



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

# ICO NEWS

ISSUE 37

SUMMER 2024



John Doris

## President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the summer edition of the ICO newsletter.

It was inspiring to see so many of you at our ICO Annual Conference in Westport. Around 200 delegates enjoyed a rich educational and social programme in wonderful weather.

Thank you to Sean Chen, the Chair of the Scientific Committee, and all the team for organising such an excellent meeting. I would like to extend special thanks to our Mooney Lecturer, Prof. Geoffrey Rose, and to all of our invited speakers.

In addition, it was a pleasure to hear the quality of the work presented by our trainees, which is a testament to the great work being undertaken by both our trainees and trainers throughout the country.

This year's meeting ended with a call to action in relation to environmental sustainability in Ophthalmology. As discussed, there is a lot that each of us can do as individuals, but we are better together. To that end the ICO's web portal will play its part as an important resource for members to share health improvement initiatives and sustainability projects. This is a priority issue for the College and will feature prominently in our thinking into the future.

Finally, I would like to thank the ICO board members and those who serve on our various subcommittees. Your input, energy and vision is much appreciated.

I wish you a well deserved break over the summer months.

Kind regards  
JOHN DORIS,  
ICO President

## ICO Annual Conference 2024

The charming town of Westport on the Wild Atlantic Way was the destination for the ICO Annual Conference 2024. The meeting took place at the Knockranny House Hotel from Wednesday 15th to Friday 17th May.

The conference has gone from strength to strength each year, with record numbers attending the meeting in May and a notable energy evident over the three day gathering. The mission of the College at our meetings is to provide a platform for the exchange of learning and ideas, as we strive to improve clinical care and outcomes for patients.

It is always a pleasure and honour for the College to welcome esteemed colleagues from the international ophthalmic community to join our panel of local experts to the Annual Conference, and our sincere thanks to

Mr Sean Chen, and members of the ICO Scientific & PCS Committee for the superb agenda of speakers and talks at this year's meeting.

It was great to see so many get the chance to enjoy the stunning surroundings during their stay, be it an early morning trek on Croagh Patrick or run along the Wild Atlantic Way, a round of golf or a stroll to the historic town of Westport for a bite to eat with friends and colleagues. We hope you all had a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable time in Westport.

We're looking forward to planning next year's meeting already!



Professor Geoffrey Rose, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, who presented the Mooney Lecture 2024 is pictured with Mr Tim Fulcher, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and Mr John Doris, ICO President and Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, University Hospital Waterford.

## ANNUAL MOONEY LECTURE 2024

# Trends in Rehabilitation of Patient with Thyroid Eye Disease

The Annual Mooney Lecture 2024 was presented by eminent surgeon, Professor Geoffrey Rose, Moorfields Eye Hospital London, on the evening of Wednesday 15th May 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. Four decades ago, changes in treatment were largely directed to improving surgical techniques to allow a better restoration of function and appearance, with less injury to neighbouring tissues. From the 1990s, it was widely recognised that the final functional deficit and aesthetic disturbance could be reduced considerably by shortening the inflammatory phase of thyroid eye disease.

Early immunosuppressive regimes were based on various regimes for systemic corticosteroids, either oral or

intravenous (and occasionally intra-orbital administration). These early regimes were modified by adjunctive use of steroid-sparing agents and, in some cases, use of low-dose orbital radiotherapy.

More recently, he told delegates, the immune response has been mollified with monoclonal antibodies directed against the inflammatory mediators or cells.

"Over the last 20 years, it has been shown that changes of thyroid eye disease appear to be produced through an immune activation of the TSH-receptor and IGF1-receptors, two membrane-bound receptors that are co-localised on the surface of orbital fibroblasts; this activation leads to the characteristic hyaluronate deposition and adipogenesis.

With the proliferation of "biological" therapeutics, the treatment of thyroid eye disease is now very much directed towards blocking activation of the TSH and IGF1 receptor pathway. Early biological agents directed against IGF-1



*Professor Geoffrey E. Rose, Honorary Consultant, Moorfields Eye Hospital London and Senior Research Fellow, Biomedical Research Centre, Institute of Ophthalmology, London.*

receptors have shown an excellent effect on the active phase of thyroid eye disease, and also some activity in the apparently "burnt-out" phase of the condition; usage of these drugs can, however, have some major side-effects."

