



**FACULTY OF
PAEDIATRICS**

ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT



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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

The past year has been one of continued activity, progress and achievement for the Faculty of Paediatrics. As the national professional and training body for paediatrics in Ireland, we have continued to support the development of our specialty through a broad programme of education, training, advocacy and policy work, all with a shared focus on delivering the best possible care for children and young people.

None of this would be possible without the commitment and contribution of paediatricians and neonatologists across Ireland. The strong level of engagement nationally has enabled the faculty to move forward on a range of important priorities and to respond to the evolving needs of our specialty and the children and families we serve.

“Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.”

Vincent van Gogh.

I would like to highlight some of the key activities and achievements of the Faculty during the 2025–2026 year.

Faculty of Paediatrics Board

The Faculty Board met on five occasions over the past year. An additional meeting was held in November in response to an exceptional matter that required further time and discussion outside the usual meeting timelines.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members of the Board for the advice, support and commitment they have given throughout the past year. The breadth of expertise, thoughtful discussion and valuable contributions from Board members have provided strong support to me personally and have greatly assisted the work of the Faculty.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to those who are demitting from the Board this year: Dr Muhammad Azam, Convenor of Meetings; Dr Basil Elnazir, Chair of the Awards Committee; and Dr Ide Nic Dhonncha, Associate Member Representative. Each has been an active and valued contributor to the Board and has provided tremendous support to the Faculty in so many ways throughout their respective terms. I am very grateful for their commitment and contributions.

We have also been extremely fortunate to have three wonderful trainee representatives — Dr Ruth Carey, Dr Dee Ryan and Dr Dermot Wildes. They have been fully committed members of the Board, bringing valuable and important trainee perspectives to our discussions and work. We thank them for their work and wish them every success in the next stage of their careers as their terms come to an end.

I am delighted to welcome our two new trainee representatives, Dr Deirbhile Henderson and Dr Tiarnán Fallon Verbruggen. We are very grateful to them for taking on these important roles and look forward to their contributions to the Board.

It was also great to welcome Professor Michael Boyle back to the board as Director of Education and Training for the Faculty—Mike has a wealth of experience and is a great asset to the Faculty.

A very warm welcome to our two incoming Board members, Dr Sinead Harty, Fellow Representative, and Dr Lucinda Ryan, Associate Member Representative. We look forward to working with you both over the coming year.

And of course, special thanks to incoming Dean Professor Michael O Neill for his support and wisdom throughout the year. I wish him the very best for his term as Dean and look forward to working with him over the coming year as past dean.

Finally, I would like to thank every member of the Board for giving so generously of their time and for the care, consideration and expertise they have brought to all aspects of the Board's work over the past year. Their

commitment and support are greatly appreciated and are central to the continued work and success of the Faculty.

Professor Denis Gill RIP



Sad news for our faculty this year as we said farewell to Professor Denis Gill-former Dean of the Faculty of Paediatrics.

On behalf of the Faculty of Paediatrics and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to his family and friends. His exceptional leadership, dedication to children's health, and unwavering commitment to paediatric education have left an enduring legacy. He inspired generations of clinicians and trainees, and his contributions will continue to shape the profession for years to come. He will be remembered with great respect and gratitude.

Prof Denis Gill Dean served as Dean of the faculty of Paediatrics from 1992–1994. He graduated from UCD in 1968 and undertook paediatric training in Dublin, Bristol, the Brompton Hospital, and Brisbane. He trained in Guys Hospital with the father of paediatric nephrology, Cyril Chantler. Denis was a general paediatrician and paediatric nephrologist in Temple Street and Professor of Paediatrics at RCSI. He had a reputation as an enthusiastic teacher and researcher. He was President of the Confederation of European Specialists in Paediatrics and, as Ethics Committee Convenor, produced guidelines on biomedical research in paediatrics for Europe.

He is a founder member of the faculty and as Dean promoted the faculty's interest in childhood immunisations and prevention of childhood poisoning. As Chairman of the National Immunisation Committee RCPI he led the development and publication of National Guidelines. Denis was a past President of the British Society for the History of Paediatrics and Child Health. He was a founding member of the Retired Paediatricians Group of Faculty.

He was kind and encouraging trainees and colleagues and will be remembered by many for this.

May he Rest in Peace.

Faculty Initiatives and Public Engagement

E-Scooters Position Paper December 2025

In Dec 2025, the Faculty of Paediatrics published a new position paper - [E-scooter Falls and Brain Injuries in Children: Call for Action in Ireland](#). This paper highlighted that e-scooter accidents had become the leading cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) in children and called for public awareness, enforcement of existing legislation and for consideration of existing legislation for children's safety. The paper received extensive media attention with a college social media campaign, national radio and television interviews, newspaper articles and local interviews. The paper was sent to the Oireachtas and to the Minister for Transport. Thanks to Dr Irwin Gill, for his expertise and enthusiasm and for playing such a key role. Changes to the legislation around e scooters were announced August 2026.

National and European Impact-Faculty Position Paper: Engaging in Online Activity: Prioritising and protecting the mental health of children and young people 2025

The Faculty of Paediatrics position paper "Engaging in Online Activity: Prioritising and protecting the mental health of children and young people" <http://www.rcpi.ie/protecting-children-online> continued to have a national and European impact throughout the year as the European union worked to introduce legislation to protect children engaging in online activity. The European Commission has adopted the EU KIDS Act to enhance the online safety

of children throughout the Union. The proposal prohibits social media platforms from accessing children under the age of 13 and sets an EU-wide minimum age for minors to open an account of their own at the age of 15, thereby ensuring a gradual approach.

Faculty of Paediatrics Children's Research Charter 2025

The Research Committee of the Faculty has created the Infants and Children's Child Health Research Charter, [Children's Health Research Charter](#), in collaboration with children, young people, and healthcare professionals. The Charter sets out key principles to guide anyone involved in child health research. The Charter is designed to help children, families and caregivers, and health professionals have informed conversations about child health research. Its purpose is to support open, clear conversations between families, caregivers and healthcare professionals about child health research. It helps ensure that everyone understands what the research involves, when it takes place and why it matters. I would like to thank the Young Peoples Advisory Group (YPAG) at Children's Health Ireland /IN4KIDS for their invaluable help with the co-design and review of this charter.

Faculty Funding Call 2025-2026

The faculty continued to fund educational and training activities nationally through a faculty funding call which closed in Jan 2026. This funding resulted in many events and opportunities being realised across paediatric units in Ireland.

Please see details below of the activities and projects funded:

1. The Community Child Health/Neurodisability subcommittee of the faculty held an away day in Glasannon Lakehouse Hotel in January 2026. There were presentations on hot topics in Neurodisability and development of national guidelines and pathways. (Applicant Dr Niamh Lagan)
2. STAR Project Team (Subdural Haemorrhage Trends Across the Republic of Ireland) which includes Paediatricians and a Radiologist from multiple hospital sites received funding for statistical data analysis support for this valuable national study. (Applicant Dr Joanne Nelson)
3. International Adolescent Health Week educational activities CHI October 2025. (Applicant Dr Orla Walsh)
4. Performance of advanced proteomic studies in a subset of patients via placenta-derived extracellular vesicles (EVs) as novel markers of placental cellular function- measured by maternal blood-sampling. This project will provide novel insights to improve the diagnosis and assessment of congenital heart disease in utero with the ultimate aim of improving short- and long-term outcomes of patients. (Applicant Dr Sophie Duignan)
5. The purchase of a dermatoscope for nailfold capillaroscopy assessment at the National Centre for Paediatric Rheumatology at CHI-to improve the clinical assessment of patients with systemic connective tissue diseases, to encourage learning of nailfold capillaroscopy as a clinical skill for trainees and all doctors within the department and allow inclusion in future research studies involving capillaroscopy. (Applicant Dr Diarmuid Mc Laughlin)
6. The first National Barnahus Study Day - May 2026 in Galway. Barnahus puts the focus on ensuring that children who may have been exposed to sexual harm receive the right help at the right time. The Barnahus model co-locates essential services within the four rooms of the "children's house", incorporating TUSLA, HSE/ CHI, An Garda Síochána and Therapeutic supports. (Applicant Dr Joanne Nelson)

Communication Strategy

RCPI Faculty of Paediatrics' communication strategy helps maintain connections with its members and fellows, while also being a voice for advocacy for the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

The faculty was referenced widely in Irish media this year for its position paper "E-scooter Falls and Brain Injuries in Children: Call for Action in Ireland." Coverage on RTÉ Six One and RTÉ: One O'Clock, on RTÉ Morning Ireland and Newstalk Breakfast, and in the Irish Times, Irish Independent and Irish Examiner are estimated to have reached a combined audience of 4,263,225 across TV, radio and print.

The faculty also used its voice to encourage informed conversations about child health research by launching a

new Children's Health Research Charter, which has been viewed 298 times on the college website, and shared widely across hospital sites.

The faculty uses its monthly faculty E-Zine to provide updates, supporting our community and sending news and CPD opportunities directly to their inboxes. Open rates for the monthly faculty E-zine reached a high of 57%, demonstrating a strong commitment from members and fellows to know what is going on in the faculty. For comparison, the industry average open rate is 25%.

The top clicked link was the RCPI statement on global conflict, followed closely by the report of assessment and management of tongue tie in infants. Across all reports, links back to the faculty web pages, RCPI social media (particularly Instagram), and CPD conferences and events proved popular with the community. Engagement with the faculty email communications reflects the vibrant Faculty of Paediatrics community.

Advocacy

Continued Support to Gaza and Conflict Zones

I would like to update you all on the support provided by us as a faculty and college to Gaza and other conflict zones. Firstly, we are all equally appalled at the humanitarian disaster in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan and other areas of the world. The situation for the people living in these regions is intolerable - particularly for children and of course our health care worker colleagues.

As you know, the Faculty of Paediatrics is one of six faculties and institutes in RCPI. The college advocates these issues on a collective basis, as this is a more effective and stronger voice. Wars and conflicts and their impact on health have been mentioned at every college event including all Faculty and Institute events.

RCPI Council previously approved a charitable donation to Médecins Sans Frontières.

As a faculty and training body, we have met and worked with Dr Trish Scanlan and colleagues (TLM, <https://childrennotnumbers.org/who-we-are/>) and colleagues to help reestablish paediatric training in Gaza. RCPI is continuing to make its logbooks and learning materials freely available to all doctors who are training in paediatrics. We are also providing access to webinars and educational activities. I understand the deep concern held by all for those affected by these horrific situations, and we as a faculty, along with our colleagues across RCPI, will continue to advocate and help as much as we can.

Autism Charity Faculty Support

In December 2025 the Faculty welcomed Ireland's Autism charity (AslAm) to No 6 Kildare St where a sensory Santa was hosted for children with autism and their families. Information on practical support and resources was provided by the charity. This is the third year this has been hosted in RCPI and was a wonderful event for all.

Faculty contribution to Cross College Activities and Policy engagement

RCPI Strategy 2025-2029

RCPI continues to take action on key elements of the college [Strategic Plan: 2025-2029](#), a detailed roadmap to enhance and maintain its position as a world-leading postgraduate medical training body. Thank you to Dr Pamela O Connor, past Vice President of the College, who represented our faculty on the strategy group.

RCPI Inclusion Health Framework

The Faculty of Paediatrics, in collaboration with the Institute of Medicine was successful in securing funding from NDTP for the development of an Education framework in Inclusion health.

Faculty of Paediatrics lead: Dr Aoibhinn Walsh.

Overall Lead: Prof Cliona Nic Cheallaigh

The focus of this Framework was on identifying the capabilities required by doctors to address health inequities

faced by people experiencing social exclusion and to work towards achieving health outcomes equivalent to those of the general population. This Framework outlines teaching and learning goals that specify the clinical skills underpinning the delivery of effective, responsive care; it serves as a foundation for designing clinical fellowships, special interest pathways, curricula within National Training Programmes, and other educational resources.

This project involved significant input from the faculty, and the work produced was codesigned with patients experiencing social exclusion. The Education Framework was launched in RCPI in March.

https://rcpi.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/IO_cee442b4-8e62-4bd3-abf3-3581c045099b/

RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Climate Action

Dr Joanne Balfe and I represented the faculty during the early months of the RCPI Climate action group. Education on climate action is to be embedded into SPR curricula. Thanks to Dr Molly McGuckin who helped to review the Paediatric curricula requirements for the group. Thank you to the NSD'S who have reviewed the outputs from the group and their suitability for inclusion in the Paediatric Curriculum.

Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health re Allergy services in Ireland Consultation

Thank you to Professor Aideen Byrne for coordinating the Faculty response.

