



**FACULTY OF  
OCCUPATIONAL  
MEDICINE**

ROYAL COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

# 2024 – 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



**Cover Image:** Faculty of Occupational Medicine Smiley Lecture, No. 6 Kildare Street, Dublin 2, November 2024. (L-R)  
Eoin 'Mahony, Kirsten McGarry, Ira Madan & Alex Reid)

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## FACULTY OF OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE, RCPI

### Background

The Faculty of Occupational Medicine has been an integral part of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) since 1976. The mission of the Faculty is to advance the science, art, interests & medical practice of occupational medicine and to promote education, study and research in the specialty. It is the authoritative body on all matters of educational, professional and public interest concerning occupational medicine.

The Faculty fulfils a wide range of complex functions including:

- Acting in an advisory capacity to governmental and statutory bodies in all matters pertaining to occupational medicine.
- Development and delivery of postgraduate specialist training and education in occupational medicine in Ireland.
- Setting and maintaining standards for Licentiate of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and Membership of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine examinations.
- Assisting in the maintenance of professional standards for doctors with regard to the Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) in Occupational Medicine, including the delivery of dynamic educational events.
- Acting as a vital source of information for individuals practicing in occupational medicine.

### Faculty Board

The Faculty is governed by the Board, the Chair of which is the Dean of the Faculty. The Dean also serves on the Executive Board of the College. The Board ordinarily consists of a combination of 18 Fellow, Member, Licentiate, and Trainee representatives. Board membership for 2024-2025 was as follows:

BOARD MEMBER	TITLE
Dr Alex Reid	Dean
Dr Oghenovo Oghuvbu	Vice Dean / Chair of the Advocacy Committee
Dr David Madden	Treasurer
Dr Grant Jeffrey	Chair of the Scientific Meetings Committee
Dr Nuala Kelly	Fellow
Dr Martin Tohill	Fellow
Dr Sasha Hennessy	Fellow
Dr David Poots	Fellow
Dr Justine Fenn	Trainee Representative
Ms Stephen O'Herlihy	Lay Person
Dr Sujil Jacob	Member Representative
Dr. Tom Branigan	Licentiate Representative
Dr Martin Hogan	RCPI Council Representative
Dr Sheelagh O'Brien	Co-Opted
Dr David Mills	NI Representative
Dr Lanre Ogunyemi	Chief Examiner
Dr Hemal Thakore	National Speciality Director
Dr Thomas O'Connell	Director of Professional Competence

### Board meetings held since AGM 2024 were as follows:

04 December 2024, 05 February 2025, 16 April 2025, 11 June 2025, 05 September 2025 and 05 November 2025.

New/returning Board members will begin their tenures from the 2025 AGM, with their first Board meeting scheduled for 03 December 2025.

#### Past Deans of the Faculty include:

Dr J F Eustace	1976 – 1981	Dr K Addley	2006 – 2008
Dr J A Smiley	1981 – 1983	Dr P Guéret	2008 – 2010
Dr L McElearney	1983 – 1987	Dr M Hogan	2010 – 2012
Dr R Pritchard	1987 – 1990	Dr T O’Connell	2012 – 2014
Dr I E Eustace	1990 – 1993	Dr D Whelan	2014 – 2016
Dr D Courtney	1993 – 1996	Dr B Hayes	2016 – 2018
Dr C E Dick	1996 – 1999	Dr L Sisson	2018 – 2020
Dr W A Eakins	1999 – 2002	Dr R Ryan	2020 – 2022
Dr J Malone	2002 – 2004	Dr S O’Brien	2022 – 2024
Dr J Gallagher	2004 – 2006		

### FACULTY REPRESENTATION

- Simulation Committee: Dr Graine McNally
- Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies Global Health Working Group: Currently vacant
- Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies Wellbeing Committee: Dr Mary McMahon / Dr. Aoife Broderick
- Guideline Development Group for Emergency Management of injuries & Post exposure prophylaxis: Dr Sujil Jacob
- National TB Advisory Committee: Dr Zakiah Amir
- Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies Quality and Safety Subcommittee: Dr Zakiah Amir
- Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies Professional Competence Subcommittee: Dr. Tom O’Connell
- RCPI Smoking and Vaping Representative: Dr Sujil Jacob
- RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Climate Action Representatives: Dr Alice Quinn / Dr. Kirstin McGarry
- RCPI Academic Board Representative: Dr. Conor McDonnell
- Working Group for the National Traffic Medicine Programme: Dr Grant Jeffery
- National Immunisation Advisory Committee Representative: Dr Sujil Jacob
- RCPI Research Ethics Committee: Dr Nuala Kelly & Dr Blánaid Hayes
- Practitioner Health / Clinical Advisory Group representative: Dr Fiona Graham
- RCPI Working group on Reasonable Accommodations: Dr Grainne McNally
- European Union of Medical Specialists; Occupational Medicine. Dr. Tom O’Connell.

### ENROLMENT 2025

#### Enrolment into Honorary Fellowship

Christopher Martin

Robin Cordell

#### Enrolment into Fellowship

Abigail O'Reilly

Anselm Ting Su

Brian Beattie

Grainne O'Sullivan  
Haji S Shahrani Muhammad  
Maria Tempany  
Mary-Teresa O'Neill  
Noel McElearney  
Thomas McKeagney  
Ciaran Bohane  
Edwin Whiteside  
Ganesh Balasingam  
Ishvan Ramcharitar  
Pathmakanthan Ganesamoorthy  
Priya Ragunath  
Gogillan Sevaratnam  
Shahzad Ahmad

**Enrolment into Licentiateship by Exam**

Hafsa Abdul Rafeeq  
Cathal Ahern  
Khalid Algaali  
Sameera Alhajri  
Muhannad Almughthim  
Safa Alsaïd  
Hifni Babiker  
Hala Abubakr Mohamed Basher  
Azzad Bin Hamzah  
Gabriel Chia  
Pyari Chiyamu Shila  
Alex Djan  
Elliot Zai Feng EU  
Anne Hui Yi Goei  
Sahar Hamid  
Farrukh Qureshi  
Falak Sayed  
Bassm Boles  
Caroline Brennan  
Aoife Broderick  
Clare Byrne  
Daniel David  
Louise Fitzgerald  
John Flanagan  
Kirsten McGarry  
Zara Togher

**Enrolment into Membership by Exam**

Sarah Lobban  
Ruth McCullough  
Lena Murphy  
Eoin O'Mahony

## DEAN'S REPORT

### DR ALEX REID, FACULTY DEAN

It is a great honour to present the Dean's Report for 2023, which is my first. It has been a very busy and challenging year for the Faculty. I believe that we have made very positive progress in some areas, which I will outline below. However, the financial situation has become a cause for concern and it is important that the Faculty membership is frankly apprised of this.

Prior to doing so, and to set the context, I will take this opportunity to outline the Board's activities and to acknowledge the hard work being carried out by many of our members.

In preparing this report, I reflected on recent reports of my predecessors (Dr's Sheelagh O'Brien and Robert Ryan). Both referenced the increased recognition of occupational medicine (OM) in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the period of anxiety, severe illness and social restrictions is fast receding in memory, OM providers continue to experience increased demands on their services. On one hand, this is welcome but when viewed in conjunction with other variables (including a rapidly increasing workforce, an aging population, the 'gig' economy and relatively poor access to OM, to name but a few), we can see the challenges that will continue to face our speciality in the short and medium term.