Professor 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. Professor Rose is a Senior Research Fellow of the Biomedical Research Centre at the Institute of Ophthalmology, London, and is a Past-President of ESOPRS and a Past-President of BOPSS.

## ICO Workshops Annual Conference 2024

Miss Yvonne Delaney, ICO Dean of Postgraduate Education and Mr Brendan Cummings, Cataract and Refractive Fellow, Wellington Eye Clinic, Dublin presented two excellent workshops on the afternoon of Thursday 16th May at the annual conference.

Miss Delaney gave a workshop on 'Optic Disc Evaluation in Glaucoma: Back to Basics', providing a guide to performing a comprehensive clinical examination of the optic nerve for an early and accurate diagnosis of glaucoma.

The focus of Mr Brendan Cummings workshop was to provide an introduction to corneal topography and tomography basics, which was followed by a demonstration of different applications. This included a detailed description of how the technology can be used to screen refractive surgery candidates for ectasia risk with example cases and the role of epithelial mapping.





## Vision and Strabismus Symposium

Following his official address to delegates on the opening morning of the Conference, ICO President, Mr John Doris welcomed the panel for the first plenary session of the conference on the topic of 'Vision and Strabismus'.

The speakers for the session included Mr Ian Marsh, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust, Dr Arvind Chandna, Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist at Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool and Senior Clinician Scientist at Smith Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, San Francisco and Ms Kathryn McCreery, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin Hospital, Dublin.

In her presentation, Ms McCreery discussed difficult paediatric ophthalmology and strabismus consultations including drop administration in children, evaluation of the child with autism and delivering bad news. The management of strabismus surgery complications and the informed consent process in paediatric and adult strabismus surgery was also discussed, with an emphasis on effective communication with children, their parents and adults in advance of undergoing strabismus surgery.

Mr Ian Marsh currently runs a comprehensive strabismus service at Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust for adults but also for more complex

squint in children and spoke to delegates about decoding the process of strabismus management. Recent developments at his practice in Liverpool have included the introduction of Bupivacaine injections to permanently straighten eyes, the use of inferior medial rectus plication in near exotropia and since the Covid pandemic, a regular video clinic and a monthly local anaesthetic squint list.

Dr Arvind Chandna delivered a comprehensive talk on Cerebral Visual Impairment and a structured approach to managing the condition beyond visual acuity.

Dr Chandna conducts research programmes dealing with significant gaps in clinical and scientific knowledge of common childhood eye conditions with poor management outcomes, investigating them in collaboration with SKERI's vision scientists. His talk outlined this investigation of visual brain neuroscience and oculomotor behavior using eye tracking, photorefraction, psychophysics and visually evoked brain potentials in childhood eye disease.



Keynote speakers at the Vision and Strabismus symposium (Wednesday, 15th May); (L-R) Ms Kathryn McCreery, Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin Hospital, Dr Arvind Chandna, Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool and Smith Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, San Francisco, session chair Mr Sean Chen, Blackrock Health Galway Clinic and Mr Ian Marsh, Liverpool University Hospital NHS Trust, Liverpool.

## RCOphth Annual Congress 2024 – Belfast

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists Annual Congress was held in Belfast for the first time, 20th - 23rd May at the International Convention Centre and was well attended, 1150 delegates



ICO President, Mr John Doris

The President's session to open the meeting was also unique with joint contributions from the ICO President John Doris and RCOphth President Ben Burton. The talks focused on training and manpower in the two jurisdictions and was well received by a substantial audience.

ICO representatives discussed the challenges and opportunities in ophthalmology in both the UK and in Ireland and included presentations from Miss Yvonne Delaney, Dean of Postgraduate Education, ICO and from the private practice perspective from Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Mr James O'Reilly.

We had the pleasure of welcoming many of our eye specialist colleagues in the UK to present at our annual conference in Westport the week prior to the RCOphth Congress, including Prof Geoffrey Rose and Miss Radhika Rampat, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, Dr Arvind Chandna, Alder Hey Children's Hospital and Mr Ian Marsh, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

It was a fantastic opportunity to continue the conversations and momentum for shared clinical learning between the ophthalmic communities here and in the UK.

