



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

# ICO NEWS

ISSUE 42

SPRING 2026



## President's Message

Dear Members,

I am delighted to introduce the spring edition of our members newsletter.

A key highlight in the months ahead is our Annual Conference, taking place at The Galmont Hotel in Galway City. The programme promises three days of education, stimulating discussion and connection with peers and mentors. We are excited to welcome a distinguished line-up of international guest speakers, including Professor Keith Barton from Moorfields, Prof. Uday Devgan (The Cataract Coach), Prof. Alvin Young and Mr Jimmy Uddin whose expertise span cataract, glaucoma, cornea and ophthalmoplastics. Professor Barton will present this year's Mooney Lecture.

Their contributions, alongside those of our local speakers, will ensure a stimulating and clinically relevant meeting for all attendees. I encourage members at every career stage to join us for what is always an enjoyable event in the College's annual calendar.

This issue also highlights important developments within Irish ophthalmology. From innovative projects supported through the HSE Spark Access Accelerator initiative, to updates on training, the professional competence scheme, and national audit activity. The newsletter also highlights the ongoing work to enhance patient care and service delivery. We are pleased to celebrate the achievements of our trainees and colleagues, including recent CCST awardees and grant recipients. Well done to all on these achievements.

Coverage of the Adare Retinal Meeting, the New Frontiers in Ophthalmology and Eithne Walls Meeting, the RCSI Charter Day and the RAMI Spring Meeting are also featured. Our congratulations to Mr Tim Fulcher, who presented the Peter Eustace Medal Lecture at the RAMI meeting.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Galway at our conference.

Best wishes,

**Gerry Fahy,**  
President,  
Irish College of Ophthalmologists

## ICO Annual Conference 2026

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists Annual Conference will take place at The Galmont Hotel in Galway.

This year's programme opens with a **Cataract Symposium** on Wednesday the 13th, featuring guest speaker Professor Uday Devgan from Los Angeles, widely recognised for his CataractCoach.com teaching platform. He will be joined by Professor Alvin Young, Chief of Service at Prince of Wales Hospital, and Honorary Clinical Professor at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Professor Young, an expert in corneal surgery and anterior segment care, will present on "Cataract Surgery in Challenging Corneal Conditions." Dr. Geraldine Comer (HSE West and North West) will provide an overview of the experience of the new cataract pathway currently operating in Galway.

The **Mooney Lecture** will be delivered that evening by Professor Keith Barton, Glaucoma Specialist at Moorfields Eye Hospital and Professor of Ophthalmology at University College London. He is known throughout the world for complex glaucoma surgery, and has been instrumental in landmark trials that have defined the evidence base for glaucoma drainage devices and refined the indications for lasers and trabeculectomy, including TVT, ABC, PTVT, TAGS and LIGHT. His lecture, "The Challenge for Surgeons Managing Glaucoma", will draw on decades of experience shaping modern glaucoma care.

A **Glaucoma Symposium** (Thursday 14th) on challenging cases will further benefit from Prof. Barton's expertise, alongside Prof. Uday Devgan on combined cataract and glaucoma surgery, and Dr. David Gildea (HSE Dublin and South East), who will discuss a hub-and-spoke model of glaucoma care.

The **Oculoplastics Symposium** (Friday 15th) will include contributions from Mr. Jimmy Uddin, Consultant Adnexal Surgeon, specialising in orbits and complex oculoplastics at Moorfields Eye Hospital. He is renowned for his work in thyroid eye disease, leading the TED service at Moorfields with extensive experience in orbital decompression and multidisciplinary care. He is joined by Ms. Clare Quigley (Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital/St James's Hospital) and Ms. Elizabeth McElnea (Galway University Hospital), covering lids, lacrimal and thyroid eye disease.

A dedicated session on "**Effective and Sustainable Teams**" welcomes Stuart Lancaster, Head Coach of Connacht Rugby and former England head coach, who will share insights on building resilient, high-performing teams. With experience at the highest



Annual Mooney Lecturer 2026  
Professor Keith Barton, Glaucoma Specialist at  
Moorfields Eye Hospital and Professor of  
Ophthalmology at University College London

levels of professional rugby, he brings a wealth of insight into cultivating culture, sustaining excellence, and leading through challenge and change.

We are delighted to also welcome Dr Monique Hope-Ross, ophthalmic surgeon, author and Director of Medicine at Healthbuddi Life Sciences, as a guest speaker to this session. Dr Hope-Ross will explore clinician wellbeing and longevity in her talk “Cellular Foundations of Resilience”, drawing on her work in behaviour change and sustainable health for medical professionals.

The popular **Top Ten Tips** session returns, featuring contributions from Ms Sarah Chamney (Children’s Health Ireland) on examples of paediatric ophthalmology MDT working, Mr

Edward Loane (Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital) on strabismus, Prof Alvin Young (Chinese University of Hong Kong) on pterygium surgery, and Dr Mairide McGuire on managing acute uveitis.

