



Irish College of
Ophthalmologists
Eye Doctors of Ireland, protecting your vision

Newsletter

ISSUE 2

MARCH 2012

Letter from the President

Welcome to the latest edition of the College newsletter. We are delighted to be marking the 21st anniversary



of the amalgamation of the Faculty of Ophthalmology with the Irish Ophthalmological Society. The gala dinner at this year's annual conference will be a special celebration of the anniversary and I hope to welcome many of our life members to the event in particular those individuals who played a key role in both organisations in the lead-up to the merger and indeed in the fledgling ICO. While the annual conference will have a celebratory air it will also strike a more serious note. The Annual General Meeting will be a particularly important platform for members to openly and frankly discuss the changed political and regulatory context our specialty is facing. I am calling on all members to make a special effort to be present for both the celebration and the important discussion on the future that will follow it.

With Best Wishes

PATRICIA LOGAN, *President,*
Irish College of Ophthalmologists

ICO at 21



Pictured at the 1952 Congress of the Irish Ophthalmological Society, do you recognise any of the faces in the crowd?

2012 marks the 21st anniversary of the amalgamation of the Irish Ophthalmological Society and the Faculty of Ophthalmology.

The decision to join together the IOS and the Faculty was made in 1990, with Rob Acheson elected as the new organisation's first secretary in 1991 and Stuart Johnson the first President, taking office in 1992.

The background to the move to merge the two organisations, was that the IOS had always been a purely clinical society. It was not equipped to deal with the politics of ophthalmology, such as the discussions with the Dept of Health and the training of junior ophthalmologists amongst other important non-clinical issues. As a result, Frank McAuley founded the Irish Faculty of Ophthalmologists to

deal with these areas as they might arise.

The Faculty accomplished an enormous amount of unsung work. Frank ran a "tight ship" caring for every aspect of the Faculty's work and investing its assets wisely.

Discussion over an amalgamation of the IOS and the Faculty had been going on for at least two years prior to 1990. Desire for the marriage was pretty unanimous on the side of the IOS, but Frank was not persuaded of the long-term wisdom of such a move and it was only in 1990 that he acceded to the general wish to amalgamate. Even then, he felt it prudent to hand over only 50% of the Faculty funds to the new body and it was agreed that he would hand over the remainder after 5 years if he was then satisfied that the Irish College of Ophthalmologists would survive as the permanent body representing both the clinical and the political sides of Irish ophthalmology.

The ICO flourished and after the 5 years had passed Frank handed over



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the remaining Faculty funds. Due to Frank's shrewd investments, the £5,000 of 1990 had increased to £19,000 by 1995!

The decision to amalgamate was taken in Autumn of 1990 and at the following Council meeting in the Spring of 1991 Rob Acheson agreed to undertake the secretaryship of the new ICO. It was then necessary to draw up the rules of the new College and to steer these through the various legal minefields and secure the acceptance of the Dept. of Health.

Under the guidance of Rob Acheson this was accomplished and we salute him as one of the Founding Fathers of the ICO.

At the Spring Council meeting in 1992 that Stuart Johnson was unanimously elected as the 1st President of the ICO. Stuart Johnson had always sought to bridge the gap between the Northern and Southern Irish ophthalmological worlds and was a most loyal and long-standing member of the IOS and its Council.

Stuart then took up his Office at the first official AGM of the ICO in the early summer of 1992.

John Nolan recalls that much time, energy & perseverance was required to amalgamate the IOS and the Faculty which had been discussed for years at council meetings of both organisations before any negotiations started. Most IOS Council meetings were held on Saturday mornings, allowing starts at a civilised hour, attendance at international rugby matches and for those of less elevated interests to have a post-mortem lunch at the new restaurant in the back alley behind the Bank of Ireland HQ on Baggot St. Peter Eustace, Roger Bowell and John are among the few who still remember that their early patronage ensured the success of Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud!

ICO Council meetings continue to be held on Saturday mornings, often with a nod to the rugby internationals, the lunch date has fallen by the way side although it might be due for a revival in celebration of the coming of age of the College!

Annual Conference 2012



The RDS, Dublin

The 2012 Annual Conference takes place on Thursday 24th & Friday 25th May in the RDS. Kicking off at 8.30am on Thursday, the opening morning will feature a cataract symposium during which Larry Benjamin will talk about advances in the prevention and management of complications in cataract surgery. Larry Benjamin is a consultant at Stoke Mandeville hospital, Aylesbury and is the Honorary Secretary of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists where he is chairing the group to re-write the national cataract guidelines. He established a microsurgical skills course at Stoke Mandeville which was subsequently adopted by the Royal College and is now mandatory for all trainee ophthalmologists. All ICO BST trainees now attend a phaco training course in Alcon laboratories in Hemel Hempsted under the direction of Larry.

