



NDTP

National Doctors Training & Planning

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



"Investing in the career development of doctors"

Introduction

I am pleased to present this report on the activity of the HSE National Doctors Training Planning (Unit) for 2020.

The National Doctors Training Planning (NDTP) in the HSE was established in 2014 to fulfil the statutory role of the HSE in relation to postgraduate training. NDTP continues to fulfil these original responsibilities however the role of NDTP has over time expanded to include Medical Workforce planning, Consultant Approval Process and the management of the Doctors Integrated Management E-System (DIME) database.

The largest component of our responsibilities and role in NDTP is Postgraduate Medical Training, which is delivered in partnership with Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies, the Forum of Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies, Intern Networks, the Medical Council, and clinical sites in hospitals, primary care and mental health services.

Working closely with the postgraduate training bodies and the NDTP Trainer Leads the NDTP continues to focus on growing the number of postgraduate training positions as well the development of educational supports for our doctors in Ireland. I am pleased to report the funding support for postgraduate training and education provided by NDTP increased in 2020 recognising the growth in our postgraduate training programmes and the ongoing educational needs of doctors.

The challenges of delivering training and education during Covid - 19 has highlighted the need to approach training and education in new and innovative ways incorporating the use of technology. The development of simulation within the Hospital Groups has been another key area NDTP supported during 2020.

The NDTP also worked to help address the medical staffing challenges arising from the Covid - 19 pandemic. The Department of Health (DOH), on behalf of the Minister for Health, requested that the HSE commence the 2020 Medical Intern intake earlier than usual and offer an Intern place to all eligible applicants.

The Intern Unit in NDTP, led by Dr Gozie Offiah, successfully worked with the Medical Schools, Intern Networks and sites to deliver these requirements in an extremely short time frame with 992 interns commencing internship in May 2020.

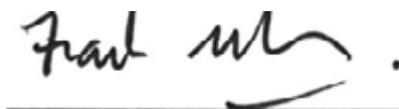
NDTP continues to improve and expand the Doctors' Integrated Management E-system (DIME) system and the National Employment Record (NER). The DIME system is a platform where all employers' HR and Occupational Health Departments can access NCHD data relevant to them for employment purposes via the NCHD's NER account. NDTP is focused on ensuring that the system is developed and utilised to its full potential to reduce the paperwork burden for NCHDs and employers. In November 2020 NDTP continued further enhancements and moved the Clinical Courses Refund Scheme from a paper based system to DIME/NER creating the new module to enable NCHDs to apply for funding and Medical Manpower Departments to manage the administration of the scheme via NER/ DIME. Further improvements and developments are planned for 2021.

As with all areas across the Health sector the year 2020 was challenging with many of the NDTP staff redeployed to support the Covid - 19 crisis. Despite these challenges NDTP successfully delivered on a number of our goals as well adapting and delivering on the unplanned work that arose due to Covid - 19.

I trust that you will find that this report give you a greater insight into the activities of NDTP.

I would like to thank the team in NDTP and acknowledge their commitment and hard work in meeting our objectives on behalf of trainees, doctors, patients and the Health Service.

I would also like to acknowledge the input of Dr Carol Norton, National Lead NCHD and Dr Alan Hopkins National Innovation Fellow and wish them well on their continued career path.



Prof Frank Murray
Director
National Doctors Training and Planning

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What we do



Achievements & Outputs 2020

Covid - 19 Response

Intern Numbers

36% Increase in Intern posts

In response to the Covid - 19 pandemic the Minister for Health requested the HSE to increase medical intern posts to provide a post for all Irish Medical School graduates (CAO and Non CAO) who wished to accept a post.

The short timelines put in place in the context of Covid - 19 meant the intern matching process was significantly disrupted. The application process for internship had closed when the decision to increase the numbers was announced. The management of the increase represented serious logistical challenges. However as a result of the commitment of all stakeholders a total of 992 eligible candidates accepted the offer of an Intern post from July 2020 – July 2021, a 36% increase from 2019.

Simulation Training

€1 Million Investment

Cognisant of the challenges in delivering NCHD training and education in the Covid - 19 environment, NDTP invested over €1 Million in the development of simulation training capabilities across the Hospital Groups. This funding is to ensure the development of the required infrastructure to facilitate simulation training within the clinical environment.