A session on **Pain Management** will feature Dr. Conor Hearty (Mater Hospital, Dublin), who specialises in complex and neuropathic pain and will discuss its relevance in ophthalmology, particularly in chronic ocular surface disease and post-surgical pain. He will be joined by Dr. Fionnuala Kennedy, ICO Medical Ophthalmology Trainee, who will discuss neuropathic pain case presentations.

**The European Society of Ophthalmology (SOE) Lecture 2026** will be delivered by Dr. Ann O’Connell,

Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist at HSE South East on “Medical Retina – a Three Pronged Approach.”

A dedicated workshop session on Thursday afternoon will welcome Ms. Sarah Chamney and Ms. Kathryn McCreery, Children’s Health Ireland, who will provide an update on the **New Children’s Hospital and Paediatric Ophthalmology Services**.

Ms. Clare Dowling and Ms. Hilary Devlin from Vision Ireland will be joined by Ms. Janice Brady to deliver a workshop on **Low Vision and Assistive Technologies**.

Paper and poster presentations will also feature, alongside the awarding of the ICO Sir William Wilde Medal for Best Poster and the Barbara Knox Medal for Best Paper.

## Prof. Uday Devgan – “The Cataract Coach”

We are delighted to welcome Prof. Uday Devgan, as a guest speaker at the Cataract Symposium at this year’s conference.

Prof. Devgan is a cataract and refractive surgeon based in Los Angeles, celebrated not just for his clinical excellence but also for his impact on surgical education. As the founder of CataractCoach.com, he has created a widely respected educational platform – an online resource providing daily surgical training videos with over 100,000 subscribers worldwide. A weekly podcast features hour-long interviews with fellow ophthalmologists regarding surgical techniques, career advice, and research.

Over two decades, Prof. Devgan has blended academic rigour with practical insight, previously serving as a Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology at the Jules Stein Eye Institute (UCLA) and as Chief of Ophthalmology at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center. Through CataractCoach, he reaches tens of thousands of learners worldwide, breaking down techniques such as phaco chop, complex pupil management strategies, refractive considerations and complication handling in his videos.

His approach emphasises not only the practical skills for the operating room, but also the importance of confidence in decision making, an invaluable lesson for those at the start of their surgical journey.

In late 2025, Prof. Devgan performed the world’s first robotic-assisted cataract surgery, a breakthrough in ophthalmic precision, successfully completing robotic cataract replacement in 10 patients.

We spoke to Prof. Devgan ahead of his visit to get some insights into what we can look forward to hearing at his talk in May.

### **What can delegates expect from your presentation at the Irish College of Ophthalmologists Annual Conference this May?**

All of my presentations are video based and tightly edited like watching a sports highlight reel, the maximum amount of learning in an efficient manner. No powerpoint slides. And all of my videos are available to watch again later at CataractCoach.com (free to access and watch).

### **Have you visited Ireland before and what interests you most about engaging with the Irish ophthalmology community?**

Yes, I’ve had the pleasure of visiting the Emerald Isle before though it was many years ago. I am looking forward to connecting with colleagues and sharing ideas and learning from each other.



*Professor Uday Devgan ‘The Cataract Coach’ who is among the international guest speakers we are delighted to be welcoming to the ICO Annual Conference in Galway this May.*

### **Who were your most influential mentors during your training, and what specific lessons did they instill that still guide your surgical practice today? What do you think makes a truly great surgical mentor?**

Dr. Bob Osher is my greatest influence – he is the godfather of surgical video and he pioneered the concept of learning surgical techniques from video footage. A great mentor wants you to do better than he/she has done in life and will help you achieve that.

### **Was there a defining moment during training when you knew cataract and ocular surgery would be your pathway?**

In medical school I saw a woman with bilateral white cataracts have a beautiful, brief surgery and return to normal vision – it was a true miracle of modern medicine. From that point on, I knew I had to pursue ophthalmology.

**How did your training environment shape your philosophy on surgical education?**

I trained at the UCLA Jules Stein Eye Institute many years ago (I graduated in 2000) and the biggest influence there was Dr. Bradley Straatsma, the founding chair of the department who set a very high bar of excellence in every regard. He had one golden rule: give every patient the same high level of care that you want for yourself. I still live by that today.

**What do you see as the biggest current gaps in cataract training internationally?**

There are differences in surgical education worldwide where learning used to depend on where you trained. Online video has changed that and now CataractCoach.com (and our sister channel RetinaRounds.com) changes that so it is now a level playing field. No matter where you are on the planet, you have access to the same great learning and surgical pearls (and secrets).

**How should training programmes evolve over the next decade?**

Incorporate new technologies and techniques. Robotic ophthalmic surgery is a game changer!

**What inspired you to begin sharing surgical teaching videos online?**

Ophthalmology is a perfect fit for online video learning. Our cases are relatively brief and we have cameras on our microscopes. I taught residents for 22 years and I am the most awarded surgical teaching professor in the history of UCLA ophthalmology. This great learning needs to be shared worldwide and not just with 8 residents per year (x4 years = 32 residents at a time).

