



Irish College of  
Ophthalmologists  
*Eye Doctors of Ireland*  
*Protecting your Vision*

# ICO Annual Report 2024

Protecting, Promoting and  
Preserving Eye Care Standards  
in Ireland



## ICO MISSION

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists is committed to the advancement and improvement of eye health and patient safety and works to protect, enhance and promote the highest standards in the delivery of eye care.

*This Annual Report describes the performance and key operations of the Irish College of Ophthalmologists (ICO) during 2024.*

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**JOHN DORIS**

2024 was a year of continued improvement within ophthalmology. However, there are winds of change in the air.

I would first like to acknowledge the work of all College members in delivering high quality eye care and in their commitment to teaching. There has been a surge in demand for our services, and public and private practice has risen to the challenge. There are significant increases in demand still to come. The census population data of Ireland recorded 4.6 million in 2011, 5.3 million in 2023, and it is expected to hit 5.6 million by 2030. The population increase is more rapid in the over 65 age group with 535,393 recorded in 2011, 806,300 in 2023 and an expected increase to 1 million by 2030. Through the support of the National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology, the College is in a good position to react to the expected training demands, but there is a need for more resources. We have increased our surgical and medical ophthalmology intake significantly. We need to raise the profile of ophthalmology and encourage medical students to consider what we know is a very rewarding career.

The first cohort of our new grade of Medical Ophthalmologists exited the training programme in 2023; a programme that started in 2018. In testament to the quality of our new graduates, many secured prestigious international fellowships. This did not happen in a vacuum and the College recognises the hard work and time commitment of our trainers across the country.

I would like to thank Yvonne Delaney for her dedicated service as our Dean of Postgraduate Education in Ophthalmology. We have very much valued her leadership, guidance and support over the years. She successfully delivered the Medical Ophthalmology programme from its inception.

The Integrated Eye Care Team model is also taking shape and there has been an expansion in Consultant Medical Ophthalmology posts throughout the country. However, the College recognises the need for greater collaboration between all stakeholders in primary care and

hospitals to co-ordinate the transition of care into the community. It is a priority of the College to advocate for a national ophthalmology electronic record system and for national audit standards for ophthalmology.

In 2024, the ICO supported the call for better access to Eye Liaison Clinical Officers in all major population areas in Ireland.

I would also like to acknowledge the development of the ICO's web portal over 2024 and highlight its importance as a resource for members' shared health improvement initiatives and sustainability projects. There are significant changes to our professional competency scheme and the ICO portal will help to guide our members on the new requirements.

There are some major changes ahead for ophthalmology service delivery in Ireland. World Equity is looking for a home and Irish ophthalmology is in its sights. This brings opportunities but also threats. We, as members of the ICO community, have a responsibility to advocate in the best interests of our patients. This was an important topic at our 2024 Winter ICO meeting.

As the world is experiencing a period of political and climate uncertainty, we need to stay on course with our sustainability agenda and the ICO has committed to keeping climate and career sustainability on our future conference agendas.

Finally, I would like to thank the ICO board members and those who serve on our subcommittees for their energy, vision and commitment. I extend our special thanks to Siobhan Kelly and the dedicated ICO team.

**John Doris**  
**President,**  
**Irish College of Ophthalmologists**

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

## **SIOBHAN KELLY**

As CEO of the Irish College of Ophthalmologists, I am very pleased to present the 2024 annual report.

The ICO stands as the recognised training and professional body for medical and surgical eye doctors in Ireland, supporting ophthalmologists in training and in both public and private practice throughout their careers. Our mission remains steadfast: to uphold the highest standards in eye care, education, and professional development, ensuring the best possible outcomes for patients across the country.

The Irish health service continues to face significant challenges that directly impact ophthalmology. Chief among these are ongoing workforce shortages, an ageing population, increased demand for services, and persistent capacity constraints. Despite record levels of investment in healthcare, system-wide issues such as hospital overcrowding, long waiting lists, and gaps in primary care access remain acute. For eye health specifically, the growing prevalence of chronic eye conditions and an expanding elderly demographic have placed unprecedented pressure on our members and the services they deliver.

The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to reverberate, contributing to staff burnout and retention difficulties, while the implementation of Sláintecare and the transition

to integrated care models present both opportunities and complexities. In this environment, our members have shown remarkable resilience and dedication, continuing to provide excellent patient care despite these obstacles.

The commitment and professionalism of our members continue to inspire confidence in the future of eye care in Ireland. The ICO will remain at the forefront-advocating for the profession, supporting our members, and striving for excellence in patient care.

Thank you for your dedication and your unwavering commitment to the highest standards in ophthalmology.

Sincerely,

**Siobhan Kelly**  
**CEO, Irish College of Ophthalmologists**

# ABOUT THE ICO – who we are

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists (ICO) is the training and professional body for eye doctors in Ireland.

The ICO is committed to the advancement and improvement of eye health and works to protect, enhance and promote the highest standards in the delivery of eye care and ophthalmic training.

The delivery of healthcare requires a lifelong commitment to learning. The ICO's goal is to provide and support education and learning for ophthalmologists in training, in practice and those who work alongside them as they deliver care to patients.

## OUR ROLE:

### 1. TRAINING

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists is formally assessed and accredited by the Irish Medical Council. The accreditation by the Medical Council, for a period of five years, is under section 89(3)(a)(ii) of the Medical Practitioners Act and approves the College as the body which may grant evidence of the satisfactory completion of Specialist Training in Medical Ophthalmology. A certificate of satisfactory completion in specialist training in Medical Ophthalmology is the title and designation of qualification granted in the State, by the Medical Council, to enable a medical practitioner to secure registration in the Specialist Division of the Register, under the terms of Section 89(2) of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007. The College delivers the National Training Programme in Medical Ophthalmology and in collaboration with the RCSI, Surgical Ophthalmology.

The ICO works alongside our fellow Postgraduate Training Colleges to support the education and training of medical and surgical colleagues in Ireland.

### 2. ONGOING EDUCATION OF OPHTHALMIC SPECIALISTS

Maintaining and expanding skills, knowledge and competency is essential in medical practice. The ICO delivers a continuous programme of events and online content to support the continued acquisition of knowledge and skills by the profession.

Doctors who hold Specialist, General or Supervised registration with the Irish Medical Council, are required by law to maintain their professional competence and to enroll on a Professional Competence Scheme operated by a Postgraduate Medical Training Body relevant to their scope of practice.

The ICO operates the Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) for ophthalmologists and those practicing within the specialty and advises doctors on how to fulfill this commitment and to continuously develop their professional skills.

The ICO remains committed to enhancing and promoting life-long learning and providing on-going professional development support to our members and members of the Integrated Eye Care Team.

### 3. ADVOCACY

The ICO advocates for the highest standards of eye healthcare delivery in Ireland, on behalf of patients and doctors.

We do this through our influence as the medical authority on eye care practice in Ireland, helping to shape healthcare policy in the interests of the delivery of safe, sustainable, equitable and quality care for all patients.

Through our collaboration with a number of key external stakeholders, including patient support groups, the Health Service Executive, the Department of Health, the Medical Council and the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies, the ICO is focused on demonstrating leadership and guidance on patient centered policy decisions.

The College places a high priority on our role as a trusted source of reliable eye health information for the public. We do this through the promotion of positive eye care practices, and raising awareness of the modifiable risk factors associated with the most common causes of sight loss.

#### *Underpinning all ICO activity is a commitment to:*

- **Integrity** acting with openness, consideration and respect
- **Collegiality** supporting trainees and members through all stages of their career
- **Innovating** in the delivery of education & healthcare
- **Collaboration** working with others involved in the delivery of eye health care nationally and internationally.

# DIRECTORS REPORT\*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mr John Doris - President and Chair of the Board
- Mr Gerry Fahy - President Elect
- Mr Tim Fulcher - Vice President
- Ms Elizabeth McElnea
- Mr James O'Reilly
- Dr Mark James
- Dr Olya Scannell
- Ms Shauna Quinn
- Prof. Conor Murphy
- Mr Michéal O'Rourke
- Dr Mary Jo Ryan
- Dr Geraldine Comer

**Dean of Postgraduate Education:** Miss Yvonne Delaney

**Clinical Lead for the National Clinical Programme in Ophthalmology:** Ms Aoife Doyle

The Board of Directors met on 5 occasions in 2024 and held an AGM on May15, 2024.

All Board members are Directors of the Company. All Board members are inducted regarding their role and responsibilities.

## Principal Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

The principal activity of the College continues to be education, training, and the running of a professional body for ophthalmologists and ophthalmic surgeons. It is responsible for setting and maintaining standards in ophthalmic training for young ophthalmologists and for continuing medical education for those in practice. The College provides a range of skills courses for trainees and for continuing education.

***\*The full Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024 is included under Appendix 1 at the end of this document.***

# GOVERNANCE

The ICO is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

The voluntary Board of Directors, who are elected from the membership, provides governance oversight.

As a registered charity, the ICO is committed to our compliance with the requirements of the Charities Governance Code and has established its governance structures, policies and procedures to comply with the Code.

## ICO Annual General Meeting

The ICO Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024.

ICO President Mr John Doris chaired proceedings. He updated members on the activities of the Board, presenting an overview of the ICO committee reports, financial report and 2023 audited accounts, the report from the Board and board elections.

The work of the Board of the College has increasingly focused on the sustainability of practice both from an environmental perspective and the need to sustain ophthalmology careers over the working lifetime of those who have chosen it as a specialty.