As a result, it is widely recognised that the number of Specialists in Occupational Medicine, both in Ireland and internationally, will have to significantly increase to meet future demands. To address this, there has been considerable engagement with the NDTP (National Doctors in Training and Planning) around workforce planning. The need to grow the speciality is accepted, and the project that is underway will inform the extent of expansion of the training scheme that is required to meet the forecasted increase in demand. I am optimistic that this report and their recommendations will be available later this calendar year. Discussions will then commence around funding for these posts. I would like to thank both the current NSD (Dr. Hemal Thakore) and Advocacy Officer (Dr. Abigail O'Reilly) for their input into this.

In parallel with this, the Board remains very aware of the Faculty's stated mission i.e. 'to advance the science, art, interests & practice of occupational medicine and to promote education, study and research in the speciality'. You will see from the enclosed reports how the educational and academic objectives of the Faculty are being achieved. Maintaining high standards in these areas is a core function of the Faculty. However, advancing the interests and practice of occupational medicine is equally or more challenging in a busy world that may not wish to hear the message being delivered. We all have a role to play in promoting the value and importance of our speciality in our day-to-day professional lives.

On behalf of the Faculty, the Advocacy Committee has embraced this challenge and I would like to acknowledge their commitment and hard work; in particular that of Dr. Abigail O'Reilly, in fulfilling this responsibility. I refer you to her report which outlines the activities undertaken to date. A fundamental principle of the committee's approach is to engage with allied professional organisations to promote the importance and benefits of occupational health (rather than focussing solely on Occupational Medicine), commencing with those organisations with whom we share the hosting of the annual Eustace Lecture. In addition, the committee has reached out to other key stakeholders in the public sector and will aim to build on these over the upcoming years. OM practice is truly multi-disciplinary in nature and the importance of building and maintaining strong professional relationships beyond medicine cannot be overstated; ní neart go cur le chéile. The second guiding principle of the strategy is to advocate for universal access to occupational medicine services, while remaining consistent with the model of service delivery endorsed by the Faculty (Faculty of Occupational Medicine Preferred Model of Care for Occupational Medicine in Ireland,

2021). This has informed our discussions with the NDTP, and hopefully will be reflected in the final recommendations.

Looking at the Faculty Advocacy Strategy of 2023, it is clear that many of the strategic actions and objectives set out in this document have been achieved or are underway. This remains a work in progress and I commend them for their success thus far. We would welcome any feedback, support or suggestions in this regard.

### **Training**

As with any professional field, the future of occupational medicine is dependent on those who enter the speciality and the standard of education / training that they receive. In this regard, I would like to thank Dr. Hemal Thakore for his careful stewardship of the Higher Specialist Training Scheme in Occupational Medicine. I invite you to read the detailed activity report that he has submitted.

In addition to the activity outlined, Hemal has been actively exploring ways to diversify the training experience provided to our Specialist Registrars, including the introduction of external subject matter experts to provide tutorials on their specific areas of interest and engaging with potential alternative training sites. He has also been centrally involved in the on-going workforce planning project that is underway with the NDTP (National Doctors in Training and Planning).

On a related note, I am pleased to report that there was considerable interest in the International Clinical Fellowship Programme in the Occupational Medicine. Following interview, two candidates were deemed appointable and have accepted their offers subject to being successful in the LFOM. This programme aims to promote occupational medicine standards internationally. For further information, I refer you to Sinead Lucey's report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the trainers and members of the National Speciality Committee for their efforts in delivering a high calibre training scheme; one that continues to be recognised internationally as being of very high standard.

### **Examinations**

The Chief Examiner, Dr Lanre Ogunyemi, supported by the Deputy Chief Examiners, Dr Sasha Hennessy and Dr Susan Hill, have successfully overseen another diet of high-quality exams, held both remotely and in person. The report included details their achievements during the year. You will appreciate from this the significant amount of work that goes into maintaining the standard of the exams and building on the work done by previous incumbents. It is a testament to the team, in particular Lanre and the previous post-holder, Dr Alan Bray, that the transition has been seamless.

The quality of both our examinations and qualifications is reflected in the continued global demand, with international applicants from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Malaysia, New Zealand, Australia, Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, India, Egypt, Pakistan and Singapore. Growing and supporting our international membership is very important to the Faculty. Developing the role of regional specialty advisors is an important step in this, in conjunction with supporting international colleagues through our exams. We would welcome any further suggestions that you may have in achieving this.

You will note from the report that a significant growth in numbers sitting our exams is projected in light of the large numbers currently completing the iHeed Professional Diploma Course and the high level of interest in undertaking the additional module designed to prepare candidates for the Licentiate exam. It is expected that this increase will be reflected in additional interest in the Membership exam in due course. This



development is most welcome, as it not only provides additional revenue for the Faculty, but should also allow improved exam preparation for our international colleagues. I would like to acknowledge Dr. Conor McDonnell for his on-going commitment as Programme Lead responsible for overseeing the development of the course thus far and its evolution to a preparatory training course for the LFOM. Details of the numbers participating in the course are available in Diarmuid Breathnach's report.

The thoroughness of the assessment process comes at a cost of considerable complexity, with the licentiate and membership exams comprising three and four distinct components respectively. This requires a combination of in-person and virtual assessment. It is hoped that candidate numbers and Faculty / RCPI finances will allow for the re-introduction of alternative international centres for the in-person components of the exam.

Finally, given the likely increased number of examinees, I will take this opportunity to thank all those who have indicated their willingness to support the Faculty in expanding the reach of our exams. This development would not be possible without your assistance.

### **Education**

The Scientific Meeting Committee, chaired by Dr. Grant Jeffrey, has again delivered an excellent series of meetings over the course of the past year. I refer you to his report. The topics covered have been very diverse, with engaging expert speakers throughout. The success of the programme is attested by increasing attendances and very positive feedback.

In addition to the presentations, these events provide an excellent opportunity for making and maintaining professional relationships. In this increasingly busy, fractured and demanding world, collegiality is an important support and I encourage everyone to attend in person where possible. Clearly, this is not a realistic option for all, so it is planned that the hybrid format will continue into the foreseeable future. This is essential, as it not only promotes participation but also represents an important point of contact with our international colleagues.

After three years of hard work at the helm, Dr. Grant Jeffrey has decided to step down from the role as Chair of the Scientific Meetings Committee. There is no doubt that he has fulfilled the responsibilities of the role admirably and the educational programme has thrived under his direction. I am delighted to report that Dr. David Mills has agreed to step in and to take up the reins. I am sure you will all join me in thanking Grant for his dedication and commitment during his tenure and in welcoming David to the role.

In addition to our core educational days, I would like to mention the Arthur Eakins Occupational Medicine Award, which comprises a medal and educational grant of €1000 funded by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine. It is awarded at the RCPI National Education Day to an RCPI trainee for a research project or quality improvement initiative that improves and promotes Trainee Health and Wellbeing. In 2025, it was awarded to Dr. David Synott for the project 'Stepping into the Night: The Preparedness of Newly Qualified Doctors for Out-of-Hours Work'.

### **Finance**

I would like to sincerely thank David Madden for his work as Honorary Treasurer this year. Under David's guidance, the Faculty has re-introduced sponsorship for our Scientific Meetings. One of the significant challenges that he has inherited relates to the high numbers of our membership that are not up to date with their subscriptions. A similar situation exists across the other Faculties and Institutes of the College. David has been very active at contacting members to clarify their intentions regarding the RCPI / FOM. This is an essential piece of work, as it has been decided that the College's costs should be distributed proportionately



in accordance with each Faculty's / Institute's membership numbers. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to contact all those involved. These efforts, in combination with increased numbers taking our exams, have led to a year-on-year increase in our subscriptions. However, it is hard not to conclude that many of those who do not renew their subscriptions question the relevance of the FOM / RCPI in their day-to-day professional lives.