**When you started "Cataract Coach," did you anticipate the global reach it would achieve?**

The future is hard to predict and we have experienced growth every quarter for the past 8 years. Today that means about 4 million views per month across YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, email subscribers, and the CataractCoach.com website.

**Has digital education changed the way we train cataract surgeons compared to when you were a resident?**

Yes! I had to hunt to find and borrow Dr. Osher's VHS video tapes of his Video Journal of Cataract, Refractive, & Glaucoma Surgery. And then I studied them carefully (in low definition video) and returned them. That was one hour-long video per quarter.

**Do you think traditional apprenticeship-style training is under threat or enhanced by digital platforms?**

It is enhanced – we can all learn together. This morning I posted a video about a new technique for inserting iris hooks (CataractCoach video #2863) and it received 45k instagram views in just 12 hours.

**What responsibility comes with teaching surgery to a global audience online?**

Making these videos is a tremendous amount of work. Ask yourself how long it would take you to get video footage, edit it, do a voiceover, make a

title slide, render the video, then upload it, then keyword index it, categorise it, search engine optimise it, push it to social media platforms. Do that for just 1 video. And then remember that as of today, I have done that for 2863 days in a row, never missing a single day. I am committed to a new CataractCoach video every day.

**You are known for openly discussing complications in your teaching. Why is transparency so important in surgical education?**

We all learn together. Only ophthalmologists who don't operate (or who aren't truthful) can claim to have a zero complication rate!

**What tips would you give for starting out learning cataract surgery?**

Learn from every single case you do. record every case, study the video, ask yourself what you could do better. Every case must be a step forward.

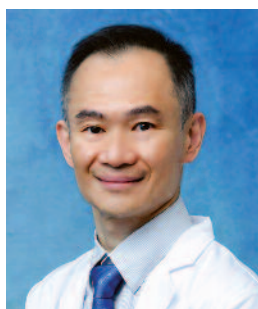
**How would you increase confidence amongst trainees, when first performing cataract surgery?**

Sometimes it is better, especially early in the learning curve, to be more cautious with confidence because you don't know what you don't know. Remember the Dunning-Kruger effect!

As Prof. Devgan takes the stage in Galway, we look forward to the practical wisdom, incisive guidance and inspiring insights he will share with us all.

**[www.cataractcoach.com](http://www.cataractcoach.com)**

A new 'Cataract Coach' podcast is published every Sunday and is uploaded to all major podcast services (Apple, Google, Spotify). The podcast series is also available to view on [www.CataractCoach.com](http://www.CataractCoach.com) as well as on their YouTube channel.



**Prof Alvin Young**  
Prince of Wales Hospital, and  
Honorary Clinical Professor at  
The Chinese University of  
Hong Kong



**Mr Jimmy Uddin**  
Moorfields Eye Hospital,  
London



**Dr Conor Hearty**  
Pain Management Specialist,  
Mater Misericordiae  
University Hospital, Dublin



**Mr Stuart Lancaster**  
Head Coach of Connacht  
Rugby



**Dr Monique Ross-Hope**  
Director of Medicine at  
Healthbuddi Life Sciences

# RCSI Charter Meeting 2026 – Ophthalmology Session

A dedicated Ophthalmology session took place at the RCSI Charter Day Meeting on Friday 13th February in the Parallel Group II session.



Presenters Ms Clare Quigley, Ms Clare McCloskey, Ms Christine Goodchild, and Dr Bobby Tang.

The session was chaired by Ms. Christine Goodchild, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin and ICO Co Programme Director for Ophthalmic Surgery

Ms. Goodchild was joined on the panel by Ms. Clare McCloskey (Sligo University Hospital and Co Programme Director for Ophthalmic Surgery), Dr. Bobby Tang (Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda and Mater Hospital) and Ms. Clare Quigley (Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital).

In her talk on '**Paediatric Orbital Lesions**' Ms. Clare McCloskey discussed the spectrum of orbital lesions in paediatrics, beginning with a challenging clinical case that highlighted the diagnostic difficulties often encountered in children presenting with proptosis and orbital swelling. Using this case as a framework, she discussed the importance of careful history, examination, and imaging in narrowing the differential diagnosis. The session covered both benign and malignant conditions, including

capillary haemangioma and lymphangioma, as well as more aggressive pathologies such as rhabdomyosarcoma, neuroblastoma, orbital

leukaemia, and orbital lymphoma. For each entity, key clinical features, radiological findings, and current management strategies were reviewed, emphasising the need for a multidisciplinary approach to optimise outcomes. The talk concluded by reinforcing the value of systematic assessment in distinguishing between these lesions and guiding timely, appropriate treatment.

Dr. Bobby Tang spoke to attendees about **Developing a Digital Retinopathy of Prematurity Screening Pathway** at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda. Every year in Ireland, around 600 pre-term infants are at risk of irreversible sight loss due to Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP). The talk highlighted the pathophysiology, evidence-base and treatment of ROP, as well as the next steps in developing a digitalised screening service.