# Sustainability in Ophthalmology Symposium

On the final day of the conference, a dedicated symposium on Sustainability in Ophthalmology welcomed a panel of experts to share their knowledge on the ways to minimise the carbon footprint of the specialty and plan for the future from both an environmental and sustainable practice perspective.

The session was chaired by ICO President, Mr John Doris, who is committed to placing a spotlight and a 'call to action' on this important issue which will resonate with ICO members and initiate positive change.

Healthcare is a notable contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for an estimated 5% of total emissions globally. The ophthalmic field, like many others in healthcare, has a significant environmental footprint. Cataract surgery is the highest volume surgery performed in Ireland. From the disposal of single-use instruments to the energy consumption of diagnostic equipment, the impact is significant.

Miss Radhika Rampat, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Free London NHS Trust 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". She 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.

Miss Rampat is the co-chair of AECOS Green Working Group.

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 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.

Dr Emilie Mahon, RCSI Ophthalmology Clinical Tutor at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, 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.

Reducing the carbon footprint can be achieved by streamlining the usage of equipment and materials in surgery. Dr Mahon discussed single-use vs reusable devices. The various recycling methods and their potential drawbacks, plastic generation and waste and their effect, and the social considerations of procuring single-use

devices made abroad.

Earlier that morning, Dr Alison Greene gave a podium presentation on her study of sustainability in cataract surgery at the new high flow cataract unit (opened September 2023) at University Hospital Waterford. The unit is currently undertaking 6 high flow cataract lists per week.

Dr Greene highlighted the European Society for Cataract and Refractive Surgeons benchmark for sustainable surgical cataract packs and the Sustainable Index for Disposables in Cataract Surgery (SIDICS), a tool for evaluating the sustainability of customised cataract packs used by hospitals and surgical centres which can be accessed for free on the ESCRS website to see how your custom cataract pack compares to the benchmark recommendation and what you can do to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> footprint.

Other recommendations to come from the sustainability action studies are to examine procurement options, and where possible, to look locally for general surgical items (gloves, gowns etc). Also to opt for reusables in place of single use instruments, cups and trays and to use swabs and gauzes sparingly.

In his talk 'Making Ophthalmic Practice Sustainable' 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.

The global ophthalmology workforce is expected to decline by 12% in the next 11 years. It is already understaffed, and it is projected that capacity relative to demand will become the second lowest among 38 surgical specialties, Mr Cummings outlined.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology published similar findings in a recent report for the projections in the US 2020-2035, which forecasts a sizable shortage of ophthalmology workforce relative to demand by the year 2035. Projections indicate that the number of full-time ophthalmologists will decrease by 2,650 between 2020 and 2035, while simultaneously the demand for



*Dr Philip Crowley, National Director of Strategy and Research and HSE National Lead for Climate Change.*





Keynote speakers at the Sustainability in Ophthalmology symposium, Dr Philip Crowley, National Director of Strategy and Research, HSE and National Lead for Climate Strategy, Dr Emilie Mahon, Ophthalmology Clinical Tutor, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin and Mr Arthur Cummings, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Wellington Eye Clinic, Dublin.

ophthalmologists is expected to increase significantly, reaching 5,150. This represents a supply and demand mismatch of approximately 30%.

Factors also contributing to the shortage include an aging population, the retirement of experienced eye doctors, leading to a loss of expertise, the number of trainees entering ophthalmology programmes is insufficient to meet future demands

and the obvious geographic disparities, with shortages more pronounced in certain regions.

Arthur 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.

The Wellington Eye Clinic has produced a series of videos aimed at improving patient understanding of their options and supporting the consent process before they undergo lens replacement surgery, whether for cataract or refractive purposes.

Each procedure has a consent form that is accompanied by a video that guides them through the consent form. The video is not the consent, Arthur noted, but is used as a tool to help the patient understand the consent form better.

## ICO Members Portal – Sustainability Education Resource

To promote greater awareness of sustainability resources and actions we can take individually and as a collective, a new Sustainability Education page has been added to the ICO members portal.