In this context, along with increased exam revenue, it was very disappointing to recently receive a copy of the FOM accounts from the College. In brief, this indicates that our net operating surplus from 2023/24 of over €47000 has become a net loss in excess of €134000.

As you may recall from previous reports, the College has undergone a review of the costs of running the College and how this is apportioned to the constituent Faculties and Institutes. As part of this process, all Faculties and Institutes accepted an adjustment in their reserves to account for historical underpayment of College overheads. We have been advised that the current situation arises from increased costs in administration and the redistribution of these costs as outlined above. The discrepancy in the annualised accounts reflects income and costs not being correctly allocated in previous years.

The Faculty Board has entered into discussion with RCPI on this. At the time of writing, the final accounts are still subject to review and are not available. We fully accept that there is a cost to our affiliation with RCPI, which is required to cover both day-to-day administration and support. As with all previous Boards, we remain committed to maintaining a balanced budget, to working with the College on income generation, to pay our way proportionately and to shoulder any necessary shared cost-saving initiatives. Whereas we recognise that we would not be as well placed to deliver on our mission or core activities without the support of the College, it is untenable for us to continue with the financial model that has been proposed as year-on-year losses of this magnitude cannot be sustained.

I am optimistic that the accounts will be available in advance of the AGM. They will be circulated as soon as they are available, as an addendum to this report. These will then be presented at the AGM.

With the above in mind, I encourage you to read the reports of Ms. Sinead Lucey, Head of Business Development RCPI, Dr. Diarmuid Breathnach, Head of Professional Affairs RCPI and Prof. Trevor Duffy, Head of Healthcare Leadership, RCPI. The past year has given me a far better understanding of the range and complexity of programmes delivered by the RCPI. Although many of these may not be directly applicable to occupational medicine, being part of a broader community that has a global reach and which shares similar objectives (i.e. the education/ support of doctors, influencing healthcare policy and improving healthcare provision) is important for the Faculty. I believe that this will better enable us to address the many challenges facing Occupational Medicine into the future.

Moving on to this year's AGM, the Board of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine will propose a motion to amend the Standing Orders that primarily relates to the FOM Credentials Committee. As you may recall, decisions around Fellowship now fall to the RCPI Credentials and Awards Committee, rather than to the Faculty. Of note, FOM are represented by two Fellows on this committee. As a result, the FOM Credentials Committee is largely defunct and has not met in recent years. The proposal aims to reflect the current processes pertaining to Fellowship and to establish a clear reporting structure for our representatives on the RCPI Credentials and Awards Committee to the Board. The details and the rationale behind this proposal will be discussed at the AGM

I would like to pass on some congratulations. Firstly, to Dr. MaryT O'Neill, a recent graduate of the Specialist Registrar Training Scheme in Occupational Medicine who was successful in applying for an Aspire Fellowship

post, under the aegis of a Fellow and past Dean of the FOM, Prof. Blanaid Hayes. This project will investigate current hospital doctors' health and well-being, using Prof. Hayes's original survey that was carried out 10 years ago as a template. This is recognised as being an important piece of research and is supported by both the Faculty (via the Doughty Fund) and the RCPI.

I would also like to congratulate Dr. Martin Hogan on his appointment as Vice President and Censor of the Royal College of Physicians. Many of you will know Martin, who has been active in the Faculty for many years across many positions, is the current Fellow Representative on RCPI Council and previously served as Dean. In addition to this responsibility, he is also currently the Vice President of ICOH, so I have little doubt that he will continue to be busy into the future.

On behalf of the Faculty, I would like to recognise and thank members of the Board and Committees for their commitment, support and hard work carried out over the past year. They are each identified earlier in this annual report. At risk of overlooking someone, I would like to acknowledge and thank those who are either demitting this month or have demitted from their roles during the year:

- Dr. Grant Jeffrey, Chair of the Scientific Meetings Committee
- Dr. Martin Tohill, Fellow Representative
- Dr. Sasha Hennessy, Fellow Representative
- Dr. Justine Fenn, SpR representative
- Dr. Jacques Bronkhurst, FOM Representative on RCPI Credentials & Awards Committee
- Dr. Paul Gannon. FOM representative on Practitioner Health Clinical Advisory Group
- Dr. Mary McMahon. FOM representative on RCPI Global Health Strategic Working Group
- Dr. Conor McDonnell. FOM representative on National Immunisation Advisory Committee

It goes without saying that the Faculty is only as strong as our membership and I believe that I speak for all when I say that we are very grateful to those who have put themselves forward to take their places.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution and administrative support that we have received from John Hunt, who has managed to remain positive and good humoured despite the demands on him! I would also like to thank Darragh Whelan and the other RCPI staff, who are too many to name, for their input and support during the year.

I look forward to the next year, which will be a very significant one as during which we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary. It is important that we do so, as there is little doubt that we continue to benefit from the vision and commitment of our forebearers, who in conjunction with the then RCPI Council, established the FOM as 'an integral part of the College'. I am sure that with your support, we will be able to mark the occasion appropriately.

## **HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT**

### **DR DAVID MADDEN, HONORARY TREASURER**

Report to follow after AGM

## NSD REPORT

### DR HEMAL THAKORE, NSD

#### Clinical posts in Ireland 2025-2026

There are currently 14 trainees in the HST OM training scheme.

3 First Years

3 Second Years

4 Third Years

3 Fourth Years

1 Fifth Year

#### Trainees in Research

No trainees are currently in formal/out of scheme research.

Trainees outside of Ireland

Nil

#### Recruitment and Selection

- Applicants: 16
- Shortlisted: 8
- Interviewed: 6
- Appointed: 3

#### HST Interviews

Interviews were held on the February 21st 2025 in No. 6 Kildare Street. Dr Hemal Thakore and Dr Fiona Graham took part as panel members and Dr Anna Clarke was independent chair on the day. Six candidates were interviewed, and three candidates were appointed.

#### Evaluations

Evaluations took place over 3 days (June 9th and 10th and July 2nd). All assessments were held online through Zoom. Dr Martin Tohill acted as Extern for all Penultimate Year Evaluations. The breakdown of evaluations is below:

- 4 End of Year Evaluations
- 9 Penultimate Year Evaluations

#### CSCSTs Awarded

Four CSCST were awarded in July 2024

#### International Clinical Fellowship Programme 2025/2026

There were 8 eligible candidates verified for the shortlisting process to the international fellowship programme for July 2026 intake. 2 were shortlisted and interviewed remotely via Zoom and onsite in UAE on September 12th 2025. Dr Hemal Thakore and Dr Alex Reid took part remotely as panel members and Dr Anna Clarke attended in person as independent chair. The interviews were completed and both candidates were deemed appointable subject to successful completion of all components of the LFOM examination.

Currently, the programme for Occupational Medicine will be a 3-year programme going forward, with successful candidates commencing an online training course in their home country, then coming to Ireland

to complete a clerkship, in order that they have a greater chance of passing the LFOM exam, prior to commencing the 2-year Fellowship properly.

### Training Site Inspections

RCPI have implemented a structured site accreditation model. 1 new OH practice has applied for recognition as a training site and will be assessed this year.

The accreditation cycle is ongoing with the review of interim reports and scheduling of further site reviews as per the accreditation cycle schedule.