In her talk on '**Orbital Inflammation – Investigations to Consider**' Ms. Clare Quigley spoke about investigations that can be useful in orbital disease. She presented a challenging case of an expanded Miragel scleral buckle that caused severe pain, which improved with removal. She also spoke about the eye features of a recent disorder, VEXAS syndrome, that was first described in 2020.



Congratulations to Dr Liam Bourke, Higher Surgical Ophthalmology Trainee who was among the recipients of the RCSI Colles Surgical Travel Grant awarded during this year's RCSI Charter Event. The grant will go towards a one year Fellowship with the Glaucoma Investigation and Research Unit (GIRU) at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital (RVEEH), Melbourne. Dr Bourke is pictured with (l-r) RCSI President, Professor Deborah McNamara, Dr Mel Corbett and Dr Patrick Philip Higgins.

# ICO Training Programme Applicant Demographic Review

The following demographics review provides an overview of applicants who have been accepted to train under the Irish College of Ophthalmologists' National Training Programmes – Basic Surgical Training (BST) and Basic Medical Training (BMT).

The data shown was collected at the time of the application submission. The information is organised by year, allowing for a clear comparison of trends and changes over time.

## ICO Careers Talks

The College continues its promotional campaign for specialist training in both Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology through ongoing engagement with the Schools of Medicine, Intern Networks and the training units.

A key focus is to highlight the 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.

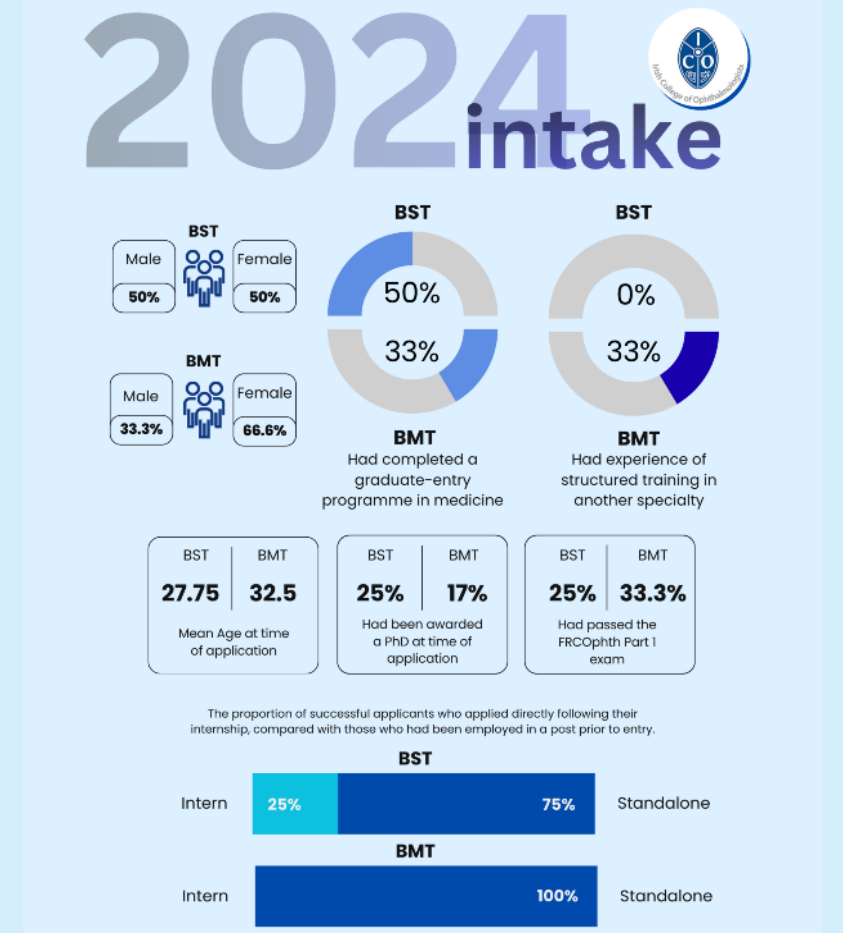
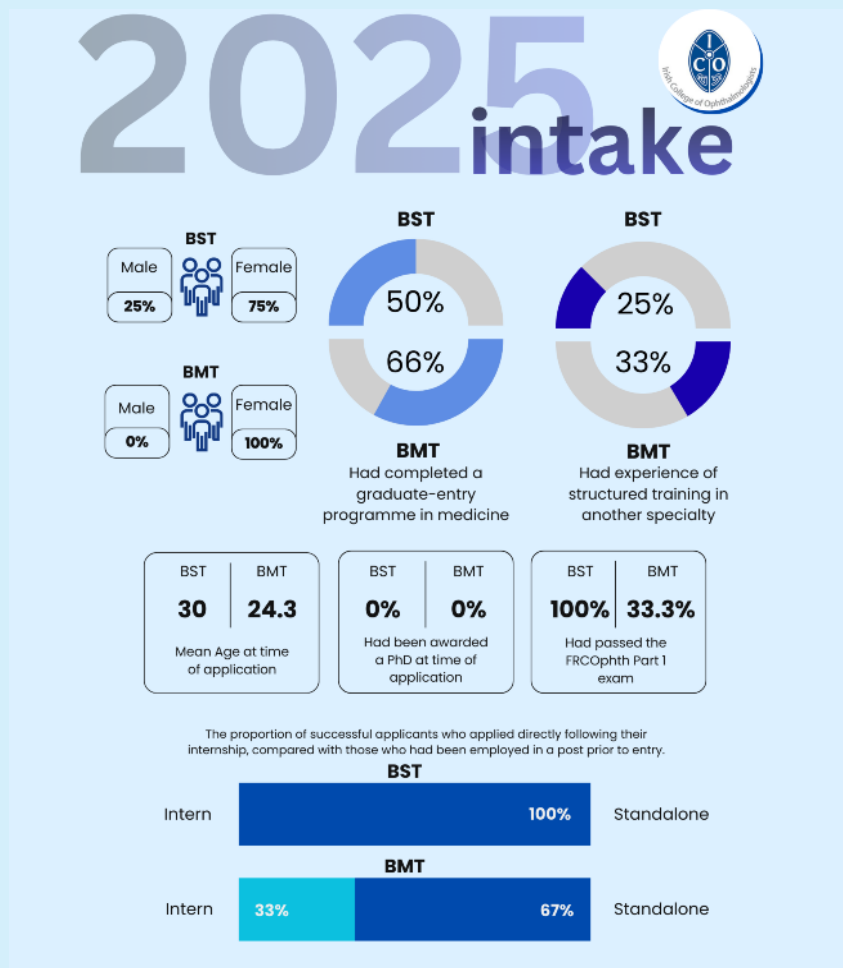
Dr. Emer Henry, ICO Programme Director for the Medical Ophthalmology Programme gave an excellent talk to University of Limerick students on January 20th alongside Dr. Ann O'Connell, Mr John Stokes and Dr. Sarah Powell, surgical trainee.