## ICO Governance – Committee Structure

The committee structures of the College are designed to reflect the core mission of the ICO as a training and educational body.

Committee members are drawn from the ICO membership. On occasion, non-College members, with specific expertise, may be co-opted in an advisory capacity to a committee, if approved by the Board.

ICO committees are structured to ensure a balanced representation across the various areas of practice.

Committees are chaired by Board members, with a clear remit and work plan approved by the Board, to which they report.

## The ICO committee structure is as follows:

- Governance and Nominations committee
- Finance committee

- Training committees
  - Training Advisory committee
  - Training Regulations and Standards committee
- Scientific and Continuing Professional Development committee
- Service Development committee

## ICO Annual Report 2023

The ICO published its Annual Report 2023 on Wednesday, 15th May, 2024.

The report provides an update on ICO activities and finances for 2023, in line with the College's responsibilities under the Charities Governance Code and the requirements of the Charities Regulator.

The report was circulated to all ICO members and is published on the ICO website [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie)

## Operational Structure and Funding

The ICO is a membership-based organisation with an annual subscription fee.

Our members and trainees are a very important resource for the College. We rely on this community to help shape our policy, inform our leadership and develop the future of medical education, practice and healthcare. Our goal is to develop, encourage and continually expand relationships within the College at all levels, from the innovative trainee perspective to the invaluable experience of life and senior members.

A voluntary Board of Directors is elected from the membership to provide governance oversight and policy guidance.

The Chairman of the Board (ICO President), along with the other directors, sets the policy direction for the ICO



and oversees the administration of affairs. The Chairman and the Board of Directors are charged with setting the strategy and goals of the ICO. A number of voluntary committees of the Board focus and advise on the specific areas of ICO activity.

The executive team is composed of a Chief Executive along with operational roles within the organisation: training programme manager, professional competence manager, communications and advocacy manager, and administrative services. The ICO staff are responsible for implementing the strategy and running the day-to-day activities of the College.

## Sources of Funding and Reporting

The ICO holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) where our annual accounts are presented to the members for approval. These accounts are also included in our Annual Report, which is published on our website.

The College has a number of income streams;

Members pay an annual subscription fee, the College runs educational events including an annual summer and autumn meeting for which there is a registration fee and a trade exhibition supported by pharmaceutical and instrument and device companies, the College has a service level agreement in place with the HSE for the delivery of specialist training and specialist support for the clinical programme.

# ICO CORE ACTIVITIES

## 1. SPECIALTY TRAINING IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

### *Promotion of Specialist Training Programme in Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology*

In 2024, the College continued its promotional recruitment campaign for Specialist Training in both Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology. The aim of the communications campaign was engagement with the Schools of Medicine, Intern Networks and with the training units to highlight the Medical Ophthalmology programme and exciting career opportunities available to aspiring ophthalmologists, as the College looks to expand the number of training posts year-on-year to align a specialised medical workforce with patient demand.

The College launched a new testimonial video to coincide with the ICO Career's talk in October 2024 highlighting the National Training Programme in Medical Ophthalmology. The video provides valuable insights into the training journey and career opportunities within ophthalmology. The College would like to thank ICO trainees Dr Alan Hopkins, Dr Meghann Canning and Paediatric Ophthalmology Clinical Fellow Dr Christine Bourke, as well as Consultant Medical Ophthalmologists Dr Emer Doolan and Dr Duncan Rogers for their time and contributions to the making of this video.

A dedicated ICO online careers talk was hosted on the 16th October with a record number of attendees for this year's session. Miss Yvonne Delaney outlined the programmes in Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology and respective scorecard requirements. Miss Delaney was joined by Dr Emily Greenan, ICO Basic Surgical Trainee (BST) and Dr Fionnuala Kennedy, ICO Basic Medical Trainee (BMT) who shared their valuable insights into a day in the life of a trainee with the prospective applicants and joined Miss Delaney in the Q&A session. The attendance record demonstrates the ongoing increased awareness of the training pathway options, following the coordinated and sustained communications strategy of the College with the undergraduate medical institutions, Intern Networks and the National Doctors Training Programme in recent years.

We continue to optimise on the opportunities for face to face meetings at careers events and talks which present throughout the academic calendar year. In 2024, these included talks at the Galway University Hospital Careers event for interns, medical students and NCHD on October 10th. The College expresses its gratitude to Dr Fiona Harney, Clinical Lecturer in Ophthalmology, University of Galway and Dr Grace McCabe HST for representing the College at the Galway careers event. It is really valuable for potential applicants to receive firsthand insights from trainees regarding their experiences and advice on how to prepare for application.

In Dublin, a career in Surgical Ophthalmology talk was delivered by Miss Delaney on November 9th at the Irish Surgical Training Group (ISTG) Career's Day in the RCSI. She was joined afterwards by Dr Alison Greene (current ISTG representative), Dr Liam Bourke, HST and Dr Robert Mc Grath, HST for the post-presentation Q&A with NCHDs interested in Ophthalmic Surgery. It was most beneficial for future applicants to the specialty to hear about the training experience in Ophthalmic Surgery directly from the HSTs.

### ***Selection Processes For Basic And Higher Medical And Surgical Ophthalmology Programmes***

An increase in applications to the Basic Medical Training programme exhibited a strong interest in Medical Ophthalmology. The College expects applications for both programmes to increase in 2025 again.

Online format for shortlisting and interviews for Basic Medical and Basic Surgical training programmes continued in 2024 and shortlisting for the two Higher programmes, Medical and Surgery, also took place virtually and will continue to take place virtually for the foreseeable future. Interviews for both higher programmes continue to take place in-person.

### ***Structured Objective Oral Examinations(SOEs) in Higher Medical Training (HMT)***

The SOE is a mandatory summative assessment on the HMT Programme. The SOE takes place at the end of each subspecialty module in Medical Retina, Glaucoma and Paediatric Ophthalmology and must be passed by each candidate in order to progress. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure the required standard for independent practice consistent with the standard outlined in the curriculum is achieved. In 2024, SOEs took place in-person on January 19th 2024 and March 28th 2024 for Paediatric Ophthalmology. The SOE in Medical Retina took place on June 13th 2024 in-person. Two further SOEs took place in person for Glaucoma on December 3rd 2024 and Paediatric Ophthalmology on December 5th 2024.

### ***Objective Structured Examinations (OSEs) in Higher Surgical Training***

The OSE is a formative assessment for trainees in HST Year 6. The OSEs assess the 7 sub specialty areas of the HST curriculum and assess the ability of trainees to evaluate, diagnose and formulate treatment plans for ophthalmic conditions. These assessments serve to encourage ongoing learning and preparation for the final FRCSI exam in Ophthalmology. The OSEs took place virtually on 13th June 2024.

### ***ICO Anterior Vitrectomy Course***

The ICO Anterior Vitrectomy Course for surgical trainees took place on September 24th and September 25th 2024 at the RCSI Simulation Lab in Dublin. The wet-lab and mock operating theatre facility enables trainees to expand their hands-on technical experience and further progress their development in procedural and technical expertise.

The course was coordinated by Miss Yvonne Delaney. Faculty included Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeons Mr Larry Benjamin, Mr Noel Horgan, Mr Patrick Talty, Mr Zubair Idrees, Mr Barry Quill, Mr John Doris and Mr Princeton Lee.

### ***Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training in Medical Ophthalmology***

Award of the Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) in Medical Ophthalmology allows the Higher Medical Trainee to register on the ophthalmology specialist register of the Irish Medical Council and indicates that the trainee has reached the curricular standards of competence to practice independently as a Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist in Ireland.

2024 saw further graduates of the Higher Medical Training Programme (HMT) and culminated in the awarding of CCST for Dr David Gildea and Dr Christine Bourke.

This is an excellent achievement and the ICO wishes both David and Christine the very best in their future as Medical Ophthalmologists.

### ***National Masterclass in Paediatric Ophthalmology and Neuro-Ophthalmology***

Following the success of the ICO Masterclass Series in Medical Retina in 2022 and Glaucoma in 2023, the College held a Masterclass in Paediatric Ophthalmology and Neuro-Ophthalmology on 9th May 2024.

The Masterclass titled "Challenges of the Optic Nerve" featured expert presentations from renowned speakers including Professor John Chen, Mayo Clinic, USA, who presented on "Atypical Optic Neuritis in the Paediatric and Adult Population". Dr Kathleen Gorman, Temple Street Children's Hospital, Ireland provided insights on "Atypical Optic Neuritis: The Paediatric Neurologist's Perspective". Miss Jane Ashworth, Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, UK, presented on "Management of Swollen Optic Discs in the Paediatric Population- The Manchester Pathway and Experience".

The event chaired by Ms Kathryn McCreery, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, CHI at Our Lady's Hospital Crumlin, also included case presentations by Dr Alan Hopkins, Dr Simon Neary, Dr Sasnuskha Moodley and Dr Mohammed Mohamed, followed by an engaging Q&A session.

### **Training Site Accreditation**

The accreditation of training posts process is structured on the basis of ensuring that the quality and standard of ophthalmic training is consistent across training posts and equivalent to best practice in the sector. The goal of the accreditation process is to work with the training unit stakeholders to support the continual improvement, knowledge sharing and trainee learning experience while ensuring that the standards and guidelines associated with the accreditation process are implemented in a consistent, fair and transparent way.

The accreditation standards define the minimum set of standards that all training sites must meet and complement the Medical Council criteria for evaluation of training sites, which support the delivery of specialist training. The standards form the basis for training post inspections and audit for all Basic and Higher Ophthalmic Training posts in Surgical and Medical Ophthalmology specialist training.