### Study Days

29/09/2023	FOM Autumn Scientific Conference	
18/10/2023	Toxicology (Tutorial via Zoom)	Dr. Martin Hogan
10/11/2023	Worksite Visit (WSV): Ardee Ambulance Depot	Dr. Fiona Kevitt
17/11/2023	Smiley Symposium	
28/11/2023	LFOM/MFOM Portfolio Lecture	Dr. Alan Bray
20/12/2023	Toxicology 2 (Zoom)	Dr Martin Hogan
26/01/2024	WSV: Shannon Zimmer Biomet	Dr. David Madden
01/03/2024	WSV: Roscrea Abattoir	Dr. Deirdre Gleeson
12/04/2024	Critical Appraisal Lecture in RCPI	Dr. Hubert Lam
19/04/2024	Spring Scientific Conference	
22/04/2024	WSV: Birds Eye, Naas	Dr Deirdre Gleeson

All study days/site visits have reverted to in person events, although some stand-alone tutorials and teaching sessions will remain virtual.

### Specialty Training Committee Meetings

There were three STC meetings held between February 2025 and July 2024. The following is a summary of some of the discussions:

- Study day programme
- Training and curriculum developments
- Research skills development and research opportunities in occupational medicine
- Training site accreditation
- Trainer development
- International clinical fellowship programme
- Trainee recruitment, allocation and workforce planning

### Specialist Division Registration

For the period July 2024 – June 2025 there were 2 new applications received from the IMC for our review.

## EXAMINATIONS REPORT

### DR LANRE OGUNYEMI, CHIEF EXAMINER

The LFOM exams continued to be delivered virtually whilst the MFOM exams continued to be delivered in a mixed format, combining online and in-person components. Written exams were conducted via remote invigilation (TestReach), portfolios were submitted online, and the LFOM portfolio viva continued to be conducted via Zoom. A notable change this year was the switch of the MFOM Viva Exam from in-person to online. The MFOM OSPE took place over two days in Dublin. Day 1 of the OSPE which includes the report writing and critical appraisal sections took place in RCPI No.6 building. Day 2 of the OSPE Clinical took place in Beaumont Hospital where three patients were sourced.

The use of live patients in the MFOM OSPE is a vital step that allows candidates to demonstrate their clinical skills, particularly in identifying diseases and assessing their implications in the workplace. I consider that it greatly enhanced the quality of the OSPE, and I would again like to acknowledge the efforts of Dr Sasha Hennessy in overcoming the challenges inherent in this work.

The FOM Examinations Committee, with the invaluable support of the College's specialist staff, has continued its work on improving assessment processes across the board. Formal meetings of the FOM Examinations Committee were held quarterly, either in Dublin or remotely, usually coinciding with the FOM Board meetings.

A significant development this year was the migration of LFOM and MFOM portfolio case uploading and marking to Brightspace, in February. This was a key component of the RCPI Connect Programme, which aims to modernize examination processes and integrate them with the College's digital infrastructure. The plagiarism checking process using Turnitin tool is now also undertaken via the Brightspace platform. Uploading of the supplementary documents and paying the examination fee remains via the RCPI online application.

An interactive workshop on DEI and Unconscious Bias training was delivered to examiners in April by Josie Hasting. The workshop was a mandatory component of Examiner training. The session was recorded for Examiners who were unable to attend. Feedback provided by attendees was immensely positive with many elements of the workshop being put into practice by our examiners.

On 16 May 2025, a question writing session was held in Dublin producing which generated 50 new SBA questions. These are under review by our Educational Specialist and a dedicated review group. CPD points were awarded to question writers. I am especially grateful to Dr Susan Hill and Keith Farrington for leading on this and greatly appreciate all who took the time to participate in the exercise.

Following the MFOM OSPE exam in June, candidate and examiner surveys were distributed as part of ongoing quality assurance checks. The feedback provided was useful and will be taken into account for future exam sittings.

Ileed and RCPI proposed to the Faculty to extend the RCPI **Professional Diploma in Occupational Medicine** to align with LFOM requirements which was provisionally approved by the Faculty Board. This will add a preparatory LFOM module to the current curriculum, and is expected to increase both candidate numbers and examination sittings. In preparation, a **recruitment drive** has begun to expand the pool of LFOM examiners and question setters, with onboarding, final checks, and examiner training planned well ahead of 2027.

## Examination Statistics

### LFOM Examinations 2025:

Exam	Number of Candidates:	Pass Rate %
LFOM Written	57	51%
LFOM Portfolio	30	93%
LFOM Viva	28	86%

### MFOM Examinations 2025:

Exam	Number of Candidates:	Pass Rate %
MFOM Written	37	38%
MFOM Portfolio	16	69%
MFOM Viva	12	58%
MFOM OSPE	8	50%

The overall numbers enrolling in our exams are similar to previous years with a slight increase from last year. Irish trainees and non-trainee candidates continue to perform better than their international counterparts across all exam components. The pass rate for the MFOM Written Exam has improved from 29% in 2024 to 38% this year.

### Looking Ahead

The Faculty is now considering several strategic initiatives to further strengthen our examinations framework:

**Additional Deputy Chief Examiner:** A proposal is being explored to appoint a third Deputy Chief Examiner to enhance quality assurance, oversight capacity, (especially with portfolio elements) and examiner support.

**International Performance:** Improving the performance of international candidates remains a priority. Work is underway to enhance guidance and preparation for international candidates.

**Regional Specialty Advisers:** The Faculty is also considering the appointment of Regional Specialty Advisers for our international community. Their role would be to act as local contacts for examiner recruitment, candidate support, and regional engagement, especially in areas where candidate demand is high.

**Examiner Onboarding:** Building on our 2025 recruitment drive, we will update the onboarding process for new examiners. This will likely include:

- A structured induction module (delivered online) covering regulations, marking standards, DEI principles, and practical exam conduct.
- Observation & Practice Marking: New examiners will observe a live exam diet and complete supervised practice marking exercises before undertaking independent examining.
- Pairing new examiners with experienced mentors for their first sitting.
- Annual refresher workshops and calibration exercises to ensure consistency across examiner judgements.
- Streamlined background checks and status updates, to make joining the examiner pool more efficient.

By embedding these forward-looking initiatives, we will be better positioned to sustain examination quality while preparing for anticipated growth in candidate numbers, particularly for the LFOM examination.



**Acknowledgements**

I extend my sincere thanks to the Deputy Chief Examiners, Dr Susan Hill and Dr Sasha Hennessy, the Faculty of Occupational Medicine Examination Committee and Faculty of Occupational Medicine Board for their hard work and dedication. Special recognition is also due to the RCPI Examinations Department for their continued support, especially Lorna Furey, Exams Coordinator.

This has been a year of **consolidation, quality assurance, and forward planning**, and I look forward to building on this momentum in 2026.

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE REPORT

### DR GRANT JEFFERY, CHAIR OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The following report outlines the hybrid event activity for the academic year 2024-25. There were three completed Occupational Medicine events at the time of providing this update.

#### 15 NOVEMBER 2024: SMILEY SYMPOSIUM

**Theme(s):** AI, TB, NCHDs, Redefining work: transforming occupational medicine in the age of Artificial Intelligence

#### Speakers & Topics Covered

Speaker and Organisation	Topic
Prof Ira Madan – King's College London	Smiley Lecture (Keynote) <i>"The role of AI in Occupational Medicine"</i>
Dr Eon O'Mahony, SpR – LOCATION	SpR Presentation <i>"Tuberculosis Screening of High Priority Healthcare Workers: Service Evaluation"</i>
SPEAKER, SpR – LOCATION	SpR Presentation <i>"Are NCHDs being referred to Occupational Health? - An audit of referrals in the HSE Limerick"</i>

#### Event Attendance by Membership Category

Category	Count	Category	Count
Fellow	45	BASE	11
Member	23	Retired	1
BST	2	PCS	3
HST	15	Public	1

#### Event Evaluation

- 122 registrations received. 103 attendees (64 in-person, 37 virtual)
- 30 attendees would recommend this event to others.

