



Irish College of
Ophthalmologists
Eye Doctors of Ireland
Protecting your Vision

ICO NEWS

ISSUE 32

WINTER 2022

President's Message



Welcome to the latest edition of the ICO Newsletter, as we enter the final weeks of 2022.

The past year has seen a welcomed return to more normal life post pandemic, and yet the impact of COVID-19 is of course still being felt and will be for some time to come in the healthcare system.

It was a great pleasure to invite Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer at the HSE to share with us his insights on this very issue at the ICO's Eye Care in Focus Conference on October 4th. I'd like to thank Prof Colm O'Brien, Chair of the Scientific Committee for his coordination of the meeting and to all our guest speakers.

I very much look forward to seeing our members at the Winter Meeting on November 18th in the Royal College of Surgeons. Tim Sullivan, Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Queensland, Australia will present the prestigious Annual Montgomery Lecture which he has entitled "2022: An Orbital Odyssey". Prof Sullivan will lead a case based panel discussion on eyelid, lacrimal and orbital problems at our winter meeting earlier that day, joined on the panel by specialists Michéal O'Rourke, Elizabeth McElnea and Gerry Fahy.

The ICO Masterclass Series in Medical Retina has been a fantastic addition to the specialty training programme in 2022, and I wish to thank our Dean, Yvonne Delaney for her coordination of this event for our Medical Ophthalmology trainees. Coverage on this series, and further ICO specialty training updates, including the launch of the new ICO Trainer Portal and activity for Medical Careers Events 2022 are outlined in this edition.

Contributory articles from our members are always gratefully received, and we thank Joe Keenan for the focus piece on overseas volunteering and international ophthalmology. I am aware a number of Irish ophthalmologists and eye care staff volunteer their time to work and support such initiatives, and commend you all for your altruistic efforts.

With the festive season creeping up ever so fast, I will take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful and happy Christmas with friends and family.

With Best Wishes,
Tim Fulcher

ICO 'Eye Care in Focus' Conference

The Irish College of Ophthalmologists hosted the 'Eye Care in Focus' conference, a one day clinical education meeting for the extended eye care team, on Thursday, 4th October at The Gibson Hotel in Dublin.



Meeting Chair Professor Colm O'Brien, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital Dublin (far right) and ICO President, Mr Tim Fulcher (centre) with keynote speakers at the Perimetry clinical education session (L-r); Dr Tony Redmond, Reader, School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, Cardiff University, Wales; Professor David Crabb, Optometry and Visual Sciences, School of Health Sciences, City, University of London and Ms Emily Hughes; Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Galway University Hospital.

Over 170 eye health care professionals attended the conference, including ophthalmologists, ICO trainees, ophthalmic nurses, optometrists, and orthoptists working both within HSE and outside of the health service in private practice.

The programme was developed by the ICO Scientific and Continuing Professional Development Committee chaired by Prof Colm O'Brien, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, with key areas of clinical interest in mind and to support continuing medical education opportunities.

Dedicated clinical education sessions on perimetry, retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) and keratoconus,

featured speakers from optometry education and clinical practice, neonatology, advanced nursing practice and ophthalmologists.

In his opening address, ICO President Mr Tim Fulcher, welcomed colleagues from all aspects of eye care in attendance, and highlighted the importance of developing the platform for clinical learning opportunities and expertise sharing together.

The first discussion of the day focused on perimetry with presentations from Dr. Tony Redmond, Reader at the School of Optometry and Vision Sciences in Cardiff University, Wales, Professor David Crabb, School of Health Sciences, City University of

London, and Ms Emily Hughes, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at Galway University Hospital.

Dr Redmond outlined the basics of perimetry and the interpretation of test outcomes, and the process of identifying changes in visual field sensitivity over time.

Dr Redmond leads a multi-disciplinary research lab in Cardiff, where his research is focused on gaining a better understanding of the functional architecture of the healthy visual system and how it is altered in neurodegenerative disorders such as glaucoma and macular degeneration. The lab uses a combination of psychophysics, electrophysiology, retinal imaging, and fMRI. This understanding is also used to inform the design of accurate and precise clinical tools for identifying the earliest deficits of visual perception in these disorders.