In 2024 the College conducted two training site accreditations, the first of which took place in April 2024 with Waterford University Hospital and the second in November 2024 with the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear and St Vincent's University Hospital. The College wishes to thank representatives from both units in particular the Educational Supervisors, Mr John Stoke, Mr Kevin Kennelly and Mr Edward Loane as well as the Consultant Trainers from Waterford University Hospital and the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and St Vincent's University Hospital for their support and participation in the accreditation process and their continued dedication in the delivery of specialist training in Ophthalmology.

### **Appointment of New Trainers & Train the Trainer Course**

Following the introduction of the trainer portal and online modules, in 2023 the College introduced a new appointment process for Consultants who wish to become trainers with the ICO.

To be eligible to be a trainer with the ICO you must::

- Be registered on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register.
- Be registered on a Professional Competence Scheme.
- Practice at a Consultant level ophthalmic post in Ireland.
- Complete the mandatory requirements of the ICO Trainer education modules.

**The process for appointment is as follows:**

1. Educational Supervisors notifies ICO of new Consultant Appointments in clinical training sites.

2. ICO invites new Consultant to apply to become a trainer with the College.
3. Consultant completes application form.
4. ICO reviews the application against the eligibility criteria.
5. If applicant is eligible, the application is submitted to the Training Regulations and Standards Committee for approval.
7. The Training Regulations and Standards Committee reviews applications and makes a decision to approve or not.
8. ICO notifies Consultant that they are approved subject to the completion of the Train the Trainer module.
9. Approved Consultants are provided with a copy of the ICO Code of Conduct.
10. ICO gives the new trainer access to the ICO Trainer Portal following internal confirmation of completion of the Train the Trainer education modules.

In 2024, the College appointed six new Consultant Trainers, Ms Maeve Lagan, Mr Paul Stanciu, Ms Clare McCloskey, Ms Emer Doolan, Ms Christine Goodchild and Mr Daniel Nolan.

### **International Medical Graduate Training Initiative (IMGTI)**

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative (IMGTI) is a postgraduate medical training programme in ophthalmology for non EU International medical graduates. The programme is coordinated by the HSE National Doctors Training and Planning division, the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies and the Postgraduate Training Bodies. This stream facilitates participants to access a structured period of training and experience as developed by an Irish postgraduate medical training body to specifically meet the clinical needs of participants as defined by their home country's health service. Currently both the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan and the Sudanese Medical Specialisation Board participate in the Programme.

In 2024, four trainees commenced the two-year programme with the ICO. There are currently eight trainees in total on this training pathway.

### **ICO IMGT Clinical Fellowship Programme**

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists offers clinical fellowship training to international doctors who are sponsored by their government, hospital or national training body. The International Medical Graduate Training Programme (IMGTP) clinical fellowship programme offers a unique opportunity to experience

the delivery of complex and sub-specialty healthcare in a broad environment. It is also the opportunity to develop and learn advanced skills that will be especially beneficial for the health service in the Fellow's home country.

The ICO Clinical Fellowship Programme is aimed at those who wish to develop ophthalmic subspecialty expertise. The programme is offered over one to two years of clinical training. The IMGTP programme allows Fellows access to a structured period of training and education which is completed under the guidance of leading Ophthalmic Consultant Trainers in accredited hospitals in Ireland. Throughout the fellowship, Fellows are supported and mentored by their designated Educational Supervisor, the ICO team and the ICO Surgical Training Programme Director.

## 2. CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

The College ran its Continuing Medical Education series throughout 2024 including the following events:

### *ICO Annual Conference 2024*

The ICO Annual Conference 2024 took place from Wednesday 15th to Friday 17th May at the Knockranny House Hotel in Westport, Co Mayo. Over 200 ophthalmologists and ICO trainees gathered to hear the latest clinical and scientific updates and developments in the specialty from national and international eye experts.

The topics of focus for symposia were; Vision and Strabismus, Orbit and Socket, Sustainability in Ophthalmology.

Invited guest speakers at the Vision and Strabismus symposium were Mr Ian Marsh, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, NHS Trust Manchester and Dr Arvind Chandna, Senior Clinician Scientist at Smith Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, San Francisco who were joined by ICO member Ms Kathryn McCreery, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin Hospital on the panel.

Immediate Past President of the College, Mr Tim Fulcher Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Mater Hospital, Dublin presented at the Orbit and Socket Symposium alongside guest speakers, Mr Manoj Parulekar, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust and Professor Geoffrey Rose, Consultant Orbital, Lacrimal and Plastic Reconstructive Surgeon and Past Director of the Adnexal Service at Moorfields Eye Hospital, London.

A focused discussion on Sustainability in Ophthalmology welcomed a panel of experts and clinicians who are committed to addressing the carbon

footprint of healthcare. Guest speakers included Dr Philip Crowley, National Director for Strategy and Research in the Health Services Executive and HSE National Lead for Climate Change, and Miss Radhika Rampat, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Royal Free London NHS Trust and Co-Chair of the American-European Congress of Ophthalmic Surgery (AECOS) Green Working Group who were joined by Mr Arthur Cummings, Wellington Eye Clinic, Dublin and Dr Emilie Mahon, Ophthalmology Tutor, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital.

The Annual Conference programme also featured parallel workshop sessions on 'Disk Assessment - How to Assess an Optic Nerve' presented by Miss Yvonne Delaney, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Mater Hospital, Dublin and on 'Corneal Topography' presented by Mr Brendan Cummings, Cataract and Research Fellow, Wellington Eye Clinic, Dublin.

Paper and poster sessions (ICO medals for best poster and paper awarded) and the SOE Young Ophthalmologist Lecture 2024, presented by Mr Michéal O'Rourke on the topic of Paediatric Oculoplastic, were among the other highlights of the 3-day conference agenda.

### *ICO Medal Winners at the ICO Annual Conference 2024*

#### **Sir William Wilde Medal 2024 - Best Poster**

"Uveal Melanoma Patients Treated with Iodine Plaque versus Ruthenium Plaque versus Proton Beam Radiation: An Ten-Year Review"

**Dr Patrick Murtagh**

#### **Barbara Knox Medal 2024 - Best Paper**

"Eyes on Spina Bifida: A Two-Decade Retrospective Exploration of Ophthalmic Manifestations in Paediatric Patients at Temple Street Children's University Hospital, Dublin"

**Dr Shane O'Regan**

### *Annual Mooney Lecture 2024*

#### **"Trends in Rehabilitation of Patients with Thyroid Eye Disease"**

Prof Geoffrey Rose

The Annual Mooney Lecture 2024 was presented by eminent surgeon, Professor Geoffrey Rose, Moorfields Eye Hospital London, on the evening of Wednesday 15th May during the ICO Annual Conference event in Westport.

Prof Rose's lecture entitled "Trends in rehabilitation of



patients with thyroid eye disease" examined what thyroid eye disease means, in practical terms, to the patient and the mechanism of the disease in terms of the underlying inflammatory mechanism, and also the biomechanics of the condition.

Prof Rose outlined the historical treatment of thyroid eye disease in patients, up to modern day advances and changes in treatment approaches.

Prof Geoffrey Rose was appointed to the consultant staff at Moorfields Eye Hospital in 1990, has been Director of the Adnexal Service, and is now an honorary consultant to the hospital. He is a Senior Research Fellow of the Biomedical Research Centre at the Institute of Ophthalmology, London, and is a Past-President of ESOPRS and of BOPSS.

The inaugural Mooney Lecture was presented at the ICO Annual Conference in May 1995 by Prof. T.R. Hedges entitled "A History of Neuro-ophthalmology: An American Perspective". The Annual Mooney Lecture is named in honour of the Mooney family for their multigenerational contribution to ophthalmology in Ireland.

### ***Eye Care in Focus Conference 2024***

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists hosted its 3rd annual Eye Care in Focus conference for the multi-disciplinary eye care team at The Gibson Hotel in Dublin on Tuesday, 1st October, 2024.

The 1-day clinical education meeting is designed for the multidisciplinary eyecare team working across community and hospital care in Ireland. It provides a unique opportunity for ophthalmologists, optometrists, orthoptists, ophthalmic nurses and technicians to come together to discuss current eye care pathways and developments, and facilitate a forum for shared learning across the disciplines.

The programme for the 2024 conference included dedicated sessions on paediatric ophthalmology, cataract and sustainability in eyecare with representation from across the multidisciplinary eye care team on the panel of guest speakers. Delegates also heard an update on the strategy for eye care and service delivery developments with regards to the HSE National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology from Clinical Lead and Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Ms Aoife Doyle.

Guest speaker Prof John Nolan, Founder and Director of the Nutrition Research Centre Ireland (NRCI) at the South East Technological University (SETU) in Waterford, gave a comprehensive outline of the research and evidence for targeted nutrition to improve visual and cognitive function. Professor Nolan, a Fulbright Scholar at the SETU, established the Macular Pigment Research Group at the research centre where scientists have spent twenty years studying the role of nutrition and lifestyle

for human well-being.

The conference was chaired by ICO President, Mr John Doris.

The Eye Care in Focus Conference returns in the autumn of 2025, taking place on Wednesday, October 1st, at The Gibson Hotel in Dublin.

### ***ICO Winter Meeting and Annual Montgomery Lecture 2024***

The College held its annual Winter Meeting for ICO members on Friday, November 15th, 2024 at the Alert Theatre in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

The theme of discussion 'What Might the Future of Practice Look Like?' explored the evolving dynamics of public and private healthcare practice in Ireland, addressing potential transformations over the coming years.