A talk recorded with Ms. Christine Goodchild, ICO Co-Programme Director for Surgical Ophthalmology, highlighting the two training programme was shown at the Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University Ophthalmology Conference on Saturday, 28th March.

The upcoming 2-day Irish Student Ophthalmology Conference (ISOC), organised in collaboration with the UCD Ophthalmology Society, takes place on April 10th (online) and 11th (on campus) for medical students, interns, and early-career trainees from across the country.

Our sincere thanks to Dr. Alexandra McCreery, surgical trainee and a former UCD ophthalmology tutor, who will speak about the ICO training pathways and her experience on the programme. Also featured on the programme are planned talks from Mr. Kirk Stephensen (Retinal Imaging), Prof. Pearse Keane (How AI is Transforming Ophthalmic Care) and Dr. Brian Woods (Extended Reality in Surgical Training).

We are delighted to be part of these key events and thank our members for their support and involvement.



# HSE Spark 'Access Accelerator' 2026

## Four Ophthalmology Projects Awarded Funding under New Innovation Initiative

We are delighted to share the news that four ophthalmology projects were recently awarded funding under the new HSE 'Access Accelerator' innovation initiative, delivered in collaboration with HSE Spark Innovation Programme and the Department of Health.

On Monday, 23rd February, the HSE Spark Programme hosted a Clinical Innovation Meeting at the Guinness Enterprise Centre. The event connected clinicians, innovators, and project teams for a day dedicated to collaborative learning, practical insights, and valuable networking, all aimed at accelerating innovation in healthcare.

The session offered an excellent opportunity to hear directly from project teams that have obtained funding through Access Accelerator, providing deeper insight into the advancements and possibilities of innovation within their respective fields.

Presentations on the selected ophthalmology projects were delivered by Dr. David Gildea, Dr. Bobby Tang, Ms. Maeve Lagan and Ms. Aoife Doyle.

### Establishing a Digital Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) Screening Pathway



Dr Bobby Tang, Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda

"The project aims to establish a nationwide digital screening programme for Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) across Ireland. Currently, many neonatal units do not have access to ophthalmologists trained to provide ROP screening, meaning services are unevenly distributed across the country. In 2025 alone, up to 100 premature infants had to be transported in incubators from their local neonatal units to central hospitals for screening examinations.

By incorporating advanced retinal imaging technology and an integrated digital workflow, the programme will allow high-quality retinal images to be captured locally and securely reviewed by specialist clinicians. This approach will support neonatal teams, reduce the need for fragile infants to travel long distances, and ensure timely detection and referral for treatment when needed.

Ultimately, the programme aims to provide equitable, high-quality ROP screening for premature infants across Ireland while reducing unnecessary transfers and improving clinical outcomes for some of the country's most vulnerable newborns."