Professor David Crabb, Professor of Statistics and Vision Research at City, University of London, engaged the audience with a visual and interactive presentation on 'How Does Glaucoma Look and Feel?' placing a spotlight on the different stages in the process of chronic eye disease to a patient's everyday life. Prof Crabb also discussed ocular imaging and image processing, the design of new tests for visual disorders and using 'big data' from eye clinics to assess health service delivery of age-related eye disease. He leads a research team at his laboratory (Crabb Lab) which he describes as a 'lively mix



(L-R) Meeting Chair Professor Colm O'Brien, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital Dublin with keynote speakers at the Retinopathy of Prematurity clinical education session; Mr John Stokes, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, University Hospital Waterford; Ms Eibhlin McLoone, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast HSC Trust, Northern Ireland, ICO President, Mr Tim Fulcher; Ms Claire Hartnett, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street and Bon Secours Hospital, Dublin and Professor John Murphy, Consultant Neonatologist at the National Maternity Hospital, Dublin and Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street; National Clinical Lead for Neonatology.

of young vision scientists, ophthalmologists, optometrists, psychologists, mathematicians and computer scientists focusing on measurement of vision using visual fields, imaging, electrophysiology and eye movements."

Ms Emily Hughes, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at Galway

University Hospital discussed the visual field defects in glaucoma and neurology. Following completion of her ophthalmic surgery specialty training in Ireland in 2020, Ms Hughes pursued an American Glaucoma Society accredited fellowship in the surgical management of adult glaucoma at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, before returning to Ireland to take up her consultant post in Galway.

Among the expert panel of speakers at the Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) session, the College was delighted to welcome Professor John Murphy, National Clinical Lead for Neonatology and Consultant Neonatologist at the National Maternity Hospital, Dublin and Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street.

During his talk 'Prematurity and ROP: the new challenges' Prof Murphy highlighted that 20% of preterm babies are less than 31 weeks gestation, and that it is this group that requires ROP screening (the number of preterm infants requiring ROP screening annually is 600 with 30 needing treatment). He credited Consultant Ophthalmologist Prof Michael O'Keeffe as one of the main pioneers of ROP services in Ireland and that there is



Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE Ireland, presenting his talk 'Learnings from Covid-19' to an audience of eye health care professionals at the Eye Care in Focus Conference, hosted by the Irish College of Ophthalmologists on October 4th at The Gibson Hotel, Dublin.

currently a proposal to develop a post for the national coordination of ROP services in Ireland.

The reduction in ROP consists of general measures, nutrition, and close monitoring of oxygen saturation concentrations. He stressed the importance of supportive nursing and neonatal monitoring when infants are undergoing ROP screening.

Prof Murphy said there is current debate as to whether laser treatment should be administered under morphine analgesia or general anaesthesia.

When seeking good outcomes for very preterm babies, he highlighted the need for normal motor, cognitive, speech & language development, normal sight, and normal hearing.

Mr John Stokes, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at University Hospital Waterford provided an overview of the clinical appearance of Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP), explaining the history of ROP and emphasising the role of supplemental oxygen and that of various angiogenic factors such as Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor (VEGF) in the pathogenesis of this disease.

His talk also outlined the long term (and sometimes lifelong) consequences of premature birth for the visual system in premature infants with and without ROP such as strabismus, refractive

errors, visual field defects and cortical visual impairment.

Ms Claire Hartnett, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street and Bon Secours Hospital, Dublin gave a comprehensive clinical overview on Screening and Treatment in ROP. This was followed by a presentation from Ms Eibhlin McLoone Consultant Ophthalmologist, Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast HSC Trust, Northern Ireland, who outlined the Northern Ireland experience in developing a telemedicine service for ROP, including the creation of an ROP Clinical Coordinator role, training ROP Imagers and running a weekly multi disciplinary team ROP Virtual meeting.