The session featured presentations from Mr John Doris, University Hospital Waterford, Mr James O'Reilly, UPMC Hospital, Waterford and Aut Even Hospital, Kilkenny, and Dr Shane McKeogh, Principle GP, Solas Medical Centre, Dublin; ICGP/HSE GP Integrated Care Lead for Adult Respiratory Disease. Shifts in ownership and funding structures within the medical sector were discussed, with a focus on examining how these developments might affect the future of public, private, and general practice.

A panel discussion followed, with insights from business entrepreneur and ICO Board member, Mr Sean Gallagher, Mr Aidan O'Reilly, Interim Secretary General of the Irish Hospital Consultant Association and Professor Robert Scott, Consultant Ophthalmologist at St John and St Elizabeth Hospital, London.

Mr Richard Comer, Bon Secours Hospital, Galway chaired and moderated the event.

Prof Conor Murphy, ICO Scientific and Professional Competence Committee and Ms Janice Brady, chaired the podium research paper presentations at the meeting.

### ***John Blake Medal 2024 – Best Scientific Research Paper***

"Indications and Outcomes of Iris-Claw Intraocular Lens Implantation: A Comprehensive Analysis of Lens Positioning"

**Dr Sara Ahmed**

### ***Annual Montgomery Lecture 2024***

**"Traumatized Eyes: Coping with Major Ocular Injuries"**

Prof Robert Scott

A highlight of the ICO Winter Meeting day was the 108th Annual Montgomery Lecture, delivered by Professor Robert Scott, Consultant Ophthalmologist at St John and St Elizabeth Hospital, London at the Albert Theatre in the RCSI on November 15th, 2024. Professor Scott is a former Royal Air Force eye consultant at both the Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre (BMEC) and the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM) at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, sub-specialising in eye trauma, advanced cataract and vitreoretinal surgery.

Professor Scott's lecture, titled "Traumatized eyes: Coping with Major Ocular Injuries," provided a unique and invaluable clinical learning perspective on the management of severe ocular trauma and offered crucial insights into the challenges of treating major eye injuries in high-pressure environments, as well as practical guidance for ophthalmologists dealing with eye trauma cases in healthcare settings.

Professor Scott participated in the panel discussion at the ICO Winter Meeting earlier that day, where he shared further expertise on ophthalmology healthcare delivery and discussed evolving management models for the specialty in light of his experience of the UK healthcare system.

The establishment of the Montgomery Lecture in 1916 was of great significance to the specialty of ophthalmology in Ireland. Dr Robert Montgomery served as an ophthalmic surgeon to St Mark's Hospital and the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital until his passing in 1912.

The Montgomery Lecture was the first medical lecture to be founded in Trinity College Dublin. The inaugural lecture was presented by Dr Euphan Maxwell in 1916 on the subject of "Diagnosis in Uveitis".

### 3. ICO PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE SCHEME

The ICO operates the Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) for doctors practicing as ophthalmologists who are registered with the Irish Medical Council on the General Register and the Specialist Register – Division of Ophthalmology and Division of Ophthalmic Surgery. The PCS is organised and run in line with the Arrangements Documents with the Medical Council of Ireland.

The ICO supports enrolled doctors in achieving, maintaining and developing their professional competence.

The College provides support in the recording of CPD credits by ensuring credits for all College organised events are directly uploaded to the PCS online portal accounts for events attended. Information on CPD accredited meetings was circulated to doctors via email,

the ICO website, the ICO Member's Portal and the ICO newsletter throughout the PCS yearly cycle which runs from May 1 to April 30.

Throughout each PCS yearly Cycle, the College assesses and recognises a range of external educational events for Continuous Professional Development to meet the needs of doctors seeking credits.

#### Professional Competence has two key components:

- (1) Continuing Professional Development (CPD); and,
- (2) Clinical / Practice Audit.

In the PCS year 2023-2024, doctors were required to accumulate 40 CPD credits, recorded across any of the below categories:

- External (maintenance of knowledge and skills)
- Internal (practice evaluation and development)
- Personal Learning
- Research and Teaching

#### *ICO Annual Educational Programme to support PCS engagement from Jan – Dec 2024:*

- ICO Annual Conference 2024
- ICO Conference extra sessions: Bayer Breakfast Session on Neovascular Age-related Macular Degeneration; Roche Breakfast Session on Retinal Disease and Alimera Sciences Afternoon Session on Uveitis.
- European Society of Ophthalmology Lecture 2024 (ICO Annual Conference)
- Eye Care in Focus 2024 - ICO Conference for the Extended Eye Care Team
- Charter Day Ophthalmology Parallel Session
- ICO Winter Meeting 2024
- Annual Montgomery Lecture 2024
- Annual Mooney Lecture 2024
- ICO National Practice Audit

#### *For support of doctors on the IMGTI programme and supervised division of the register:*

- ICO National Tutorial Series in Ophthalmology
- Phaco Bootcamp
- Microsurgical Skills Course

### ***End of PCS year 2023/24 (Jan - April 2024)***

The ICO planned for the final four months of the PCS 2023/24 year (Jan - April 2024) to ensure there were regular check-ins, giving enrolled doctors adequate time to participate in any learning activities before the end of the PCS year on 30th April. Comparison of the previous year's enrolled list with the current year enrolled list was regularly carried out to identify any doctors who would benefit from a reminder to enrol.

### ***Clinical Practice Audit or Quality Improvement Project***

As part of the PCS requirements for doctors, an audit of practice or quality improvement project must be completed. Presuming that the audit or improvement project takes 10 hours, this brings the annual requirements to 50 hours of CPD activity.

The purpose of the audit is to establish if best practice is being adhered to for quality assurance and improvement purposes.

To assist members in meeting the audit/quality improvement requirement, the ICO provides project proposals to our members each year and a platform to log the details and results of the audit. At the end of the PCS year 2023/24 (April 30th 2024), the ICO recorded the audit credit on the PCS online accounts of those who participated.

### **The following end of year reports for the 2023/24 PCS year were collated and submitted to the Medical Council:**

- Qualitative Report (general report recapping the year)
- Action Plan update (identifying objectives and goals for the upcoming year)
- Report on Actions in Response to Medical Council Oct 2023 Recommendations
- Report on Measures Implemented & Objectives for 2023/24 based on Medical Council's PCS Themes (a-h)
- Key Performance Indicators
- Financial Report
- Activities Recognised by the College for CPD
- Activities Provided by the College for CPD
- Uptake of Professional Development Plan

### ***Start of PCS year 2024/25 (May - Dec 2024)***

The ICO planned for the PCS year and prepared the educational programmes for all activities based on the identified needs of the patient, practice and Irish health service. The educational programmes were also

designed to be diverse, with both clinical and non-clinical content, incorporated the Domains of Good Professional Practice and provided opportunities for self and practice reflection.

Doctors in locally appointed Non Consultant Hospital Doctor (NCHD) non-training posts were invited to enrol for the Continuous Professional Development Support Scheme (CPD-SS) which is the HSE support scheme for those doctors participating in the Professional Competence Scheme. The ICO regularly updated these doctors with learning opportunities and provided support throughout 2024.

### ***CPD Requirements for Scheme 2024/25:***

In 2024, the Medical Council approved new Maintenance of Professional Competence Rules and Guidelines, representing an important step to bring Maintenance of Professional Competence (MPC) in line with international practice and incorporate right touch and compassionate regulation.

The requirements for the PCS year 1 May 2024 – 30 April 2025 remained as 40 hours in any CPD category and 1 audit/quality improvement project).

The Rules and Guidelines associated with the evolved Maintenance of Professional Competence Framework Model will commence in May 2025. The College informed our members of the upcoming planned changes for PCS, which include the renaming of CPD categories and a requirement for all doctors to complete an annual Mandatory Professional Development Plan. Once enrolled, registered medical practitioners will be required to engage in and record 50 hours of CPD activity annually.

### **The four broad categories are as follows:**

Planning CPD, Practice Review, Work-based Learning, and Accredited Continuing Education.

Learning activities relevant to retired doctors, including clinical leadership, management and committee participation, health and clinical service policy, teaching, examining and mentoring roles, medico-legal work and practice review, for example, will be recognised.

The aim of the new PCS requirements is to provide doctors with greater flexibility ensuring applicability across diverse medical roles and responsibilities.

Throughout 2024, the ICO collaborated with the Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies and the Medical Council to review and provide feedback on proposed changes, ensuring our PCS cohort is well-prepared and supported once these changes are formalised.

In parallel, the ICO has maintained weekly video calls with the IT development team at the Royal College of

Surgeons in Ireland to refine the new PCS Online Portal. This platform, set to launch in May 2025 alongside the updated PCS framework, will enhance user experience and streamline processes. A comprehensive communication plan is underway to guide ICO members through the transition and the launch of the new PCS Portal in 2025.

The Verification Audit for the 2023/24 PCS year was conducted starting in August 2024. A randomly selected sample of enrolled doctors underwent a thorough review of their PCS records, with ICO providing guidance throughout the process. All selected participants were found to be fully compliant with PCS requirements, granting them exemption from audit selection for the next three years.

## 4. NATIONAL CLINICAL PROGRAMME FOR OPHTHALMOLOGY

Ms Aoife Doyle, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and St James's Hospital, was appointed HSE National Clinical Lead for the Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology in December 2023. She took over the role from Professor William Power who was appointed in 2016 following their predecessors in the role, Professor Peter Barry and Mr Paul Moriarty (from 2012).