This year's Keynote Address will be given by Prof Des O'Neill who is leading the new faculty of traffic medicine at the RCPI. Des will discuss the implications for patients of the new medical fitness to drive standards an area of particular importance for ophthalmology. Pat Logan and Garry Treacy represent the College on the RCPI Medical Fitness to Drive Working Group at the RCPI and the College has published its recommend-

ations on the visual standards for driving safety including the introduction of practical tests for exceptional cases and the need for a restricted licence to maintain a person's independence where appropriate.

A paediatric symposium on Friday afternoon will feature David Coats and Evelyn Paysee from Baylor College of Medicine & Children's Hospital in Houston. Texas Children's Hospital is one of the largest children's hospitals in the United States with over 715 beds. It is located in the Texas Medical Center, which is the largest medical center in the world.

This year's Mooney Lecture will be given by Einar Steffanson. Einar, Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Iceland is familiar to many of the College's members as he previously spoke at the 2009 meeting. Einar will present on retinal oximetry in health & disease.

This year's AGM will be of particular importance and additional details on the agenda topics will be circulated to members separately.

The EASDec meeting will follow on from the ICO meeting on Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th also in the RDS. EASDec delegates will be welcomed to town with a traditional Irish welcome on Friday evening in the RDS.

Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology

The HSE's Quality and Clinical Care Directorate was established to help improve patient care throughout the health system. The Directorate, led by Dr Barry White, is charged with defining how health services are delivered, measured and resourced.

The clinical strategy and programmes aim to improve and standardise patient care by bringing together clinical disciplines and enabling them to share innovative solutions to deliver greater benefits to patients. 33 national clinical programmes including ophthalmology under the guidance of clinical lead Paul Moriarty, have been established based on three main objectives; to improve the quality of care we deliver to all users of HSE services, to improve access to all services and to improve cost effectiveness.

As part of its quality and safety remit, the Quality and Clinical Care Directorate is also introducing clinical governance to ensure that patients can get the right treatment. It is establishing a national clinical audit programme and developing guidelines to support service-use involvement in the health services. These standards will be measured and audited to ensure that they are delivered across the system.

A working group has been

convened to look at the different work streams in eye care in Ireland and to consider and suggest appropriate care pathways. Chaired by Paul and following a template suggested by the HSE the group includes both ophthalmologists and the allied health care professionals involved in the delivery of eye care. Catherine McCrann, representing community ophthalmology, Garry Treacy, medical ophthalmologist, Paul Mullaney regional ophthalmic surgery, Abdul Bulbulia, General Practitioner, Gillian O Mullane, orthoptist, Marie Tighe ophthalmic nursing, Fiona Kavanagh, optometrist and Siobhan Kelly programme co-ordinator.

The College has commissioned Prof Charles Normand, Chair of Health Policy & Management TCD to provide the research, assisted by a research fellow Guilia Faedo. The research is being undertaken as a three stage process firstly involving an analysis of the existing service provision; what is currently being done by whom, where and at what cost. Stage 2 will involve a systematic review of all the published literature on service provision including skill mix, skill substitution and emerging technologies and stage 3 will involve modelling alternative patient pathways in Ireland.

The research requires a strong reference group so that the analysis



*HSE Director of Quality and Clinical Care
Dr Barry White*

can be reviewed by those with experience of the actual service delivery and what are the most efficient ways of organising the provision of care.

The five main work streams in ophthalmology have been defined as AMD, Cataract, Diabetic Retinopathy, Glaucoma and Paediatric Services and these 5 will form the basis of the pathways developed. Once the provisional pathways have been defined, Paul will meet with hospital and community services to look at the processes and their implementation.

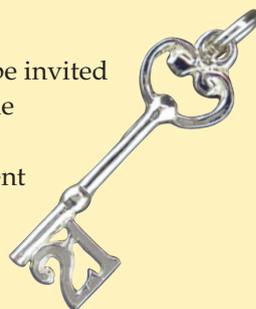
21 Celebration Gala Dinner

The annual gala dinner on Thursday night will be a very special celebration of 21 years of the ICO. The dress dinner is being held in the Four Seasons and it promises to be a very special night to reminisce and look back over the development and achievements of the College with both long standing and newer members. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Friends of the College and those who have contributed to its

development will be invited along to share in the celebrations. Eilis McGovern, President of the RCSI will attend to represent the College.