### Medical Retina Virtual Assessment Clinic



Dr David Gildea, Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist, Dun Laoghaire Primary Care Centre, HSE Dublin South

"We will be introducing new Virtual Medical Retina clinics at our service in Dun Laoghaire Primary Care Centre. Stable and low-risk Medical Retina patients will attend high-volume Technician- or Optometrist-Led Diagnostic Imaging clinics, with subsequent asynchronous virtual review of the results by a Consultant Ophthalmologist. The Access Accelerator initiative will support the project by providing funding of €97,000 to purchase an Optos Widefield Retinal Imaging Camera, which will enable us to implement this new service. In the initial 12-month pilot phase of this project we expect to double our Medical Retina capacity."

### Community Based Optometrist Postoperative Cataract Review Clinic

*Ms. Maeve Lagan, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital. Nominated HSE Spark Programme "Innovator of the Month – April 2026"*

"A multidisciplinary cataract service was established in the community in partnership with the HSE, Mater Hospital and NERIEC. The service includes redesigned referral pathways, comprehensive pre-operative assessment, and optometrist-led post operative review with consultant oversight. High-spec ophthalmic imaging and biometry support accurate assessment. Innovations such as bilateral and dropless cataract surgery were introduced. The service has been operational since November 2023 and continues to expand. In 2025, 3727 patients were managed across pre and post-operative clinics. Integration with the Mater electronic system supports coordinated care."

A national online cataract referral form and community-based post-operative optometry review have been implemented. Ongoing audit, training and collaboration with hospital partners continue to refine the pathway. The project is now delivering high patient volumes and supporting waiting list initiatives."

### Glaucoma: A community based approach

*Ms. Aoife Doyle, National Clinical Lead for Ophthalmology; Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, RVEEH, HSE Dublin Midlands and South East*

“My project is a cross regional service for rapid access imaging clinics for glaucoma with virtual consultant review. It utilises the existing team structure across the integrated eye care team of Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and Dun Laoghaire primary eyecare centre (HSE Dublin South East) and the primary care teams in Dublin and Midlands – Kilnamanagh Tymon and Portlaoise.

It is modelled on the successful imaging clinics for stable care review patients established in RVEEH in 2018 and extended to Kilnamanagh Tymon PCC under Dr. Margaret Morgan in 2021 and in 2022 to Dun Laoghaire under Dr. Emer Doolan and Dr. David Gildea.

Images taken at the patient visit are reviewed virtually and outcome letters generated using the Medisight glaucoma programme to inform patients and GP’s of the status (stable / change treatment / discharge) and issue prescriptions as required.”

The new patient clinic has been piloted at RVEEH and the glaucoma consultant review allows for efficient use of resources with all staff working to the top of their licence.

Clinics can be run by staff nurses and eye technicians to measure visual acuity, IOP (iCare), visual field and Kowa 3D disc image. Only 10% of patients need subsequent consultant clinic visits, 12-14% are referred to Advanced Nurse Practitioner clinics, low risk patients are allocated to imaging clinics at annual intervals for as long as appropriate and the discharge rate is 25-30% depending on the source of referral. Low risk referrals from optometrists (based on disc OCT/ IOP) and from the HSE Diabetic RetinaScreen programme are the main patients allocated and can be seen and managed / discharged as according to standardised criteria by a senior decision maker.

The imaging clinic utilises staff resources efficiently and minimises unnecessary return visits whilst rapidly identifying any high risk patients in need of urgent treatment.

The funding request covers a 3D disc imaging Kowa camera for Portlaoise primary care team and will help support initial recruitment and funding of an eye technician in the first year, to support delivery of the service. Dr. Christine Bourke will lead the service in Portlaoise and Dr. Margaret Morgan



*Pictured at the HSE Clinical Innovation Meeting on Monday, February 23rd were (l-r) Janice Brady, Senior Manager, Primary Care, HSE Dublin South and Wicklow, Ms Sarah Chamney, Children's Health Ireland, Dr Bobby Tang, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda, Ms Aoife Doyle, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dr Christine Bourke and Karen Brennan, Ophthalmic Nurse, HSE Dublin South.*

in Kinmanagh and Dr. David Gildea in Dun Laoghaire, with virtual reviews taking place at RVEEH by the consultant glaucoma team.

The team is grateful to the HSE Spark Innovation Programme and to Sheila McGuinness, HSE Director of Access for Acute Operations for supporting the roll out of this model of glaucoma new patient imaging clinic across two regions under the Access Accelerator initiative.”

Ms. Aoife Doyle added,

“Any regional team wishing to run similar initiatives in the future should be encouraged to consider applying to future calls.

HSE ophthalmology waiting lists are a priority for HSE and funding can also be sought at any time by submission of a business case the regional scheduled care leads for similar initiatives that improve access for patients waiting a long time for eye OPD appointments.”

### **Spark Impact Funding 2025 – Progress of Ophthalmology Initiative at University Hospital Galway**

In 2025, University Hospital Galway successfully secured SPARK Impact funding to establish a nurse-delivered intravitreal injection service. The project

was led by Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Ms. Elizabeth McElnea.