The aim is to empower the ophthalmic community to actively engage in and contribute to the commitment towards greater sustainability in our specialty.

The new portal page is a live resource that we are looking to continually build on through our network of members. Sharing your knowledge with your colleagues will be central to its success and ongoing relevance.

A recording of Miss Radhika Rampat's talk at the conference is

among the new uploads to the resource, along with the slides from presenters Dr Philip Crowley, Dr Emilie Mahon, Mr Arthur Cummings and Dr Alison Greene.



Miss Radhika Rampat, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Free, London NHS Trust and co-chair of the AECOS Green Working Group



# ICO Annual Confer



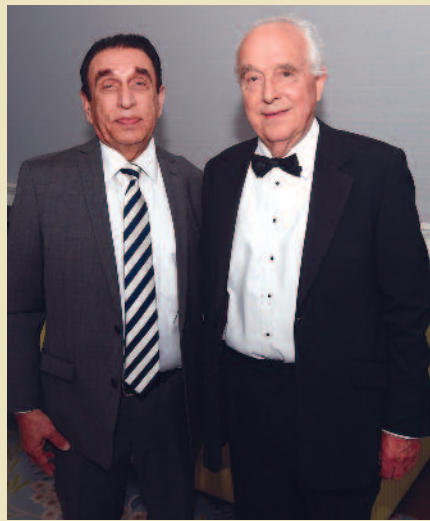
*Dr Aaron Donnelly, Mr Behrooz Golchin, Miss Marie Hickey Dwyer, Dr Dharm Pandeya and Dr Mark James.*



*Ms Janice Brady and Mr John Doris.*



*Ms Kathryn McCreery and Dr Alexandra McCreery.*



*Dr Aziz Rehman and Dr Garry Treacy.*



*Miss Yvonne Delaney and Mr Edward Dervan.*



*Dr Shane O'Regan, Dr Sanushka Moodley and Dr Simon Neary.*



*Dr Fiona Darcy, Ms Deirdre Townley and Dr Fiona Kearns.*



# ence 2024

Gala Dinner,  
15 May, Westport



*Dr Duncan Rogers and Ms Christine Goodchild.*



*Dr Clare McCloskey, Mr Paul-Eduard Stanciu, Ms Aine Ni Mhéaloid, Dr Esraa Hegazy and Ms Lisa McAnena.*



*Rebecca Martin Albuquerque, Siobhan Kelly and Ciara Keenan.*



*Dr Sarah Powell, Dr Aoife Smyth, Dr Amy O'Regan and Dr Simon Neary.*



*Mr Ian Marsh, Mr Gerry Fahy, Dr Arvind Chandna, Michelle Murray-Chandna, Prof Geoffrey Rose, Mr Manoj Parelkar and Mr Sean Chen.*



*Dr Emer Doolan and Ms Caroline Bailly.*



## Orbit and Socket Symposium

Mr Manoj Parulekar, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust and Professor Geoffrey Rose, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London were guest speakers at the Orbit and Socket symposium on Thursday 16th May.

Mr Tim Fulcher, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital chaired the session and gave a talk on the management of socket complications.

Mr Parulekar outlined the clinical assessment, differential diagnosis and management of benign and malignant lesions of the paediatric orbit. He contributes to the paediatric ophthalmology service at the Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital, the largest women's and children's hospitals in Europe, where he treats a wide range of childhood eye conditions including strabismus, paediatric cataracts and glaucoma, oculoplastics and neuro-ophthalmology, ocular oncology, and external eye diseases.

He has special expertise in the treatment of eye cancers in children and is consultant ophthalmologist to the Birmingham National Retinoblastoma Unit, the largest nationally designated retinoblastoma center in

the UK. Mr Parulekar contributes to the ocular motility service (squints and complex eye movement disorders), and the neuro-ophthalmology service at the Oxford University Hospital where he provides a supra-regional service to Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire.

Prof Geoffrey Rose's talk at the Orbit and Socket symposium on 'Managing the Removal of an Eye' discussed the problems that can occur with socket management and removal of an eye, in some cases leading to significant aesthetic or functional deficit.