Consultant Contract Changes

168 Type A Contracts approved

233 Private Consultants availed of Type A Contracts

During Covid - 19 there were revised arrangements introduced to expedite the process for Consultants applying for a temporary change of contract type to Consultant Contract Type A. The Consultants Division were responsible for developing, managing and reporting on the uptake of the new process.

The Consultants Division were tasked with recording the details of Consultants who held a contract that permitted them to undertake private practice, including Oral

Surgeons and Paediatric Dentists, who chose to avail of a temporary Type A Contract arising from the Covid - 19 public health emergency. NDTP collaborated with Acute Hospitals in the processing, tracking and recording of this information since its temporary introduction in March 2020.

The process of recording details of Private Consultants who availed of a temporary Type A Contract administered by the Consultants Division NDTP.

Funding to support Training Bodies during Covid -19

To support our training partners to pivot operations in response to the Covid -19 pandemic, once off funding was secured. Funding was granted for specific changes and work required to deliver training online and remotely.

NCHD Training Support Scheme Rollover

In recognition of the role NCHDs played in the Covid -19 response and as access to training and development activities was limited we agreed with IMO that a once off carry-over of TSS balances would apply. The DIME system was reconfigured to realise this change and extensive development and testing work was undertaken.

Developmental Funding

15 Projects Funded

We continue to support our Medical Training stakeholders by providing a level of financial investment in original projects that will contribute to the career development of doctors. These projects focus on developing clinical as well as professional skills.

Examples of projects supported in 2020 include:

- Simulation equipment for the delivery of Obstetrics and Gynaecology simulation courses
- Preparing for the first 2 years as a Consultant
- Certificate in Telemedicine and Virtual Care Online Educational programme
- Development of an Educational Programme on Delivering and Receiving Feedback

The full list of the 2020 projects <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/publications/funded-projects-2020-complete.pdf>

Medical Workforce Planning Reports published

The following reports were published:

- Medical Workforce Report 2019-2020
- Demand for Medical Consultants and Specialists to 2028 and the Training Pipeline to Meet Demand: A high level stakeholder informed analysis
- Intensive Care Medicine Workforce Plan

DIME: New Module and Enhancements

Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme (CCERS)

626 online applications

The CCERS Module was successfully launched in November. This Module enables NCHDs to apply for CCERS funding via their NER Portal Account.

Medical Manpower Departments also manage the administration for this Scheme through DIME allowing for a more transparent and paperless process for all stakeholders.

By years end NCHDs had submitted 626 applications with 287 of these applications approved by Medical Manpower Departments.

Suggestions Register 2020

The DIME Team maintain a Suggestions Register which collates system feedback from all end users which could improve the DIME system and NER Portal.

Following review and development the following enhancements were deployed in October