If you would like to contribute review of the College's story planned for the evening with interesting stories or pictures this would be most welcome, please contact the College office.



Fatima Answers the Call for Libya

Fatima Hamroush, College member and former ophthalmologist at our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda was appointed Minister for Health in Libya by the National Transitional Council last November.

Fatima trained as a surgeon in Bengazi before coming to Ireland in 1996 at a time when state sponsored human rights abuses were increasing in Libya. Her father was jailed for three years by Ghadaffi's forces during the 1969 coup and nearly 20 years later the family were caught up in the American bombing of a Libyan military base, living just a kilometre from it.

Fatima recently recalled that prior to her leaving Libya in 1996, the political corruption was having a very negative impact on medicine, with powerful people influencing the health care system for their own gain.

Before her recent return to Libya, Fatima last ventured home in 2003. Her activism became known in her home state and to return home would have been unsafe.

In 2010 the surge towards revolution across North Africa began and the Arab Spring rolled into Libya in February 2011 with protests beginning in the country's second city of Benghazi. This led to clashes with security forces who responded by firing on crowds. The protests escalated into a rebellion that spread across the country, with the forces



Pictured at a RAMI meeting Bernice Rowan, Catherine McCrann, Fatima Hamroush, Amanda Collum and Marie Houlihan.

opposing Gaddafi establishing an interim governing body, the National Transitional Council. On 16 September 2011, the National Transitional Council was recognised by the United Nations as the legal representative of Libya, replacing the Gaddafi government. Muammar Gaddafi remained at large until 20 October 2011, when he was captured and killed attempting to escape from Sirte. The National Transitional Council "declared the liberation of Libya" and the official end of the war on 23 October 2011.

Through-out the uprising Fatima was very visible in the Irish media through her role as director of Irish-Libyan Emergency Aid and head of the Libyan Health Office in Ireland. With medical staff and resources on

the ground stretched very thin, Libyan hospitals had to rely on volunteers and international assistance to provide much-needed aid to the wounded. Thousands of injured people were sent abroad for treatment including to Ireland. According to figures published by the Libyan health ministry last November, the number of wounded revolutionaries who received treatment abroad was more than 4,000.

Fatima received the call from the interim Government during November last, asking her to return home to head up the Ministry of Health, which she accepted without hesitation and has been quoted as saying that she felt she could not turn down the opportunity to be part of the transitional government: "I couldn't refuse this challenge, it would be like a soldier refusing to go to the battlefield."

Fatima has spoken of her awareness of the difficulties that lie ahead but is ready and determined to face the challenge. She is under no illusions about the challenges that lie ahead of her particularly the corruption, which was rampant under Ghadaffi.

She said the transitional government "is not going to build the country but is going to set the foundations for the country to be built on".

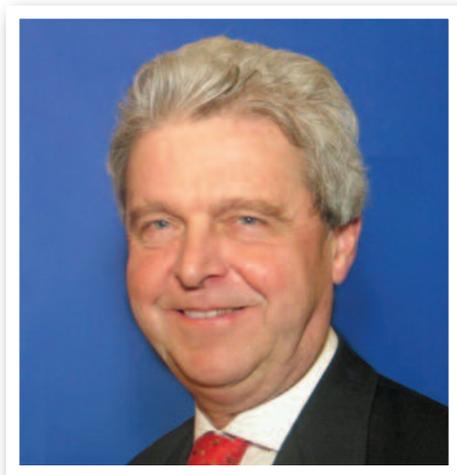
We wish Fatima and the fledgling Libyan democracy well.



Fatima with Minister for Health & Children James Reilly TD.

Peter Barry Becomes President of ESCRS

Peter Barry, eye surgeon at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, Ireland, is the new President of the European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons. Peter's term of office will run from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2013.



Founded in 1991, the ESCRS is Europe's leading organisation for cataract and refractive surgeons. The Society currently has 4,000 members worldwide and has an attendance of 6,000 ophthalmologists at its annual meeting.

"I am proud and honoured to be elected the first Irish President of the ESCRS having been associated with the Society since its successful meeting in Trinity College, Dublin in

1990. Today our annual congress is one of the largest on the global ophthalmology calendar. ESCRS has recently launched a series of online educational platforms that are available to all members. The Society also offers a host of benefits for trainee ophthalmologists for whom membership of the Society is free of charge. I would urge all Irish anterior segment surgeons to consider joining the ESCRS."