Call for a Tobacco Free Future

In February 2026, the RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Smoking and E-Cigarettes, a cross-college group, launched a paper and campaign [calling for government action to end tobacco harm in Ireland](#). Specialist doctors across a range of clinical areas and representing their Faculty/Institute (eg Public Health Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Respiratory Medicine, Medical Oncology) worked with the advocacy and communications team to produce a comprehensive position statement and a high-impact media campaign with expert-led video content. This group is chaired by Dr Paul Kavanagh from the Faculty of Public Health Medicine.

Consultation Submissions

In 2025/26, RCPI made submissions to the public consultations on the National Obesity Strategy for adults and children, the new Healthy Ireland Framework, the National Drugs Strategy and made a response to Tobacco Free Ireland Call for Evidence. These reflect RCPI's commitment to shaping health policy across sectors.

Prebudget Submission

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

Irish Medical Council Survey-Development of National Graduate Outcomes

The faculty completed a submission to this survey on desirable graduate outcomes.

RCPI Climate Scorecard

Earlier this year, RCPI participated in this climate scorecard exercise with the HSE's Climate and Sustainability Programme. The report is attached and has been shared with RCPI's senior management team. It will be disseminated further throughout RCPI over the coming months – so you are getting a first look here.

While there is room for improvement in many areas, RCPI scored the highest of the three colleges who participated, and our progress/achievements in specific areas are highlighted in the report. We score well in advocacy – mainly down to the engagement of all faculties and institutes.

National Standards for Residential Services for Disabled People

Thank you to Dr Niamh Lagan and Child Community Health/ Neurodisability Subgroup of the RCPI for collating the faculty response on National Standards for Residential Services for Disabled People.

Fortification of Flour with Folic Acid

The Department of Health undertook a Public Consultation on mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid. The Faculty submitted a response along with the other faculties and institutes in RCPI.

Neonatal and Paediatric Clinical Advisory Groups-(CAGs)

Over the past year, the Neonatal and Paediatric Clinical Advisory Groups (CAGs) have continued to review, advise on and approve the activities of the National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics and Neonatology, supporting the implementation of this important work by the HSE. Work on the Neonatal and Paediatric Models of Care is also progressing. Further details of the work undertaken are outlined in the relevant sections of this report.

In September, we welcomed our new National Clinical Co-Leads for Paediatrics, Professor Colin Hawkes and Dr Hilary Stokes. In July, we were also delighted to welcome Dr Ann Hickey as the new National Clinical Lead for Neonatology.

I would like to acknowledge the huge work done by previous lead Professor John Murphy -his impact was enormous and we wish him well in his new position as RCPI representative to the Irish Medical Council.

The Faculty is very appreciative of the ongoing work and commitment of Professor Michael O'Grady in his role as Clinical Lead for Diabetes.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my Paediatric CAG co-chair, Dr Dave Mullane, and to the outgoing Neonatal CAG co-chairs, Dr Ann Hickey and Dr Mathew Thomas, for their significant contributions to the effective running of the CAGs and to the progress of their work. Their expertise and leadership have been greatly valued.

I am delighted to welcome our new Neonatal CAG co-chairs, Dr Matt McGovern and Dr Donough O'Donovan, and thank them for their commitment to the faculty.

Faculty Events/Engaging our Community

Conferences

The Faculty Autumn **Conference “Opening Doors to Excellence-Child Health in a Time of Change”** took place on October 3rd 2025. There were 286 people registered for the event, with 132 attending in person and 118 joining virtually. Speakers spotlighted paediatric oncology, pioneering brain tumour diagnosis protocols, cancer genetics, e-scooter safety, care for children with special needs and tic disorders. The Ralph Counahan Annual Memorial Lecture was delivered by Professor Anthony Costello, and Ms Lucy Nugent, CEO of Children’s Health Ireland, joined a panel to discuss the future of children’s healthcare.

The Faculty Spring Conference, **“Partnerships in Paediatrics and Neonatology”**, took place on May 8th, 2026. The conference explored collaboration across paediatric and neonatal care, with sessions addressing children’s rights, national clinical programmes and the influence of commercial industries on child health. A total of 270 participants were registered, with 126 attending in person and 144 attending virtually.

Posthumous Special Recognition Award-Professor Anthony Ryan RIP

Following a session on neonatology dedicated to Professor Anthony Ryan at the conference, a posthumous special recognition award for his huge contribution to neonatology nationally, was presented to his children Heather Mc Dermott and Paul Ryan. Dr John Mc Kiernan, former faculty dean, spoke warmly recalling his former colleague and friend.



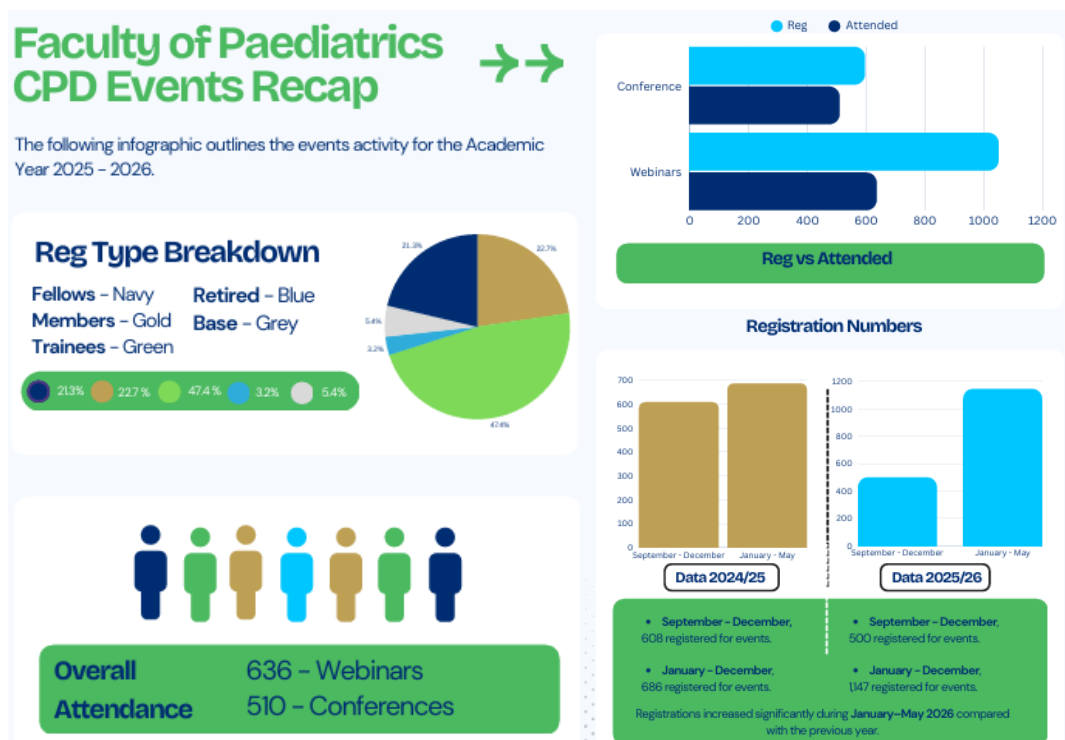
Webinar Series

The faculty delivered a strong webinar programme during the year: 4 webinars were hosted:

- **“Joint Ventures: Inside the World of Paediatric Rheumatology”** was held on 11 November 2025 and had 214 registrations.
- **“At the Heart of Paediatric Cardiology”** was held on 20 January 2026 and had 219 registrations.
- **“To Sleep or Not to Sleep...That is the Question!”** was held on 24 March 2026 and had 153 registrations.
- **“Newborn Screening Updates – Guidance for Paediatricians & Neonatologists”** was held on 28 April 2026 and had 225 registrations.

All the Faculty events were well attended by Trainees and NCHD’s with excellent feedback received. Paediatric doctors in non-training posts working in paediatric units can avail of free online attendance at the Spring and Autumn faculty conferences.

Faculty Events 2025–2026: At a Glance





RCPI Trainee Committee Chair-Dr Alessandra Biagini (HST)Paediatrics

Dr. Alessandra Biagini, a Higher Specialist Training Specialist Registrar in Paediatrics, served as Chair of the RCPI Trainee Committee for 2025-2026. In this role, she represented the interests and perspectives of trainees across RCPI training programmes, ensuring that trainee voices contribute meaningfully to discussions on education, training quality, professional development and the overall trainee experience.

Her appointment was particularly significant as a senior trainee from the Faculty of Paediatrics. Having a paediatric trainee in a prominent College-wide leadership position strengthens the visibility and influence of paediatric training within RCPI and ensures that the perspectives of paediatric trainees are represented at the highest levels of trainee governance. It also demonstrates the faculty's commitment to developing future leaders and encouraging active participation in shaping postgraduate medical education.

External Fellowships and Trainee Awards

Dr Richard Steevens Scholarship

The faculty was very fortunate that one of our paediatric trainees and trainee representative on the faculty board, Dr Dermot Wildes was awarded a Dr Richard Steevens Scholarship-This is a very competitive process and we congratulate him warmly.

Aspire Fellowships

Doctors awarded a Certificate of Successful Completion of Training (CSCST) on completion of their Higher Specialist Training may apply for an Aspire Fellowship. Paediatrics was proud to obtain 2 Aspire fellowships in the 25/26 year:

Dr Aishling Marie Cadogan: Special Interest in Neonatology for the General Paediatrician.

Dr Mojahid Elbadry - Paediatric Neurology.

European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP) Leadership Academy Leipzig August 2026

The Faculty of Paediatrics was delighted to nominate our 2 Faculty board trainee representatives to attend the EAP Leadership Program held in Leipzig in August. Dr Ruth Carey and Dr Dermot Wildes were supported by the EAP to attend and participate in 3 days of learning and connecting with colleagues across the EU. Thanks to both for being such wonderful ambassadors for our training program and faculty.

Education and Training

Strong demand for paediatric training continued throughout the year.

Thank you to our busy and committed NSD'S: Dr Jean Donnelly, Dr Carol Blackburn, Dr Mary O'Dea, Dr Orla Flanagan (HST General Paediatrics), Dr Orla Franklin (HST Paediatric Cardiology), Dr Lisa Mc Carthy and Dr Brian Walsh (HST Neonates), Dr Angharad Griffiths (BST), Dr Juan Trujillo (BST) and Dr Edina Moylett (BST).

I would also like to welcome (back!) Professor Michael Boyle as Director of Education and training for the faculty). Mike has extensive knowledge and experience in training and in trainee matters and is a great asset to our faculty.

Special thanks to Dr Lisa Mc Carthy as she demits from her role-Lisa has been a hugely hardworking NSD. Welcome to Dr Jana Semberova who is starting as NSD for HST-she will be a valuable addition to the team.

The Paediatric Pocket Tutorials resource continued to be used by trainees and consultants. The resource now totals approximately 130 short consultant-led videos across 14 sections.

International Training Programs

During the 2025–2026 training year, the Faculty of Paediatrics supported 50 international trainees across a range of programmes. The International Clinical Fellowship Programme in Paediatrics supported 23 trainees, while the International Residency Training Programme supported one trainee.

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative Postgraduate Scholarship Programme welcomed trainees from Pakistan and Sudan through the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) and the Sudan Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB). A total of 26 trainees participated in the programme, comprising 25 trainees from Pakistan and one from Sudan.

Dr Declan Cody and Dr Basil Elnazir are joint co-leads of the International Fellowship and Residency programmes and Dr John Fitzsimons is lead for the CPSP program.

We thank them for all of their efforts with our international trainees. They are a fantastic team.

Exams

Thank you to Dr Eoin O Currain, Associate Dean of Examinations and to Part I Written Convenor Dr Ngozi Okefor, Part II Written Convenor Dr Emer Ryan, Part II Clinical Convenor Dr Niamh Lynch, for the huge work they do in progressing the paediatric examinations and ensuring the highest academic standards in doing so. We are so lucky to have the fantastic college team to support these exams- Examinations team (Sinead, Louise, Rachel, Sirpa, Rebecca & Irene) and the Education team (Keith & Maurice) who support the committee and facilitate the efficient running of the examinations.

Thanks to all of the committee members and to all the colleagues from all around Ireland who examine and organise the exams.

Faculty Awards-Celebrating our Community

The Autumn Conference provided an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of members, fellows, trainees and colleagues across paediatrics:

- Kathleen Lynn Medal: Dr Kevin Connolly.
- Sir Henry Marsh Medal: Dr Shauna Quinn.
- Victoria Coffey Award: Dr Lucy Geraghty.
- Conor Ward Essay Competition: Dr Danielle Clifford.
- Dean's Wellbeing Award: Dr Dubhfeasa Slattery and CHI Team.
- Dean's Special Commendation Award for Wellbeing: Dr Ngozi Oketah and Dr Una Murtagh-The Gentle

Landing Project for International Trainees.