“Intravitreal therapy is a core component of modern ophthalmic care, providing sight-preserving treatment for patients with conditions such as age-related macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusions and diabetic eye disease. As demand for these time-sensitive treatments continues to grow, expanding sustainable procedural capacity is essential.

SPARK funding has enabled the structured development of a specialist injector role within a defined clinical governance framework, under consultant oversight. The service strengthens treatment capacity, supports waiting list reduction, and enhances pathway efficiency while maintaining high standards of safety and quality.

This project demonstrates the value of targeted workforce investment in supporting timely patient access and building resilience within ophthalmology services at Galway University Hospital.”

*For further information on the Spark Innovation Programme and upcoming initiatives, visit the HSE website*

<https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/spark-innovation-programme/>

# New Frontiers in Ophthalmology and Eithne Walls Meeting 2025

December 4th, Education and  
Conference Centre, Royal  
Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital



*Dr Anna Ridgeway, Ocular Genetics PhD Student, Trinity College Dublin, Eithne Walls Medal Recipient 2025*



*Prof Billy Power, Mr Colm McAlinden (keynote speaker, Princess of Wales Hospital), Mr Max Tracey and Mr Brendan Cummings*



*Ms Emma Duignan and Mr Mark Cahill*



*Mr Max Tracey, Mr Rory Murphy and Mr Patrick Murtagh, judging panel for the Eithne Walls Medal and prizes*



*Mr Max Tracey, Mr Barry Quill, Ms Rizwana Khan and Mr Barry Power*



*Eithne Walls Medal recipients: Dr Anna Ridgeway, Ocular Genetics PhD Student, Trinity College Dublin and Dr Nathaniel McHugh, ENT Resident, Oxford, pictured with Dr Simon Neary, ICO Higher Surgical Trainee.*

# RAMI Spring Meeting

The sun shone brightly at the RAMI Ophthalmology Spring Section meeting, held at St Helen's Hotel on the Stillorgan Road in Dublin on March 6th, 2026. Congratulations to all who were selected to present on the day.

Dr. Amy O'Regan, surgical ophthalmology trainee and Dr. Doireann Hughes, medical ophthalmology trainee were presented with their RAMI medals for the April and November 2025 section meetings.

ICO past president and Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Mater Hospital, Mr Tim Fulcher, presented the Peter Eustace Medal Lecture entitled "Thyroid Eye Disease – Where are we now?".



Mr Tim Fulcher, who delivered the Peter Eustace Medal Lecture at the RAMI meeting on Friday, March 6th, is pictured being presented with his medal by Miss Marie Hickey, RAMI Ophthalmology Section President, along with Dr Denise Curtin and Ms Ann Marie Mongan.



Dr. Doireann Hughes, recipient of the RAMI 2025 Bronze Medal (spring meeting) is presented with her award by Ms. Catherine Cleary, RAMI Ophthalmology Section Secretary



Dr. Amy O'Regan, recipient of the RAMI 2025 Bronze Medal (winter meeting) is presented with her award by Ms. Catherine Cleary

# East Coast Medical Ophthalmology Meeting

The 10th anniversary East Coast Medical Ophthalmologists meeting was held last Tuesday.

Mr Patrick Murtagh spoke on "From Conjunctiva to Choroid: The Tumour Triage Toolkit".

Photo L to R Mr James Blaney, Mr Patrick Murtagh Speaker, Dr. Alison Blake Chair



# 16th National Adare Retinal Meeting

The Dunraven Arms Hotel in Adare once again provided the perfect backdrop for this year's Adare Retinal Meeting, held on the 25th September last. The meeting brought together ophthalmologists, trainees, allied health professionals and researchers for a focused day of retinal education and exchange.

Attendees enjoyed a well-received series of talks covering a broad range of contemporary retinal topics.

The guest lecture was delivered by Ms. Mireia Roca Cabue, Vitreo-retina and Cataract Surgeon, on her chosen topic "Retinoblastomas – Presentations, Diagnosis – New Treatments and how they have changed Protocols."

Presentations throughout the day were delivered by Professor Dara Kilmartin, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Mr Ian Dooley, Mater Hospital, Mr John Doris, University Hospital Waterford, Mr Frank Kinsella, The Galway Clinic, Mr Noel Horgan, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dr. Patrick Canning, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, and Dr. Edward Ahern, Dr. Xinxan Budwig, and Miss Marie Hickey Dwyer, University Hospital Limerick.

The speakers delivered updates on clinical practice, shared new research insights, and discussed emerging



*Dr Xinxan Budweg, Ms Mireia Roca Cabau, Prof Dara Kilmartin, Miss Marie Hickey Dwyer, Mr Ian Dooley, Dr Patrick Canning, Dr Edward Ahern, Mr John Doris and Mr Noel Horgan*

diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. The high standard of presentations ensured that delegates were kept informed of developments shaping both medical and surgical retina.

Throughout the day, the warm and welcoming setting of the Dunraven Arms Hotel encouraged relaxed conversation between colleagues. These informal exchanges added greatly to the sense of community and

provided opportunities to explore topics further outside the lecture room.

