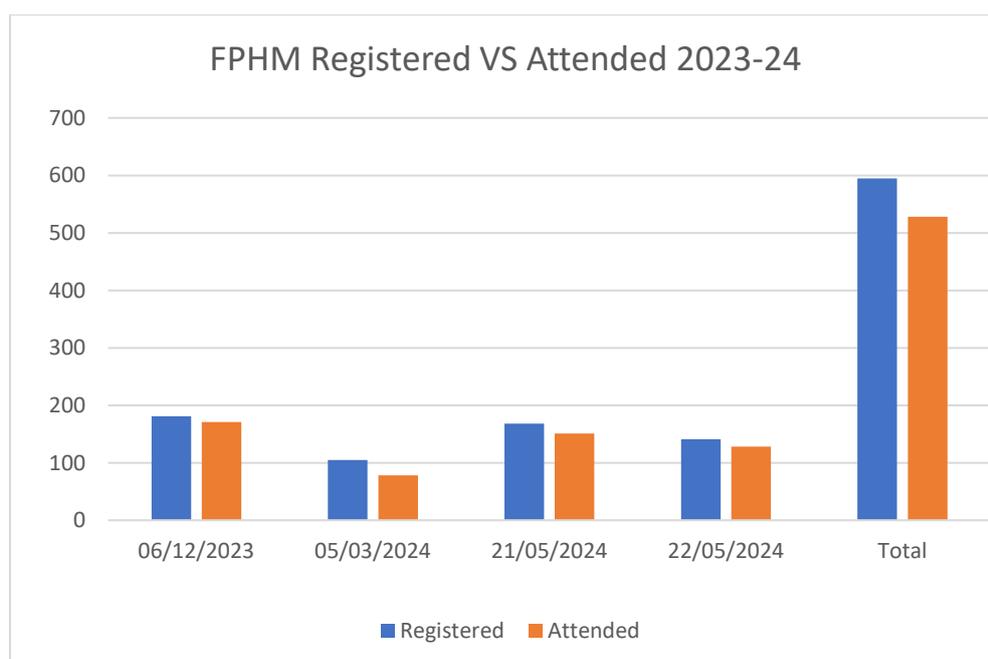
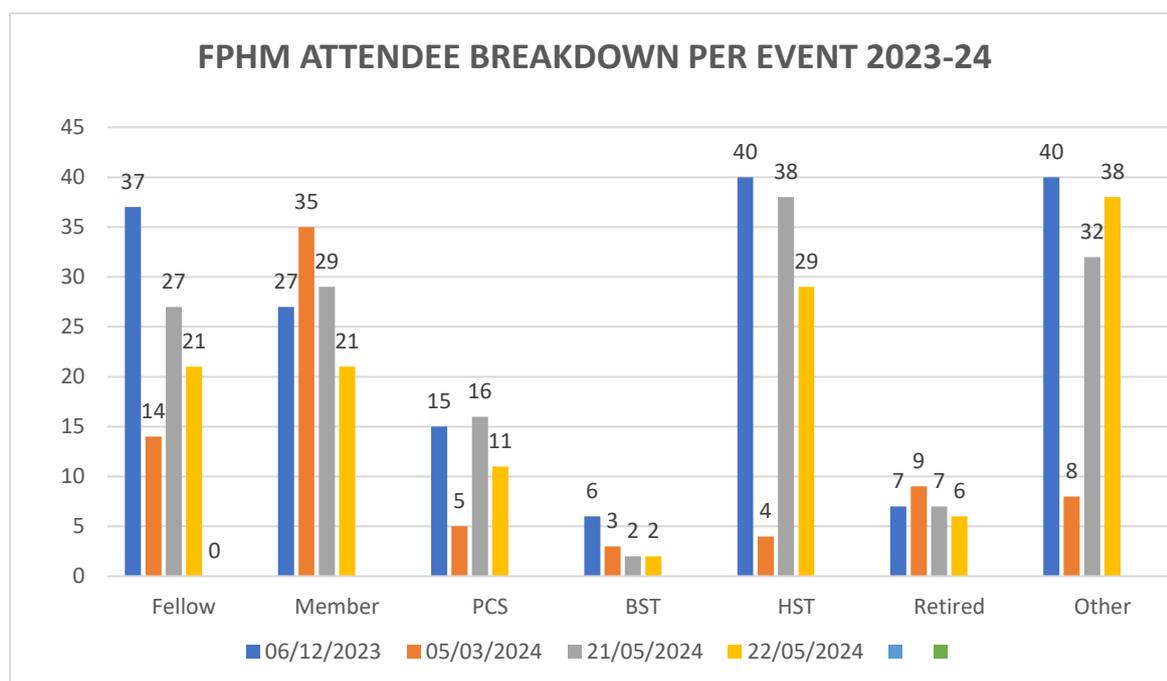
- Well run programme, good interaction. Duration of speakers was adequate without being drawn out for overly long, well judged.
- The cost of the conference is excessive. Particularly if staff want to attend both days, no adjustments/ discounts despite contributing to the SS as speakers or poster authors. Better attendance and more diverse audience would be achieved if it was more affordable. Q1 in this survey only identifies Dr's who work in PH, Public health medicine staff disciplines excludes nursing, surveillance, researchers and management, time to recognize other domains that contribute to PH specifically.