- Special Recognition Award: Professor Bee Wee.
- National Teaching Award in Subspecialty Paediatrics in the tertiary children's hospitals: Dr Cilian Ó Maoldomhnaigh.
- National Teaching Award in Neonatology in tertiary and regional centres: Dr David Corcoran.
- National Teaching Award in General with special interest, and Community Paediatrics: Dr Orla Flanagan.
- National Teaching Award in General and Community Paediatrics: Dr Paul Gallagher.

Honorary Fellowships and Admissions

Following the autumn conference a faculty admission ceremony was held:

Professor Anthony Costello and Professor David Walker were admitted as Honorary Fellows at the 2025 admission ceremony.

The faculty also welcomed 27 doctors who were awarded CSCST, 10 Associate Members, and 25 new fellows-FRCPI (Paediatrics).

And finally.....

As I come to the end of my term as Dean, I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported me over the past 3 years.

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland is an incredible organisation, built on the expertise, commitment and enthusiasm of so many talented people. I have been privileged to work alongside colleagues across the Faculty and the College, and I am very grateful for the support, advice, and friendship that I have received.

Within the Faculty, I would particularly like to thank John Hunt and Darragh Whelan, who have guided me so carefully through the many aspects of Faculty affairs. Their knowledge, patience and incredible support have been very much appreciated and valued.

I would also like to thank Muríosa Prendergast, Head of Operations, and Sinéad Lucey, Business Development, who are always there to advise and support the faculty, drawing on their enormous experience and expertise.

A huge thank you to Rebecca and the wonderful Events Team, who organise our events with such professionalism, energy and efficiency. And to the Communications Department, who do such an impressive job in promoting and communicating the work of the Faculty. In particular, thank you to Niamh O'Sullivan for her help in developing our communications strategy, and to Chris McCormack, who has looked after our Faculty communications so brilliantly this year.

I would also like to thank the other Deans and Chairs and the Senior Leadership Team: Sheila Gallagher, Siobhan Creaton, Diarmuid Breathnach, Michael Hughes, Trevor Duffy and Sinead Lucey for their collegiality, experience and support. It has been a real pleasure to work with you.

To the retired paediatricians — thank you for always being there with wise advice whenever I needed it. Your experience and perspective are invaluable.

Thank you also to the Healthcare Leadership Team, and to Barry Quinlan and the Finance Team, for their guidance and advice.

I want to acknowledge Maria Golden, our Health and Wellbeing Manager, and all of the Exams, Training and Education Teams for their tremendous work and support. A particular thank you to Harriet Wheelock, for her good humour, common sense and wonderful sense of direction!

I am also very grateful to Audrey Houlihan, CEO, and Diarmuid O'Shea, President of RCPI, for their strong leadership of the College and for the support and encouragement they have given to the Faculty and to me personally during my time as Dean.

And, of course, thank you to Magda, Linda and the Reception Team, whose warm welcome makes such a difference every time we arrive at the College.

Finally, I want to thank everyone in the Faculty community around the country who gives their time, expertise and energy to represent the Faculty and contribute so positively to its work. A Faculty is only as strong as the people who are willing to get involved, and I have been incredibly fortunate to work with so many committed colleagues.

And so, as my term as Dean comes to an end, it is a great pleasure to hand over the role to Dr Michael O'Neill.

Michael, I wish you every success in the role. You are taking over the deanship of a Faculty with a tremendous depth of expertise, commitment and goodwill, and I know you will have the support of colleagues across the Faculty and the College.

It has been a privilege and an honour to serve as Dean over the past 3 years. I have learned a great deal, met many wonderful people and, most importantly, have had the opportunity to work with colleagues who care deeply about paediatrics, our trainees, our patients and the future of our profession.

I am very grateful for the trust that was placed in me, and I leave the role with many happy memories and enormous respect for everyone who contributes to the work of the Faculty.
Thank you all.

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." — Helen Keller

Dr Judith Meehan

Faculty Dean



HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Faculty Board

The Board convened 6 times over the past year: 06 November 2025, 14 November 2025, 23 January 2026, 27 March 2026, 12 June 2026, and 11 September 2026.

Board Members were as follows:

Title	Name	Role
Dr	Judith MEEHAN	Faculty Dean, demitting October 2026
Prof	Michael O'NEILL	Dean Elect & Director of Training & Education demitting October 2026
Prof	Clodagh O'GORMAN	Honorary Secretary
Dr	Ethel RYAN	Honorary Treasurer
Dr	Muhammad AZAM	Convener of Meetings, demitting October 2026
Prof	Hilary HOEY	RCPI Director of Professional Competence
Dr	Eoin Ó CURRAÍN	Associate Dean of Examinations
Dr	Jean DONNELLY	Chair of STC
Dr	Shoana QUINN	Fellow Board Member
Dr	Frances Neenan	Fellow Board Member
Dr	Cilian O'MAOLDOMHNAIGH	Fellow Board Member
Dr	Ann Hickey	Fellow Board Member
Dr	Cathy GIBBONS	Fellow Board Member
Dr	Wasim ASIF	Fellow Board Member
Dr	Basil ELNAZIR	Fellow Board Member demitting October 2026
Dr	Íde NIC DHONNCHA	Associate Board Member demitting October 2026
Dr	Nese GADZAMA	Collegiate Member Representative
Dr	Hilary STOKES	Joint Clinical Lead, National Clinical Programme for Children
Dr	Colin Hawkes	Joint Clinical Lead, National Clinical Programme for Children
Dr	Ruth CAREY	Trainee Representative
Dr	Dermot WILDES /Dr Dee RYAN	Trainee Representatives
Ms	Hilary COATES	Lay Board Member
Mr	Aidan KENNY	Lay Board Member

Faculty Representation

RCPI:

- RCPI Council: Dr Pamela O'Connor
- RCPI Credentials Committee: Dr Louise Kyne and Dr 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
- Faculty Representatives for Foetal Alcohol Syndrome: Professor Farhana Sharif and Dr Pamela O Connor
- RCPI Policy Group on Obesity: Prof Hilary Hoey
- RCPI Child Protection Peer Review Group: Dr Louise Kyne
- RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco: Prof Desmond Cox
- RCPI Faculty's Community Child Health (CCH)/Neurodisability Group: Dr Nick Van der Spek and Dr Niamh Lagan
- RCPI Professional Competence Assessors: Dr Michael O'Neill and Dr Pamela O'Connor
- RCPI Professional Policy Group on GDPR: Dr Ellen Crushell
- RCPI Recruitment & Retention Group: Dr Paul Gallagher
- RCPI Research 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 Alessandra Biagini (HST) Chair
- 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 (NCPD): 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, Dr Joanne Balfe, Dr Molly McGuckin
- Faculty representative on the National Immunology/Allergy Model of Care: Prof Aideen Byrne
- RCPI Global Health: Professor Muhammad Azam

External Agencies:

- RCPI Representative to the Medical Council: Professor John Murphy
- BPSU Scientific Committee: Dr Charlotte Lewis, 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
- 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
- Intercollegiate Transport Medicine Liaison Committee: Dr Nuala Quinn and Prof John Murphy
- Irish Paediatric Surveillance Unit: Dr Robert Cunney
- Medical Subcommittee of Disability Advisory Group: Prof Denise McDonald
- National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics and Neonatology, Joint Clinical Leads for Children: Dr Hilary Stokes and Prof Colin Hawkes
- National Clinical Lead for Neonatology: Dr Ann Hickey
- 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 Audit: Dr Hilary Stokes
- International Paediatric Association: Prof Hilary Hoey
- NOCA/NPMR Rep: Dr Alan Finan
- NIAC Faculty Rep: Dr Julie Lucey
- Irish Audit of Paediatric Diabetes (IAPD) - RCPI representative: Dr Orla Neylon
- Physical Abuse Peer Review: Dr Sinead Harty

Board Composition:

Prof Michael O'Neill will take up the role of Dean of the Faculty of Paediatrics in October 2026 for a three-year term. Dr Judith Meehan will demit as Faculty Dean in October 2026 and will become Immediate Past Dean.

Dr Sinead Harty has been elected as Fellow Representative and Dr Lucinda Ryan has been elected as associate Member Representative to the Faculty Board, for the term October 2026 to October 2029. The Dean and Board thank Professor Muhammad Azam, Professor Basil Elnazir and Dr Íde Nic Dhonncha, who are demitting their roles. Professor Michael Boyle has joined the board as Director of education and training.

New Associate members of the Faculty

The Board welcomes ten new Associate Members:

- Dr Mary O'Connell
- Dr Claire Higgins
- Dr Cathy Foley
- Dr Cathleen Weymes
- Dr Aoife Keegan
- Dr Ann Mary O'Gara
- Dr Hafi Saad
- Dr Alice Louise Bailey
- Dr Aine O'Boyle
- Dr Anna Nic Con Iomaire

New Fellows of the Faculty

The Board and Faculty welcomes the following Fellows to the Faculty in 2026:

- Dr Aishling Cadogan
- Dr Carol Martina Stephens
- Dr Doireann Pereira
- Dr Eimear Kitt
- Dr Emily Jane Stenke
- Dr Henry Olusegun Gbelee
- Dr Husnain Mahomed
- Dr Irene Gorman
- Dr Leah Frances Halpenny
- Dr Lorraine Stallard
- Dr Louisa Mary Owens
- Dr Mary Denise Bridgid Devins
- Dr Niamh O'Brien
- Dr Rachel Mullaly
- Dr Ritma Boruah
- Dr Rory Richard Mannion
- Dr Siobhan Miriam McCormack
- Dr Ailbhe McGrath
- Dr Claire Connellan
- Dr Muhammad Ali
- Dr Muhammad Junaid
- Dr Muhammad Naveed
- Dr Peter Tormey
- Dr Samy A. Allawendy

- Dr Venugopal Reddy Iragamreddy

New Honorary Fellows of the Faculty

The Board and Faculty welcomes Mr Adam Harris and Ms Sinead Burke to Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians aligned to the Faculty of Paediatrics in 2026.

Prof Clodagh O’Gorman, Honorary Secretary

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

Summary Net Contribution for Financial Year ended 30th June 2026

Commentary

General

An overall surplus, excluding investment income, of €726,153, was achieved for the 12 months to end June 2026. This is compared to an overall surplus, excluding investment income, of €295,830 achieved to the end of June 2025.

Net Income

Total Income (excluding investment income) generated for the year end June 2026 was €3,376,480, an increase of €353,858 (12%) on last year.

Income is classed under four broad headings, further detail in Appendix 1:

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

Subscriptions and Admission Fees

Receipts from Subscriptions were €64,920 in 2025/2026 versus €46,865 in 2024/2025, an increase of €18,055 (39%) on last year.

In 2025/2026, 57% of Associate Members, 64% of Collegiate Members and 74% of Fellows paid their subscriptions. In 2024/2025, 55% of Associate Members, 61% of Collegiate Members and 93% of Fellows paid their subscriptions.

Faculty Event Fee Income and Sponsorship

Event fee income for 2025/2026 was €41,145, a decrease of 26%. This is made up of €18,315 Autumn Conference (a decrease on 2024/2025 of €5,330 or 22%), €22,575 Spring Conference (an increase on 2024/2025 of €3,850 or 21%), and admissions/conferring income of €255.

HSE Grant Income

This relates to the SLA for delivering training. Costs for providing SLA activities exceeded funds received by €808,670 (a decrease of €513,825 on 2024/2025), and this is reflected in the share apportioned to the faculty. Income earned from international activities contributes to the costs associated with the national training scheme.

Faculty Related Income

This relates to income generated by other areas of the business relating to the faculty.

Exams posted strong returns for Paediatrics Part I & II online exams as well as the clinical exams held in Ireland, with net income (after costs) of €209,663 being allocated to the faculty (up from €160,492 (30%) in 2024/2025). International trainees specialising in Paediatrics led to net income (after costs) apportioned of €625,168 to the faculty (up from €413,558 (51%) in 2024/2025).

Independent Courses (including iHeed), net income (after costs) of €114,399 apportioned to the faculty (up from €44,136 (53%) on 2024/2025).

Other Income

This relates to the allocation of income and costs relating to other areas, detailed in Appendix 1, with €13,812 net allocated to the faculty as a cost (down from €48,437 (71%) in 2024/2025).

Investments

Investments held by the College of €11.2m at the end of June 2026 increased by €1.1m year on year of which €35,974 were apportioned to the faculty – an increase of €3,431 when compared to 2024/2025.

