



Message from the Clinical Leads of the National Acute Medicine Programme

As 2023 draws to a close and we welcome another year, we look back on what was a record year for the delivery of acute medical care in Ireland. In the past 12 months, approximately 275,000 acute medical patients were admitted to our public hospitals, utilising 1.67m bed days, equating to 4,600 beds each day. It is remarkable how well our acute medical units and acute hospitals have recovered in the post pandemic era and are already providing levels of service in excess of that provided in the pre pandemic period. The NAMP anticipates that in excess of 100,000 patients will be assessed in the 28 hospital AMP pathways currently in operation, which accounts for 33% of all urgent acute medical admissions.

Clinical Advisory Group (CAG)

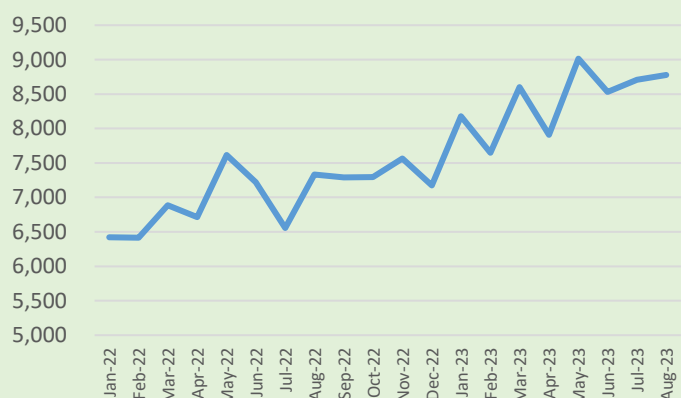
The Acute Medicine CAG is chaired by Dr Catherine McGorrian and meets 4-5 times per year. In 2023, a key priority of the group was to highlight and address the continued 'boarding' of units across Ireland. A position paper was submitted to the HSE articulating the impact of continued boarding. A conservative estimate is that 70,000 additional acute medical patients could be assessed in already funded AMUs/AMAs each year, if a zero tolerance approach was taken to the boarding of units. This figure of 70,000 additional patients, when combined with the 30,000 additional patients that can be directed through MAUs in model 2 hospitals can safely remove 100,000 patients from our EDs and Trolleygar numbers each year.

Wexford General Hospital AMAU/NAS pathway



We would like to give particular mention to Wexford General Hospital, who experienced a devastating fire in their hospital on the 1st of March 2023. The timely and heroic actions of management and staff resulted in the safe evacuation of all patients and staff and the resumption of almost all services within a few short months has been well documented and heralded. The NAMP would like to commend Hospital Management and Clinical Leadership and the National Ambulance Service on their innovative and successful implementation of a direct NAS pathway to the AMAU within days of the fire. In excess of 20 patients were assessed through the unit each day, between March and July 2023, at which point the hospital re-opened its 24 hour ED and all inpatient services.

No of acute medical assessments (Nationally)
Jan 2022 to Aug 2023



Given the growing population and ageing demographic in Ireland, we cannot afford to standstill and admire the work that has been done in recent years, we need to progress on many levels, if we are to meet future challenges. We must make progress in a range of areas from delivering the current models of care, whilst radically altering the way in which we deliver urgent and emergency care pathways, to the training and provision of healthcare staff that can meet the needs of future healthcare. In this regard, the NAMP have engaged and will continue to engage in 2024 with training bodies such as the Institute of Medicine (IoM) in the RCPI and Trinity College, NDTP (Model 3 Hospital review) and HSE reviews on the utilisation of Model 2 hospitals, particularly in the context of Medical Assessment Units (MAUs).

Happy New Year to you all!

Prof. Garry Courtney and Dr Yvonne Smyth Clinical Co-Leads, National Acute Medicine Programme

Training our workforce



OPTIMISE

(Optimisation and Progression of Training in Internal Medicine – In Search of Excellence).

The IoM at the RCPI began a review of its Internal Medicine Training Programme in 2022. The review is led by Prof. Anthony O'Connor, the scope of which is to understand what is necessary to ensure we have a fit for purpose programme for graduates, who will be equipped with the skills necessary to meet the needs of patients and society in the future. The Interim Review was published in September 2023 [Optimise Interim recommendations](#)

Dual Training – Specialties of Medicine

The NAMP is working collaboratively with the National Doctors Training Programme (NDTP) and Trinity College Dublin on workforce planning for dual training specialties of medicine, with particular reference to General Internal Medicine (GIM) workload. This work is being led by Tom Peirse, NDTP.

Winter at the College (8th December 2023)

The Acute Medicine CAG, NAMP team and staff in the RCPI hosted a very successful Study Day on December 8th at No. 6 Kildare Street.

In addition to being treated to 8 excellent [McMasters](#) case study presentations, the audience heard from

- Dr Andy Walden (NHS) on POCUS
- Prof Garry Courtney on the future of Acute Medicine
- Prof Brian Kinirons, Medical Director, NDTP
- Prof Anthony O'Connor (OPTIMISE)

The overall winners of the McMaster bursaries were Dr John McCormack, Dr Sile Toland and Dr David Gorey. Congratulations and best of luck presenting in Poland in 2024!



Planning future services and pathways

3 year Urgent and Emergency Care framework (UEC)

The NAMP team contributed to the work of the 3 year Urgent and Emergency Care Framework (UEC), which was developed during 2023 by the HSE's Acute Operations division. From a NAMP perspective, our priorities include ensuring that acute hospitals across all models are equipped and resourced to provide acute medical assessment services 7 days per week. Previous experience shows that adequately resourced Model 2 hospitals (MAU) can cater for the needs of up to 85% of urgent acute medical workload. The provision of urgent care closer to home is better for patients and indeed is more environmental sustainable.

MAU/MIU review

In late 2022 and early 2023, the NAMP played a key role in the Medical Assessment Unit (MAU) review carried out by HSE Operations for Integrated Planning. This review details the opportunities afforded by our Model 2 Hospitals and associated MAUs in caring for an additional 30k patients across all 7 MAUs in the short to medium term.

Direct NAS Pathways to Model 2 MAUs

In October 2022, Mallow General Hospital began piloting the direct conveyance of appropriately selected acute medical patients from NAS crews at the roadside. This was a very successful pilot and over the course of 2023, the pathway has been extended to all MAUs across Ireland.

Model 3 Hospital Review

In November 2023, the NDTP launched its review of Model 3 Hospitals. The review sets out, in very stark terms the significant role of Model 3 hospitals in healthcare on the one hand, whilst workforce planning needs to be tailored to safeguard these hospitals, which are very fragile in their ability to assure ongoing

NAMP Team

- Prof. Garry Courtney, Clinical Co-Lead
- Dr Yvonne Smyth, Clinical Co-Lead
- Ms Deirdre Reid, Interim Nurse Lead
- Ms Mary Ryan, Programme Manager

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