Registration and Attendance

Date	Fellow	Member	PCS	BST	HST	Retired	Other	Total
06/12/2023	37	27	15	6	40	7	40	172
05/03/2024	14	35	5	3	4	9	8	78
21/05/2024	27	29	16	2	38	7	32	151
22/05/2024	21	21	11	2	29	6	38	128
Total	99	112	47		111		118	529

	06/12/2023	05/03/2024	21/05/2024	22/05/2024	Total
Registered	181	105	168	141	595
Attended	171	78	151	128	528





Conclusions – Key Insights

- There was a total of 595 people registered to attend the four events that took place over the year. Out of these 595 registered, 528 attended.
- The Summer Scientific Meeting took place across two days 21 & 22 May. In total there was 279 people that attended across the two days.
- All events received very positive feedback which included themes and topics that may be of interest for future events for keynote speakers.



The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland awards preminent physician, Dr Anthony Fauci the prestigious Stearne Medal for his outstanding contribution to public health at a special ceremony at No. 6 Kildare Street on Wednesday, 17 April 2024.

Faculty Credentials Committee

Dr Anna Clarke, Chair

Committee: Prof Patricia Fitzpatrick, Dr Margaret O Sullivan, Dr Orlaith O Reilly, Dr Lelia Thornton

Following the establishment of the RCPI Credentials Committee in 2023, the Faculty Credentials Committees' role changed and it now considers Membership ad Eundem applications and Diplomate nominations. The Credentials Committee convened once during the year on the 24 March 2024 to consider an application for Membership as per Standing Orders and to make recommendations to the Board.

Membership Ad Eundem

There was one application for Membership Ad Eundem which was approved and recommended to the Faculty Board.

Diplomate Membership

No applications for Diplomate Membership were received.

The Chair is appointed as the Faculty representative on the RCPI Credentials Committee and Prof Patricia Fitzpatrick is appointed as alternate.

Finally, can I thank all members of the Committee and Faculty Coordinator Mr Brian O'Murchu, for their support throughout the last year.

Dr Anna Clarke, Chair Credentials Committee



Education

Diarmuid Breathnach, Director of 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.