The ICO has been a long-standing advocate for the expansion of ophthalmology services for patients in Ireland and continues to work alongside the programme, the HSE and the Department of Health to support the implementation of the new Integrated Eye Care Teams (IECT) which will extend the delivery of specialist ophthalmic care in the community.

The overarching goal of the eye care strategy is better access to eyecare for all, addressing services for both children and adults in the most common eye conditions affecting the population in Ireland, paediatric eye care, age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataract, diabetic retinopathy and minor injury and acute eye disease.

Ophthalmology is recognised by the HSE as a priority area and has recently received support and funding. The first Integrated Eye Care Teams (IECT) were established in 2020 in the Dublin region, CHO9 linked with the Mater and CHO6 and 7, linked with the Royal Victoria Eye & Ear Hospital (RVEEH).

### *Activity in Regions with Integrated Eye Care Teams*

The IECT is led by the Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist, working in clinics in the primary care centre with optometrists, orthoptists and ophthalmic nurses. Patient care is often shared with the team at the regional

hospital eye unit, for surgery or specialist opinion. The Consultant also spends a portion of their time in the regional hospital.

The paediatric pathway has led to significant reductions in waiting times for children in the areas where an IECT has been set up in CHO6, CHO7 and CHO9 in Dublin and surrounding area, in CHO2 (Sligo / Roscommon / Galway West) and in CHO4 (Ballincollig Primary Eye Care Clinic) over the past two years.

CHO7 / RVEEH figures for 2023 show that 10,550 appointments were offered to patients. Of that figure, 5680 paediatric patients are being managed and the team also saw 2367 patients for pre and post-operative cataract review. The transfer of medical retina patients from the acute setting to the community is also underway in CHO7, which will allow patients to be seen by the appropriate eye care professional closer to home in a more convenient and timely manner, easing the pressures on the acute hospital.

In CHO6 / RVEEH, a similarly high volume of paediatric appointments visits was achieved. The waiting list for cataract has been reduced from 60 months to 17 months. A framework for the transfer of stable glaucoma patient care is currently underway.

In CHO2 / Galway West, the implementation of the paediatric care pathway has made a significant impact on the waiting list in Galway University Hospital (GUH), reducing from 12-18 months to currently no waiting list in 2024. Significant numbers of paediatric and adult patients were discharged to the primary eye care clinic in 2024, triaged and discharged from the cataract list.

Figures for CHO2 / Roscommon show paediatric transfers from Galway University Hospital and Sligo University Hospital have resulted in increased new and review patients being seen throughout 2023-2024. Cataract pre and post op appointments accounted for appointments with a 49.5% listing rate. A medical retina injection service is also underway and similarly, a service for medical retina patients in Letterkenny.

### *Priorities and Main Challenges to be addressed for Eye Care*

Investment in a digital clinical record and e-referrals are critical to the successful implementation of the national roll out of eye care pathways, particularly with the transfer of patients from the hospital to the community and for high volume procedures such as cataract surgery and medical retina injections.

This will also allow the patient to be seen closer to home and avoid the burden of long-distance care for patients who are elderly and their carers.

The Clinical Programme is rolling out the National Programme on the basis of funding being available and



recruitment being possible. The teams, led by Consultant Medical Ophthalmologists who are subspecialty trained in the areas of medical retina, glaucoma and paediatric ophthalmology, are providing much-needed services and care of patients in the community. They are a major component of addressing the current demands for specialist ophthalmology services with a building up of capacity in HSE community clinics.

There is a sharp focus on the areas that currently do not have an integrated eye care team in place across the hospital and community setting. The Clinical Programme wants to achieve equity of access to eye care services in all regions, using the same model of eye care team and pathways.

The Clinical Programme is also focused on expanding access to surgical care. The opening in recent years of dedicated cataract theatres in the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital in Dublin, Nenagh Hospital in Limerick and University Hospital Waterford, as well as the Mater Hospital in Dublin, has significantly improved waiting times for cataract surgery patients. The facilities in the community clinics enable the pre and post op assessment.

The Clinical Programme supports the workforce expansion and training of the eye care team healthcare professionals which is essential to the continued roll out of the model in the community.

Ms Aoife Doyle gave a keynote address at the Irish College of Ophthalmologists Eye Care in Focus Conference (October 1st, 2024) where she spoke to the audience of eye care professionals about the work of the Clinical Programme, the progress to date and current priorities and areas of focus for the programme.

Ms Doyle's talk was followed by a presentation from Ms Sarah Spain, Senior Orthoptist and newly appointed Health and Social Care Professions (HSCP) Orthoptist Lead for the Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology and from Ms Cathriona Ennis, Director of Nursing, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital.

They spoke about the development and support of the role of orthoptics, advanced and specialist nursing and a new ophthalmic technician grade as integral to the integrated eye care team.

## 5. ADVOCACY

The College, in its remit as a registered charity and through its core function as the education and training body for eye specialists, recognises the significant importance of supporting and advocating on behalf of both patients and doctors in striving for the best eye healthcare system possible in Ireland.

We endeavour to carry out this duty of care through our

ongoing collaboration with patient support groups on our shared goals and demonstrating leadership on healthcare practice and patient focused policy decisions.

### *Sustainability in Eye Care*

In 2024, under the stewardship and guidance of current ICO President Mr John Doris, the College placed a priority on addressing sustainability in eyecare and looked at the ways in which we could facilitate a platform for education on this important matter to support our members.



The focus embraces a broader commitment encompassing both environmental sustainability and sustainability in ophthalmology practice.

Our objective within the College is to provide both practical help and advice, and to generate a commitment within the ophthalmic community in Ireland to continuous improvement in this area through our individual and collective responsibility.

The ICO has committed to including a session on quality improvement and sustainability at the ICO Annual Conference every year, where members and trainees can share their knowledge and experience of the measures they are implementing.

We will encourage and facilitate members as they strive to improve their practice and to share their knowledge so all can learn and foster a community-driven approach to sustainability in ophthalmology in Ireland.

### *ICO Annual Conference 2024*

A dedicated symposium on 'Sustainability in Ophthalmology' held at the ICO Annual Conference (15th-17th May 2024) welcomed a panel of experts to share their knowledge and examine the various facets of sustainability, including environmental responsibility, ethical patient care, efficiency and the long-term resilience of ophthalmic practices.

Healthcare is a notable contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for an estimated 5% of total emissions globally. The ophthalmic field, like many other specialties in healthcare, has a significant environmental footprint.

#### **Presenters at the session:**

#### ***Sustainability in Ophthalmology- How Can I Act Locally and Share Globally?***

Among the expert panel of speakers at the Annual Conference was Miss Radhika Rampat, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Free London NHS Trust who outlined the sustainability in ophthalmology journey so far of the American European Congress Of

Ophthalmic surgery – Green Working Group, examining “how can I act locally and share globally”.

Miss Rampat examined what has been achieved to date in eye clinics and theatres locally and internationally in the efforts to reduce the carbon footprint in the specialty.

### ***Leadership and Climate Action in the Irish Health Service***

Ireland is among the major healthcare emitters per capita internationally. Dr Philip Crowley, National Director of Strategy and Research and HSE National Lead for Climate Change, joined the panel of presenters at the ICO Annual Conference to speak about the HSE Climate Action Strategy 2023-2050 being adopted to reduce emissions and protect population health in the Irish healthcare system.

The HSE strategy is one of the first national health service climate strategies globally, and Dr Crowley outlined the progress on implementation in its target to achieve net zero emissions for the HSE by 2050, the relevant actions for ophthalmology practice and the work to mobilise health service staff.

### ***Optimising Sustainability in Ophthalmic Surgical Care***

Dr Emilie Mahon, RCSI Ophthalmology Clinical Tutor at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin outlined the findings of her research on the ecological impact of phacoemulsification cataract surgery where she examined the single-use items consumption and the results concerning the carbon footprint of cataract surgery in the University Hospital Limerick and the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital. Dr Mahon discussed the methodology on how to measure the environmental impact of a process or procedure, and its carbon footprint, looking at potential alternatives and why to pick one method over another, the benefits and drawbacks of various methodologies, and a life cycle assessment which they are undertaking with the study in the Eye and Ear Hospital.

### ***Making Ophthalmic Practice Sustainable***

In his presentation, Mr Arthur Cummings, Consultant Ophthalmologist at the Wellington Eye Clinic in Dublin, looked at the practice side of sustainability in ophthalmology in light of the growing burden of ophthalmic needs building globally while the number of ophthalmologists is decreasing.

Factors contributing to the shortage include a growing aging population, the retirement of experienced eye doctors, leading to a loss of expertise, the number of trainees entering ophthalmology programmes being insufficient to meet future demands and the obvious geographic disparities, with shortages more pronounced in certain regions.

Mr Cummings highlighted the need for the specialty to become more efficient and effective while the shortage of ophthalmologists is addressed. His talk reviewed three areas that can help achieve greater efficacy and efficiency, namely system design, artificial intelligence and looking at patient pathways and the role of the allied health professional team in leading to improvements in making ophthalmic practice sustainable. He stressed that well designed systems can streamline processes leading to more efficient service delivery. Digital solutions like online scheduling, electronic medical records and telemedicine can help achieve increased efficiency and ophthalmologists can access relevant information quickly, improving decision-making. AI-driven systems can optimise appointment scheduling based on patient needs. By providing better tools and information, patients can make informed decisions, leading to a less anxious experience and potentially reducing unnecessary visits to doctors.