CME Accreditation for Annual Meeting

To better meet the CME requirements of the now mandatory professional competence scheme the points awarded for attendance at this year's meeting will be sub-divided into internal and external points. Doctors must accumulate a minimum of 20 internal and 20 external points each year and with that in mind the conference programme is being specially geared towards assisting members in meeting those requirements, particularly the internal requirement which can prove most challenging for those in independent practice. Further details will be available at registration.

Professional Competence

Since Part 11 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 came into law on May 1st 2011 all registered doctors are obliged to enrol on a professional competence scheme (PCS). Enrolment must be renewed annually and the first year of the scheme draws to a close on April 30th. The Medical Council are very encouraged by the numbers of doctors who have signed on so far.

As you complete your annual re-registration with the Medical Council in June you will be asked to declare that you have registered with a PCS. If you have already done so, thank you but if not, it's important that you enrol before the end of April. Enrolment is done through the online portal run by the RCSI at <https://pcs.rcsi.ie/>

Once you have enrolled you can use the portal to log the CME credits you have achieved in the year since May 1st 2011.

You must get a minimum of 50 points annually to include at least; 20 external, 20 internal, 5 personnel learning, 2 research or teaching and 1 audit.

The College is required to verify the recorded points of 5% of participants at the end of each period. This will involve selecting a random 5% sample and verifying the CME credits logged by those sampled individuals. This will be a relatively straight forward exercise in this specialty as there is a limited number of accredited meetings, several of which are directly organised by the College. With the verification process

in mind it is essential that if you attend a meeting which you wish to record for CME, that you add your name to the sign-in sheet.

On the April 30th cut-off date the online portal will automatically send a certificate to each participant indicating that the doctor has enrolled on a PCS and showing the number of CME points logged into the online system. While everyone will not be required to submit a copy of this certificate to the Medical Council, a 5% sample of the total number of doctors registered will be required to produce the copy of the certificate for the Council.

If you haven't yet enrolled there is still time before the April 30th cut-off date so please go ahead with the important first step of enrolment before then. If you have any difficulties Marian and Siobhan in the College office are happy to help.

Montgomery Lecture Returns

The College's Annual Montgomery Lecture was given by Lloyd Paul Aiello on Friday December 2nd. On the return to the RCSI after 5 years in Trinity, a packed Albert Theatre, which included RCSI President Eilis McGovern, listened as Lloyd Paul give a very interesting talk on the novel therapeutic approaches for diabetic retinopathy. Lloyd Paul is the head of the Beeham Eye Institute at the Joslin Diabetes Center, and is a Professor of Ophthalmology at Harvard Medical School.

He has spent 18 years at the Beetham Eye Institute and the Vascular Cell Biology Section of the Joslin Research Division, where

he has distinguished himself as a worldwide leader in both bench and clinical research of diabetic eye disease and clinical care for persons with diabetes.

Lloyd Paul is as an internationally recognized researcher in diabetic eye disease, and as a leader in understanding the biochemical basis of diabetic retinopathy.



Patricia Logan, President, Lloyd Paul Aiello, Eilis McGovern



Catherine Cleary, Brendan Young, Max Graham.



Sasha Hutchinson, Marie Sweeney.

to RCSI



Deepti Thacoor, Sarah Moran, Tahira Saad, Krisztina Emeriewen, Aoife Naughton.



John Smith, Martin Coyne.



Philip Cleary, Ray Niland, Patrick Hayes, Peter Tormey.



Gerard O'Connor, Paul Connell, Louise O'Toole.



Sasha Hutchinson, Marie Sweeney.



Dharm Pandeya Mary Jo Ryan, Maureen Hillery.