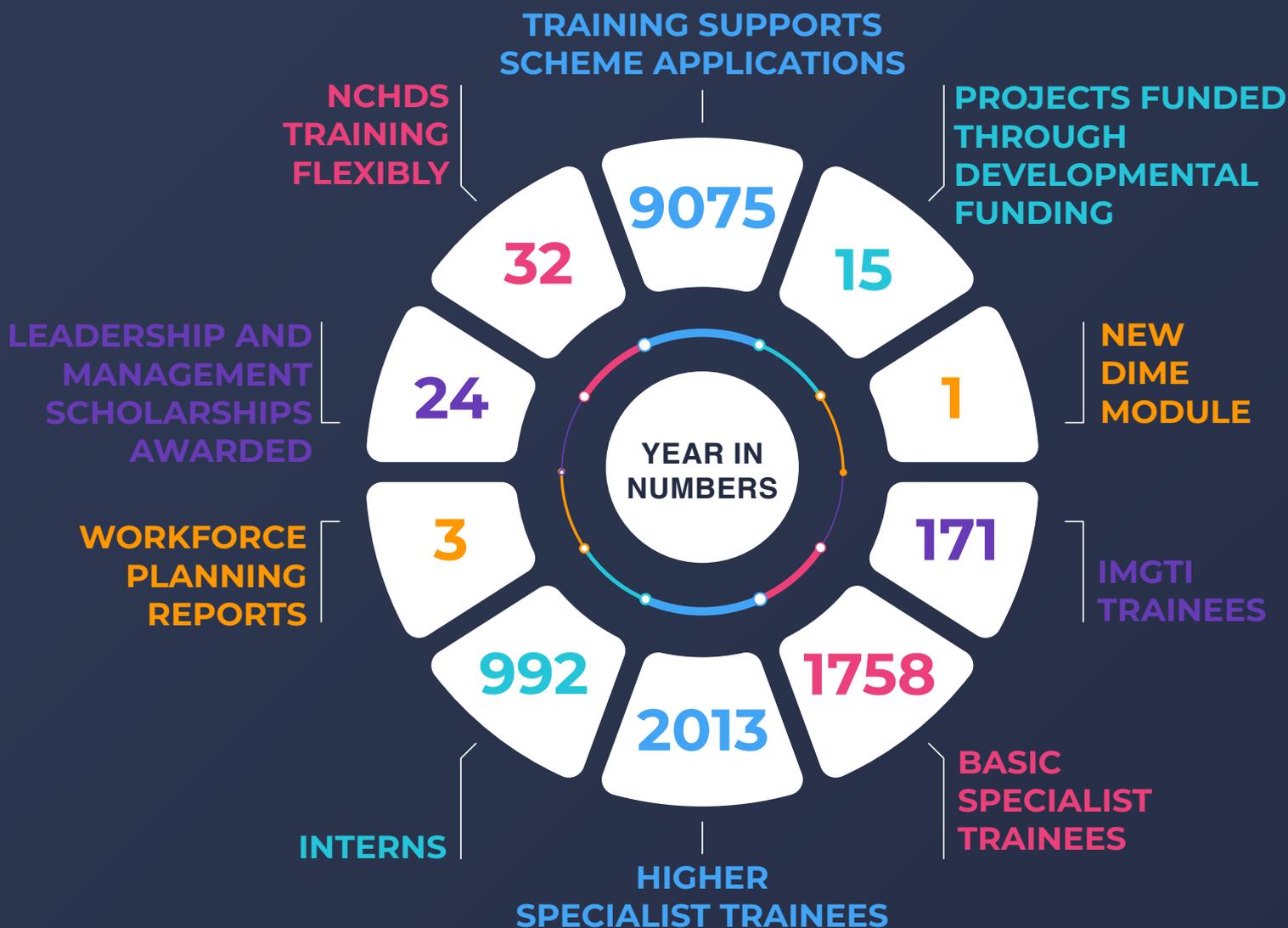
- Additional functionality added to TSS Module for NCHDs.
- Reconfiguration of EPP status and reporting in Occupational Health Module.
- Streamlining of sections in the CAP module to improve user experience and compatibility with the consultant post matching module.
- Enhanced reporting capacity in the NCHD Post Matching Module.
- Updated mandatory training requirements in the NER Portal/ Module.

38 Training Courses Delivered

The DIME Team continued to offer training to all DIME Users throughout 2020, and pivoted successfully to a remote delivery model in line with public health guidance. The training included tailored module training sessions as well as on-going 1:1 coaching and support.



Year in Numbers



NCHD Workforce

We are responsible for meeting the HSE's legislative responsibilities in medical training as set out in Health Act 2004 and the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 that include, among other things, that:

- The current and future needs of the public health service, in terms of medical training and specialist medicine workforce planning, are assessed, in order to ensure safe, quality patient care; and,
- The medical education and training system reflects, and is responsive to, the changing needs of the health service on a national and on-going basis.

Details are published at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/>

NCHD Training 2020

The HSE is required to assess, on an annual basis, the number of intern posts, and the number and type of specialist medical training posts, required by the health service under Part 10 of the Medical Practitioners Act (MPA 2007).

The Medical Workforce Report for the 2020-21 training year which includes the annual assessment of NCHD posts along with data on the consultant workforce is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/rep/>

Medical Intern Training

Medical internship is delivered by six Intern Training Networks which are aligned to each of the six medical schools in Ireland. Intern training is funded by NDTP via Service Level Agreements with each of the six medical schools.

The Medical Intern Unit within NDTP is in operation since 2018 to support the Medical Intern Board, implement strategic recommendations and deliver the operational function of the intern year. The Modernisation of the Intern Year project is ongoing with four workstreams which have the full support of the Medical Intern Board and the Medical Council.