### ***ICO Members Portal - Sustainability Education Resource***

Coinciding with the Annual Conference in May 2024 and to promote greater awareness and understanding, the College launched a new Sustainability education resource to the ICO member's portal signposting helpful and practical guidance.

The purpose of the new resource is to house educational resources and provide practical guidance on how members can work towards and achieve a more sustainable clinical practice.

This includes advice on proactive examination of operational practices, encompassing medical and drug waste management, reduction of packaging and printed materials, and the optimisation of resources and ophthalmic team education. Recordings from the Sustainability talks at the ICO Annual Conference and Eye Care in Focus Conference in 2024 have also been added.

The new portal page is a live resource that we are looking to continually build on through our network of ICO members and international ophthalmic community relationships.

### ***ICO Eye Care in Focus Conference 2024 - 'How to make your Practice more Sustainable'***

The sustainability session at the ICO Eye Care in Focus Conference aimed to provide practical advice and steps eye care professionals can take in their clinics to help reduce their carbon footprint. It followed the focus on the topic at the ICO's Annual Conference in May, demonstrating the College's ongoing commitment to placing a spotlight and 'call to action' on the impact of the specialty's carbon footprint to the extended eye care team.

### **Sustainability in Cataract Surgery**

In her talk, Dr Alison Greene, a Surgical Trainee with the Irish College of Ophthalmologists, explained that she first developed an interest in sustainable healthcare while working in University Hospital Waterford during the establishment of their new high flow cataract unit in 2023.

Seventy one percent of the healthcare carbon footprint is from the manufacture, use or disposal of our supplies. Within ophthalmology, cataract surgery is the number one procedure and surgery in Ireland and worldwide. This type of surgery requires high energy consumption, generates a large volume of disposable materials, and produces complex waste, all of which contribute significantly to its carbon footprint.

Sustainability in healthcare means adopting a "lean" and efficient use of resources. Dr Greene provided examples of resource-limited settings where clinics have streamlined their operations to maximize efficiency. She highlighted the European Society for Cataract and Refractive Surgeons (ESCRS) guidelines on benchmarking sustainable surgical cataract packs, as well as the Sustainable Index for Disposables in Cataract Surgery (SIDICS)—a practical tool for assessing the sustainability of customized cataract packs used by hospitals and surgical centers.

Key recommendations from sustainability action studies include evaluating procurement options and, where possible, sourcing general surgical items (such as gloves and gowns) locally. Additionally, the studies encourage opting for reusable instruments instead of single-use alternatives, minimizing the use of disposable cups and trays, and using swabs and gauze more sparingly.

### **Recycling Initiative – Eye Theatre, University Hospital Waterford**

"Recycling – It's the Simple Things" was presented by Ms Louise Doyle, Theatre Nurse at University Hospital Waterford, who outlined her sustainability initiative now in place in the hospital eye theatres to make recycling more accessible.

Louise initiated and implemented practical measures to improve recycling and reduce the environmental impact of plastic waste. These included ensuring adequate bin placement with correctly labeled bags positioned together, to encourage proper waste segregation. Three separate bins, for risk waste, general waste, and recyclable waste are now used in the theatre setting.

Education and guidance was necessary to achieve effective recycling. To support this, Louise developed new waste recycling education posters tailored specifically for operating theatres in collaboration with the HSE Green Healthcare Programme ([www.greenhealthcare.ie](http://www.greenhealthcare.ie)).

### **Simple Ways to Make Your Practice More Sustainable**

Ms Helen Curran, Head of Sustainability at Specsavers Ireland & UK, delivered the final talk in the session on the "Simple Ways to Make Your Practice More Sustainable".

In her role, Helen focuses on all aspects of sustainability - including environmental impact, the communities in which Specsavers operates, and the well-being of its employees. She explored the broader definition of sustainability in eye care, extending beyond carbon emissions and energy consumption. Her talk emphasised a wider perspective, considering the effects of climate change on people, communities, and the healthcare sector as a whole.

### **Practitioner Health Matters Programme**

The Practitioner Health Matters Programme (PHMP), supporting and advocating for the wellbeing of doctors, those in training and in practice, is a key priority for the ICO. Delivering high quality and safe healthcare is a demanding job. The link between physician wellbeing and patient outcomes is well documented.

The College continued its financial contributions to the PHMP in 2024 and reminded our members and trainee doctors of the programme which provides a strictly confidential service to doctors and healthcare practitioners seeking confidential medical assistance.

The service aims to provide support and psychological care for doctors, dentists and pharmacists who may have a mental health issue or who may have developed a substance use issue.

### **Physician Wellness Support Services**

The ICO welcomes the expansion of support services available to doctors, including the introduction of the Medical Council's CareHub in 2024. This platform, along with other dedicated clinician support services, is regularly communicated to our members and young ophthalmologists to emphasise the importance of mental health and overall well-being among physicians.

As part of the College's focus on wellbeing, the ICO was delighted to welcome Professor Brendan Kelly, Professor of Psychiatry at Trinity College Dublin and Consultant Psychiatrist, as a keynote speaker at the ICO Annual Conference in May 2024. Professor Kelly discussed the history of pandemics in Ireland and the lessons learnt from our recent Covid-19 experience.

Prof Kelly is the author of *Resilience: Lessons from Sir William Wilde on Life After Covid: 2023*, which reflects on the writings of Sir William Wilde, the Irish Ophthalmologist with an extensive interest in infectious disease and their societal impact.

### **Patient Advocacy Group Engagement**

The College is committed to engaging closely with eye health patient support organisations, promoting eye health awareness and patient advocacy.

In May 2023, the ICO hosted a *Listen and Learn* engagement session, inviting patient organisations to give a short presentation to the College. The purpose of the session was for the College to use the knowledge gathered to help inform our training and continuing medical education programmes.

Throughout 2024 the College continued this engagement and received educational material from the various patient organisations who had attended the session. The information was added to the ICO members portal 'patient supports' resource and signposted to our members and trainees, and to the ICO public facing website [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie) 'Patient Support' section.

A number of dedicated articles focusing on patient advocacy services featured in the ICO members newsletter and were shared with our members via our monthly eBulletin during 2024, and via social media updates.

### **ECLO eLearning Video Modules**

As part of this body of work with patient advocacy service providers, the ICO is working with Vision Ireland's Eye Clinic Liaison Service (ECLO) to support the development of an educational module for clinicians aimed at raising awareness and greater understanding of the support service ECLO's provide to patients. On completion, the module will be added to the ICO member's portal educational resources.

The ECLO role is based within eye clinics in hospitals. The ECLO is an important support for patients. They can give information on, and referral to, rehabilitation and support services in the community following a diagnosis of vision impairment.

This service started in 2019. There are ECLOs providing support in a number of hospitals including the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear, CHI at Temple Street, Crumlin Children's Hospital, the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and in Cork and Waterford.

### **Vision Ireland 'Vision Van'**

In 2024, Vision Ireland launched a new mobile vision assessment and rehabilitation service.

The aim is to deliver vision rehabilitation to the doorstep of local communities around Ireland, providing information, awareness and support services for sight loss and common eye conditions.

Vision Ireland and ECLO representatives attended the ICO Annual Conference in Westport in 2024, where they

had the opportunity to demonstrate the functions and aims of the new Vision Van to delegates.

### **ICO Newsletter, eBulletin and Social Media**

The ICO newsletter provides updates to our membership and stakeholders on news and developments taking place in the specialty and is an important means to capture our key activities, including our advocacy outreach. It is circulated directly to our members by post and email via our monthly e bulletin and available electronically on our website for all stakeholders and the public to access. It is emailed separately to a list of key external stakeholders and policy decision makers to promote greater understanding of the role and function of the College in line with our charitable purpose - advancing eye health care in Ireland.

The ICO uses various social media platforms (X, BlueSky, LinkedIn and Instagram) to engage with key health care partners, patient advocacy groups and decision makers in the interest of eye health promotion, supporting members and increasing public awareness of relevant College updates and eye health related news.

### **ICO website - [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie)**

The ICO website, [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie), is a valuable resource for the public to access trusted and reliable eye health information.

In 2024, we continued to highlight the College's key activities on the website, keeping the public and our key stakeholders informed. This included the quarterly publication of our members newsletter and ophthalmology events listings. Ongoing engagement by the College with vision advocacy organisations resulted in additional patient information resources being shared with the College, and in turn signposted for visitors to our website under the 'Your Eye Health' section.

The website also hosts a directory of ICO members, allowing visitors to search for an ophthalmologist by name, location and/or area of subspecialty. New members of the College who are practicing ophthalmologists in Ireland were added to the directory throughout 2024.

ICO position papers, statements, press releases and reports were published throughout the year under the News and Health Policy sections.

### **ICO Members Portal**

The College continued to utilise the ICO members portal as our primary method of e-communication with members throughout the year. The portal houses online learning resources, and serves as a one-stop location for guidance and support.



In 2024, several resource pages were updated to the portal, including patient information from key patient advocacy groups. These resources are designed to assist doctors in delivering care to patients and enhance and improve the patient experience.

A dedicated ICO Trainers and Trainees portal is available to support and inform this membership base, and was continually updated throughout 2024 with relevant documentation and materials for those in training and to aid the Consultant trainers.

### ***Global Ophthalmology and International Representation***

A primary commitment of the ICO is to stimulate and support communication and collaboration among ophthalmologic societies and ophthalmologists globally, particularly on initiatives to preserve and restore vision.

The College focuses on nurturing key external and international relationships, influencing and supporting policy decisions that are based on best patient outcome and the highest standards of patient safety.