Keratoconus was the focus for the afternoon clinical session, chaired by Prof Conor Murphy, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin and Chair and Professor of Ophthalmology, RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Prof Murphy, whose talk focused on 'Optimising keratoplasty outcomes in keratoconus', specialises in disorders of the cornea and ocular surface, uveitis and corneal transplant surgery.

Dr Marchien Dallinga, Corneal Fellow at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital explained that keratoconus is characterized by progressive thinning,

protrusion and shape changes in the corneal stroma that causes vision loss and mechanical weakness of the cornea. Dr Dallinga said topographic studies are used to confirm the diagnosis, and artificial intelligence-based algorithms can be helpful when there is doubt. She highlighted that early detection of progression is important to halt the disease by crosslinking, and in severe cases, there will be need for surgical intervention. Mr Cian Gildea, Contact Lens Specialist at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, discussed contact lens management of Keratoconus. He is a Fellow of the Association of Optometrists Ireland (FAOI), the International Association of Contact Lens Educators (FIACLE) and faculty for European school of Scleral lens education.

Ms Diana Malata, Advanced Nurse Practitioner at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital spoke to delegates about 'Delivering an effective corneal crosslinking service for keratoconus'. Ms Malata played a lead role in the establishment of nurse-led anterior segment clinics at the hospital and was a recipient of the JC Coleman Research award in 2018 for her work in setting up Ireland's first Nurse-led Corneal Crosslinking Service.

Delivering the guest speaker lecture at the Eye Care in Focus conference, the ICO welcomed Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer of the Health Service Executive, who shared his key insights into the 'Learnings from COVID-19', reflecting on the past two and a half years of living through and emerging from the pandemic.

In his lecture, Dr Henry highlighted the immense impact of the pandemic on our healthcare system, the country's emergency response and measures implemented to restrain its spread and the rollout of the vaccine programme. He stressed that the public's co-operation and responsible adherence to the widespread health and safety measures was evident and helped curb the spread of Covid 19.

The ICO would like to thank all who participated and attended the College's inaugural conference for the extended eye care team this year. We are committed to the further development of clinical education and discussion opportunities to support the continuing education of all those working to deliver eye care.



Keynote speakers at the Keratoconus clinical education session; Ms Diana Malata, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin; Professor Conor Murphy, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin; Chair and Professor of Ophthalmology, RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences; Mr Cian Gildea, Contact Lens Specialist, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin and Dr Marchien Dallinga, Corneal Fellow, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin.

ICO Launches Dedicated Trainer Portal

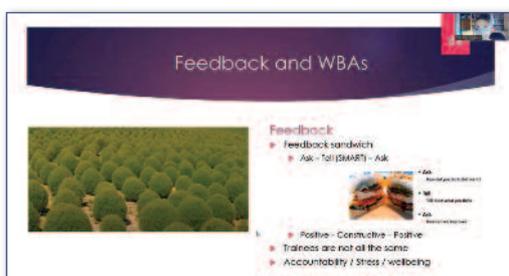
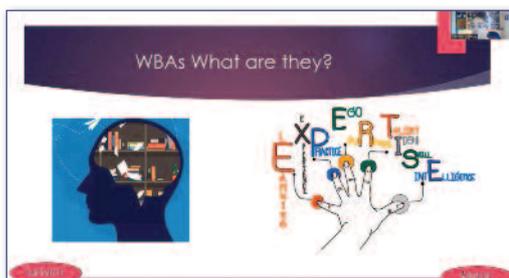
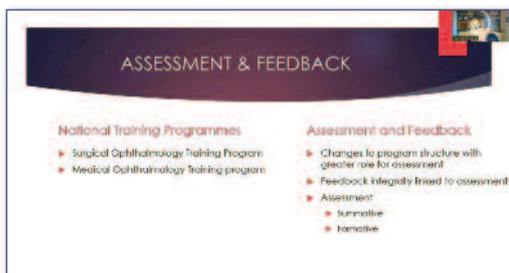
The ICO recently launched the new dedicated *ICO Trainer Portal* which is now live on the ICO membership portal.