The alternatives to eye removal were also outlined prior to considering how to manage patient expectations and reviewing the patient consent process.

Prof Rose addressed the mechanics of eye removal and how to manage (largely by prevention) the volume deficiency that would otherwise arise from removal of the globe.



Mr Tim Fulcher, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Professor Geoffrey Rose, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London and Mr Manoj Parulekar, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, Oxfordshire.

## SOE Lecture 2024

### Paediatric Oculoplastics



The SOE Lecture 2024 was delivered by Mr Michéal O'Rourke, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, St James's Hospital and Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin, Dublin at the ICO Annual Conference on Wednesday, 15th May. Michéal is pictured with Ms Kathryn McCreery (left), CHI Crumlin and Miss Aoife Doyle, Clinical Lead for Ophthalmology and Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and St James's Hospital.

His topic was chosen within the scope of Mr O'Rourke's fellowship training at Manchester Royal Eye Hospital and Melbourne Children's Hospital, with specific allocation to clinic and surgical sessions for paediatric oculoplastics.

A similar blueprint was utilised in establishing an oculoplastic service at CHI Crumlin with the aim of treating all such patients which streamlines their care. A review and update on conditions was presented by Mr O'Rourke during his superb lecture at the ICO Annual Conference.

The annual SOE lecture invites early career ophthalmologists to deliver this prestigious talk to peers at the ICO meeting, providing an excellent platform to showcase their sub specialty expertise and indeed inspire future generations of young ophthalmologists.

Congratulations to Michéal on his excellent lecture at this year's conference and to all past SOE Lecturers. A full list of past honorary lectures and medal winners can be viewed on the ICO website [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie) under the ICO members section.





Irish College of Ophthalmologists  
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**TRAINER  
PORTAL**

## Trainer Engagement and Education Supports

The Medical Council is responsible for quality assuring medical education and training in Ireland across the continuum, which spans the undergraduate, intern and specialist training stages of professional development.

This includes the approval of specialist training programmes and post-graduate training bodies which deliver those programmes, including the Irish College of Ophthalmologists.

In collaboration with the Medical Council and the HSE, the ICO is responsible for the quality management and control of ophthalmic specialist training programmes to ensure that:

1. The design and delivery of medical training meets the defined standards as set out by the Medical Council;
2. The education and training experience of trainees in the workplace meets the defined standards as set out by the Medical Council.

The Medical Council accreditation process results in conditions and recommendations that the College must comply with in order to retain accreditation for a specialist training programme.

The ICO is required to implement processes and procedures to ensure that any conditions and recommendations raised by the Medical Council are addressed.

Included in the training standards are a number of requirements with respect to trainers.

### Trainer Development and Engagement

In 2022 the ICO launched its Trainer Portal and the Train the Trainer modules to support trainers in their role. Following on from this, the College intends to develop additional Train the Trainer modules in 2024 and 2025 and to focus on trainer engagement to meet Medical Council requirements.

The College has developed a framework that will be used to measure engagement of our trainers with training related activities that take place throughout the training year (July to July).

#### The aim of this framework is to:

- Encourage greater inclusivity in future training related activities
- Identify areas that may require additional supports from the College
- Provide reflection on our own practices to improve our processes and procedures

#### What do I need to do as a Trainer?

There is now an application process for new trainers and a requirement to complete the trainer education modules – thank you to everyone for your cooperation in this regard.

The next requirement that the College is obliged to implement is the evaluation of trainers.

The approach we are taking is to develop a framework that will be used to measure the engagement of our trainers, with training related activities that take place throughout the training year, for example the completion of trainee CAPA forms and workplace based assessments.

In its first iteration the implementation of the framework is an administrative process and requires no action from our trainers.

#### Our thanks to ICO Trainers

We are very cognisant of the considerable effort and energy ophthalmology trainers give to their trainees and the training programme and take this opportunity to say thank you.

## Annual Conference 2024

### 5K Run



Our thanks to ICO Trainee Dr Alan Hopkins, for once again organising what has become somewhat of an annual tradition at our conference, the ICO 5km morning run! Well done to all who took to the Wild Atlantic Way early morning, and no doubt feeling invigorated ahead of Thursday 16th scientific programme!