992 Interns Appointed

In light of the Covid - 19 pandemic, in March 2020, the Minister for Health announced that all graduates from Irish Medical Schools would be guaranteed an Intern post. Many of these started early, allowing for a period of overlap between the outgoing and incoming Interns. This allowed for one to one guided transition into real

practice with fellow interns and supervised by network coordinators and associates.

Highlights of 2020 included:

- **Intern Wellbeing event:** A Virtual Intern Gathering was hosted in November. Guest Speakers included Dr. Mike Ryan, Executive Director of WHO Health Emergencies Programme and Dr. Rita Doyle, President of the Medical Council of Ireland.
- **EPA implementation:** Digital Resources in the form of a series of informational video supports were created as training support for Interns. Details are published at <https://www.youtube.com/user/HSEIreland/videos>
- **Review of Intern posts:** there are a number of different projects underway with multiple stakeholders in review of intern posts. This includes Intern job description, remediation guidelines and quality of posts.

Intern Academic Track

24 Academic Track Interns Appointed

The Intern Academic Track programme provides 24 interns the opportunity to undertake a three-month project in clinical research, gain experience in medical education or enhance their leadership and management skills.

An Independent Review of the Academic Year commenced in the 3rd Quarter of 2020. The findings will be available next year.

Basic Specialist Training (BST)

1758 BST trainees

There were 851 BSTs that commenced training with our Postgraduate training partners in July 2020.

Highlights of 2020 included:

- Additional 80 training places across BST programmes in General Medicine, Paediatrics and Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Increase to an intake of 213 trainees to GP training
- Overall increase of 142 trainees commencing BST

Higher Specialist Training (HST)

2013 HST trainees

There were 541 HSTs that commenced training programmes with our Postgraduate training partners in July 2020.

Highlights of 2020 included:

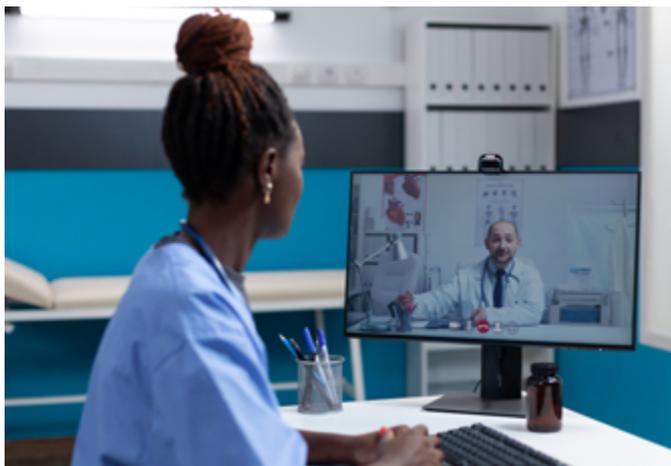
- 3% increase in approved HST training places from 2019

IMGTI

171 IMGTI Doctors training in Ireland

The Irish Medical Graduate Training Initiative enables overseas doctors in training to gain access to clinical experience on a scholarship basis e.g. HSE Scholarship Programme College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) / Sudan Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB) or through a fully sponsored Clinical Fellowship programme.

Since its introduction the IMGTI has continued to grow year on year and has now more than doubled, with an overall increase of 101% from 85 in 2014 to 171 in 2020. Despite the unique overseas recruitment challenges presented by the Covid -19 pandemic, 2020 saw a similar intake to the programme. All stakeholders continue to be committed to further expansion of the programme with plans to further increase the annual intake, source additional countries and increase specialty offering over the next 3 years.



Scholarships & Fellowships

Details relating to fellowships and scholarships are published at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/scholarships/>

Dr Richard Steevens' Scholarships

This programme supports clinical training abroad and is aimed at NCHDs in the final stages of their HST. The successful scholars spend time training abroad in recognised centres of excellence.

4 scholarships were awarded with funding provided up to the equivalent Specialist Registrar (SpR) salaries and a small number of bursaries.