Dr Ethel Ryan, Honorary Treasurer

Appendix 1

Income and costs are classified and allocated as follows:

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

Faculty of Paediatrics

Net Contribution Statement for Year Ended 30 June 2026

	12 Months to June 2026			12 Months to June 2025		
	Income	Expenditure	Net Contribution	Income	Expenditure	Net Contribution
Net Income						
Faculty Subscriptions	64,920	(8,030)	56,890	46,865	(7,009)	39,856
SLA	911,510	(1,033,308)	(121,798)	883,981	(1,080,398)	(196,417) *
Exams	468,857	(259,194)	209,663	409,896	(248,954)	160,942
International	1,247,990	(622,822)	625,168	1,146,683	(733,125)	413,558
	2,628,357	(1,915,323)	713,034	2,440,560	(2,062,477)	378,083
Independent Courses (incl iHeed)	323,123	(208,724)	114,399	211,059	(166,923)	44,136
Events - No.6 Kildare Street	5,625	(15,343)	(9,719)	4,708	(14,733)	(10,025)
Paediatrics Events & Faculty Activity	41,145	(175,784)	(134,639)	55,870	(163,653)	(107,783)
	369,893	(399,851)	(29,959)	271,637	(345,309)	(73,672)
Other Income*	313,310	(327,122)	(13,812)	263,560	(311,997)	(48,437)
	313,310	(327,122)	(13,812)	263,560	(311,997)	(48,437)
Total excluding Investment gain	3,376,480	(2,650,327)	726,153	3,022,622	(2,726,792)	295,830
Investment gain	3,431	-	3,431	1,244	-	1,244
Total Surplus including Investment Gain	3,379,911	(2,650,327)	729,584	3,023,867	(2,726,792)	297,074

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

* This relates to the allocation of income and costs relating to other areas as detailed above in Appendix 1.

NATIONAL SPECIALTY DIRECTORS' REPORTS

HST General Paediatrics

The year has been a busy one for the four HST NSDs of Dr Carol Blackburn, Dr Orla Flanagan, Dr Mary O'Dea and myself Dr Jean Donnelly. We were deeply grateful to our former Programme Director Ms Irene Poltronieri and welcome Midiane Sousa as her replacement.

We also worked closely with our trainee representatives Dr Ruth Carey and Dr Deirdre Ryan who both stepped down in July 2026. We look forward to working with Dr Tiarnan Fallon Verbruggen and Deirbhile Henderson who successfully interviewed recently.

The OBE curriculum is in its fourth year for HST training from July 2026 with positive feedback from trainees. 182 trainees are registered on the HST scheme in General Paediatrics in Ireland for the 2026-27 academic year. There were 10 HST study days in the 2025/2026 academic year including one in Galway which was a great success. Many trainees also attended the Faculty Study Days and the IPA as study days. These continued to be run as in person events and recordings of the study days are available to trainees who could not attend. The in person attendance remains high and a positive attribute to the HST programme fostering relationships and allowing the SpRs and NSDs alike to regularly meet in person.

The popularity of the paediatric HST programme continues to increase with shortlisting required prior to the HST interviews. 68 applications were reviewed and scored and 43 applicants were interviewed. 36 appointments were made following interviews in February.

End of year evaluations were held in May and June including penultimate evaluations. A total of 149 trainees were assessed. Interim assessments will be held again in November/ December 2026.

CSCSTs were awarded to 14 trainees in July 2026 and a further 13 trainees are scheduled complete the programme on or before July 2027. The recruitment process for July 2027 will open in September.

Dr Jean Donnelly , National Specialty Director

HST Neonatology

Thirteen trainees are currently registered on the HST scheme in Neonatology in Ireland, one of whom will graduate in October 2026, and there will be 12 remaining enrolled for the 2026-2027 academic year. Interviews for the 2026-2027 academic year were held on the 3rd of February 2026 and 2 new trainees were successfully appointed to the scheme. Four trainees are in full-time clinical placements, 7 are doing OCPE, and 2 are currently on a leave of absence. There were 9 Neonatal Study Days in the 2025/2026 academic year, these were hybrid in-person and remote events. The end of year assessments were held on the 8th of June. There will be 1 graduating from the scheme in October 2026. They have chosen to obtain further research experience in a Neonatal unit in Ireland. The recruitment process for the July 2027 intake will open in Autumn 2026 with interviews due to be held in February 2026.

Dr 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 strong emphasis on postgraduate education continues with two of our trainees Dr Sean Kelleher, Dr Ciara Ryan and Dr Sophie Duignan pursuing higher degrees and Dr Ross Foley relocating to Sick Kids in Toronto to complete a fellowship in Advanced Medical Imaging. Dr Niall Linnane has completed an adult congenital heart disease

fellowship and has taken up a post in Leeds.

The new competency based curriculum in Paediatric Cardiology is now published. We are grateful for the help of the educational team in RCPI for their considerable assistance in the development of this new curriculum.

Our work with the team from the GMC has resulted in Paediatric Cardiology being recognised as eligible for RSQ (Recognition of Specialist Qualification) enrolment to the GMC. This will considerably improve the job prospects for Irish Trainees seeking consultant employment in the UK and is of course essential for employment of our trainees in our sister site in The Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast. I would like to acknowledge the very strong support that we had from senior faculty including the Dean of the Faculty of Paediatrics Dr Judith Meehan and former Dean Dr Louise Kyne 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.

Dr Orla Franklin, National Specialty Director

BST

Trainees

There were 108 trainees enrolled in the paediatric BST scheme last year and 111 this year (accounting for maternity and sick leave). 52 commenced first year this July, with many trainees entering having previous experience in Paediatrics either in Ireland or overseas. Interviews for BST took place virtually in January 2026. Approximately 222 applied and 125 candidates were interviewed over 2 days. This interview process was incredibly competitive, and the NSDs are incredibly grateful for the volunteerism of the Paediatricians across the country who contributed on the interview days. The trial of regionally based rotations in Cork, Dublin, Galway and Limerick with two candidates in each region, has been very successful with overall excellent feedback from trainers and trainees.

NSDs and Coordinator

Drs. Edina Moylett (Galway), and Juan Trujillo (Cork), and Angharad Griffiths (Dublin) continue as BST NSDs. Ms. Mairéad O’Hea is the Programme Coordinator and is an invaluable member of our team. We are very fortunate to avail of her diligence and the support she provides to the trainees and the programme. NSD meetings run virtually, once monthly, reviewing trainees in difficulty, trainee concerns, issues arising relating to the programme and rotations & applications.

Training Site

Inspections Training sites are inspected as per RCPI schedule in addition to site inspections triggered by trainee feedback. 4 training sites were inspected this year with a commitment to training and supporting trainees. Recommendations are made following all site inspections. One site had training accreditation suspended in 2025 with a plan for further discussion imminently following implementation of recommended changes.

Study Days and Mandatory Courses

There were 8 BST study days during the last 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. Feedback from the trainees has been very favorable with a desire to keep the in-person component. The new online BST Taught Programme introduced last year has also received overall positive feedback from trainees.

Trainee Wellbeing

We continue to notice an increase in trainees in difficulty and trainees requesting reasonable accommodation and support secondary to health or personal issues. We anticipate training schemes will need to adapt and provide greater flexibility in future. We continue to support trainees with flexible training requirements with the excellent support of the RCPI Health and Wellbeing Department.

Trainee assessment

All trainees received end of year assessments, with 48 exiting the BST programme at the end of year two. Assessments were virtual, over three full days. They included trainer feedback and logbook/training progress review. Of the 48 exiting the BST, 33 applied to the HST. 25 were successful. 3 are either pursuing training in the UK or another HST programme. Some plan on gaining more experience prior to HST application, many favouring the freedom and flexibility a year out of training scheme offers. We appreciate the support trainers and colleagues

have provided to the BST programme. As always we are open to any feedback.

Dr Angharad Griffiths, National Specialty Director

International

During the 2026–2027 training year, the Faculty of Paediatrics supported 50 international trainees across a range of programmes.

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative Postgraduate Scholarship Programme welcomed trainees from Pakistan and Sudan through the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) and the Sudan Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB). A total of 26 trainees participated in the programme, comprising 25 trainees from Pakistan and one from Sudan. These trainees undertake the third and fourth years of their local training programme in Ireland before returning home to complete their final year. First-year trainees are primarily placed in smaller regional units before progressing to larger regional centres, including Galway, Limerick and Drogheda, during their second year. A small number of trainees are also placed at Children’s Health Ireland.

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme in Paediatrics supported **23 trainees**, while the International Residency Training Programme supported **one trainee**.

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
CPSP	12	13	0	25
SMSB	0	1	0	1
International Clinical Fellowship Programme	10	13	0	23
International Residency Training Programme	0	0	1	1
Total	22	27	1	50

Main improvements

- **Structure:** Combined the information from the three contributors into one coherent annual report section.
- **Clarity:** Explained the purpose and placement structure of the scholarship programme while keeping the other programme updates concise.
- **Accuracy:** Retained all trainee numbers and added totals by programme and training year.
- **Tone:** Removed email language and converted the content into a professional annual report format.

Dr John Fitzsimons Lead CPSP

Dr Basil Elnazir Co Lead ICFP and IRTP

Dr Declan Cody Co Lead ICFP and IRTP

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

Applications numbers from July 2025 to July 2026

New Applications Received: 17 in total (all Paediatrics)

Written Reviews/Re-Apps Received: 11 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 – 1

Not Recommended - 16

Written Reviews

Recommended - 6

Not Recommended - 5

Re-Applications

Recommended: 0

Not Recommended: 0

FORUM & IMC Review of SDR Process & SLA

A review of the current arrangements between the Forum and the Medical Council is underway, with three subgroups established to examine: (1) SLA arrangements, (2) application and assessment processes, and (3) the Category F Listing process.

Following a legal review, RCPI has issued six months' notice of its intention to withdraw from the current SLA for Section 47(1)(f) assessments due to identified legal and financial risks. Assessment services will continue throughout the notice period, while RCPI remains engaged with the ongoing Forum/IMC review and discussions on potential future arrangements.

Following a legal review, RCPI has issued six months' notice of its intention to withdraw from the current SLA for Section 47(1)(f) assessments due to identified legal and financial risks. Assessment services will continue throughout the notice period. The Faculty and RCPI remain engaged with the ongoing Forum/IMC review and discussions on potential future arrangements.

Regular updates will be provided to the SDR Committee and Board.

SDR Assessors:

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](https://www.rcpi.ie) ([rcpi.ie](https://www.rcpi.ie))

Ms Siobhán Kearns, IMC Accreditation & Assessment Specialist, Accreditation Department, Quality Enhancement Office, RCPI

EXAMINATIONS

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

Committees:

A small, dedicated 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 has three Convenors covering the three exams. The work of the committee includes question writing, editing, review and approval, standard setting, and preparation for and facilitation of clinical examinations. I wish to extend my gratitude all the committee members and the Convenors for their dedication and substantial commitment to the examinations.

Part I Written Convenor Dr Ngozi Okefor, Part II Written Convenor Dr Emer Ryan, Part II Clinical Convenor Dr Niamh Lynch, committee members: Dr Ciara McDonnell, Dr Michael Riordan, Dr Turlough Bolger, Dr Joanne Beamish, Dr Ciara Martin, Dr Sheena Durnin, Dr Gavin Stone, Dr Sarah Lewis, Dr Cathy Gibbons, Dr Muhammad Azam, Dr Louise Kyne, Prof Naomi McCallion, Dr Juan Trujillo, Dr Madeleine Murphy, Dr Orla Walsh, Dr John Allen and welcome to Dr Neidin Bussmann, Dr Lucy Perrem and Dr Caoimhe Costigan who joined the committee in 2025 & 2026. My sincere thanks to Dr Bridget Freyne, who demitted from her role this year, for her dedication, help and advice.

The examinations would not be possible without the hard work, dedication, and commitment of the Examinations team (Sinead, Louise, Rachel, Sirpa, Rebecca & Irene) and the Education team (Keith & Maurice) who support the committee 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. Clinical exams are held in person in Ireland and Internationally.

Table 1. Examination Schedule

Examination	Format	Dates
MRCPI Part I Written	100 Single Best Answer Question (SBA)	Held in January & April/May
MRCPI Part II Written	Paper 1: 60 Single Best Answer Question (SBA) Paper 2: 60 Single Best Answer Question (SBA)	Held in March & August
MRCPI Part II Clinical	6 clinical stations	Held in May & November

Written examinations: MRCPI Paediatrics Reformat

Format Change Successfully Implemented for MRCPI Paediatrics Part II Written Examination

In March 2026, the Faculty of Paediatrics successfully implemented a significant change to the MRCPI Paediatrics Part II Written Examination, replacing the Short Answer Question (SAQ) paper with a second Single Best Answer (SBA) paper.

The change followed an extensive review and consultation process undertaken by the Paediatrics Examination Board since 2024, with consideration given to assessment design, methodology and coverage of the core curriculum.

The new format provides a more consistent assessment approach for candidates and supports greater efficiency and sustainability in examination production and delivery. The successful implementation represents an important development in the ongoing review and enhancement of the Paediatrics examination.