Overall, the late-September Adare Retinal Meeting proved to be informative gathering, continuing its tradition of fostering high-quality education, discussion, and collegiality within the retinal community.

**Miss Marie Hickey-Dwyer  
Organiser**



*Dr Alison Greene and Dr Edward Ahern*



*Dr Xinxan Budweg and Dr Charlotte Morrissey*

## Dunraven Arms Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick



*Dr Alison Blake and Miss Marie Hickey-Dwyer*



*Mr Philip O'Reilly, Dr Margaret Piense, Ms Sylvia Jungkim and Mr David Wallace*



*Miss Marie Hickey Dwyer, Ms Mireia Roca Cabue, and ICO President, Mr Gerry Fahy*

## Maintenance of Professional Competence PCS National Audit 2025-2026

The end of the current PCS year is Thursday, April 30th.

Under the new Medical Council Maintenance of Professional Competence Framework, doctors must record a minimum of 50 hours of CPD activity each year. Doctors are still required to complete a practice review activity each year, though this is included within the total figure of 50 hours of CPD activity.

- Planning CPD – up to 5 CPD credits
- Practice Review (Clinical Audit, Quality Improvement Project or Practice Evaluation Review) - minimum 10 CPD credits
- Work-based Learning – minimum 15 CPD credits
- Accredited Continuing Education – minimum 20 CPD credits
- Assign all eight Domains of Good Professional Practice at least once in every 3 years

### ICO National Audit PCS Year 2025/2026

To assist members in meeting the audit/quality improvement requirement for the PCS, the ICO recently circulated the following National Audit proposals for 2025-2026.

The information is also housed on our members portal under the Professional Competence, ICO Audit section. A form has been created on survey monkey, where you will find further details on each proposal.

This year we are reviewing the quality of referrals received in the clinic.

#### Take a sample of new referrals (30-40) and look at:

1. the percentage with visual acuity documented,
2. the percentage with IOP documented.

#### Compare this against what is recorded when the patient is in the clinic

Was there a difference in the information received from GP or optometry referrals?

**How complete was the referral information at triage?**  
Did that impact clinic flow?

**Please record your findings at the following link.**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6T7QLZF>

In due course the College will upload the record of your participation in the national audit directly to your PCS account.

***If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the College.***

## “All Eyes on Glaucoma”

### Patient Education Event marking World Glaucoma Week

Marking World Glaucoma Week, OmniVision ophthalmology centre in north Dublin, successfully hosted its inaugural *All Eyes on Glaucoma* educational event on the 13 March 2026 at the IMC Cinema in Omni Park, Santry.

The event brought together almost 200 patients, carers, clinicians, and allied eye care professionals for an engaging and informative morning dedicated to improving the understanding, early detection, and treatment of glaucoma.

Initiated by Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon Mr. Edward Dervan, the

symposium formed a cornerstone of World Glaucoma Awareness Week and represented a unique collaboration between specialists and the community in Ireland.

Mr. Dervan spoke passionately about the need to elevate public and professional awareness of glaucoma, describing the condition’s stealthy progression and the importance of early diagnosis.

Guest speakers alongside Mr. Dervan included Mr. Pavi Agrawal, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Ms. Emily Hughes, Glaucoma Specialist, Mr. David Trevaskis, Dispensing Optician,

Ms. Catherine McMahon, Optometrist; and Ms. Julie Cotter, Clinical Nurse Specialist

Participants heard clinical insights into the latest advances in glaucoma treatment, explored practical strategies for early detection, and gained first-hand perspectives from people living with glaucoma.

The event combined educational lectures with panel discussions and Q&A sessions, empowering attendees to ask questions, discuss management options, and connect with clinicians in a supportive environment. One of the key takeaways was a reinforced message about the value of regular eye examinations and ongoing monitoring to protect vision before irreversible damage occurs.



## ICO CCST Awards

Our congratulations to Dr. Gareth O’Dwyer and Dr. Melissa Murphy, who were awarded their Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) in Medical Ophthalmology in recent months.

Gareth undertook a medical retina fellowship last year at Manchester Royal Eye Hospital and Melissa is currently undertaking a fellowship in Neuro-Ophthalmology and Inflammatory Eye Disease at King’s College Hospital and Guys and St Thomas’s Hospital in London.

Dr. Robert McGrath received his CCST in Surgical Ophthalmology in July 2025, and is currently on a Vitreo Retinal Fellowship in Cheltenham. He will undertake a further year fellowship in this sub specialty in Melbourne from August 2026.

We wish our former trainees all the best as they embark on their careers and look forward to their continued and much valued association within the College.

**Save the Date**

**Wednesday 7th October 2026**  
**The Ashling Hotel, Parkgate St, Dublin**



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

**Eye Care in Focus**  
**CONFERENCE 2026**

[www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie) / [@eyedoctorsirl](https://twitter.com/eyedoctorsirl)

**One day Clinical Education Conference for the Extended Eye Care Team**