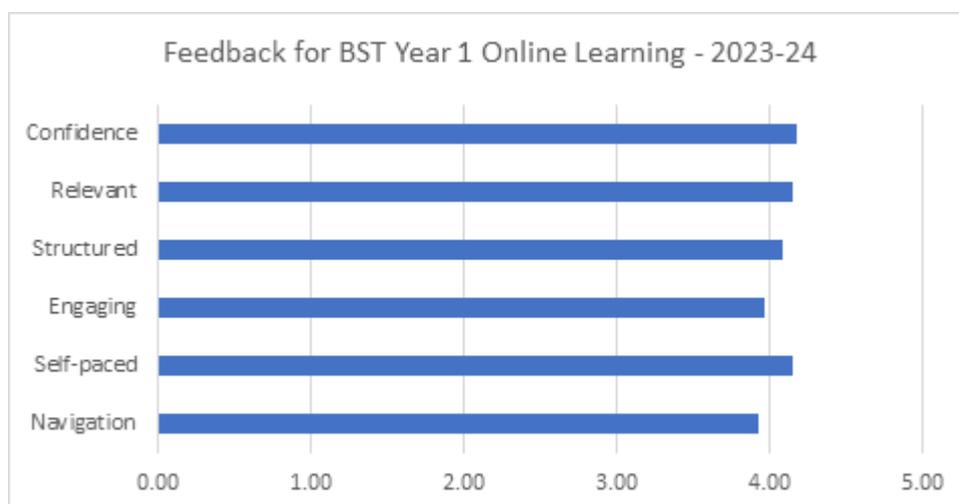
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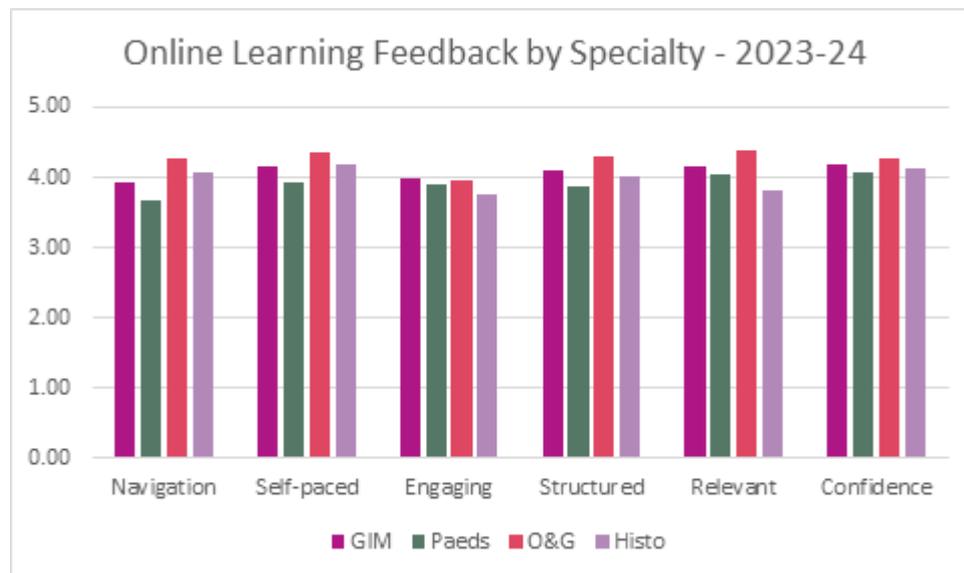
- Over 11,700 learners accessed Brightspace
- 134 tutorials and workshops delivered
- 6,299 attendees at 58 CPD events
- 5,811 total attendees
- 81% of participants across 11 Professional Competence Schemes met the PCS requirements
- 1,086 new enrolments across 11 Professional Competence Schemes
- 2,335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

The Professional Diploma in Infectious Diseases is particularly relevant to Public Health. Module 3, titled "Public Health & Social Aspects of Infectious Diseases," equips learners to consider infectious diseases within the broader context of public and global health. Over 10 weeks it covers areas such as public and global health, disease prevention, tropical medicine, social exclusion, migrant health and other special populations.

Launched in December 2022, the programme runs 3 times per year, has attracted over 500 learners and receives extremely positive feedback from the participating clinicians.



November 2024: Barbara Coen, iheed's Chief Product and Operations Officer, delivered a compelling talk at the "Discussions on Good Practice in Online and Transnational Programmes" event, hosted by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) on Kildare Street. Organised by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the event gathered educators from across Ireland to explore the challenges and opportunities for online and transnational learning in a post-pandemic world.

Healthcare Leadership

Prof Trevor Duffy, Head of Healthcare Leadership

Overview

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, at development stage, 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 – January to December 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 129 doctors were enrolled in the Faculty of Public Health Medicine Schemes (108 on the Specialist Division Scheme and 21 on the General Division Scheme).

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

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

Under the formal Arrangements with the Medical Council for the operation of PCS, our six Training Bodies are required to submit annual reports on the operation of PCS by 30 June each year. For the 2023 – 2024 PCS year, Training Bodies were only required to submit the Quantitative (KPI) Report and this report was submitted on behalf of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine 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% (94% for FPHM Specialist Division Scheme and 90% for the General Division Scheme). The Annual Statements issued in May 2024 were once again annotated to state the reduced PCS requirements for the 2023 - 2024 year.