ICO Trainers have exclusive access to this resource, which has been designed to support and guide our trainers in their role.

From July 2022 all new trainers are required to participate in mandatory Train the Trainer education before they commence training. This mandatory element for Trainers is a requirement of the Irish Medical Council.

All existing trainers are required to have completed the mandatory modules by July 2023.

The online course was developed by the College and includes content generously shared by the *Ophthalmology Foundation*.



The *Ophthalmology Foundation* is a nonprofit organisation working with ophthalmologists, societies and organisations to enhance and provide ophthalmic education worldwide, through continuing professional development resources for ophthalmic educators. We are indebted to Dr Karl Golnik and our great friend Dr Mike Brennan for facilitating.

Content specific to specialty training in Ireland has been created by Miss Yvonne Delaney, Dean of Postgraduate Education.

The ICO Trainer Portal includes access to:

- **Train the Trainer:** Online video modules and survey

The purpose of this online video module course is to educate and equip ICO Trainers with the skills and information necessary to be a trainer.

The first online module focuses on the role of assessment and feedback. The ICO National Training Programmes in Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology have undergone significant changes in the last seven years and are now streamlined programmes underpinned by competency based training. These changes have guaranteed a much greater role for both formative and summative assessment to the programmes. This has translated into increased opportunity for trainees to receive feedback from their Consultant Trainers. The primary aim is to drive learning, improve performance and provide equitable access to training opportunities for all trainees. The provision of quality feedback throughout training is key to achieving these outcomes and from the trainees perspective, we know that feedback from their Consultant is highly valued.

The three titles in this module are:

1. Giving Effective Feedback
2. The Critical Role of Feedback in Clinical Training
3. ICO Assessment & Feedback

The first two videos, supplied by the *Ophthalmology Foundation*, examine the role of feedback and its importance in postgraduate medical education. The content includes formative learning feedback tools and techniques, with the aim of improving and motivating the performance of learners at all levels.

The third video presented by Miss Yvonne Delaney, concentrates on the opportunity for feedback on our own training programmes, particularly in relation to formative assessment and work-place based assessment.

To complete the module, trainers must ensure they have viewed the videos and completed the post learning survey.

On completion of the module, the goal for Trainers is to:

- Demonstrate skills for giving effective feedback
- Understand and mitigate for the perceived barriers to effective feedback
- Increase trainee engagement drawing on the principles of adult learning
- Harness the benefits of various workplace-based assessments to assess your trainees' learning

The ICO Trainer Portal also provides:

- A Trainer Information page which includes the ICO Code of Conduct for Trainers, Role and Responsibilities of Trainers, and a list of Educational Supervisors in each unit.
- Additional Trainer Support and information including details of ICO

policies, procedures and processes, contact details, a checklist for trainers and a calendar of training events for the relevant training year (this is updated throughout the year and includes dates for exams, human factors, courses etc).

The ICO would like to thank our team of Consultant Trainers and Educational Supervisors for all the work they have put into the training programme over the last few years as we have introduced Workplace Based Assessments.

We know WBAs increase access to training opportunities for trainees. Our trainers provide an indispensable service crucial to the successful operation of the College, and mentorship to the next generation of ophthalmologists in our health service.

The development of the new Trainer Portal is fundamental to the College's commitment to provide ongoing support and learning development tools to our training team. We hope the new Train the Trainer module inspires and reinforces the value and importance of ongoing WBAs.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the resource please contact Rebecca Martin, ICO Training Programme Manager at rebecca.martin@eyedoctors.ie

AMD Awareness Week 2022

This year marked the 15th anniversary of the Annual AMD Awareness week, which ran from the 19th - 25th September. The awareness week is supported by the Irish College of Ophthalmologists, National Council for the Blind (NCBI), Fighting Blindness and Novartis Ireland.

www.amd.ie provides helpful resources to the public about the condition, with downloadable information booklets and videos.