#### Feedback

- Very informative.
- It was excellent and a very well organised event.
- Excellent speaker, very interesting topic. Well organized and well run.
- Excellent presentations by all the presenters.
- Enjoyed the SpR presentations - Both highlighting areas that would benefit from further research.
- Keep doing what you do so well.

#### Suggestions for topics

- Topics which related to occupational medicine of daily practice.
- Hep B/ID updates.
- Avian influenza.
- Leadership and quality standards in OH.
- Managing addiction disorders in OH.
- Medicolegal/report writing related topics.
- Report writing tips, difficult cases and their outcomes.

**04 APRIL 2025: SPRING CONFERENCE**

**Theme(s):** Noise & Hearing, Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare, IVF & Fertility issues at work, Endocrine, Positive Health and Medical Council Complaints.

**Speakers & Topics Covered**

Speaker and Organisation	Topic
Dr John Sheehan – Blackrock Clinic Dublin	<i>“How AI is transforming care and barriers to adoption”</i>
Prof Cathy Allen – Merrion Fertility Clinic, Dublin	<i>“Fertility treatment: work impacts and supportive policies”</i>
Prof Moira O’Brien – Affidea Medical Scan Clinic	<i>“Osteoporosis recognition and assessment”</i>
Dr Maura Moriarty – Cork University Hospital	<i>“Diabetes technology in the workplace and reasonable accommodations”</i>
Dr Martin Hogan – Corporate Health Ireland	<i>“Updates to industrial audiometry guidelines (HSE 2007 guidance being revised)”</i>
Ms Melanie Brewster – Industrial Diagnostics Company Ltd	<i>“Pitfalls of current categorisation systems; audiogram use”</i>
Mr Shane Hamilton – CHIME	<i>“Lived experience and assistive tech at work”</i>
Dr Deirdre Gleeson – Medwise Occupational Health Service	<i>“Occupational Medicine: A Profession at Risk of Complaint to the Regulator”</i>
Dr Suzanne Crowe – Irish Medical Council	<i>“Regulating Occupational Health Medicine: The Perspective of the Medical Council”</i>
Prof Ciaran O’Boyle – RCSI	<i>“Optimising Positive Health in the Workplace”</i>

**Event Attendance by Membership Category**

Category	Count	Category	Count
Fellow	50	BASE	43
Member	41	Retired	6
BST	1	PCS	16
HST	12	Public	2

**Event Evaluation**

- 274 registrations received. 171 attendees (65 in-person, 106 virtual)
- 28 attendees would recommend this event to others.

**Feedback**

- *Excellent programme and speakers.*
- *Very informative day.*
- *Very much enjoyed range of excellent speakers.*
- *The topics are relevant and very informative.*
- *Thank you for a super conference.*
- *Excellent day.*
- *Really enjoyed this conference - very interesting and practically helpful.*
- *Excellent programme.*
- *Very well organised event.*
- *Excellent conference excellent speakers.*
- *Brilliant presentations, very practical topics.*

**Suggestions for topics**

- Pre-employment medical assessments.
- MSK, Rheumatology updates.
- Cancer recovery.
- Climate related.
- Ill health retirement.
- Practical advice on supporting neurodivergent people in the workplace.
- Employment law, driving, neurology, neurodiversity.
- Night shift worker effect on circadian rhythm and breast cancer.
- Safety critical roles such as firefighters.
- Developments in oncology.
- Epilepsy and the workplace.

## 26 SEPTEMBER 2025: AUTUMN CONFERENCE

**Theme(s):** Head & Neck Cancer; treatment and rehabilitation, Driving, Diving and Aviation, Hot Topics.

### Speakers & Topics Covered

Speaker	Topic
Dr Funmi Oluwajana – NHS	<i>“The complex rehabilitation needs of head-and-neck cancer survivors and their return to work”</i>
Fiona Ryan – National Rehab Hospital	<i>“Strategies &amp; interventions to support return to work post-injury”</i>
Deirdre Leavy	<i>Head and Neck Cancer Survivorship: Navigating challenges in communication and swallow function</i>
Dr Alan Bray – SWIMS, UK	<i>“Medical challenges in diving &amp; tunnelling: insights from large-scale projects”</i>
Dr Rae-Wen Chang – NATS (National Air Traffic Services)	<i>“Aeromedical fitness for air traffic controllers: balancing demands in aviation medicine”</i>
Dr Maggie Martin – National Office for Traffic Medicine, TCD	<i>“Updates in Driving Medicine: Traffic Medicine and Medical Fitness to Drive”</i>
Dr Mary E. Collins – RCSI	<i>“Mind the Gap: Intergenerational teams in the workplace”</i>
Nodlaig Carroll – HSE, Workplace Health & Wellbeing Unit	<i>“Psychosocial risks in the workplace: stress, job-demands &amp; team dynamics”</i>
Marianne Fox – Lexxic	<i>“Neurodiversity in the workplace: creating inclusive environments &amp; practical strategies”</i>

### Event Attendance by Membership Category

Category	Count	Category	Count
Fellow	56	BASE	49
Member	42	Retired	2
BST	1	PCS	19
HST	13	Public	7

### Event Evaluation

- 205 registrations received. 189 attendees (75 in-person, 114 virtual)
- 41 attendees would recommend this event to others.

### Feedback

- *Great day.*
- *Informative & interesting conference.*

- *The virtual attendance option is great for those outside of Dublin.*
- *Best conference for quite some time in terms of relevance of topics covered.*
- *It was a good event and being able to attend virtually is crucial.*
- *Meeting was exceptionally good.*
- *Very informative and enjoyable day.*
- *Enjoyed the day.*
- *Excellent day, thank you to all the speakers and organisers.*
- *Great conference, very interesting topics and speakers.*

#### **Suggestions for topics**

- Driving at work and NDLS guidelines
- Musculoskeletal and orthopaedic issues – back, neck, knee pain
- Chronic and neurological conditions – MS, Parkinson’s, Huntington’s, diabetes, cardiology, sepsis recovery
- Occupational stress, psychosocial risks, and mental health at work
- Ill-health retirement, remote working, and workplace adjustments
- Legal and ethical aspects of occupational medicine
- Health surveillance.
- Colour vision screening.
- Neurocognitive assessments.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration between OHPs, HR, and other professionals
- Novel drugs, AI in reporting, and emerging “hot topics”
- Leadership, management, and early-career development
- Substance use and its impact on work

## **CONCLUSIONS AND KEY INSIGHTS**

### **Overall Satisfaction**

The Smiley Symposium 2024, Spring Conference 2025, and Autumn Conference 2025, all received excellent feedback. Attendees described the events as *informative*, *well organised*, and *highly relevant*. Feedback reflected strong appreciation for the quality of the speakers, the choice of topics, and the overall professionalism of each event.

### **Content, Quality, and Accessibility**

All three events featured expert, engaging speakers and a well-balanced mix of clinical and workplace topics. SpR contributions at the Smiley Symposium added fresh insight, while the hybrid format broadened access and strengthened participation across Ireland and internationally.