4 Scholarships

- Dr Simon Clifford: Fellowship in Hybrid Oncologic Imaging in Paediatric Radiology, Great Ormond Street Hospital
- Dr Eamon Francis: International Clinical Fellowship in Reconstructive Microsurgery, Chang Gung Memorial Hospital, Taiwan
- Dr Helen Mohan: Fellowship in Advanced Colorectal Cancer at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne
- Dr Niamh Murphy: Fellowship in Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto

4 Bursary Scholarships

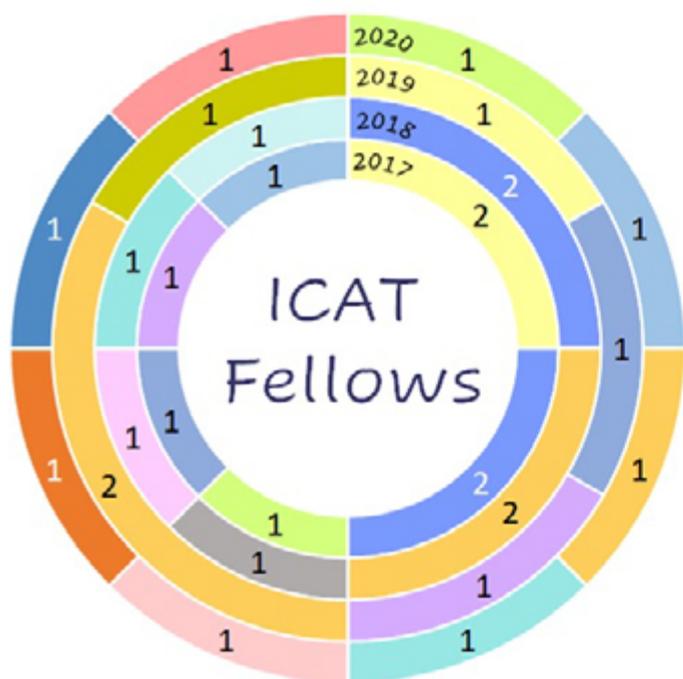
- Dr Ailín Rodgers: Fellowship in Robotic Colorectal Surgery and Multivisceral Resection for Advanced Pelvic Malignancy at The Royal Marsden Hospital, London
- Dr John O'Neil; Fellowship in Paediatric Pathology at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, London

The Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) Programme

The Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) Programme is a unique cross-institutional national programme which provides 6-7 years of integrated training and research leading to both a PhD and CCST/CCT in the appropriate specialty. The aim of the programme is to train the academic clinicians and academic scientists of the future to ensure the quality of medical education and training, improve quality of care, and attract and retain high calibre professionals to the health system.

Candidates applying to ICAT must either have secured a place on Higher Specialist Training, be enrolled in the early stages of Higher Specialist Training, or be enrolled on an approved run-through Basic Specialist Training – Higher Specialist Training programme. The programme, funded in part by NDTP, is offered at six Irish universities and seeks to award a minimum of forty fellowships over a five-year period. Eight fellows were appointed in 2021.

Specialties of ICAT Fellowships to date



- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Psychiatry | ■ Clinical Oncology |
| ■ Nephrology | ■ ICAT |
| ■ Endocrinology | ■ Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgery |
| ■ Infectious Diseases | ■ Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics |
| ■ Dermatology | ■ Anaesthesiology |
| ■ Public Health Medicine | ■ Immunology |
| ■ Haematology | ■ Cardiology |
| ■ Radiology | |
| ■ General Paediatrics | |
| ■ Medical Oncology | |

Aspire Post CSCST Fellowships

The Aspire initiative provides full Post CSCST funding for fellowships in collaboration with the Acute Hospital Division and the Mental Health Division.

8 Aspire Fellowships

- Prostate Cancer Survivorship
- Autologus Haematopoietic Stem Cell Therapy
- Epilepsy, E-Health and Transformation of Chronic Care
- Neonatal Transfusion & Haemovigilance

- Clinical Leadership & Quality Improvement
- Public Health Medicine Fellowship in QI
- Fellowship in Psychological Medicine
- Neuroimaging Fellowship in Mood Disorders

GP Academic Fellowships

2 Fellowships

The goal of the Fellowship Programme is to support the professional development of future leaders of academic general practice in the Irish health service. It does so by offering a structured three year programme of 1) research, 2) education and training and 3) clinical practice, all overseen by an academic department of general practice. The scholarship includes salary, a contribution towards PhD/MD fees and Academic fellows receive an annual training and development allowance. There are currently two trainees availing of the Academic GP Fellowship Dr Michael O’Callaghan and Dr Muireann De Paor.