We collaborate with national and international blindness prevention committees, overseas training institutions, training hospitals, ministries of health and other local stakeholders in countries.

The ICO has influential relationships and partnerships with international peers and continues to develop strong bonds through our representation with the following organisations:

- The ICO is a member of the **International Council for Ophthalmology (ICO)** which represents and serves professional associations of ophthalmologists throughout the world
- **European Board of Ophthalmology (EBO)** – the Ophthalmology Subspecialty Section of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS)
- **Royal College of Ophthalmologists** – The ICO nurtures and supports important ties with our UK counterpart professional body for Ophthalmologists.
- **American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO)**
- **Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Ophthalmology (RANZCO)**
- **European Society of Ophthalmology (SOE)**
- **SOE Young Ophthalmologists (SOE YO)** – the SOE Young Ophthalmologists group aims to serve the collective needs of YOs in Europe who are in training or in their first 5 years of independent practice. A nominated ICO trainee represents their fellow doctors in Ireland.

### ***International Medical Graduate Training Initiative***

The International Medical Graduate Training Initiative (IMGTI) is a postgraduate medical training programme in ophthalmology for non EU International medical graduates.

The programme is coordinated by the HSE National Doctors Training and Planning division, the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies and the Postgraduate Training Bodies.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan (CPSP) and the Sudanese Medical Specialisation Board (SMSB) are the participants. This initiative facilitates doctors to access a structured period of training and experience to meet the needs of their home country's health service. The period of clinical training provided is ordinarily 24 months, after which doctors must return to their country of origin either Pakistan or Sudan.

Ophthalmic training by the ICO under the IMGTI is provided in clinical departments approved for postgraduate specialist training in Ophthalmology, tailored to meet the IMGTI appointee's educational and training objectives and takes into account the needs of the health service in the doctor's home country.

## Legal and Administrative Information

<b>Directors</b>	John Paul Doris Tim Fulcher Elizabeth McElnea Mark James James O'Reilly Gerald Fahy Olya Scannell Conor Murphy Shauna Quinn Sean Gallagher Micheal O'Rourke (Appointed 15 May 2024) Mary-Jo Ryan (Appointed 15 May 2024) Geraldine Comer (Appointed 15 May 2024)
<b>Secretary</b>	Brona Kavanagh
<b>Charity Number</b>	20028039
<b>Company Number</b>	151473
<b>Principal address</b>	121 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2, Co. Dublin, Ireland
<b>Registered office</b>	121 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2, Co. Dublin, I reland
<b>Auditor</b>	UHY Farrelly Dawe White Limited FDW House Blackthorn Business Park Coes Road Dundalk Co. Louth Ireland
<b>Bankers</b>	Bank of Ireland 39 St. Stephens Green East, Dublin 2, Ireland
<b>Solicitors</b>	Cormac O Ceallaigh & Co. Solicitors 388 North Circular Road, Phibsborough, Dublin 7

# APPENDIX 1



## ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

# DIRECTORS' REPORT

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The directors present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Companies Act 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019).

### Objectives and activities

The principal activity is the running of a professional body for ophthalmologists and ophthalmic surgeons. It is responsible for setting and maintaining standards in ophthalmic training for young ophthalmologists and for continuing medical education for those in practice. The company provides a range of skills courses for trainees and for continuing education.

### Achievements and performance

The College continued to oversee and deliver specialist training for ophthalmologists, both for those in training and for those in practice. The Programme of Speciality Training in Ophthalmology was formally accredited by the Medical Council in 2021 and the College has allocated significant resources to ensure that the training programmes meet the Medical Council requirements. A specific three-year programme to meet the requirements and to embed the Medical Ophthalmology programme has recently concluded. In addition, the College continued to support the delivery of the National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology. Additional resources were allocated to support the delivery of the programme and this in turn has been matched by an increase in the grant from the HSE. The College has received a grant from the HSE to purchase a surgical simulator to practice cataract surgery. Trainees will have access to the simulator for training sessions which will make a very important contribution to the development of their surgical skills.

### Principal risks and uncertainties

Having navigated our way through the Covid Pandemic of 2020 – 2021, The outbreak of the War in Ukraine in 2022 has brought great uncertainty to the Global Economy and the College has had to deal with the ever increasing costs and inflation. We have prudently managed all expenditure and on this basis the directors are satisfied the organisation can continue as a going concern. The College has a service level agreement with the HSE for the delivery of specialist training. The funding received through this does not cover the entire cost of the delivery of the specialty training programmes and is supplemented by the College from other funds. While this is feasible in the short to medium term, over the longer term reconsideration may be necessary. The College has continued to grow during 2022 but for continued growth, further administrative resources will be required.

### Financial review

The surplus for the year after providing for depreciation and accounting for the decrease in fair value of investments amounts to €240,490 (2023: €28,478). The charity received a grant of €234,807 (2023: €Nil) from the HSE to purchase a surgical simulator to practice cataract surgery. Trainees will have access to the simulator for training sessions which will make a very important contribution to the development of their surgical skills. Excluding this grant, the charity generated a surplus of €5,683.

At the year end, the company has assets of €2,211,353 (2023: €1,743,442) and liabilities of €349,836 (2023: €122,415).

### Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital.



## DIRECTORS' REPORT

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

John Paul Doris	
Tim Fulcher	
Sean Chen	(Resigned 15 May 2024)
Eamonn O'Connell	(Resigned 15 May 2024)
Aziz Ur Rehman	(Resigned 15 May 2024)
Elizabeth McElnea	
Mark James	
James O'Reilly	
Gerald Fahy	
Olya Scannell	
Conor Murphy	
Shauna Quinn	
Sean Gallagher	
Micheal O'Rourke	(Appointed 15 May 2024)
Mary-Jo Ryan	(Appointed 15 May 2024)
Geraldine Comer	(Appointed 15 May 2024)

The secretary who served during the financial year was:

Brona Kavanagh

## Accounting records

The charity's directors acknowledge their responsibilities under sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 to ensure that the charity keeps adequate accounting records. The following measures have been taken:

- employing qualified and/or experienced staff, and
- ensuring that sufficient charity resources are available for the task, and
- liaising with the charity's auditor.

The accounting records are held at the company's business premises, 121 St Stephens Green Dublin 2 Co. Dublin Ireland.

## Auditor

In accordance with the Companies Act 2014, section 383(2), UHY Farrelly Dawe White Limited continue in office as auditor of the company.

## Post reporting date events

There have been no significant events affecting the charity since the year end.

## Charitable Status

The company holds a charitable status (CHY No 10781 RCN 20028039) and as such is exempt from corporation tax in accordance in accordance with Section 207 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.

## Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the directors in office at the date of approval of this annual report confirms that:

- so far as the director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware, and
- the director has taken all the steps that he / she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself / herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of section 330 of the Companies Act 2014.

The directors' report was approved by the Board of Directors.

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**John Paul Doris**

*Director - President*

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**Gerald Fahy**

*Director - President Elect*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

## INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

		Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Total 2023
	Notes	€	€	€	€	€	€
<b>Income from:</b>							
Other trading activities	2	369,511	385,935	755,446	306,544	351,543	658,087
Other material income	3	-	234,807	234,807	-	-	-
<b>Total income</b>		<u>369,511</u>	<u>620,742</u>	<u>990,253</u>	<u>306,544</u>	<u>351,543</u>	<u>658,087</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable activities		<u>217,017</u>	<u>538,782</u>	<u>755,799</u>	<u>213,302</u>	<u>407,945</u>	<u>621,247</u>
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>217,017</u>	<u>538,782</u>	<u>755,799</u>	<u>213,302</u>	<u>407,945</u>	<u>621,247</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	9	<u>6,036</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,036</u>	<u>(8,362)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(8,362)</u>
<b>Net income and movement in funds</b>		<u>158,530</u>	<u>81,960</u>	<u>240,490</u>	<u>84,880</u>	<u>(56,402)</u>	<u>28,478</u>
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 January 2024		<u>1,485,816</u>	<u>135,211</u>	<u>1,621,027</u>	<u>1,462,048</u>	<u>130,501</u>	<u>1,592,549</u>
<b>Fund balances at 31 December 2024</b>		<u><b>1,644,346</b></u>	<u><b>217,171</b></u>	<u><b>1,861,517</b></u>	<u><b>1,546,928</b></u>	<u><b>74,099</b></u>	<u><b>1,621,027</b></u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2014.

# BALANCE SHEET

## AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		€	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	10	237,121	4,043
Investments	11	1,059,536	1,053,500
		<u>1,296,657</u>	<u>1,057,543</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	12	93,601	186,815
Cash at bank and in hand		821,095	499,084
		<u>914,696</u>	<u>685,899</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	(349,836)	(122,415)
		<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		564,860	563,484
		<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>1,861,517</b>	<b>1,621,027</b>
		<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		<b>1,861,517</b>	<b>1,621,027</b>
		<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>			
Restricted income funds		217,171	74,099
Unrestricted funds		1,644,346	1,546,928
		<u>1,861,517</u>	<u>1,621,027</u>
		<u></u>	<u></u>

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**John Paul Doris**  
 Director - President

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Gerald Fahy**  
 Director - President Elect

Company registration number 151473 (Republic of Ireland)

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024 €	2023 €
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	21	558,156	(24,391)
<b>Investing activities</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(236,145)	(2,049)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		(236,145)	(2,049)
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>		—	—
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>		322,011	(26,440)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		499,084	525,5243
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>		821,095	499,084

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 1 Accounting policies

### Charity information

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in Ireland. The registered office is 121 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in euros, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest €.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

### 1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Grants from governments and institutional donors, are recognised as income when the activities which they are intended to fund have been undertaken, the related expenditure incurred, and there is reasonable certainty of receipt.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

## 1 Accounting policies (Continued)

### 1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

### 1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment	12.5% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	12.5% straight line
Computers	33.33% straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

### 1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

### 1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

### 1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

### 1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

## 1 Accounting policies (Continued)

### ***Basic financial assets***

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

### ***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### ***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

### **1.11 Employee benefits**

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

### **1.12 Retirement benefits**

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.