### **Key Takeaways**

Each event achieved high satisfaction and strong attendance, reinforcing the Faculty’s reputation for delivering relevant, practical, and engaging conferences. The hybrid model continues to enhance accessibility and collaboration across the occupational medicine community.

The **Spring Conference 2025** was also recognised externally, featuring in *The Medical Independent* article “**Workplace Health Under Microscope**” (RCPI, 29 June 2025), highlighting the Faculty’s leadership in promoting workplace health and education.

- <https://www.medicalindependent.ie/in-the-news/conference/workplace-health-under-microscope/>

**Acknowledgements**

As my term as Chair concludes, I'm thankful for the opportunity to contribute and to work with colleagues committed to advancing occupational medicine. My sincere thanks to the Scientific Committee, Dr Niamh Byrne, Dr Gráinne McNally, Dr Aoife Broderick, Dr Zara Together, and Prof Dingani Moyo, for their dedication and teamwork in delivering these events, and to Andrew Sweeney and the wider Events Team at RCPI for their support and coordination.

## ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT

**DR OVO' OGHUVBU, CHAIR F THE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

**DR ABIGAIL O'REILLY, ADVOCACY LEAD, ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

The work of the advocacy lead and committee remains centred on progressing the Faculty Advocacy Strategy launched in November 2022. The Advocacy Lead role was taken up in November 2024.

The Advocacy Committee met on a number of occasions this year and the Faculty board was last updated at the away board meeting in September. The main areas for 2024/2025 from an advocacy perspective:

FOM Advocacy Lead:

1. Research and publications:
  - Carried out a research review which is undergoing revisions for publication in an international peer reviewed journal.
  - Created a position paper focusing on access to OH services in Ireland which is under consideration for publication in an international peer-reviewed journal.
  - Drafted a research guide as informed by the research review which is in the final stages of editing in consultation with other departments outside the faculty within RCPI.
2. Presentations were made by the advocacy lead with positive response and promising connections made with stakeholders present:
  - HSENI Workplace health conference and exhibition April 2025
  - ISOM annual conference Lough Erne Enniskillen May 2025
  - FOHNEU 8th International Congress Cork, October 2025
3. Stakeholder network:
  - Advocacy lead has worked on creating a wider stakeholder network
4. RCPI submission contributions
  - Advocacy lead contributed to the RCPI response to 'Successor to the Roadmap to social inclusion' update and the RCPI pre budget submission to government to ensure Occupational medicine was represented and relevant issues highlighted.
5. Other work:
  - Advocacy lead continues to contribute to reviews and consultations on workforce planning with NDTP and HSE.

In conclusion, it has been a busy but fruitful year with important groundwork completed and a focused direction identified for the coming year, particularly in light of the 50th anniversary of the Faculty next year.



## GLOBAL TRAINING AND PARTNERSHIPS

### SINÉAD LUCEY, HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, RCPI

#### International Training Programmes– Sponsored

The International Training Programmes provide a route for sponsored overseas doctors to experience structured postgraduate medical training in the Irish public health service. It enables suitably qualified medical Trainees from the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar) to undertake a fixed period of training in clinical services in Ireland. Trainees participating in these programmes are fully sponsored by the country governmental bodies for the duration of their training therefore all the International trainees are supernumerary to the departmental team.

Income generated through the programmes is invested into improvement projects that benefit all RCPI training programmes. At present, RCPI offers two training streams under this Initiative: International Residency Training and International Clinical Fellowship Programmes.

#### International Residency Training Programme

The International Residency Training Programme (IRTP) is designed for doctors who have completed their undergraduate medical training and the internship. This programme allows doctors to join the Residency training in Ireland, enabling them to acquire a qualification equivalent to the Saudi/Arab Board and become members of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. For the last decade, this programme was available only for General Internal Medicine and Paediatrics doctors, and recently we have introduced International Residency Training Programme in Obstetrics and Gynaecology and International Basic Specialty Training in Histopathology during winter 2024/2025. All the International programmes curricula mirror the National BST curriculum.

Up to date, there have been 21 graduates of the International Residency Training Programme since 2019.

#### International Clinical Fellowship Programme

The International Clinical Fellowship Programme (ICFP) offers structured, curriculum-based specialist training for post-Residency doctors to pursue higher training in their chosen speciality or sub-specialty. Up to now, there were 191 trainees who have graduated from the International Clinical Fellowship Programme across the Institutes and Faculties and returned to their home country to embed the newly acquired knowledge and skills in the local health services.

So far, there has been one International Fellow graduate from the Occupational Medicine specialty. This is largely due to the specialty being in its early stages of development in the Middle East, making it challenging for trainees to gain the necessary exposure and training required for eligibility in the Irish programme and consequently passing the LFOM exam, a prerequisite for joining the programme.

In response, an International Pathway to Fellowship has recently been discussed to potentially implement in the future. This programme will include an LFOM exam preparation component, integrated with the iheed Occupational Medicine Diploma, and combined with a part-time clerkship in an Occupational Medicine clinic. The aim is that this offering will attract high-quality applicants to the two-year fellowship programme.

From the latest recruitment process that took place in September 2025, we are delighted to say that there were two candidates offered the placement on the Programme, contingent on LFOM exam completion early next year. We are hoping that these two doctors will pass the exam successfully and join our colleagues in July 2026.

**EQUALS Initiative**

In February 2025 and June 2025 two more 40ft containers of equipment were shipped to Zambia. This will take the total number of 40ft containers shipped since 2013 to 19 (18 to Zambia and 1 to Uganda). The equipment was tested pre shipment by clinical engineers of the EQUALS Initiative and on arrival it will be distributed across the country to larger teaching hospitals and smaller health clinics.

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

In October 2025 RCPI will be hosting Prof Victor Mukonka and Dr Jonathan Sitali from the Zambian Ministry of Health and ZACOMS. Prof Mukonka will be speaking at the RCPI Annual Conference and is being conferred as an Honorary Fellow. Whilst here they will participate in several meetings aimed at supporting the ongoing development and growth of ZACOMS.

**Global Health**

The Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies completed the process of developing a competency framework on Global Health which takes the form of a 2 hour, 2 CPD points module. This module is free to access and went live on the RCPI website for Members, Fellows and Trainees to access in November 2024. 140 learners have enrolled on the course to date and 50 have completed the module.

In April 2025 a call for funding proposals was issued to all RCPI Members, Fellows and Trainees for current global health initiatives. There were 13 successful applications and all funds have now been claimed.

**Membership and Fellowship**

The Fellowship recruitment campaign continued with targeted invitations being sent to eligible candidates. From the invitations sent from the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, 8 candidates were approved for Fellowship in June 2025. Another call out was issued for approval in September 2025 with approval pending on those. All those approved will be invited to confer at the Faculty ceremony in November 2025. The campaign remains ongoing, with each Faculty and Institute deciding who they would like to invite annually.

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

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

## RCPI EDUCATION

### DIARMUID BREATHNACH, HEAD OF PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS, RCPI

#### Core Professional Skills

In the 2024–25 College year, RCPI convened a multidisciplinary working group of clinical leads from all Faculties and Institutes to review and update the Core Professional Skills framework. The aim is to ensure that it continues to reflect the standards of practice and professionalism upheld across RCPI specialties, aligns with contemporary guidance, and responds to evolving healthcare needs.

The revised framework is structured around the Eight Domains of Good Professional Practice (Irish Medical Council, 2024), with domain-specific overviews and action-oriented outcome sets. This design enhances clarity, traceability, and alignment with assessment practices. Each Faculty and Institute will have the opportunity to provide specialty-specific feedback, and input will also be sought from lay representatives to ensure all key stakeholders contribute meaningfully to the process. The revised version will be finalised during the 2025–26 College year, with publication scheduled for July 2026.

#### Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

The 2024–25 College year marked a major milestone in RCPI's educational evolution, with all BST and HST training programmes transitioning to Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curricula. With the Obstetrics and Gynaecology curriculum going live in July 2025, RCPI completed the initial phase of a multi-year transformation that has re-centred medical training on demonstrable outcomes rather than minimum service or time requirements. This shift ensures a stronger focus on professional capability, reflection, and continuous improvement—bringing RCPI programmes into full alignment with international best practice and Irish Medical Council standards.

The implementation of OBE is a shared endeavour between the Department of Training, Education and Lifelong Learning, the Operations Department and each RCPI Faculty and Institute. RCPI teams continue to provide structured support to National Specialty Directors, Trainers, and Trainees through online and in-person implementation sessions, ePortfolio training, and the development of guidance resources available via the Trainer Hub. Recognising that embedding OBE represents a cultural as well as procedural change, RCPI will maintain sustained engagement and reinforcement over the coming years to ensure all participants are supported to apply the new framework with confidence and consistency.

#### Education Developments in Occupational Medicine

RCPI's Learning Technology team supported the migration of portfolio-based examinations (LFOM, MFOM) to the Brightspace platform, improving efficiency in submission, marking, and feedback. Collaboration with examiners shaped the system design, complemented by training sessions, demonstration videos, and user-experience enhancements to ensure a seamless rollout.

#### Simulation

The RCPI Simulation Committee saw a transition in leadership this year, with Dr Anabela Serranito, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, appointed as Chair. Dr Serranito succeeds Professor Dara Byrne, who assumed her national role as Clinical Lead at the HSE's National Simulation Office. RCPI extends its sincere thanks to Professor Byrne for her invaluable contribution in establishing the Simulation Committee and setting a clear direction for simulation-based education within the College.

During the 2024–25 College year, RCPI was awarded €250,000 in capital funding through the HSE NDTP, National Simulation Office, and SPARK Capital Investment Fund. This investment supports the regionalisation

of simulation-based training, equipping six clinical sites under a hub-and-spoke model that enhances access to procedural skills training in General Internal Medicine and Paediatrics. The Committee's ongoing work now focuses on operationalising this investment, strengthening partnerships with hospitals, and embedding sustainable models of simulation delivery that align with the national strategy for simulation in medical education

Irish Clinician Education Track (ICET) (replace current content with the below)

In 2024–25, RCPI completed the first pilot of the Irish Clinician Education Track (ICET) within Higher Specialist Training. This innovative pathway, designed for trainees with a strong interest in clinical education, provides funding for up to two years of out-of-programme experience focused on supervised teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

The first two trainees on the pilot of the ICET programme completed their two-year programme in July 2025. Four trainees commenced on Year 2 of the programme for the college year 2025-26.

### **ASPIRE FELLOWSHIPS**

Doctors awarded a Certificate of Successful Completion of Training (CSCST) on completion of their Higher Specialist Training may apply for a RCPI Aspire Fellowship up to two years post- CSCST.

Created by RCPI in partnership with HSE National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP), this 12-month Fellowship offers exceptional individuals high-quality training and exposure to speciality training and advanced clinical skills, in addition to a Specialist Registrar (SpR) salary for the duration of the fellowship. RCPI had 20 doctors on its Aspire Fellowships in the 2024-25 training year.

### **MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT FELLOWSHIPS**

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

The Management Consultant Fellowships were awarded to four Trainees in 2024: Dr Simon Daly (HST Geriatric Medicine) EY, Dr Peter Naughton (HST Public Health Medicine) PwC, Dr James Condren (RCSI Emergency Medicine) PwC and Dr Susan Keogh (HST Paediatrics) PwC

### **Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS)**

With funding from the National Simulation Office, RCPI developed a Train-the-Trainer programme in Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS). Working with international expert Dr Stefan Tchernodirski (University of Illinois) and Dr Paul O'Hara (Portiuncula / University Hospital Galway), we created a blended learning model combining online materials, hands-on workshops, supervised bedside teaching, and self-directed training.

The pilot, delivered in Galway and Waterford with consultants in General Internal Medicine, has begun to establish a new pool of trainers equipped to guide future trainees in POCUS, as outlined in the OPTIMISE report. Following full evaluation, the next iteration will expand to include procedural skills training and will run in both Limerick and Kilkenny.

### **NATIONAL EDUCATION DAY**

The Annual National Education Day, organised by RCPI Trainees' Committee, took place on 23 May 2025. Under the theme "Journeying in, out of (and back into) medicine," this year's event featured a series of compelling talks from a diverse group of speakers capturing key themes in medical training, to presentations by finalists for the Trainee Awards.

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

### **CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SCHEME (CPD-SS)**

A total of 915 Learners were enrolled on the Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme (CPD-SS) in the 2024-25 training year.

### **Professional Diploma in Occupational Medicine**

Under RCPI's ongoing, successful partnership with iheed, 2,119 Learners participated across our six programmes in the 2024-25 training year, an increase on 2,043 in the previous year. In terms of the latest offering of the Professional Diploma in Occupational Medicine, there were 372 learners who completed the qualification in 2024-25 and 235 new learners registered on the programme.

RCPI and iheed currently offer; Professional Diploma in Paediatrics, Professional Diploma in Occupational Medicine, Professional Diploma in Dermatology, Professional Diploma in Infectious Diseases, Professional Diploma in Geriatric Medicine, and Professional Diploma in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

### **Health and Wellbeing**

RCPI's Health and Wellbeing service continues to provide confidential support to trainees experiencing challenges or seeking guidance during their training, with ~80 active cases at a given time. Alongside one-to-one support, the service leads a range of proactive initiatives to enhance the overall training experience and provides advice to trainers where difficulties arise.

Through collaboration with RCPI colleagues, hospital sites, the HSE NCHD Hub, and NDTP, the Department ensures continuity of care and support for doctors in training. Appropriate referrals for additional assistance are made via the HSE as employer.

The inaugural Wellbeing Day led by trainees – a reflection of growing peer leadership in this important area.

Key ongoing projects commencing this year, including:

Development of peer-to-peer mentorship

Delivery of mentorship training

Updates to the trainee wellbeing curriculum

Creation of new guidelines on being a medical parent

Managing critical illness during training.

This year a number of trainees from the Faculty of Occupational Medicine reached out to the Health and Wellbeing Department and we were able to work with them in a number of different ways. We also have a number of occupational medicine trainees sit on the health and wellbeing trainee committee and the chair of the committee was an occupational medicine trainee, Dr Patrick Carr.

The Health and Wellbeing Department remains open to ideas and collaborations that enhance trainee and trainer support. Anyone wishing to explore an initiative or seek guidance is warmly encouraged to contact wellbeing@rcpi.ie.

## HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP

### TREVOR DUFFY, HEAD OF HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP, RCPI

#### Overview

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

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

#### Healthcare Leadership Initiatives

##### Regional Engagement

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

##### Leadership Forum

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

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

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

##### Mentorship Programme

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

##### RCPI Academy for retired doctors

The Academy, established in 2023, is a unique opportunity for retired members and fellows to share their expertise and stay connected with the college. During St Luke's Symposium in 2024, RCPI hosted a social event for academy members, many of whom now contribute greatly to the college through their involvement



in mentorship, examinations, CPD audits, representation on committees and heritage projects. To date, twenty retired members have participated in mentorship training to support early-stage consultants.