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 for their support in facilitating the examinations.

In November 2025 we successfully held the Clinical examination in Galway. The examination was coordinated by local convenor Dr Ana-Louise Hawke and Dr Edina Moylett with excellent local representation for clinical examiners, with support on the day from the RCPI coordinator and the Clinical Convenor Dr Niamh Lynch. This centre ran extremely well and had very positive feedback from all involved.

We continued to expand our regional centres and in May 2026 we held the Clinical examination in Limerick, the exam ran very well with thanks to with the support and coordination of the local Convenor Dr Clodagh O’Gorman, local examiners and the wider team. We plan to establish further new centres in Ireland over the coming 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. We have established a new centre in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with the support of Dr Hassan, local convenor, and we hope to be in a position to travel to Saudi Arabia to deliver the exam in 2027.

Governance:

The Associate Dean of Examinations reports to the Board of the Faculty of Paediatrics and to the RCPI Examinations Committee. The Terms of Reference for both committees were updated in 2023 following the Paediatric Examination Review (2019–2020).

During 2025/26, the Examinations Committee approved a number of policy amendments to strengthen fairness, transparency, candidate support and patient safety. Key changes included:

- **Limited Attempts Policy:** provisions were introduced to allow consideration of extensions to examination eligibility periods on humanitarian grounds in exceptional circumstances, including conflict and other significant disruptive events.
- **Fitness to Practise and Candidate Eligibility Policy:** eligibility requirements were strengthened for candidates subject to serious fitness-to-practise sanctions, while introducing a formal declaration and review process for candidates subject to regulatory restrictions or conditions.

These changes provide a clearer and more consistent framework for candidate eligibility while supporting a proportionate approach to exceptional circumstances and maintaining the integrity and patient safety of the examination process.

Table 2. Examination candidates and pass rate 2025/2026

Examination		Candidates	Pass Rate
Paediatrics Part I	January 2026	104	70 %
	May 2026	106	61 %
Paediatrics Part II Written	August 2025	99	49 %
	March 2026	151	78 %
Paediatrics Part II Clinical	November 2025 (Ireland)	55	82 %
	May/June 2026 (Ireland)	75	77 %

I would like to extend my gratitude to the College for their wholehearted support, in particular to 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

NATIONAL CLINICAL PROGRAMME FOR PAEDIATRICS AND NEONATOLOGY

Reporting Period: 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Programme Leadership:

Clinical Leads for Children: Dr Hilary Stokes and Prof Colin Hawkes (from September 2025)

Clinical Lead for Neonatology: Prof John Murphy (to December 2025). Dr Ann Hickey (from July 2026)

Clinical Lead for Paediatric Diabetes: Prof Michael O' Grady

Chair Paediatric Clinical Advisory Group: Dr Judith Meehan, Dr David Mullane

Programme Manager: Ms Jacqueline de Lacy

Overview:

Dr Hilary Stokes and Prof Colin Hawkes were appointed as co-leads for NCP Paediatrics and Neonatology in September 2025.

Prof John Murphy vacated the role of Clinical Lead for Neonatology in December 2025.

Dr Ann Hickey appointed to the role of Clinical Lead for Neonatology in March 2026, due to commence in post August 2026.

P-CAG Meetings within Reporting Period: N-CAG Meetings within Reporting period

June 13 th	2025	Hybrid	July 3rd	2025	Hybrid
September 26 th	2025	Hybrid	October 17 th	2025	Hybrid
December 12 th	2025	Hybrid	December 16 th	2025	Hybrid
March 6 th	2026	Hybrid	February 24 th	2026	Hybrid
May 29 th	2026	Hybrid	May 28 th	2026	Hybrid

NCPN Programme Progress Update:

- A. **Guidelines and other documents**
 1. National Clinical Guideline: [Status Epilepticus: Management in children/adolescents from 1 month to 18 years](#). (published)
 2. National Clinical Guideline: [Integrated discharge guidance for children and young people with life limiting conditions transitioning to a community care setting for end of life care](#) (Published and presented at Official Launch of the recommendations from the BeeWee Report)
 3. Paediatric Assessment Unit Guiding Principles: site survey completed and document drafted
 4. National Clinical Guideline: [Management of Infants with a Suspected Diagnosis of Spinal Muscular Atrophy \(SMA\) Through the National Newborn Bloodspot Screening Programme \(NNBSP\)](#) (Published)
 5. National Clinical Guideline: [Treatment of XLH with Burosumab](#) (published)
 6. National Clinical Guideline: [Management of Paediatric Type 1 Diabetes Patient who did not attend \(DNA\), were not brought or repeatedly cancels their appointments](#) (published)
 7. National Clinical Guideline: [General Principles in the Management of Paediatric Diabetic Ketoacidosis](#) (Revision)

8. National Clinical Guideline: [Management of Paediatric Type 1 Diabetes Patient who did not attend \(DNA\), were not brought or repeatedly cancels their appointments](#) (Published)
9. National Clinical Guideline: [Management of Paediatric T1DM patient with an intercurrent illness](#) (Published)
10. National Clinical Guideline: [Identification and Management of Hypolycaemia in Children with T1DM](#) (Published)
11. National Clinical Guideline: [Management of Paediatric Type 2 Diabetes](#) (Published)
12. National Clinical Guideline: Hypoglycaemia Guideline (non-diabetic) (reviewed by CAG)
13. National Clinical Guideline: [HSE Guidance for Safe Diabetes Management following Levemir® \(Insulin Detemir\) Discontinuation](#) (Published)
14. National Clinical Guideline: Neonatal Seizures. [National Women and Infants Health Programme. \(reviewed by CAG\)](#)
15. [RCPI consensus document on the Assessment of Ankyloglossia \(Tongue Tie\) in Newborns and Early Infancy](#) (Published)
16. National Clinical Guideline: [Gastroschisis: Management prior to transfer to surgical](#) (Published)

B. Models of Care in progress/ reviewed at CAG

1. Second Edition MoC for Neonatal Services initiated in 2025. National Clinical Programme Paediatrics and Neonatology & The National Women and Infants Health Programme (paused since Jan 2026 pending commencement of new Clinical Lead for Neonatology)
2. Model of Care - National Ambulance Service, Critical Care Retrieval Services (reviewed by CAG)
3. Draft Model of Care for Interventional Radiology - Stakeholder Consultation (CAG review)

Additional CAG and current NCPPN activities

1. Development of an updated Integrated Model of Care for Children and Young People. With the support of Spark funding and Big Motive, a design consultancy agency, a discovery phase was completed in Q2 2026 including a roadmap setting out a programmatic approach to develop an updated MoC. This phase consisted of:
 - 4 Workshops with Service Providers Across All Regions (Strategic & clinical leadership, acute, community, primary care, nursing, Health & Social Care Professions (HSCPs), mental health and disability)
 - 6 Focus Groups with Key Stakeholders (Parents, HSE leaders, HSE clinical leaders, Departments of Health and Children, academics, Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Youth Advisory Council)
 - Interviews with Senior Strategic & Clinical Leaders (Including senior clinical and organisational leadership, strategic leaders)
 - 4 International Models of Care and Framework Interviews (Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC), Connecting Care for Children (CC4C), Nuka System of Care and The Canterbury Approach)
2. Engagement with the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to explore consultation opportunities with Children and Young People
3. Draft Second edition of the Neonatal Model of Care circulated in December 2025 for consultation to all key stakeholders. Further development of the MoC has been paused pending new Clinical Lead for Neonatology start date.
4. Development of a Parent Information Leaflet (PIL): Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy and Therapeutic Hypothermia: Information for Parents of babies who are in a cooling centre
5. Development of a booklet for Young People with diabetes transitioning to adult services
6. DRAFT Unified Strategy for Neurology including Paediatric Neurology, Adult Neurology, Epilepsy and Clinical Neurophysiology in collaboration with the National Clinical Programme for Neurology
7. Consultation with the National Doctor's Training and Planning Programme (NDTP) regarding review of the Paediatric and Neonatology Workforce in Ireland
8. Funding received for new Paediatric Diabetes Resource packs including workbooks and storyboards

9. Development of a national framework for medical, nursing and health and social care professionals delivering paediatric care to infants, children and young people with differences in sexual development/variations of sex characteristics.
10. DRAFT HSE Healthcare Charter for Children and young people in collaboration with CHI
11. Collaboration with the Emergency Medicine Programme to progress agree a Strategy for unscheduled Care for Children and Young People to standardise the approach to Paediatric Unscheduled Care
12. Perinatal management of Extreme Preterm Birth at the Threshold of Viability in collaboration with NWIHP
13. Engagement and collaboration with the ARFID short life working group and with Child Health Public Health in the development of Child Health Indicators
14. Engagement with key stakeholders including the NCP for People with Disability in relation to Early follow-up for infants at high risk of Cerebral palsy and neurodevelopmental delay.

Paediatric Clinical Advisory Group Membership

Name	Position
Dr Judith Meehan	Co-Chair
Dr David Mullane	Co-Chair
Dr Hilary Stokes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
Prof Colin Hawkes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
Prof John Murphy	Clinical Lead for Neonatology (to December 2025)
Dr Cilian O'Maoldomhnaigh	Member
Dr Clodagh O'Gorman	Member
Dr Ann Hickey	Co-Chair Neonatal CAG
Dr Mathew Thomas	Co-Chair Neonatal CAG
Dr Paula Cahill	Member
Dr Abigail Collins	Member
Dr Elizabeth Barrett	Member
Dr Davina Healy	Member
Dr Ethel Ryan	Member
Dr Muhammad Azam	Member
Dr Martin White	Member
Dr Ngozi Oketah	Member
Dr Nicola Brindley	Member
Dr Terry Kong	Member
Dr Niamh McSweeney	Member

Neonatology Clinical Advisory Group Membership

Name	Position
Dr Ann Hickey	Co-Chair
Dr Mathew Thomas	Co-Chair
Dr Judith Meehan	Co-Chair Paediatric CAG
Dr Hilary Stokes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
Prof Colin Hawkes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)

Prof John Murphy	Clinical Lead for Neonatology (to December 2025)
Dr Anne Doolan	Member
Dr Brian Henry Walsh	Member
Dr Carmel Moore	Member
Dr Davinia Healy	Member
Dr Deirdre Sweetman	Member
Dr Emma Gordon	Member
Dr Lisa McCarthy	Member
Dr Hana Hfucikova	Member
Dr Johannes Letshwiti	Member
Dr Margaret Moran	Member
Dr Martin White	Member
Dr Mary O'Dea	Member
Dr Micheal Boyle	Member
Dr Naomi McCallion	Member
Dr Nurul Aminudin	Member
Dr Pamela O' Connor	Member
Dr Peter Filan	Member
Dr Rizwan Kahn	Member

Dr Hilary Stokes and Prof Colin Hawkes-National Clinical Co- leads Paediatrics

Dr Ann Hickey National Clinical Lead Neonatology

Prof Michael O Grady National Clinical Lead for Paediatric Diabetes

CLINICAL ADVISORY GROUPS

CAG in Paediatrics(P-CAG)

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 (NCPPN) and the NCP for Paediatric Diabetes. The Clinical Advisory group reports to the Board of the Faculty of Paediatrics, RCPI.

Membership: All the members of CAG are medical practitioners working in child health. There are representatives from tertiary, regional and local units, primary care, Public Health, surgery, anaesthesia/critical care and also Northern Ireland. The membership is reviewed every 3 years.

Co-Chairs: Dr Judith Meehan and Dr Dave Mullane

Meetings of CAG: The PCAG met 4 times in the reporting period: 1 July 2025- 30 June 2026

P-CAG Meetings within Reporting Period:

June 13 th	2025	Hybrid
September 26 th	2025	Hybrid
December 12 th	2025	Hybrid
March 6 th	2026	Hybrid
May 29 th	2026	Hybrid

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) to enable national approval for the HSE.