### ... And now for the 19th



What incredible blue skies the keen golfers of the group enjoyed on the fairways during their conference downtime, against the stunning backdrop of Croagh Patrick.

# Insight Counselling Services

## Insight Support Services: Nurturing Mental Well-being Through Sight Loss

Coping with sight loss is a journey laden with complex emotions and challenges. Anxiety, frustration, fear, anger, and depression often accompany the diagnosis, triggering a profound need for support and guidance. Navigating sight loss encompasses a journey of acceptance, grieving, and learning to cope. Recognising this, Fighting Blindness proudly offers the Insight Support Services, a comprehensive suite of counselling, peer support groups, and innovative projects designed to empower individuals and their families in navigating the emotional landscape of sight loss.



### Compassionate Counselling Services

At the heart of our Insight Support Services lies our compassionate counselling service. Led by accredited counsellors who specialise in addressing the unique emotional needs of those facing sight loss, we provide a safe and confidential space where individuals and their loved ones can explore their feelings, gain coping

strategies, and find solace in knowing they are not alone.

Our counselling service is offered at no cost, providing individuals affected by sight loss and/or their family members with access to up to 10 complimentary counselling sessions. Counselling sessions are available in person in Dublin and Cork, as well as through online and telephone platforms.

### Empowering Peer Support Groups

While professional counselling provides invaluable guidance, there is a unique strength that comes from connecting with peers who share similar experiences. That's why we offer 15 different peer support groups, catering to diverse needs and experiences within the visual impairment community. Through virtual meetings on Zoom and in-person gatherings in Dublin, these groups provide a nurturing environment where individuals can share their stories, exchange knowledge, and forge meaningful connections with others who truly understand their journey. Whether it's discussing the latest assistive technologies, exploring mindfulness practices, navigating the challenges of parenting a child with a visual impairment, or finding solidarity in shared conditions like Age Macular Degeneration, our support groups offer a lifeline of understanding and empathy.



### Innovative Projects: Enriching Experiences Beyond Counselling

While traditional counselling is a cornerstone of our support services, we also recognise the importance of offering enriching experiences that go beyond talk therapy. That's why we've pioneered innovative projects like the "Sculpture for Visually Impaired" and "Dance for All" workshops.

"Sculpture for Visually Impaired" course offers a multi-sensory artistic experience, enabling participants to engage with materials, shapes, and textures through touch, smell, and sound.

"Dance for All" workshops harness the therapeutic benefits of music and movement, providing tailored dance and somatic movement experiences for individuals with visual impairments. ▶▶▶

**Register  
Now**

*Tuesday, October 1st, 2024  
The Gibson Hotel, Dublin*



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

**Eye Care in Focus  
CONFERENCE 2024**

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

**A 1-day clinical education conference for all members  
of the extended eye care team  
visit [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie)**



We are additionally endeavouring to orchestrate yoga sessions tailored for individuals with visual impairment. Yoga, viewed as a complementary or alternative therapeutic approach, has demonstrated efficacy in alleviating stress, anxiety, depression, and various mood disorders. It fosters a heightened sense of well-being, promotes relaxation, bolsters self-confidence and body image, enhances efficiency, facilitates improved interpersonal connections, boosts attentiveness, reduces irritability, and fosters a positive life perspective.

### Join Our Supportive Community

At Fighting Blindness, our mission is to nurture mental well-being and resilience within the visual impairment community.

For Insight Counselling inquiries please contact us at 01 674 6496, or email [insight@fightingblindness.ie](mailto:insight@fightingblindness.ie).

**Marta O'Connor**  
Head of Support Services  
Fighting Blindness

## ICO Annual Report 2023

The ICO announced the publication of its Annual Report for 2023 at the conference in Westport. The ICO is a registered Irish charity. The organisation 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

The Annual Report 2023 outlines the activities undertaken by the College and finances for that year.

A digital copy of the Report has been circulated to ICO members and is available to download on our website [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie) and on the ICO members portal.



ICO Chief Executive Officer, Siobhan Kelly with Mr John Doris, ICO President, pictured following the official publication of the ICO Annual Report 2023 at the College's Annual General Meeting in Westport, Wednesday 15th May 2024.