Pictured in the Iveagh Gardens, Dublin at the launch of AMD Awareness Week are Mr Mark Cahill, Consultant Ophthalmologist, Royal Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin; Caitriona Walsh, Managing Director, Novartis Ireland; Neil Ward, Head of Advocacy and Communications, Fighting Blindness; Siobhan Kelly, CEO, the Irish College of Ophthalmologists and June Tinsley, Head of Advocacy and Communications, the National Council for the Blind Ireland.

Phaco Bootcamp



Pictured at the Phaco Bootcamp, coordinated by Mr Princeton Lee and held at St Vincent's University Hospital Dublin on September 28th were (l-r) Dr Sarah Powell (BST1), Dr Deirdre Harford (BST1), Dr Amy Coman, Clinical Tutor SVUH, Dr Fionn O'Leary (BST1), Dr Richard Farnan (BMT1), Mr Princeton Lee, Consultant Trainer, Dr Edward Ahern (BST1), Dr Edward Ahern (BST1), Dr Liam Mulcahy (BST1) and Dr Daire Hurley (BST1)

RCSI Conferring Ceremony



Pictured at the Royal College of Surgeons Conferring Ceremony receiving their MRCSI (Ophth) award on July 4th, 2022 were Dr Simon Neary, Dr Aisling McGlacken-Byrne and Dr Liam Bourke. Our congratulations to Simon, Aisling and Liam and to Dr Gareth O'Dwyer and Dr Ann O'Connell who also passed the MRCSI (Ophth) exam this year, marking their completion of Basic Training and who have all now successfully entered the Higher Training Programmes in Surgical and Medical Ophthalmology.

ICO 'Eye Care in Focus'



Maura Tubridy, Mater Hospital, Francois Thai Le, ECLCO Service, Dr Julia Zhu, Mater Hospital



Dr Maha Elsayed, ICO, Dr Eabha O'Driscoll, Mater Hospital, Dr Amy Coman, St Vincents University Hospital, Dr Fionn O'Leary, Mater Hospital



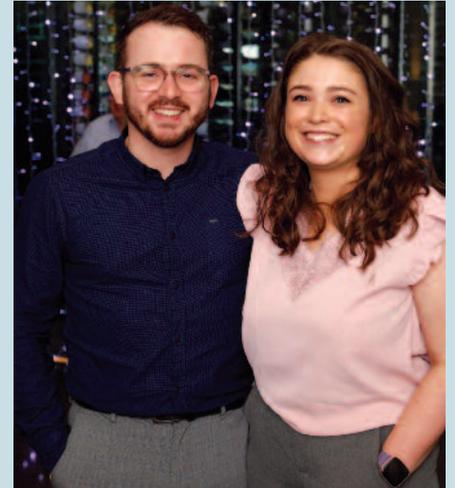
Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE Ireland (2nd left) with Prof Billy Power, National Clinical Lead for Ophthalmology, Mr Tim Fulcher, President, ICO and meeting chair, Professor Colm O'Brien, Mater Hospital Dublin



Aoife Farrell, Specsavers Finglas, Linzi Lanigan, Ace and Tate Opticians, Dublin 2 and Ailbhe Doolan, Specsavers Santry



Dr Katherina Tobin, Castlebar Co Mayo, Dr Joanne Kearney, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda Dr Fiona Kearns, Beaumont Hospital, Dr Aziz Rehman, HSE Grangegorman Primary Care Centre, Elaine Brennan and Aishling McCourt, Beaumont Hospital



Eoin Ryan, Spec Savers, Liffey Valley and Lucy Jones, Blackrock Eyecare

Conference

4th October,
The Gibson Hotel, Dublin



Eadaoin Carroll, Amy O'Shea, Blackrock Clinic and Emer Donohoe, Specsavers Tallaght



Miss Yvonne Delaney, Mater Hospital, Dr Brian Woods CHI/Temple Street, Dr Patrick Murtagh, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and Dr Marchien Dallinga, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital



Daniel Hodgson, FODO Ireland and Prof David Crabb, School of Health Sciences, City, University of London



Aisling McGlacken Byrne, Beaumont hospital and Mark Szczepanski, Sligo University Hospital



Luke McGuinn and Olivia King, Community Healthcare East, Churchtown Primary Care Centre



Dr Sarah Gilmore, Community Healthcare East & Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital and Darragh McCabe, Bayer



Farrah Loughrey, St Conals Hospital, Letterkenny, Dr Sheena Creaven, Midlands Regional Hospital, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath and Hilda Wilkinson, University Hospital Galway

ICO Winter Meeting and Annual Montgomery Lecture

The ICO Winter Meeting will take place on the afternoon of Friday, 18th November at the Albert Theatre, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, followed by the Annual Montgomery Lecture at the same venue that evening.

The RAMI Ophthalmic Section Meeting will be held earlier that day at the Learning Centre in the Royal Victoria Eye & Ear Hospital..

Eyelid, Lacrimal and Orbital Grand Rounds

Prof. Timothy Sullivan, Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Queensland, Australia will lead a case based panel discussion on eyelid, lacrimal and orbital problems at our winter meeting.

Mr Tim Fulcher will coordinate a Q&A session for the specialist panel relating to the diagnosis and management of a range of complexities in this area. Prof Tim Sullivan will be joined on the panel by Ms Elizabeth McElnea, Mr Michéal O'Rourke and Mr Gerry Fahy.



Prof. Timothy Sullivan

Eyelid, Lacrimal and Orbital Grand Rounds Panel



Ms Elizabeth McElnea



Mr Gerry Fahy



Michéal O'Rourke

Annual Montgomery Lecture 2022

Drinks Reception: 5.30pm

Montgomery Lecture: 6.00pm

"2022: An Orbital Odyssey"

Lecturer:

Professor Timothy Sullivan, MB, BS, FRANZCO, FRACS, FRCOPHTH

■ **Timothy Sullivan** completed his Ophthalmology training in 1988, then undertook further subspecialty Fellowship Training in Oculoplastics, Eyelid, Lacrimal and Orbital Disease at Moorfields Eye Hospital, London and Paediatric Ophthalmology in Toronto at The Hospital for Sick Children.

When he returned to Brisbane in 1992 he joined the Terrace Eye Centre, to provide tertiary and quaternary level subspecialty care. Since then he has also worked in the public sector, conducting the Orbital Clinic at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and the Queensland Children's Hospital.

While focusing on clinical care, he has always conducted clinical research to be abreast of and push latest developments. He has published over 130 papers in peer reviewed journals, book chapters and 400 presentations at National and International meetings. He is on the editorial boards of *Clinical Experimental Ophthalmology*,

Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and the *Asia Pacific Journal of Ophthalmology*.

Complementing his clinical and research efforts he is involved in medical student, registrar and Fellow teaching as Professor of Ophthalmology for the University of Queensland.

He is a former President of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery and the Asia-Pacific Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, and an active Fellow of the American and European Societies of Oculoplastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He is on the board of the International Thyroid Eye Disease Society. With this academic background, he continues to provide first class care to his patients.

We very much look forward to welcoming Prof Sullivan to Ireland on November 18th and seeing our members and trainees for this special annual occasion.

ICO Masterclass Series

The third and final in the Medical Retina Masterclass Series for 2022 took place on September 23rd at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin.

The third and final in the Medical Retina Masterclass Series for 2022 took place on September 23rd at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin.

The ICO were delighted to welcome Prof Camiel Boon, Professor of Ophthalmology at Leiden University Medical Center and Professor of Clinical Ophthalmogenetics at the Amsterdam University Medical Centers. Prof Boon is a leading expert in Central Serous Chorioretinopathy (CSCR), the topic chosen for the last in the Masterclass Series.