### **Advocacy**

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

Details of lobbying activities undertaken by RCPI are available at [www.lobbying.ie](http://www.lobbying.ie)

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

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

### **Priorities for Health for the Next Government**

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

### **Advocacy Achievement- passing of Tobacco 21 Legislation**

In Nov 2024, the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2024 was passed into law, raising the legal age of sale of tobacco to 21 years. This was a major advocacy achievement for RCPI, following years of work via the RCPI Policy Group on Tobacco (now reconstituted as the RCPI Clinical Advisory Group on Smoking and E-Cigarettes) and as an instrumental partner in the Tobacco 21 Alliance. Prof Des Cox, of the Faculty of Paediatrics was chair of this group for many years and led much of RCPI's advocacy for this legislation.

### **Healthcare Sustainability and Climate Action**

A Clinical Advisory Group on Climate and Health was formed in 2024 to implement RCPI's 2023 position paper. This group has advised internally on integration of healthcare sustainability into core professional skills, simulation opportunities, and is working on speciality specific curricula recommendations for healthcare sustainability. With the Irish Climate and Health Alliance RCPI is also supporting a position paper on Active Travel and has contributed to their manifesto.

### **Consultation Submissions**

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

### **Prebudget Submission**

In August 2025, RCPI released its pre-budget submission, calling for investment in health services, expanding workforce capacity, consultant posts, hospital beds, and community care. It 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.



**Masterclasses – raising awareness and building advocacy capacity**

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

**National Specialty Quality Improvement Programmes**

At present there are four National Quality Improvement (NSQI) Programmes managed by RCPI: Histopathology, Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, Radiology and Bronchoscopy. Three of the programmes are funded by the HSE National Quality and Patient Safety while Bronchoscopy is funded by the HSE and the NCCP.

The programmes continue to strengthen their role in advancing quality of patient care across the Irish healthcare system, by facilitating and supporting the use of evidence-based quality improvement in diagnosis and reporting. During the NSQI Annual Conference, which took place in November 2024, three national data reports in GI Endoscopy, Histopathology, and Radiology were presented, along with the official launch of the first Summary Reports. These new reports, developed with patient and public representatives, aim to make findings more accessible and support broader engagement across clinical and non-clinical audiences. The Programmes have continued assigning owners to key recommendations based on data findings, with the view that this approach will facilitate the development, execution, and monitoring of appropriate implementation plans.

**National Bronchoscopy Quality Improvement (NBQI) Programme**

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

**National GI Endoscopy Quality Improvement (NEQI) Programme**

The 9th national data report launched at the NSQI annual conference in November 2024, presented data collected in 2023 from 36 HSE and voluntary hospitals and 15 private hospitals, accounting for 295,237 procedures performed by 898 endoscopists across the country over the year. Findings highlighted improvements in the percentage of endoscopists meeting the target for caecal intubation rates, comfort scores, sedation doses, polyp detection rates and duodenal intubation rates. A new key quality area has been developed by the working group and programme management, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP). Key quality indicators and associated targets for ERCP will be included in version 7 of the NEQI Guidelines, due for release in Q4 2025. Additionally, a study based on programme data, titled "Continuous Improvements in Endoscopic Performance Captured at a National Level through Quality Improvement", was published in Endoscopy International Open.

**National Radiology Quality Improvement (NRQI) Programme**

The 5th national data report was published by the NRQI Programme in November 2024 with the launch at the NSQI annual conference. This report presented anonymous quality improvement data collected from 48

participating HSE and voluntary hospitals in 2023. The data findings revealed an 5.5% increase in workload between 2022 and 2023 in participating radiology departments, reaching over 3 million cases. The NRQI Programme reported on four key quality areas including report turnaround times (TAT) and peer reviews. The findings for report TAT were found to be similar to the previous year with almost half of hospitals meeting the recommended target. The report highlighted ongoing challenges faced by participating hospitals in meeting the recommended target for the authorisation of X-ray cases. The NRQI working group welcomed a Trainee Radiologist to the group to support the programme through research. A national consultation, including an online workshop and survey, was held to guide future steps on target setting. The NRQI Programme continues to emphasize the issues due to rising workload, growing complexity of cases and the need for adequate resourcing.

### **National Histopathology Quality Improvement (NHQI) Programme**

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

### **Quality Improvement**

#### **RCPI SAFE Collaborative**

Two cohorts of the Situation Awareness For Everyone (SAFE) Collaborative QI programme ran in the academic year 2024-25, Cohort 7 with 10 teams and Cohort 8 with 11. Teams work to understand the safety and communication risks in healthcare and tailor the improvement or implementation of a bespoke scripted short (5-10 minute) safety huddle in their setting. Of these 21 teams, 20 were from HSE paediatric, maternity, care of the elderly, palliative care, intensive care, emergency department and acute adult medical/surgical services and one was a self-funding private hospital team. All teams completed their SAFE collaborative programme. At the end of the course, teams submitted abstracts and/or newspaper articles, digital posters and a short video story of their experiences and outcomes.

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

All eight cohorts from 2018 – 2024 were tailored from the original Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (UK) and delivered in Ireland by Dr Peter Lachman. We wish to acknowledge Dr Lachman's essential contribution to this and other QI programmes in RCPI and congratulate him on his retirement. Two new cohorts of the situation awareness (huddle) programme, now known as RCPI Being Safe Together, have been funded for 2025-26 and will be directed by Dr John Fitzsimons.

#### **RCPI Quality Improvement in Action**

Two cohorts of Quality Improvement in Action were run with 21 and 24 registered novel Learners, of whom the majority are doctors. Learners conduct a bespoke small QI project in their setting and report on the

outcomes at the final session. This year's medical projects included addressing improvements in detection, communication and surveillance of Lewy Body Dementia, documentation of intra articular injections in a rheumatology clinic, recording of peak flow in ED and introducing criteria led discharge to two units.

### **Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership**

The 2024-2025 cohort of the Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Improvement Leadership comprised 10 multidisciplinary teams from specialties including paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology, general internal medicine, psychiatry, and endocrinology. As part of the programme, participants collaborated on team-based Quality Improvement (QI) projects and completed a range of formative and summative assessments. This year's projects focused on key healthcare improvements, such as eliminate patient and staff non-value added time in a post transplant Cystic Fibrosis clinic, appropriate sepsis management in a maternity hospital, reducing outpatient waiting list in a mental health facility, and improving patient satisfaction in patients transitioning from acute to community services.

### **Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence**

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

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

At CHI Crumlin, delays in the Combined Orthoptic and Optometry Clinic were reduced through triage, scheduling improvements, and regular huddles, with progress toward reducing overdue reviews from 48% to 25% by late 2025. Cork North Lee introduced a joint SLT/OT assessment model that halved service touchpoints, improved efficiency, and raised parental confidence in needs being met from 54% to 94%. In Donegal South and West, a single referral pathway for children's therapy services is streamlining access and supporting multidisciplinary care in line with Sláintecare.

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

## ADMINISTRATION IN RCPI

Key personnel in RCPI who conducted work on behalf of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine during 2023 - 2024:

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**NOTES**



**Back Image:** The Faculty Board meeting at Galway Hospital. (L-R) Tom O'Connell, Nuala Kelly, Hemal Thakore, Abigail O'Reilly, 'Ovo Oghuvbu, Alex Reid, Stephen O'Herlihy, Sasha Hennessy, Tom Branigan, David Madden, Lanre Ogunyemi.



## FACULTY OF OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

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