Annual Verification Process (AVP)

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. This includes 13 doctors from the Faculty of Public Health Medicine Schemes.

Doctors who were verified with no further action received an annotation on their 2023 - 2024 Annual Statement which was issued in May 2024. 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 Medical Council also plans to implement a new CPD Accreditation Model in May 2025, as part of the new Maintenance of Professional Competence (MPC) Framework. Under the new framework, the IMC will serve as the CPD accreditation body, setting standards for CPD programs and activities while recognising accredited CPD Providers.

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

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

The Professional Competence Department will continue to collaborate with our Training Bodies, the Forum and the Medical Council on the implementation of the new 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 January to 31 December 2024:

Type	Applications Approved	Credits Allowed
RCPI	241	1707
Non RCPI	368	2369
TOTAL	609	4076

National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes

RCPI currently manages four National Specialty 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 the HSE 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 2023 data, the programmes have assigned owners to several report recommendations in their national data reports in line with a newly developed HSE procedure. It is hoped that assigning ownership to recommendations can ensure a suitable implementation plan is developed, actioned and monitored.

Quality Improvement

RCPI's Situation Awareness for Everyone (SAFE) collaborative programme completed the 7th and launched the 8th Irish cohort in 2023-24, with two new cohorts funded for 2025-26. SAFE teaches teams how to improve communication, build a safety culture and enhance outcomes for patients in their clinical settings while implementing or improving a bespoke Safety Huddle in a clinical setting. 90 clinical teams from all over Ireland, from public and private hospitals, have now participated in SAFE. Overall, nearly 40 hospitals and approximately 350 clinical staff from medical, nursing, ambulance service, administrative, pharmacy and health and social care professions have been involved in improving communication and safety in their setting.

Two cohorts of Quality Improvement in Action were run with 46 novel Learners, of whom more than 30 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 addressing errors in perioperative methadone prescribing, reducing prescription errors in palliative care, standardising the approach to cross site communication in palliative care, and increasing compliance with criteria-led discharge from a children's assessment unit.

The 2023–2024 cohort of the Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership comprised 10 multidisciplinary teams from specialties including obstetrics and gynaecology, neonatology, and gerontology. As part of the programme, participants collaborated on team-based Quality Improvement (QI) projects and completed a range of formative and summative assessments. This year's projects focused on key healthcare improvements, such as establishing an out-of-hours palliative care service, enhancing the patient experience following caesarean section, improving continence management, and implementing a Family Integrated Care model in neonatal units.

RCPI's new bespoke programme, Embedding QI, was conducted with a second cohort of Critical Care Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Critical Care senior nursing and HSCP staff. Embedding QI teaches the learner how to complete a quality improvement project in the workplace and provides knowledge and skills to utilise QI methods to enhance clinical practice. Learners conduct workplace-based improvement projects to address key pillars of critical care including safe ingress and egress to the service, and early identification/mitigation of deterioration.

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.

Priorities for Health for the Next Government – influencing national healthcare policy

As part of RCPI's commitment to shaping and influencing healthcare policy at a national level, in July 2024 we developed a manifesto in consultation with our Faculties and Institutes to inform future health policies to be adopted by a new Government after the next General Election. This Manifesto reflects our advocacy priorities set in consultation with our Membership and includes the following calls to action for the next Government:

- Increase capacity and resourcing in both community and hospital settings.
- Prioritise and promote the prevention of illness for a healthier, greener society.
- Introduce public health legislation to reduce harms from tobacco, vaping, and alcohol.
- Review Healthy Ireland Framework and commitment to policy response to address structural and socioeconomic drivers of chronic disease and ill-health.
- Support and fund cross-sectoral actions to tackle root causes of ill-health and health inequalities.
- Examine how health is influenced by corporate entities and how vested interests are handled in health policymaking.



Major actions/achievements under RCPI advocacy Priorities for this period (Jan 2024- Dec 2024) are captured in table below.