## Vision Ireland Van

We were delighted to welcome Vision Ireland and Eye Clinic Liason's Officer (ECLO) representatives to our conference in Westport, where they got to demo the functions and aims of their brand new Vision Van.

The mobile vision assessment and rehabilitation service within the service aims to deliver vision rehabilitation to the doorstep of local communities around Ireland, mobilising eye care to those who need it and providing information, awareness and support services for sight loss and common eye conditions.



Pictured (l-r) in Westport, ECLO Francois Thai Le and Elaine Crossan, Vision Van Co-ordinator, Colleen Clarke, Community Resource Worker, Vision Ireland, Dr Muirin Tempary, Blackrock Clinic, Dublin and Kristina Millar, National Impact and Insights Manager, Vision Ireland.

## Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training in Ophthalmology Award

The ICO wishes to congratulate all ICO trainees who received their Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training over the past 12 months.



In attendance at the ICO Annual Conference in Westport were recipients of the CCST award from 2023 and 2024; Dr David Gildea, Dr Patrick Murtagh, Dr Clare McCloskey, Dr Christine Goodchild and Dr Brendan Cummings, pictured with with ICO Dean, Miss Yvonne Delaney.



# ICO MEDALS 2024

## Sir William Wilde Medal for Best Poster 2024



Dr Patrick Murtagh (right) is pictured with Prof Brendan Kelly.

Dr Patrick Murtagh received the Sir William Wilde Medal for the Best Poster at the ICO Annual Conference 2024. Dr Murtagh, who is currently undertaking a Fellowship in Ocular Oncology at Liverpool University Hospital following the completion of his ophthalmology surgical training in Ireland, was awarded the prize for his poster 'Local Tumour Control and Visual Outcomes in Uveal Melanoma Patients Treated with Iodine Plaque versus Ruthenium Plaque versus Proton Beam Radiation: A Ten-Year Review.'

Uveal Melanoma is the most common intraocular tumour in adults. It has a high rate of metastases and in some studies as many as 50% develop metastases over a 10-year period. Ireland has a high rate of uveal melanoma (UM) when compared with incidence rates in Europe and the rest of the world, with the mean age-adjusted incidence of uveal melanoma

in Ireland reported to be 9.5 per million of the population.

Dr Murtagh was presented with his medal by Professor Brendan Kelly, Consultant Psychiatrist, Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin and Professor of Psychiatry at Trinity College Dublin who gave a thought-provoking presentation at the conference on his insights into human behaviours and reactions to perceived challenges in his talk on "Pandemics in Ireland, and Lessons Learned from Covid (If Any)."

The talk reflected on the pandemic in Ireland, what we might learn as a society, and what pandemics teach us about ourselves. The history of similar events in our history was explored through the work of Sir William Wilde, Victorian eye doctor and father of playwright Oscar, who in addition to his clinical subspecialty, held additional interest in infectious diseases, public health and its impact on society.



Professor Brendan Kelly, Consultant Psychiatrist, Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin and Professor of Psychiatry at Trinity College Dublin at the podium

## Barbara Knox Medal for Best Paper 2024



The Barbara Knox Medal for Best Paper was awarded to Dr Shane O'Regan, SpR Temple Street Hospital, for his paper entitled "Eyes on Spina Bifida: A Two-Decade Retrospective Exploration of Ophthalmic Manifestations in Paediatric Patients at Temple Street Children's University Hospital, Dublin."

The investigation aims to explore and categorise the ophthalmic manifestations in a cohort of children diagnosed with Spina Bifida over two decades at Temple Street Children's University Hospital, Dublin. In his conclusion, Dr O'Regan stated this extensive retrospective chart audit provides insight into the multifaceted ophthalmic manifestations associated with Spina Bifida. The findings underscore a substantial incidence of varied ocular and visual pathway involvement, enhancing our understanding and highlighting the need for careful ophthalmic monitoring within this demographic to address potential preemptive visual sequelae.

## CPD Requirements for PCS Scheme Year 2024/25

The Medical Council recently approved the 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 Rules and Guidelines associated with the evolved Maintenance of Professional Competence Framework Model will commence in May 2025.

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



**Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis  
Medical Council**