A. Guidelines and other documents

1. National Clinical Guideline: [Status Epilepticus: Management in children/adolescents from 1 month to 18 years.](#) (published)
2. National Clinical Guideline: [Integrated discharge guidance for children and young people with life limiting conditions transitioning to a community care setting for end of life care](#) (Published and presented at Official Launch of the recommendations from the BeeWee Report)
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B. Models of Care in progress/ reviewed at CAG

2. Second Edition MoC for Neonatal Services initiated in 2025. National Clinical Programme Paediatrics and Neonatology & The National Women and Infants Health Model of Care – currently under review.
3. National Ambulance Service, Critical Care Retrieval Services (reviewed by CAG)
4. Draft Model of Care for Interventional Radiology - Stakeholder Consultation (CAG review)

Additional CAG and NCPPN activities

1. Development of an updated Integrated Model of Care for Children and Young People. With the support of Spark funding and Big Motive, a design consultancy agency, a discovery phase was completed in Q2 2026 including a roadmap setting out a programmatic approach to develop an updated MoC. This phase consisted of:
2. Draft Second edition of the Neonatal Model of Care circulated in December 2025 for consultation to all key stakeholders. Further development of the MoC is under review.
3. Development of a Parent Information Leaflet (PIL): Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy and Therapeutic Hypothermia: Information for Parents of babies who are in a cooling centre
4. Development of a booklet for Young People with diabetes transitioning to adult services
5. DRAFT Unified Strategy for Neurology including Paediatric Neurology, Adult Neurology, Epilepsy and Clinical Neurophysiology in collaboration with the National Clinical Programme for Neurology
6. Consultation with the National Doctor's Training and Planning Programme (NDTP) regarding review of the Paediatric and Neonatology Workforce in Ireland
7. DRAFT HSE Healthcare Charter for Children and young people in collaboration with CHI
8. Collaboration with the Emergency Medicine Programme to progress agree a Strategy for unscheduled Care for Children and Young People to standardise the approach to Paediatric Unscheduled Care
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11. Engagement with key stakeholders including the NCP for People with Disability in relation to Early follow-up for infants at high risk of Cerebral palsy and neurodevelopmental delay.

Paediatric Clinical Advisory Group Membership 2025-2026

Name	Position
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Dr David Mullane	Co-Chair
Dr Hilary Stokes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
Prof Colin Hawkes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
Prof John Murphy	Clinical Lead for Neonatology (to December 2025)
Dr Cilian O'Maoldomhnaigh	Member
Dr Clodagh O'Gorman	Member
Dr Ann Hickey	Co-Chair Neonatal CAG & Clinical Lead Neonatology July 2026
Dr Mathew Thomas	Co-Chair Neonatal CAG
Dr Paula Cahill	Member
Dr Abigail Collins	Member
Dr Elizabeth Barrett	Member
Dr Davina Healy	Member
Dr Ethel Ryan	Member
Dr Lisa Dann	Member
Dr Muhammad Azam	Member
Dr Ngozi Oketah	Member

Ms. Nicola Brindley	Member
Dr Terry Kong	Member
Dr Niamh McSweeney	Member

Dr Judith Meehan Co-chair

Dr Dave Mullane Co-chair

Neonatal Clinical Advisory Group (NCAG)

Reporting Period: 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Programme Leadership:

Clinical Leads for Children: Dr Hilary Stokes and Prof Colin Hawkes (from September 2025)
Clinical Lead for Neonatology: Prof John Murphy (to December 2025). Dr Ann Hickey (from July 2026)
Clinical Lead for Paediatric Diabetes: Prof Michael O' Grady
Chair Paediatric Clinical Advisory Group: Dr Judith Meehan, Dr David Mullane
Co-chairs Neonatal Clinical Advisory Group: Dr Ann Hickey, Dr Mathew Thomas (to June 2026). Dr Donough O' Donovan, Dr Matthew McGovern (from June 2026)
Programme Manager: Ms Jacqueline de Lacy

Overview:

Dr Hilary Stokes and Prof Colin Hawkes were appointed as co-leads for NCP Paediatrics and Neonatology in September 2025.

Prof John Murphy vacated the role of Clinical Lead for Neonatology in December 2025.

Dr Ann Hickey appointed to the role of Clinical Lead for Neonatology in March 2026, due to commence in post July 2026.

N-CAG Meetings within Reporting period

July 3rd	2025	Hybrid
October 17 th	2025	Hybrid
December 16 th	2025	Hybrid
February 24 th	2026	Hybrid
May 28 th	2026	Hybrid

Programme/ N-CAG Progress Update:

1. The Model of Care for Neonatal Services in Ireland 2026:

Extensive consultation and engagement was initiated in 2025 to identify priorities for the development of an updated Model of Care for Neonatology, expected to progress over the coming

2. Perinatal management of extreme preterm birth at the threshold of viability:

A review of the perinatal management of extreme preterm birth at the threshold of viability 22+0 to 23+6 weeks by an advisory committee commenced in June 2024. There has been extensive consultation and subsequent revision of the document from representatives of the neonatal CAG, NWIHP including obstetrics and midwifery and many more. Due to various programme reforms and the absence of a Clinical Lead for Neonatology for a significant period, progress was halted. It is envisaged that following the appointment of a new Clinical Lead this important work will be reignited and completed by Q1 2027.

3. Level 4 NICU at CHI

The clinical programme and CAG continues to support the development of the Level 4 NICU for the new children's hospital including the steering committee and operations group which have been established to implement the project. Staffing to support 12 NICU, 6 HDU, and 16 ward cots was confirmed in 2026, which will enable progression to NICU care once the NCHI is opened.

4. cCMV Testing

The Pilot of the Standard Operating Procedure for cCMV testing of infants with no clear response on newborn hearing-screening test is currently being piloted at 19 maternity sites. The National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL), Newborn Hearing Screening Programme and the Rainbow Clinic @ CHI are currently supporting this pilot. The plan for 2026 is to seek support to undertake an evaluation of this pilot programme.

5. Guidelines

- Neonatal seizures- completed and awaiting publication
- [RCPI consensus document on the Assessment of Ankyloglossia \(Tongue Tie\) in Newborns and Early Infancy](#) (Published)
- National Clinical Guideline: [Gastroschisis: Management prior to transfer to surgical](#) (Published)

Retinopathy of Prematurity Guideline updated and awaiting publication

6. Obstetric Event Support Team (OEST)

During the OEST reviews all cases of neonatal encephalopathy requiring therapeutic hypothermia are examined. The team consists of the risk manager, obstetrician, midwife, and neonatologist. The primary purpose of the work lies in assurance, identifying learning points that can be applied both for the index hospital and nationally.

7. Neonatal Therapeutic Hypothermia Reports

Therapeutic Hypothermia is now considered the standard treatment for term infants with moderate or severe Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy (HIE). Data collection is now completed for the five consecutive years: 2020 to 2024 inclusive.

A draft National Neonatal Therapeutic Hypothermia Report is being prepared and will be published in Q4, 2026. This report is a description of the epidemiology, antecedent obstetric, and intrapartum factors leading to neonatal encephalopathy. It captures the immediate and subsequent neonatal management and outcomes of infants diagnosed with neonatal encephalopathy. This report will inform clinical practice with identification of risk factors and development and implementation of initiatives in the maternity services so that these risks can be reduced.

8. Transfer Pathway from Neonatal Services to CDNT (community disability network services) and other community services

A working group was established in 2025 to consider the pathway for infants with complex needs and their transfer from maternity services to community services/ CDNTs. A number of meetings were held however have since paused following the absence of a Clinical Lead for Neonatology since December 2025.

9. NNTP celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2025, having transported more than 11,000 babies since its inception. In May 2025 a new repatriation service (bidirectional flow) for the transport of infants from the tertiary centres back to their local hospitals went into operation in May '25 in addition to the acute service. This is a 5-day service, Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. An update on the first year of the very successful and positively received additional programme was provided in June 2026 revealing that 304 transports have been undertaken

Neonatal Clinical Advisory Group Membership

Name	Position
Dr Ann Hickey	Co-Chair (to June 2026)
Dr Mathew Thomas	Co-Chair (to June 2026)
Dr Donough McDonogh	Co-Chair (from June 2026)
Dr Matthew McGovern	Co-Chair (from June 2026)
Dr Judith Meehan	Co-Chair Paediatric CAG
Dr Hilary Stokes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
Prof Colin Hawkes	Clinical Lead for Children (from September 2025)
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Dr Anne Doolan	Member
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Dr Carmel Moore	Member
Dr Deirdre Sweetman	Member
Dr Emma Gordon	Member
Dr Lisa McCarthy	Member
Dr Hana Hfucikova	Member
Dr Johannes Letshwiti	Member
Dr Margaret Moran	Member
Dr Martin White	Member
Dr Mary O'Dea	Member
Dr Micheal Boyle	Member
Dr Naomi McCallion	Member
Dr Nurul Aminudin	Member
Dr Pamela O' Connor	Member
Dr Peter Filan	Member
Dr Rizwan Kahn	Member

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

BRITISH PAEDIATRIC SURVEILLANCE UNIT (BPSU)

About the BPSU

The British Paediatric Surveillance Unit (BPSU) is a world-leading centre for rare paediatric disease surveillance. By collecting reports from clinicians across the UK and Republic of Ireland, it provides vital evidence on the number of children affected by rare diseases, conditions or treatments, helping to inform research, policy and clinical care.

The BPSU was founded in 1986 and its partners are the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), University College London Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health, and the Department of Health and Social Care. The participation of paediatricians in Ireland is supported by the RCPI Faculty of Paediatrics, in collaboration with the Irish Paediatric Surveillance Unit.

Celebrating 40 years of paediatric surveillance

In 2026, the BPSU marked its 40th anniversary, celebrating four decades of paediatric surveillance and its contribution to rare disease research and child health.

The anniversary was recognised at the RCPCH Conference through a dedicated plenary session highlighting the impact of the BPSU's work over the past 40 years. The session also looked to the future of paediatric surveillance, including the potential contribution of developments such as genomics and artificial intelligence.

A joint UCL200/BPSU40 symposium is also taking place on 22 September 2026. The event marks two important milestones in child health: the bicentenary of University College London and the 40th anniversary of the BPSU. It will highlight rare disease research and collaboration between the UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health and the BPSU.

First five-year report

As part of its anniversary year, the BPSU published its first multi-year report, covering surveillance activity and impact from 2021 to 2025. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the Unit's work over the five-year period and highlights the contribution of paediatric surveillance to understanding rare diseases and improving child health.

The report is available through the [BPSU annual reports webpage](#). Further information is also available in the [RCPCH news announcement on the five-year report](#).

Irish participation in the BPSU

The data provided by consultant paediatricians in Ireland remain an important part of the BPSU's surveillance work, helping to ensure that studies reflect incidence rates across both the UK and Ireland. The Faculty of Paediatrics would like to thank all Irish clinicians who continue to participate in the reporting system and contribute to rare disease research.

Practising paediatricians and neonatologists in Ireland are encouraged to participate in BPSU surveillance and to ensure that their contact details are up to date. Monthly reporting cards are issued electronically and are designed to support straightforward reporting of relevant cases.

Further information on the Unit and its work is available from the [British Paediatric Surveillance Unit](#).

Charlottle Lewis, BPSU ROI Representative

RETIRED PAEDIATRICIANS GROUP

The first meeting, held in November 2025, featured presentations from Dr Stephanie Ryan and Dr Michael Mahony. Dr Ryan spoke on the role of modern imaging in medico-legal cases, highlighting how advances in technology can assist in accurately dating adverse events during pregnancy and delivery. Dr Mahony delivered a fascinating account of the life and career of Dr Aidan McCarthy, a UCC graduate who served in the British Armed Forces during the Second World War and spent several years as a prisoner of war in a Japanese camp. Both presentations generated considerable interest and lively discussion among members.

Following seven years as Convenor of the Group, Dr Terry Bate stepped down from the role. The Faculty extends its sincere thanks to Terry for his leadership and commitment to the Retired Paediatricians Group. Gerry Loftus succeeded him as Convenor. Owen Hansey and Paul Oslizlok also completed their terms on the Steering Group, while Kanina Butler and John McKiernan joined as new members.

The Group met again in June 2026. Prof Kevin Dunne shared reflections on career development and offered some retrospective career guidance drawn from his extensive experience. Incoming Dean, Prof Michael O'Neill, presented on the evidence base for yoga, prompting a lively and engaging discussion. As with previous meetings, members enjoyed the opportunity to combine scientific discussion with social interaction over lunch before the event.

The Group's meetings continue to be well attended and provide an important opportunity for retired paediatricians to remain connected with colleagues and with developments within the Faculty.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place in RCPI on 5 November 2026, and the Group also hopes to hold an out-of-Dublin meeting in Cork during the summer of 2027.

Thanks to Faculty co-ordinator John Hunt and Faculty Dean Dr Judith Meehan for their ongoing support.

Dr Gerry Loftus, RPG Convenor

Education

Dr Diarmuid Breathnach, Head of Education

Training, Education and Lifelong Learning

During 2025/2026, the Faculty of Paediatrics continued to contribute to RCPI's commitment to excellence in postgraduate medical training, education and lifelong learning. This work was supported by significant College-wide progress in curriculum development, simulation, trainer development, learner support, educational governance and digital transformation, providing stronger foundations for the education and professional development of paediatric trainees, trainers, members and fellows.