Patient Safety and Dignity	<p>‘Changing Horizons Framing the Delivery of Training to 2030 and Beyond’. On 7 March 2024, RCPI hosted a meeting of medical training stakeholders to discuss the training of the specialist medical doctor of the future. This report was developed based on discussion points from the meeting and articulates a vision for that future doctor: a skilled, caring doctor, enjoying the appropriate training and supports to provide the best and safest care possible, meeting the varied healthcare needs of the population. This report considers individual and population needs and highlights what this means for the medical profession. It highlights RCPI actions – some proposed, some underway – to support the medical profession in responding to these needs. The report also identifies relevant policy and/or health system actions. Report available here</p>
Health Equity	<p>RCPI is supporting development of a model of care for inclusion health and developing an educational framework for inclusion health. These are follow-on actions from RCPI masterclass and report on health equity and inclusion health. Work done to highlight relationship between health equity, health outcomes, and health literacy. <i>Masterclass: health literacy and communication in the misinformation age</i> was held in April 2024. Discussion paper from this masterclass is under development. Health equity highlighted in Changing Horizons report- as one of eight population needs. Actions the medical profession can take to respond to this need are highlighted in this report - in addition to RCPI specific actions and other health system actions.</p>
Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work continued in 2024 on prevention of smoking- related illness through the new RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Smoking & Vaping. This group was a follow on from the RCPI policy group on tobacco with cross faculty representation. See also progress on T21- major public health legislation aimed at protecting young people from smoking related harm. • Paper published in Global Paediatrics Sep 2024 The adverse effects of vaping in young people - ScienceDirect. • Prevention of NCDs/keeping people well is a major theme of ‘Changing Horizons’ discussion and report launched 2024 • RCPI Manifesto ‘Priorities for Health for the Next Government’ July 2024 – highlighting the need for cross-government policy response to prevent ill health, and highlights the synergies between prevention of ill-health and climate action. • RCPI joined the Irish Health Promotion Alliance in 2024.
Climate Change and Healthcare /Sustainable Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory group with cross faculty representation was convened to progress actions of Position Paper. The chair of this group is Dr Ana Rakovac, Faculty of Pathology. • This group is working on recommendations for integration of healthcare sustainability into RCPI curricula. • RCPI as member of Irish Climate and Health Alliance developing a position paper on Active Travel- to be published in 2025. RCPI has also contributed to Climate and Health Alliance General Election Manifesto.
Influencing Public Health Legislation	<p>Passing of Tobacco 21 legislation The passing of legislation on raising the legal age of sale of tobacco to 21 years was a major achievement in the advocacy space for RCPI in 2024. RCPI has supported this work in recent years via the RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco beginning with the publication of a position paper in collaboration with the Institute for Public Health (see here) and subsequently maintaining this on the national political agenda including making submissions at European level to support the passing of this legislation. RCPI is also a member of the T21 Alliance which was also a strong voice for the introduction of this legislation.</p> <p>Assisted Dying A comprehensive literature review on Assisted Dying, commissioned by a Cross Faculty Advisory Group on Assisted Dying was completed in Oct 2024. Publication of this review is to be finalised in 2025, and discussions are ongoing at Faculty level regarding any updates to RCPI’s position on Assisted Dying.</p>

National Immunisation Advisory Committee (1 January – 31 December 2024)

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

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 welcomed the appointment of the following alternates: Dr Michael Carton (HPSC), Dr Daniel Hare (NVRL), Dr Chantal Migone (NIO), and Dr Áine Varley as the new Medical Secretary to NIAC. NIAC expressed thanks to Dr Aparna Keegan (NIO alternate) and Dr Deirdre Foley (Medical Secretary) who demitted during the year.

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.

Advice provided to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and Department of Health (DOH)

NIAC issued eleven separate recommendations to the CMO and DOH in 2024, 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 February 2024	NIAC Recommendations to CMO re. Herpes Zoster vaccination
16 April 2024	NIAC Recommendations re. passive immunisation of infants against RSV during the 2024/2025 season
25 October 2024	NIAC updated recommendations for pneumococcal conjugate vaccination in childhood

NIAC also issued updates to 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.

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. Eleven of the 27 chapters were updated in 2024, encompassing a total of 27 individual updates.

National Resource, Stakeholder Support, and International Collaboration

NIAC has continued to serve as a trusted and respected national resource, addressing over 100 queries pertaining to immunisation and related topics in the past year.