Prof Boon presented his talk to attending ICO Medical Ophthalmology Trainees and Trainers at the Radisson Hotel via zoom from Amsterdam. In his opening talk – **"Serous business: Delineating the broad spectrum of diseases with subretinal fluid in the macula"** Prof Boon highlighted in detail the wide array of clinical presentations that can mimic central serous chorioretinopathy including neovascular diseases, vitelliform lesions as well as inflammatory diseases and ocular tumours. His second presentation was a **"Review and update of Central Serous Chorioretinopathy"** and showcased new understandings in the pathogenesis of CSCR as well as highlighting the evidence base for treatment with



Prof Camiel Boon

reference to the findings from the VICI and PLACE trials.

Prof Boon's talks were followed by case presentations by Dr Shane O'Regan, Dr Gareth O'Dwyer, Dr Alan Hopkins and Dr Ann O'Connell with time for questions and discussion after each case.

The College would like to thank Ms Caroline Baily

for her very generous input into the Masterclass, for inviting Prof Boon as guest speaker and for chairing the session on the day.

Following the Masterclass, the ICO took the opportunity to congratulate our Higher Medical Trainees who were awarded their certificates for successfully passing their Structured Oral Examinations in Medical Retina (Dr Emer Doolan, Dr Karen Curtin and Dr Bobby Tang) and Glaucoma (Dr Shane O'Regan). Dr Christine Bourke and Dr David Gildea have also successfully passed the SOE in Medical Retina.

A fantastic achievement as they progress with great success through the ICO National Specialty Training Programme in Medical Ophthalmology.

The Masterclass was a wonderful event to round off the highly successful 2022 Medical Retina Series and we look forward to announcing our programme for 2023 in the early new year!

Irish College of Ophthalmologists

MASTERCLASS SERIES

in Medical Ophthalmology

Getting together for Excellence

Irish College of Ophthalmologists
Eye Doctors of Ireland
Protecting your Vision

ICO Board Meeting Updates

All charities must make an annual return to the Charities Regulator each year. The return includes details on the charities finances and their compliance with the charities governance code. In preparation for the filing of the return the Board reviewed and updated the Governance Code and completed the compliance record. The Board members recently participated in a strategy session to look towards the future and consider what the College's 2023 work plan should include.



Medical Careers 2022

Active promotion of the ICO National Training Programmes in Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology took a hybrid format this year, as the College welcomed the opportunity to return to in-person engagement with prospective applicants and also hosted a dedicated online careers event for those considering ophthalmology.

On October 12th, ICO Dean Miss Yvonne Delaney held separate online information sessions for Basic Surgical Training and Basic Medical Training, providing guidance on the application process, the entry scorecard and highlighting the excellent training and career opportunities for both career pathways. Registrants were directed to the ICO website training section in advance of attending the Live Q&A sessions on October 12th to view recorded webinars outlining further information.

The talks were facilitated as part of the online delivery of the Medical Careers Fair 2022, a joint initiative of the HSE, Forum Irish of Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies and Irish Medical Council.

Promotion of Medical Ophthalmology as a Specialty and Career

The College is continuing our targeted communications strategy to increase awareness of the standalone National Training Programme in Medical Ophthalmology

The first phase, launched in September 2021, employed animated

video-messaging to promote medical ophthalmology as an exciting career, highlight its recent expansion in practice and emphasise its new career path to consultant ophthalmologist.

The video was circulated and promoted to all six medical schools and intern networks, and via all ICO communication channels, including our social media platforms on Twitter and Instagram.

The second phase of the campaign, involving the coordination of face to face visits to each medical school for promotion of the specialty commenced in March of this year with a presentation to final year medical students in UCD. Plans to continue this engagement with each of the medical schools throughout winter '22 and early spring '23 are in motion.

To coincide with the application opening date for 2023 intake (October 25th, 2022), the ICO is currently undertaking a targeted campaign with the Medical Interns Unit and the six Intern Training Networks nationally, to arrange face to face presentations to interns and NCHDs.

On October 20th, Miss Yvonne Delaney gave a presentation to interns in the Mid Western Intern Unit

(University of Limerick) at their weekly teaching session in the Clinical Education and Research Centre at University Hospital Limerick.