Strengthening postgraduate training

Across RCPI, postgraduate training continued to grow, with 51 new training posts approved through local site funding, Specialty Training Committee approval and accreditation support. Work also progressed on geographical rotation mapping, programme quality, accreditation, protected training time and more flexible training pathways. RCPI continued its engagement with the HSE National Doctors Training and Planning function and regional workforce-planning structures to support Less Than Full Time Training, while 19 RCPI trainees were appointed to the HSE NDTP Supernumerary Training Scheme.

A new Core Professional Skills Framework, aligned with the Medical Council's eight domains of good professional practice, was approved by all Faculties and Institutes for incorporation into curricula from July 2026. This provides a common foundation for developing the professional capabilities required by doctors across every stage of training. Work also continued to consider emerging priorities within curricula, including climate and sustainability, artificial intelligence and evolving models of care.

Education development and innovation

RCPI advanced its approach to simulation-based education during the year. Following an audit of simulation-site capacity and interest, procedural-skills equipment was planned for General Internal Medicine and Paediatrics sites. By year-end, a simulation project charter and revised governance structure had been agreed, consultation with Faculties was under way and simulation had been incorporated into the new Trainer Development Framework.

The College also strengthened the governance and delivery of formal academic programmes. RCPI secured approval to extend the scope of its QQI provision to fully online delivery, and the quality assurance manual for Training, Education and Lifelong Learning was updated and approved by the Academic Board. New programme governance, development and management frameworks were introduced to support a more consistent and scalable approach to programme delivery.

Supporting trainers and lifelong learning

Trainer development remained a significant priority. A new Continuing Professional Development Pathway for Trainers was approved by the Training Committee in April 2026, bringing together structured professional development with trainer wellbeing supports. Curriculum development also progressed for a proposed Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Education, while work continued on the broader Courses at Scale initiative.

The transition of Professional Competence Scheme and CPD activity into the Academic Board strengthened the connection between postgraduate training and lifelong learning. A new accreditation model was introduced in response to revised Medical Council requirements, and work progressed on a lifelong learning framework focused on doctors' career transition points. The Essential Skills for New Consultants course was redesigned as the Professional Diploma in Essential Leadership for New Consultants, supported by an inaugural Programme Board and an approved business case.

Trainee wellbeing, inclusion and support

RCPI continued to expand wellbeing support for trainees and learners. More than 60 trainees received advice, signposting or ongoing support during the year. A new Reasonable Adjustment Policy and application process were established, supported by a dedicated committee, and new guidance was published on parental leave entitlements, prolonged sick leave and childcare resources.

Mentoring and peer support also expanded. The Consultant Mentoring Programme grew to more than 20 mentors, six regional mentoring courses were delivered, and more than 130 mentoring matches were facilitated across Higher Specialist Training, Basic Specialist Training and Intern programmes. The second annual Trainee Wellbeing Day attracted more than 120 trainees and was approved as a study day across all RCPI training programmes. RCPI also became the first College to adopt and implement the Forum Wellbeing Standards.

Looking ahead

The next phase of work will focus on strengthening the learning experience across the full professional journey. Priorities include implementation of the simulation strategy, with immediate work due on Point of Care Ultrasound training in Paediatrics, further development of trainers, progression of protected training time, curriculum enhancement, digital education developments, strengthened assessment approaches and continued investment in trainee wellbeing and educational support.

Through this work, the Faculty of Paediatrics will continue to support high-quality specialist training, responsive lifelong learning and a strong community of paediatric trainees, trainers, members and fellows, while contributing to RCPI's wider ambition to remain at the forefront of postgraduate medical education and professional development.

Healthcare Leadership

Prof Trevor Duffy, Head of Healthcare Leadership

Overview

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

RCPI provides healthcare leadership broadly through advocacy, influence, expertise and support. In partnership with a range of stakeholders, RCPI actively leads via the National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes and National Clinical Programmes. The Healthcare Leadership function aims to strengthen formal leadership education, in addition to supporting doctors in their day-to-day roles as leaders, while equipping doctors with the skills to become future leaders. RCPI strives to enhance its established leadership role with a strategic approach to advocacy.

Healthcare Leadership Initiatives

Regional Engagement

In Sept 2025, a visit to Beaumont Hospital kickstarted the regional hospital visits. Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President of RCPI, Audrey Houlihan, CEO, and Professor Trevor Duffy, Director of Healthcare Leadership, along with other College officers and staff met with hospital management, medical teams, trainers and trainees.

In February, a larger delegation including the RCPI Council members joined the College leadership team in Cork University Hospital where the local teams presented their innovative work across the specialties.

A visit to Naas General Hospital in May was very well received by the local team.

During these visits, the RCPI delegation engaged with trainees, trainers, consultants, and NCHDs to better understand the current challenges facing medical teams. The discussions focused on identifying opportunities to strengthen medical training and service delivery, with a strong emphasis on enhancing the quality and structure of postgraduate training.

Leadership Forum

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

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

The first meeting of the year was held in January, there was good discussion on the updating of Terms of Reference for the Clinical Programmes and a steering group to facilitate this work. A facilitator has been appointed to work with the steering group. Members of the Leadership Forum got involved in RCPI led initiatives on Patient Engagement and Artificial Intelligence. Some members of the Leadership Forum participated in the College President visit and meetings in CUH at the end of February.

Dr Diarmuid O'Shea led a Leadership Forum meeting in April 2026. All Clinical Leads and CAG Chairs were invited to participate. The next meeting is planned for October 2026.

Engagement in meetings has continued to be strong, with Clinical Leads and CAG Chairs actively participating in Leadership Forum meetings.

Mentorship Programme

Mentorship for early-stage consultants was piloted in 23-2024, the second phase of the mentorship programme commenced with an additional eleven retired doctors trained as mentors this year. Twenty-five early-stage consultants from all regions sought to participate in this phase. Feedback from the first cohort of mentors and

mentees was very positive and provided valuable insights on the considerable benefits of mentorship to new consultants, which has further informed the programme.

RCPI Academy for retired doctors

The Academy, established in 2023, is a unique opportunity for retired members and fellows to share their expertise and stay connected with the college. During St Luke's Symposium in 2025, RCPI hosted a social event for academy members, many of whom now contribute greatly to the college through their involvement in mentorship, examinations, CPD audits, representation on committees and heritage projects. There are 44 retired doctors actively involved in the work of the college. To date, twenty retired members have participated in mentorship training to support early-stage consultants.

Patient Engagement Strategy

RCPI has continued to advance its strategic approach to patient engagement as part of its 2025-2029 Strategic Plan. During 2025/26, a co-design process involving patient organisations, patient representatives, clinicians, College leadership and the Faculty of Quality Improvement led to the development of a draft Patient Partnership Framework. This work included the creation of a dedicated patient engagement webpage, virtual engagement sessions, and an in-person co-design workshop involving patients and clinicians. More than 20 participants contributed to the process, helping to shape a framework founded on partnership, mutual respect, shared decision-making and recognition of lived experience as a form of expertise. Consultation on the framework was ongoing at year end, with publication planned following completion of stakeholder feedback.

Advocacy

RCPI regularly contributes to health policy and legislation through expert reports, public consultations, and media engagement, focusing on areas relating to its agreed advocacy priorities and Faculty/Institute specific issues. It raises awareness among members via events and educational masterclasses. RCPI is part of several advocacy alliances, including the Alcohol Health Alliance, Health Promotion Alliance, Tobacco 21 Alliance, the Climate and Health Alliance and most recently, the Coalition Against Sunbeds campaign.

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

Below are activities coordinated/supported through the Advocacy Department (Healthcare Leadership) for July 2025- Jun 2026.

Children's health - E-Scooters Position Paper

In Dec 2025, the **Faculty of Paediatrics** published a new position paper - [E-scooter Falls and Brain Injuries in Children: Call for Action in Ireland](#). This paper highlighted that e-scooter accidents had become the leading cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) in children and called for public awareness, enforcement of existing legislation and for consideration of existing legislation for children's safety. The paper received extensive media attention with spokesperson Dr Irwin Gill, a paediatric consultant with specialist interest in neurodisability, playing a key role.

Call for a Tobacco Free Future

In February 2026, the RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Smoking and E-Cigarettes, a cross-college group, launched a paper and campaign [calling for government action to end tobacco harm in Ireland](#). Specialist doctors across a range of clinical areas and representing their Faculty/Institute (eg Public Health Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Respiratory Medicine, Medical Oncology) worked with the advocacy and communications team to produce a comprehensive position statement and a high-impact media campaign with expert-led video content. This group is chaired by Dr Paul Kavanagh from the Faculty of Public Health Medicine.

Women's health - Position Statement on Endometriosis.

In 2025/26, the **Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (IOG)**, supported by the advocacy department, developed a major position paper on endometriosis, drawing on the presentations, discussions and patient perspectives shared at the IOG Spring Scientific Meeting in March 2026. The paper, *Listening, Learning and Leading Care for Endometriosis in Ireland*, highlights current evidence, clinical developments, research, training and service reform in endometriosis care, while placing the lived experiences of patients at the centre of the discussion. The paper to be published in 2026/27, reflects the RCPI and IOG commitment to supporting evidence-based, person-centred healthcare and contributing to national conversations on women's health.

Healthcare Sustainability and Climate Action

The Clinical Advisory Group on Climate Action, another cross-college group, has spearheaded several actions to

advance changes in healthcare education and in wider climate-related policy. This group is jointly chaired by **Dr Bairbre McNicholas (Institute of Medicine)** and **Dr Ana Rakovac (Faculty of Pathology)**. In 2025/26 this group, with support from SpRs nominated by NSDs across specialities, commenced a review of Higher Specialist Training curricula to identify opportunities for the integration of climate change, environmental sustainability and planetary health concepts into specialty training. The report is due to be finalised in Autumn 2026.

With the Irish Climate and Health Alliance, RCPI also supported the **development of a position statement on Active Travel**. This paper was published in November 2025, and RCPI President Diarmuid O'Shea spoke at its launch in the Mansion House. The report received extensive media attention and spokespeople from the alliance had the opportunity to present findings and recommendation of the report to Oireachtas Committee members and relevant bodies in the transport sector.

RCPI also participated in a **Climate Scorecard Exercise** with the HSE's Climate and Sustainability Programme. This exercise highlighted progress made in many areas in addition to identifying opportunities for improvement. The final scorecard report will be available later in the year.

Consultation Submissions

In 2025/26, RCPI made submissions to the public consultations on the National Obesity Strategy, the new Healthy Ireland Framework, the National Drugs Strategy and made a response to Tobacco Free Ireland Call for Evidence. These reflect RCPI's commitment to shaping health policy across sectors.

Prebudget Submission

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

Masterclass – virtual settings for healthcare delivery

This (Sep 2025) masterclass highlighted the growing impact of virtual care in Ireland, showcasing the HSE's Digital for Care 2030 vision, virtual wards, remote monitoring, and telehealth services. Speakers shared evidence of improved patient outcomes, reduced hospital bed usage, enhanced access to care for rural communities, and greater patient empowerment through technology-enabled healthcare. The themes explored closely align with RCPI's advocacy priorities, particularly patient safety and dignity, health equity, and the delivery of the right care, at the right time and in the right place through innovative, patient-centred models of care. The event took place alongside an RCPI Heritage Centre exhibition on domestic medicine, linking historical approaches to healthcare in the home with today's growing use of virtual care, telehealth and remote monitoring to support patients beyond traditional healthcare settings.

National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes

The National Specialty Quality Improvement (NSQI) Programmes are in their 16th year, during which time they have developed the first National Histopathology QI (NHQI) Programme national dataset, launched two additional programmes, the National GI Endoscopy QI (NEQI) Programme and the National Radiology QI (NRQI) Programme and most recently the National Bronchoscopy QI (NBQI) Programme. The programmes aim has remained steady over the years, to evaluate national performance trends and variation across these diagnostic services, with particular emphasis on quality indicators such as turnaround times, patient experience and comfort, and opportunities for improvement. The success of these programmes is dependent on the ongoing dedication of the four working groups, and the many clinicians that upload data and share reports locally in all participating public and private hospitals across the country.

The NSQI annual conference took place in November 2025 in No. 6 Kildare Street, attracting 206 attendees both in person and online. The theme for the day was, Driving Meaningful Change Through Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement. The conference facilitated discussion on the vital role of clinical audit as an integral component of quality improvement (QI), and the role it plays in advancing patient safety and improving the quality of care across our healthcare system. The second patient and public-friendly reports were also launched, providing accessible versions of the three national annual data reports. Health literacy is fundamental to patient-centred care, and these reports reflect the programmes' commitment to presenting information in a clear, accessible, and

meaningful way. By making complex information easier to understand, they empower patients and members of the public to navigate the health system with confidence, make informed decisions, and engage actively in their care.