NIAC continues its collaborative working relationship with stakeholders including the DOH, HSE, HPRA, and HPSC. NIAC regularly engages with the wider international immunisation community and has participated in national and international meetings as appropriate (e.g., WHO SAGE, EU NITAG). NIAC continues to reinforce these relationships through engagement, participation, and advocacy.

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.



Global Training Partnerships

Ms Sinead Lucey, Head of Business Development

Membership and Fellowship

Subscription income for 2023/24 totalled €22,887 and subscription income for 2024/25 currently stands at €13,886 tracking 7% ahead of this time last year. A new pathway for fellowship for the Faculty of Public Health for members who don't have a CSCST but are members of the faculty has been identified and will be put forward to Council for approval.

Global Health

Global Health Module Now Live

The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies has completed the process of developing a Global Health competency framework, outlining 5 core competencies in which all medical practitioners in Ireland should be knowledgeable. This will improve the ability of the medical workforce in Ireland to fully participate in the global health system. This course is free to RCPI Members, Fellows and Trainees and can be accessed here: [Introduction to Global Health](#)

EQUALS delegation to Zambia

In October Karl Bergin and Eoghan Hayden from the HSE visited Zambia as part of an EQUALS delegation there to meet with local biomedical engineers. They visited local hospitals to see donated equipment being used and to discuss the best ways to support them moving forwards. This continued training and collaboration helps ensure the continued use and sustainability of the donated equipment in the areas where it is most needed. To find out more about how you can help or get involved with the EQUALS Initiative email EQUALS@rcpi.ie



International Medical Graduate Training Initiative – Sponsored

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative continues to provide a route for sponsored overseas doctors to experience structured postgraduate medical training in the Irish public health service. It enables suitably qualified medical Trainees from the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain,

Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) to undertake a fixed period of training in clinical services in Ireland. Trainees participating within these programmes are fully sponsored by their governments for the duration of their training. Income generated through the programme is invested into improvement projects that benefit all RCPI training programmes.

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

International Residency Training Programme

Our International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) is offered to doctors upon completion of their Internship. This programme enables doctors to complete Residency training in Ireland before returning to their home country with a Saudi/Arab Board equivalent qualification and Membership of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. It is currently offered in Internal Medicine and Paediatrics and programmes have been developed a histopathology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology to recruit for in 2025. Currently there are 13 graduates.

International Clinical Fellowship Programme

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) offers structured, curriculum-based specialist training at a senior level for doctors who wish to pursue higher training in their chosen specialty or sub-specialty. These programmes are now available in 35 specialty areas, including Public Health. In September 2024 interviews for an international Fellowship in Public Health took place with one offer being made and accepted to a doctor from Kuwait and three doctors paneled from Oman. The total number of trainees across all RCPI faculties and institutes is 38 and the number of graduates to date from all specialities is 184.

International Medical Graduate Training Initiative – Scholarship

The College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan's (CPSP's) working relationship with the HSE and the Forum of the Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies, continues to provide a Postgraduate Scholarship Programme in Ireland for doctors from Pakistan. This allows doctors who are enrolled with the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Pakistan to complete two years of their training in Ireland. The Sudan Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB) joined the CPSP in offering the programme in 2018. To date there are 38 graduates of the programme and 53 in training in GIM, Paediatrics and O&G.

Administration and contact details

Key personnel in RCPI who conduct work on behalf of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine include:

Faculty Officer	Brian O'Murchu	fphm@rcpi.ie brianomurchu@rcpi.ie
Faculty Manager	Darragh Whelan	Darraghwhelan@rcpi.ie
Higher Specialist Training Coordinator	Diego Castilho	diegocastilho@rcpi.ie
Higher Specialist Training Manager at RCPI	Louise Guyett	louiseguyett@rcpi.ie
Conferences and Events	Jemma Smith	events@rcpi.ie
Examinations Coordinator	Marianna Smith	MariannaSmith@RCPI.IE
Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) Administrator	Lyndsey Campbell	ProfessionalCompetence@RCPI.IE

Other key departments are linked to the Faculty of Public Health Medicine page on <https://www.rcpi.ie/>