Leadership & Management Scholarship

24 Scholarships awarded

This scholarship provides part-funding to NCHDs pursuing a Master’s Degree in Management and Leadership Skills. The funding supports 24 doctors to pursue a Masters – 12 places are part-funded in the first year and a further 12 in the second year.

Supporting NCHD Training

NDTP provide a suite of financial supports to NCHDs designed to alleviate the costs associated with the specialist training and continuous professional development.

Scheme policies and details are published at **Educational Supports**

Training Support Scheme (TSS)

9,075 applications

In light of the Covid - 19 pandemic and cognisant both of the work of NCHDs in the response to the virus and the cancelation of many courses, exams and conferences during the year; a decision was made by NDTP to allow NCHDs with balances remaining at 13th July 2020 to carry these balances into the new training year.

Higher Specialist Training Fund (HSTF)

€733,394 funded

The HSTF fund is available to Higher Special Trainees and is administered through the Postgraduate Training Bodies.

Clinical Course and Exam Refund Scheme (CCERS)

€1.9 million refunded

In keeping with our commitment to reduce the paperwork burden on NCHDs and in order to align the CCERS with TSS applications the Doctors Integrated Management E-System was updated to include an application and approval module for the CCERS. Commencing 1st December 2020 applications for CCERS are made through the NCHDs National Employment Record portal.

Continual Professional Development Support Scheme (CPD-SS)

2,325 CPD Points Awarded

1,306 NCHDs enrolled in the CPD-SS, over 300 courses were delivered by Postgraduate Training Bodies and 2,325 CPD points were attained by NCHDs who are not enrolled in specialist training programmes. NDTP also provided the Postgraduate Training Bodies with funding to cover costs associated with migrating CPD-SS programmes from classroom based to online learning during the pandemic.

Flexible Training

32 NCHDs availing of scheme

Developments in 2020 include:

- 60% increase in the number of applications received for the scheme
- NDTP provided funding for a job-share pilot programme in Histopathology and Paediatrics which was facilitated by the RCPI.

Lead NCHD Programme

67 Leads Appointed Nationally

The Lead NCHD initiative is one of a range of initiatives taken at national level to improve NCHD recruitment and retention in the Irish public health system.

The role is a recommendation from the Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structure (MacCraith) Reports, and, while still developing, is critical to two way communication between NCHDs and the management structures in hospitals around the country, which benefits NCHDs and patients. There are currently lead NCHDs across 32 acute hospitals, and the Community Health Organisations (CHOs).

NDTP Trainer Leads

There are now 9 NDTP Trainer Leads appointed across 5 hospital groups.

The primary role of the Trainer Lead is to support the delivery of training as appropriate to each clinical site. Trainer Leads have a key role in coordinating training issues at clinical site level and work closely with the Lead NCHDs in their respective hospital groups to act as a central point of contact for all training related issues, particularly from an educational governance perspective and relating to external stakeholders.

In response to the particular challenges facing the Trainer Leads in ensuring the delivery of postgraduate training within the Covid -19 environment, NDTP provided funding to support the transition to new ways of working required to deliver post graduate training.

Academic Clinicians

NDTP, in partnership with Higher Education Authority (HEA) continued to fund six Academic Clinician posts within Medical School Academic Departments in 2020. These post holders play a central role in curricular reform and development and the delivery of a modern balanced undergraduate medical training, reflective of the needs and strategic direction of the Irish health service.

Medical Workforce Planning

Activity 2020

3 Reports Published

In line with its statutory obligations, NDTP is tasked with predicting and proposing, on an annual basis, the number of post-graduate trainees required for each medical specialty. In order to do this NDTP works with specialty stakeholders including National Clinical Programmes, Postgraduate Training Bodies, senior clinicians and administrators across the acute hospital and community health care system to estimate the demand for consultants and specialists across the Irish healthcare system, both public and private. Three reports were published in 2020.

Report 1: Medical Workforce Report 2019-2020

The Medical Workforce Report 2019-2020 incorporates the mandated annual assessment of NCHDs in the health service as well as an assessment of the consultant medical workforce.

“The total HST posts filled in 2019 (1,904) represents a 25% increase in HST trainees when compared to HST trainees in 2015 (1,528).”