GLAUCOMA WEEK

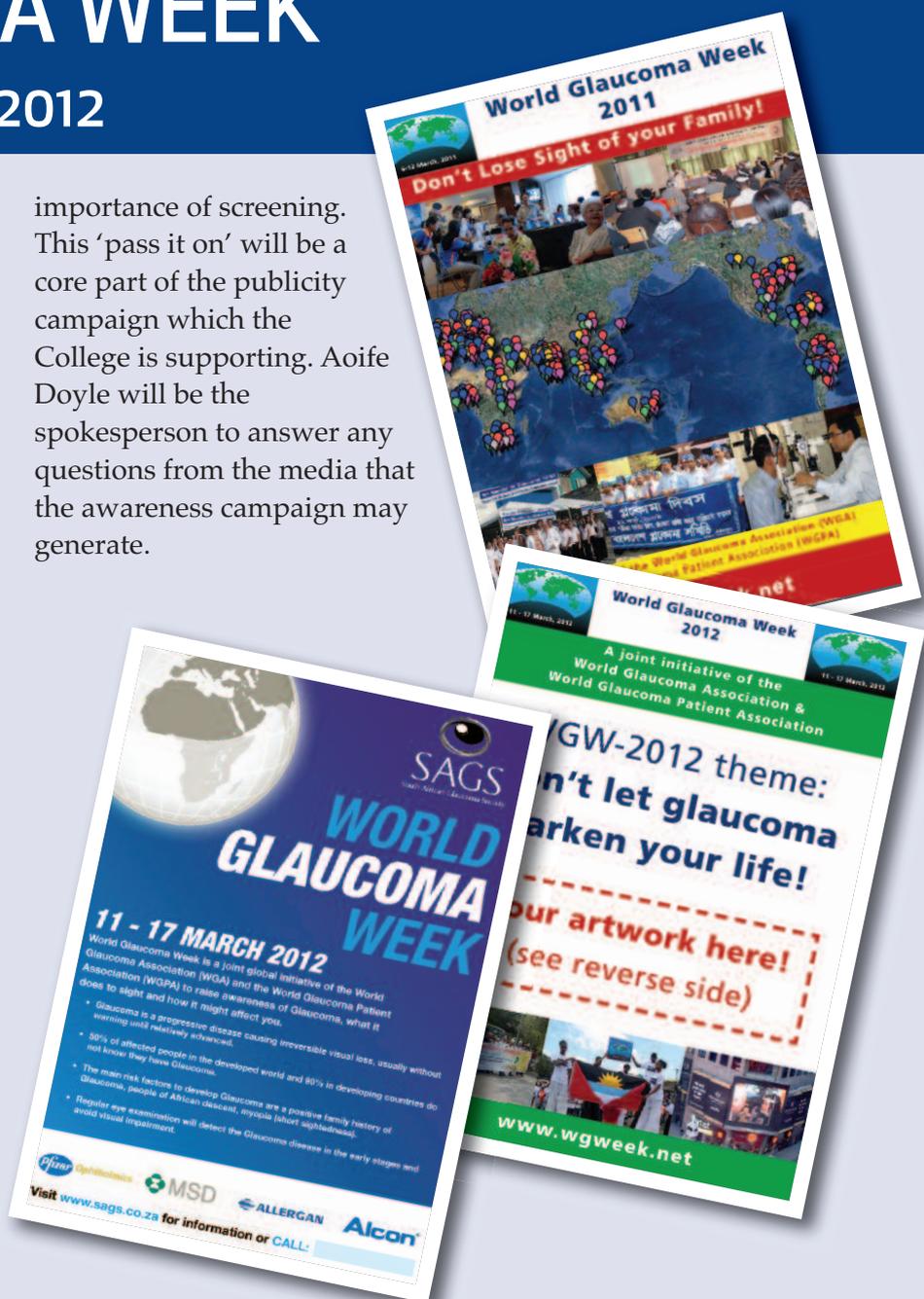
11th – 17th March 2012

World Glaucoma Week which runs from March 11-17 aims to highlight the importance of the detection and management of glaucoma. This year, the College will mark the week in partnership with NCBI.

The key messages for the awareness week are that glaucoma is the leading cause of preventable blindness but which may be successfully managed with medication. Regular eye exams are essential in order to detect glaucoma early. Any vision lost cannot be recovered but medication may prevent further damage. The awareness campaign will focus on the risk factors such as age and family history and also on the importance of compliance with medication.

This year's theme will focus on the 'pass it on' message asking people to tell one other person about glaucoma and the

importance of screening. This 'pass it on' will be a core part of the publicity campaign which the College is supporting. Aoife Doyle will be the spokesperson to answer any questions from the media that the awareness campaign may generate.



New England Ophthalmological Society

As a continuation of the relationship between the ICO and NEOS under the AAO's Twinning Initiative, Ian Dooley attended and presented at a NEOS meeting on February 24th. Ian was the recipient of the ICO's 2010 Sir William Wilde medal for his presentation on lens calculation and biometry.

His presentation at NEOS was titled 'Estimation of Effective Lens Position using a Method Independent of Preoperative Keratometry Readings'. The research confirmed that the K-independent ELP estimation method is comparable to traditional K-dependent methods and may be useful in post-

refractive surgery patients.

Several NEOS members are planning a return trip to Dublin for the Annual Conference in May. ICO members are particularly welcome to attend NEOS meetings and you would like to find out further information on the upcoming meeting schedule please visit www.neos-eyes.org