**2 Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total 2024 €	Total 2023 €
Membership subscriptions	72,300	-	72,300	70,800
Ongoing Professional Education	27,391	-	27,391	30,570
Professional Competence Scheme	23,750	-	23,750	22,000
Bursary Grant	-	20,000	20,000	20,000
Educational Grant	20,000	-	20,000	20,000
Specialist Training - HSE Income	-	233,657	233,657	230,225
Clinical Programme - HSE Income	-	132,278	132,278	81,318
Fellowship International Programme	40,000	-	40,000	13,333
Other Income - (medical council)	2,900	-	2,900	5,800
Annual Conference	151,240	-	151,240	133,531
Eyecare in Focus	31,930	-	31,930	30,510
<b>Total</b>	<b>369,511</b>	<b>385,935</b>	<b>755,446</b>	<b>658,08</b>

**3 Other material income**

The College has received a grant from the HSE of €234,807 (2023: €Nil) during the year to purchase a surgical simulator to practice cataract surgery. Trainees will have access to the simulator for training sessions which will make a very important contribution to the development of their surgical skills. The income has been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities which is in line with SORP and the depreciation in relation to the asset will be released in to Statement of Financial Activities over the next eight years.

**4 Expenditure on charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total 2024 €	Total 2023 €
Staff costs	56,031	225,090	281,121	264,509
Specialist training	47,124	99,414	146,538	136,649
Accreditation Project	-	67,414	67,414	61,112
Clinical Programme	-	105,387	105,387	13,483
Bursary grants paid	-	20,000	20,000	20,000
Conference costs	73,697	-	73,697	65,456
Eyecare in Focus	12,891	-	12,891	15,587
College expenses	18,671	18,672	37,343	33,792
Audit fees	2,613	2,614	5,227	4,125
Legal & professional fees	2,733	-	2,733	2,833
Bank charges	190	191	381	257
Depreciation and impairment	3,067	-	3,067	3,4442
	<b>217,017</b>	<b>538,782</b>	<b>755,799</b>	<b>621,247</b>

5	Net movement in funds	2024 €	2023 €
	Net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting)		
	Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	3,067	3,444

6	Directors
	None of the directors (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

7	Accreditation Project	2024 €	2023 €
	Three year Project: Year Two Costs	-	61,112
	Three year Project: Year Three Costs	67,414	-
		67,414	61,112

The Programme of Speciality Training in Ophthalmology was formally accredited by the Medical Council in 2021. The implementation of the Medical Council conditions and recommendations requires additional resources.

The budget for specialist training has been increased to reflect the increased resources for the Dean from 0.4 to 0.8 WTE.

8	Employees
	The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Administration	6	6

Employment costs	2024 €	2023 €
Wages and salaries	243,214	229,658
Social security costs	26,870	25,358
Pension costs	11,037	9,493
	281,121	264,509

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than €70,000 is as follows:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
€70,001 to €80,000	-	1
€80,000 to €90,000	1	-

**Remuneration of key management personnel**

The remuneration of key management personnel during the financial year is as follows.

	2024	2023
	€	€
Aggregate compensation	206,076	205,748

**9 Gains and losses on investments**

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Unrestricted funds 2023 €
Gains/(losses) arising on:		
Revaluation of investments	6,036	(8,362))

**10 Tangible fixed assets**

	Plant and equipment €	Fixtures and fittings €	Computers €	Total €
<b>Cost</b>				
At 1 January 2024	135,360	17,907	28,532	181,799
Additions	234,807	-	1,338	236,145
Disposals	(135,360)	(2,757)	(22,430)	(160,547)
At 31 December 2024	234,807	15,150	7,440	257,397
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>				
At 1 January 2024	135,360	16,015	26,381	177,756
Depreciation charged in the year	-	1,892	1,175	3,067
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(135,360)	(2,757)	(22,430)	(160,547)
At 31 December 2024	-	15,150	5,126	20,276
<b>Carrying amount</b>				
At 31 December 2024	234,807	-	2,314	237,121
At 31 December 2023	-	1,892	2,151	4,043

**11 Fixed asset investments**Unlisted  
investments  
€**Cost or valuation**

At 1 January 2024	1,053,500
Valuation changes	6,036
At 31 December 2024	1,059,536

**Carrying amount**

At 31 December 2024	1,059,536
At 31 December 2023	1,053,500

**12 Debtors**

	2024	2023
	€	€
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade debtors	82,743	180,759
Prepayments and accrued income	10,858	6,056
	93,601	186,815

**13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	Notes	2024	2023
		€	€
Other taxation and social security		23,897	14,986
Deferred income	16	37,377	57,632
Trade creditors		281,404	39,888
Other creditors		1,930	1,600
Accruals and deferred income		5,228	8,309
		349,836	122,415

Trade creditors are broken down as follows:

	2024	2023
	€	€
• Normal trade creditors	46,597	39,888
• Simulator	234,807	-
Total	281,404	39,888

The simulator was delivered on 13th December 2024 and the trade creditor was paid on 12th March 2025.

**14 Related party transactions**

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023: None noted).

**15 Retirement benefit schemes**

	2024 €	2023 €
Defined contribution schemes		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	11,037	9,493

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

**16 Deferred income**

	2024 €	2023 €
Deferred income	37,377	57,632

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2024 €	2023 €
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	37,377	57,632
	37,377	57,632

The deferred income as at 31 December 2024 includes the following:

	2024 €	2023 €
• Bayer Bursary Grant:	-	20,000
• Membership fees:	10,710	10,965
• International Fellowship:	26,667	26,667
Total	37,377	57,632

**17 Statement of funds**

	Balance 1 January 2024 €	Incoming resources €	Resources expended €	Transfers €	Balance 31 December 2024 €
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	1,485,816	369,511	(246,975)	-	1,608,352
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Restricted funds	135,211	620,742	(502,788)	-	253,165
	1,621,027	990,253	(749,763)	-	1,861,517

**18 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities**

The company had no material contingent liabilities at the year end 31 December 2024.

**19 Events after the reporting date**

There were no significant events affecting the company since the year end 31 December 2024.

**20 Status**

The liability of the members is limited.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of its being wound up while they are members or within one year thereafter for the payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before they ceased to be members and the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required, not exceeding €1.00.

<b>21 Cash generated from operations</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	€	€
Surplus for the year	240,490	28,478
Adjustments for:		
Fair value gains and losses on investments	(6,036)	8,362
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	3,067	3,444
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	93,214	(90,416)
Increase in creditors	247,676	709
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(20,255)	25,032
<b>Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations</b>	<b>558,156</b>	<b>(24,391)</b>

**22 Approval of financial statements**

The directors approved the financial statements on \_\_\_\_\_

# THE IRISH COLLEGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

## MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

# INCOME & EXPENDITURE DERIVED FROM COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	2024 €	2023 €
<b>College Income</b>		
Members subscriptions	72,300	70,800
Ongoing Professional Education	27,391	30,570
Professional Competence Scheme	23,750	22,000
Annual Conference	151,240	133,531
Eyecare in Focus Team event	31,930	30,510
Bursary Grant	20,000	20,000
Educational Grant	20,000	20,000
Fellowship International Programme	40,000	13,333
Specialist Training - HSE Income	233,657	230,225
Clinical Programme - HSE Income	132,278	81,318
Medical Council	2,900	5,800
<b>College Income</b>	<b>755,446</b>	<b>658,087</b>
<b>College Expenditure</b>		
Staff Costs	281,121	264,509
Specialist Training	146,538	136,649
Accreditation Project	67,414	61,112
Clinical Programme	105,387	13,483
Bursary Grants paid out	20,000	20,000
Annual Conference costs	73,697	65,456
Eyecare in Focus costs	12,891	15,587
College admin expenses	37,343	33,792
Audit Fee	5,227	4,125
Legal & Professional	2,733	2,833
Bank charges	381	257
<b>College Expenditure</b>	<b>752,732</b>	<b>617,803</b>
<b>College income less expenses - surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>2,714</b>	<b>40,284</b>



## ***IRISH COLLEGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS***

### About the ICO

Established in 1992, the Irish College of Ophthalmologists (ICO) is the recognised training and professional body for medical and surgical eye doctors in Ireland.

The ICO is a registered Irish charity. We are committed to the advancement and improvement of eye health and patient safety and work to protect, enhance and promote the highest standards in the delivery of eye care.

The delivery of healthcare requires a lifelong commitment to learning and the ICO's goal is to provide and support education and learning for ophthalmologists in training, in practice and those who work alongside them as they deliver care to patients.



Irish College of  
Ophthalmologists  
*Eye Doctors of Ireland*  
*Protecting your Vision*

**Irish College of Ophthalmologists**

121 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2. • Tel: 01 402 2777  
e: [info@eyedoctors.ie](mailto:info@eyedoctors.ie) • w: [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie)

@   : @eyedoctorsirl

RCN: 20028039