(p 12, NDTP 2020)

This report presents a review of the medical workforce, broken down by a number of demographic variables including specialty, service, age, gender, working patterns and tenure. Future entrants in to the workforce are presented i.e. training numbers, while future exits from the workforce are also outlined. The full report is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/ed/rep/medical-workforce-report-2019-2020.pdf>

Report 2: Demand for Medical Consultants and Specialists to 2028 and the Training Pipeline to Meet Demand: A high level stakeholder informed analysis

This report provides evidence on the current and future demand for medical consultant/ specialist doctors across medical specialties in Ireland. This was with a view to informing postgraduate medical training and consultant appointment requirements for the country to 2028.

The report findings were informed by key stakeholders including Clinical Programmes, responsible for the development and implementation of future models of healthcare delivery, and postgraduate medical training bodies, responsible for specialist training. The report goes some way to ensuring that we are training the right types of doctors for the health service of the future. It also presents useful evidence to inform strategic actions to address recruitment and retention issues across the consultant and NCHD workforce and will be of use to doctors planning their careers and wishing to anticipate future opportunities.

The overall findings of this report infer that, across the health system as a whole, there is a need for a considerable increase in the numbers of medical consultants/ specialists and trainees. Please note this report was prepared prior to the Covid - 19 pandemic, it is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/plan/demand-for-medical-consultants-and-specialists-to-2028-november-updates-v2.pdf>

Report 3: Intensive Care Medicine Workforce Plan

The report was a collaboration with the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine in Ireland and the National Clinical Programme for Critical Care. The purpose was to present information on the current consultant Intensive Care Medicine (ICM) workforce, and to outline projected future medical staffing needs for the specialty, specifically consultants and trainees.

Projected demand for consultants and trainees outlined in the report are aligned with the drivers of change within the healthcare system and recommendations of the National Clinical Programmes, the Health Service Capacity Review (2018) and recommendations on capacity expansion from the National Public Health Emergency Team (2020).

“A large and significant increase in the numbers of consultants and trainees is required to meet ICM requirements for the next 5-10 years.”

(p viii, NDTP 2020)

The results of modelling supply and demand in the future indicates a need for a significant increase in the number of consultants and trainees to sufficiently provide Intensive Care services over the next 5-10 years. Projected demand estimates align with both the recent commitment by Government to increased bed capacity by 66 beds by the end of 2021 as well as further increased bed capacity to bring total critical care bed numbers to 438 beds. The full report is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/met/plan/specialty-specific-reviews/icm-workforce-plan-2020-final-report.pdf>



Consultant Workforce

Consultant Recruitment

3453 Approved Permanent Consultant Posts

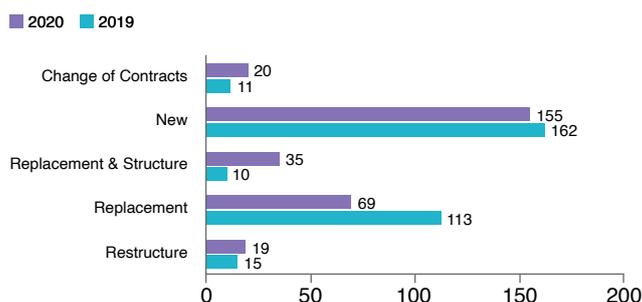
On 31st December 2020, there were a total of 3453 approved permanent Consultant posts nationally, an increase of 3.3% when compared to 31st December 2019.

CAAC

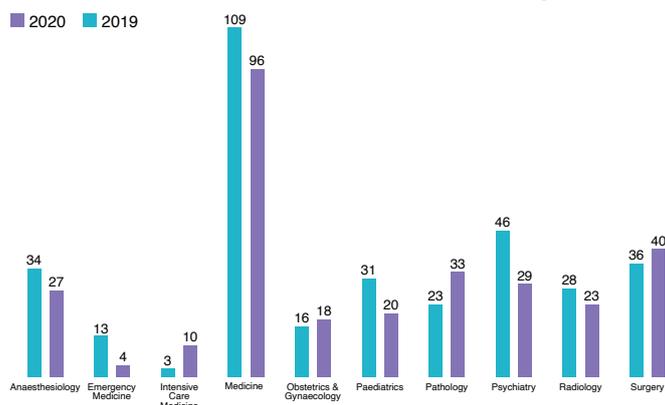
264 Posts Approved

- 10 Meetings held during 2020
- 300 applications were submitted
- There were 264 Letters of Approval (LOA) issued