National Bronchoscopy Quality Improvement (NBQI) Programme

The National Bronchoscopy QI (NBQI) Programme continue to invest considerable time and expertise in the design of the national dataset, key quality indicators and development of local data collection processes. Five key areas focused on the quality of adult bronchoscopy, endobronchial ultrasound and combined procedures with an initial focus on patients undergoing investigation for suspected cancer have been set. These are access to procedures, safety, complication rates, indicators of procedure success and patient experience. Specific key quality indicators and recommended targets for sedation doses and levels, reversal agents, complication rates and comfort score have also been agreed on by the working group.

To inform the development of KQIs, several workstreams are being undertaken in parallel, including, review of international guidelines and published evidence, contributions to the configuration of the new endoscopy reporting system (ERS), local clinical audit activity across working group member hospitals, ongoing clinical discussion and expert input. The working group has now commenced the task of setting key quality targets to measure procedure success, and more specifically the rate of repeat procedure, access or turnaround time is also under review. As work progresses the programme is nearing a time when preliminary data collection can commence locally, this can only become a reality thanks to the QI network of 24 respiratory clinicians already in place in public hospitals, willing to take responsibility for the data uploads in their hospitals.

National GI Endoscopy Quality Improvement (NEQI) Programme

Over the course of eleven years of reporting, continued improvements have been observed in the percentage of clinicians achieving established performance standards and in both the completeness and quality of data submitted by participating sites. The programme has also commenced work on the development of a further key quality indicator in withdrawal times; this is in addition to the recently completed work on endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) indicators and targets.

The National GI Endoscopy QI (NEQI) Programme's [10th national data report](#) highlighted a 3.2% increase in workload, with 313,106 procedures recorded. As in previous year's notable improvements in the percentages of consultant endoscopists meeting KQI targets were seen in polyp detection, caecal intubation, and sedation practices in older patients. The 10th national data report also contained two spotlight sections outlining further investigation into two areas of interest. The first looked at the results of a compliance survey which was carried out by the NEQI programme in Q1 2025 to understand difficulties that participating units were experiencing when trying to meet the NQAIS-Endoscopy upload schedule deadlines, identifying "time issues" and "IT issues" as the main factors affecting data uploads. The second analysed procedures listed in NQAIS-Endoscopy as having only used pethidine or fentanyl, with no midazolam, propofol or general anaesthetic used. To analyse these procedures further, the working group will set out a definition for what qualifies as a sedated procedure in the next iteration of the NEQI guidelines.

National Radiology Quality Improvement (NRQI) Programme

The National Radiology QI (NRQI) Programme published the [6th annual national data report](#) in November 2025, presenting findings from data submitted in 2024. This report saw the introduction of explicit national radiology report turnaround time (TAT) targets, marking a significant milestone for the NRQI Programme, replacing the previously recommended targets. However, despite progress, the shortage of resources to meet the growing diagnostic demand and increasing complexity remains a major concern; workload increased by 9% in 2025 in comparison to 2024.

All 41 participating NQAIS-sites provided report turnaround time (TAT) data in 2024, of which 25 met or exceeded the recommended target of 90% reports completed within the specified time representing improvements from 2023 and 2022. The number of peer reviews recorded by the sites remains low. The programme acknowledges that technical challenges within local information systems, rising workloads, increasing case complexity, staff turnover, and the outsourcing of reporting activities, are likely continuing to contribute to the relatively low number of recorded peer reviews. Analysis of 2024 data indicate that, while the number of alerts recorded for urgent and critical findings also remained low and comparable to 2023, there was a 15.6% increase in records of unexpected clinically significant (U-CS) alerts. As in previous years, owners were assigned to key recommendations

arising from findings presented in this report. This report marked the first time that Regional Executive Officers (REOs) were assigned as owners of specific recommendations, alongside hospitals' local management in relevant areas.

National Histopathology Quality Improvement (NHQI) Programme

The National Histopathology QI (NHQI) Programme's [12th national data report](#), published in November 2025 showed a 3.2% rise in case volume, with 583,482 cases processed, reflecting the growing diagnostic complexity and demand across Irish laboratories. All sites combined (21 public and seven private) exceeded targets for intradepartmental consultation (IDC), multidisciplinary team (MDT) agreement, and addendum reporting across histology, cytology, and autopsy cases. MDT data indicate that cancer resection (P03) case reviews remain significantly below target. Turnaround Time (TAT) performance continued to decline, particularly for surgical pathology categories such as small biopsy, GI endoscopic biopsy, cancer resection, and non-biopsy specimens. While some laboratories maintain strong performance, five-year trends show a national decline, most notably in histology. Frozen section (FS) concordance across general and cancer centres was marginally below the target of 97%. Autopsy data showed a 5% decrease in coroner and non-coroner/consented post-mortem cases compared to 2023. Although more cases were uploaded, fewer centres contributed data due to changes in service provision.

The Programme also developed the first regional reporting in NQAIS-Histopathology providing REOs with a consolidated view of performance across laboratories within each of their regions. This programme functionality, supported by the Faculty of Pathology, the office of the HSE Chief Clinical Officer, the National Cancer Control Programme Office and the clinical lead for the Laboratory Services Reform Programme, represents a significant enhancement in system wide oversight. The enhancement of regional reporting through NQAIS-Histopathology is strongly aligned with the priorities set out in the [Laboratory Services Reform Programme Report](#), particularly in relation to strengthening governance, improving transparency, and enabling a more integrated, networked laboratory system.

Quality Improvement

Since 2011, RCPI's QQI-accredited Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership in Healthcare has been making significant strides. This year marked the 28th intake of the programme, welcoming 10 teams from various healthcare settings nationwide. To date, over 790 healthcare professionals have been trained in Quality Improvement (QI) through this initiative.

Projects undertaken this year as part of the programme included:

- Improving Delirium Recognition and Documentation in the Emergency Department
- Redesigning the Heart Transplant and LVAD Assessment Pathway: An Outpatient Model
- Implementing ISBAR to Standardise Clinical Handover and Improve Patient Safety
- Reducing Delayed and Out-of-Hours Discharges from Paediatric Critical Care Units
- Improving Access to Acute Paediatric Neurology Services Through Pathway Redesign

The RCPI Being Safe Together programme (formerly SAFE: Situation Awareness for Everyone) is a collaborative patient safety and quality improvement initiative that supports frontline clinical teams in Irish hospitals to implement and sustain effective multidisciplinary safety huddles. Through a blended learning model, the programme helps teams strengthen communication, identify risks early and support timely interventions that improve patient safety.

During 2025-26, participating teams worked on a range of improvement initiatives focused on areas including sepsis management, communication at transitions of care, critical care safety, patient deterioration and multidisciplinary teamwork. The programme continues to strengthen safety culture and foster psychologically safe, high-performing teams across the health service. To date, 110 teams have participated in the programme, creating a growing national network committed to safer, team-driven care.

Quality Improvement in Action (QIA) is a practical, fully digital programme that supports healthcare staff to lead small, meaningful improvement projects within their own clinical settings. In 2025-26, two cohorts were delivered, attracting over 40 participants, the vast majority of whom were doctors undertaking their first formal quality improvement training.

Participants developed practical skills in problem-solving, stakeholder engagement, measurement for improvement and PDSA testing while delivering small scale projects that addressed everyday challenges in healthcare delivery. Project themes included improving referral pathways, discharge communication, patient flow, handover processes, infection prevention, diagnostic testing, laboratory services and multidisciplinary working.

Examples of project aims included reducing central line-associated bloodstream infections in paediatric intensive care by 50% and reducing emergency department to paediatric admission waiting times from four hours to less than three hours. Through participation, learners reported increased confidence in applying QI methods and leading improvement within their own teams and services.

Enhancing our Education Offering

Responding to the growing demands of healthcare, RCPI continues to expand its education offering.

ALICE (Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence) is a tailored leadership and quality improvement programme developed by RCPI and funded by the HSE National Health and Social Care Professions Office (HSCPO).

During 2025-26, a second cohort of the programme was delivered while participants from the inaugural cohort engaged in the newly established Leadership in Practice follow-on series, designed to support project sustainability, continued leadership development and peer networking. Across the two cohorts, 20 interdisciplinary HSCP teams have now participated in ALICE. The 2025-26 cohort comprised 10 teams and 30 HSCP participants, representing services across acute, community, disability and primary care settings nationwide.

Delivered through a blended learning model combining workshops, virtual learning and coaching, the programme supported teams to lead workplace-based quality improvement projects aligned with national integrated care priorities. Cohort 2 projects focused on improving access to services, strengthening care pathways, enhancing multidisciplinary communication and coordination, and improving patient and family experience across a diverse range of settings. Reported outcomes included redesigned care pathways, improved access to therapy and support services, more integrated multidisciplinary working, and greater use of data to inform service improvement.

A formal research evaluation involving participants from both cohorts is currently underway and will report in due course. The findings will help inform the future development of the programme and further strengthen the evidence base for HSCP-led leadership and quality improvement initiatives.

The Quality Improvement Advanced Programme was developed by RCPI in partnership with healthcare leaders in the West and North-West region. The programme forms part of a wider regional strategy to strengthen quality improvement capability and support the development of a sustainable culture of improvement across services.

In 2025-26, 27 healthcare professionals from acute hospitals, primary care, disability and community services completed the programme. Participants represented a broad range of clinical, managerial, quality and governance roles, creating opportunities for cross-organisational learning and networking.

Delivered through four workshops and supported by coaching sessions, the programme focused on advanced quality improvement methodology, systems thinking, measurement for improvement, leadership, coaching and sustaining change. Evaluation demonstrated varying levels of prior quality improvement experience across the cohort, with participants progressing in both technical improvement knowledge and their confidence to lead and support improvement initiatives within their own organisations.

The programme has contributed to the development of a multidisciplinary regional network of improvement practitioners and supports a structured pathway for building quality improvement capability, coaching expertise and improvement leadership across the West and North-West region.

Global Training Partnerships

Sinead Lucey, Head of Business Development

International Residency Training Programme (IRTP): The International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) provides specialist residency training in Ireland for international doctors, leading to Membership of RCPI and a qualification comparable to the Saudi/Arab Board. Paediatrics remains a core specialty within the programme, alongside Internal Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Histopathology.

There is currently one paediatrics trainee enrolled, with four graduates having successfully completed the programme to date. Twelve candidates are currently progressing through the 2026 recruitment process.

International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP): The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) delivers advanced, curriculum-based subspecialty training for post-residency doctors. The programme currently supports 69 trainees across multiple specialties, including 24 within Paediatrics.

More than 180 doctors have completed the programme, including 45 paediatric fellows. Graduates return home with enhanced clinical expertise, leadership skills and the capacity to strengthen healthcare services in their own countries. Feedback from trainees and sponsoring organisations continues to highlight the quality of RCPI's training, supervision and educational support.

EQUALS Initiative: The EQUALS Initiative, a partnership between RCPI and the HSE, supports healthcare development in low-resource settings through specialist training, medical equipment donations and biomedical engineering support. In June 2026, a joint RCPI-HSE delegation visited Zambia to strengthen collaboration with key partners, including ZACOMS, LMMU, ZACOPH and the Zambia Medical Association. The visit focused on expanding specialist training capacity, enhancing academic partnerships and sharing best practice in medical education.

A significant milestone was the graduation of 70 new specialists across 14 disciplines, including Paediatrics, reflecting Zambia's growing specialist workforce. The visit concluded with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between RCPI, the HSE and the Zambian Ministry of Health to support continued collaboration and improved health outcomes.

Membership: The Faculty continues to benefit from a strong and engaged membership of 421 Fellows, Members, Associate Members and Honorary Fellows. Members actively contribute to conferences, webinars and educational initiatives, supporting the advancement of paediatric practice and child health in Ireland and internationally.

Examinations: MRCPI Paediatrics examination candidate numbers increased by 15% compared with the previous year, reflecting sustained demand for paediatric specialist training and assessment. A key achievement was the successful introduction of the reformatted MRCPI Part II Written Examination, moving to the internationally recognised Single Best Answer format. Examination capacity was also expanded through the establishment of a new clinical examination centre at Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise, supporting continued growth in candidate numbers and enhancing accessibility for trainees.

Key achievements at a glance

- 15% growth in MRCPI Paediatrics examination candidates.
- 24 paediatric fellows currently enrolled in the ICFP.
- 45 paediatric fellows graduated to date.
- Four paediatric IRTP graduates and 12 candidates in the current recruitment pipeline.
- New MRCPI Part II Single Best Answer examination successfully implemented.
- New clinical examination centre established in Portlaoise.
- Zambia partnership strengthened through a new RCPI-HSE-Ministry of Health Memorandum of Understanding.

KEY CONTACT DETAILS

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

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Conferences:

- Spring Conference 7th May 2027
- Autumn Conference October 2027

Webinars:

- 10th November 2026
- 19th January 2027
- 23rd March 2027



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