Number of applications considered at CAAC



Number of applications considered by specialty



Type C

27 Contract Changes Approved

Key activity in 2020:

- 3 Meetings were held during 2020.
- 63% increase in Type C applications since 2019

Amendments to Medical Qualifications

11 Revisions approved

In consultation with the relevant stakeholders including the various Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies, the Consultants Division carried out a review of the current qualifications and titles with a particular focus on Pathology and Surgery.

11 revisions of titles / qualifications, as specified by the HSE, were reviewed by CAAC and subsequently implemented e.g. Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon with a special interest in spinal surgery.

A schedule of the qualifications applicable to the different types of consultant posts is held by CAAC, and can be accessed on the HSE National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP) website by clicking here.

Consultant Settlement Agreement

2511 Settlements made

NDTP provided administration assistance to National HR in the implementation of the 2008 Consultant Contract Settlement. The consultant settlement project received a total of 3048 applications, with 2537 eligible applicants. At the end of 2020, 2511 applications had cleared all stages of the application process and the applicants had received their arrears payment. The final remaining 26 were in various stages of the application process.

Innovation and Quality Improvement – “The Spark Programme”

The Spark Innovation Programme is a national programme to encourage, support and recognise innovation among healthcare workers in Ireland. It encourages frontline healthcare workers to develop and implement their own innovation projects, thereby improving patient outcomes and increasing workforce satisfaction and employee retention. The programme is funded and supported by National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP), the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD), the Office of Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) and the National Quality Improvement Team (QIT). Further details at www.hse.ie/spark

Spark Seed

26 Projects Supported

Applicants here apply for microfunding for innovative projects that will improve our health service. Ideas are refined with support and mentorship from the Spark team before they are pitched for support and funding.

Support was offered to 26 projects through this initiative, some examples are:

- Steth-o-Cope A Decision Support App for Interns
- Patient Centred MRI for Children with Autism and Intellectual Disability
- MINIMISE (Monitoring of Narcotic Initiation and Management in Irish Surgical patients)

HSE – HIHI Spark Ignite

36 Projects Shortlisted

Spark Ignite is run in association with the Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) and is open to all disciplines and departments within the HSE. It enables staff to develop their ideas through validation of clinical need and to determine the market for their proposed solution, product, or service.

Successful applicants benefit from a bespoke healthcare focused innovation workshop delivered by experts, to hone their idea and proceed to pitch for funding, in three regional competitions, followed by a National final for the six regional finalists.

Examples:

- Establishment of a digital smart tool to tackle the rising threat of antimicrobial resistance to public health through key performance indicators (Overall National Winner).
- Patient-led Education Tool - an application to provide reminders of test and vaccination dates, record results and improve self-awareness
- My CheckMate - a patient engagement application for early identification of heart failure.

Spark Design

Covid -19 Call:

- **69 Attendees at Design Workshops**
- **38 Projects supported**

The Covid -19-call was set up to seek problems that arose during Covid - 19. With the help of designers, a human-centred design approach was used to tackle the problem. Support was offered to 38 projects through this initiative, some examples include:

- Reducing anxiety in new diagnosis of dementia - information packs/support groups etc.
- Illustrated storybook as a perioperative information resource for young children and their parents ‘Your Little Sleep’
- Minding the Minders with Mindfulness

Design on the Frontline

• 4 Projects Supported

Design on the Frontline is an initiative to engage with the design and innovation community to work with healthcare workers to identify new solutions to pressing challenges. Successful projects included:

- Arctic Band – A means of reducing core body temperature while wearing PPE
- WAFFLE – a communication app for older adults to alleviate social isolation

Design Workshops & Challenges

- **174 Participants**
- **5 Workshops**

Design workshops are an integral part of the Spark programme. Design Thinking / User Centred Design is a problem-solving methodology that puts the user at the centre of the design process. 5 workshops were held with 174 participants from across Ireland. Spark also supported 2 Design Week challenges in 2020; the SJUH Design Week and MMUH Design Challenge.