The ICO was also represented at the careers event for the West/Northwestern Unit (National University of Ireland, Galway), which took place that evening in Galway University Hospital.

The Dublin / Mid Leinster (UCD) Career Event for Interns and NCHDs takes place on November 5th, 2022.

The ICO continues to liaise with the other intern units and Schools of Medicine to arrange in person talks to promote the national training programmes and a career in the specialty. The animated video has been widely used in our promotion.

An intake of 4-5 HMTs per year is necessary to train an adequate number of medical ophthalmologists to meet predicted eye-care demand which continues to rise nationally while also keeping pace with advancements in medical ophthalmology. This requires a steady, dependable and recurring intake of basic trainees into the system.

Applications for the ICO Basic Specialist Programmes in Medical and Surgical Ophthalmology commencing July 2023 opened on Tuesday 25th October, 2022 and will close 4pm Monday 30th January 2023.

Further information is available on the ICO website Trainee section / email ICO Training Programme Manager rebecca.martin@eyedoctors.ie with any queries.



ICO Dean, Miss Yvonne Delaney presenting to Mid-Western Unit interns in University Hospital Limerick, October 20th. The ICO attended the West/NorthWest Intern Unit (NUIG) Careers Event that evening in University Hospital Galway to promote the National Training Programmes in Ophthalmology and a career in the specialty.

Pan-Ireland Ophthalmic Conference – marking World Sight Day 2022

The Pan-Ireland Ophthalmic Conference, coordinated by Professor Tunde Peto, Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology at Queen's University Belfast, took place at the Assembly Buildings Belfast from Thursday 13th to Saturday 15th October.

It was a great pleasure for the ICO to once again support this important all-island event for our specialty, which is timed annually to coincide with World Sight Day to focus attention on the global issue of avoidable blindness and visual impairment.

The three-day programme of events featured presentations from a host of guest lecturers who are all experts in their field both in clinical and basic science.

Among the topics on the agenda for the opening day of the conference, World Sight Day, Thursday 13th October, were reports on diabetic eye screening and treatment pathways from the clinical leads and programme managers of the '5-nations' and included case examples and the challenges of everyday screening/grading life.

"A Tour Around the World" featured presentations by Dr Robbie Nutt (Africa), Professor Colin Willoughby (Cambodia and India), Dr Ving Fai Chan (Zanzibar, Tanzania), Catherine Jamison and the Tanzania Team, WHO Europe work.

In his opening address for the afternoon clinical session of the Pan Ireland Ophthalmology Day on Friday 14th October, ICO President, Tim Fulcher commended Prof Tunde Peto on her development of the Pan-Ireland Ophthalmology Conference, acknowledging her 'all-inclusive efforts in developing and growing a whole of Ireland network, both education and research."

Tim also referenced the meetings focus on the importance of collaboration and information sharing platforms amongst the eye care team, noting the ICO's own recent 'Eye Care in Focus' conference. The clinical education meeting for the extended eye care team was attended by over 170 delegates, made up largely of



Prof Tunde Peto Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology, Queen's University, Belfast pictured with Mr Ian Flitcroft and Ms Janice Brady at the 'Recent Clinical Trials' session at the ICO Annual Conference 2022

optometrists, orthoptists, clinical nurse specialists, and our own ICO members and trainees.

We were delighted Ms Eibhlin McLoone, Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast HSC Trust, was able to join us for this meeting on October 4th, and speak to delegates about the retinopathy of prematurity screening service that she has been involved in setting up in Northern Ireland. Tim congratulated the team on this excellent initiative, noting the benefit it will bring to children in Northern Ireland for years to come. The aspiration is to set up a similar model in Ireland, Tim noted and the opportunity to hear and learn about developments and advancements both in the north and south of Ireland is greatly appreciated and of significant mutual benefit.

In his address, Tim also highlighted the development and advancement of the structured National Specialty

Training Programme in Medical Ophthalmology in Ireland, in response to the growing demand for services in this area and the need to keep pace with advancements in the specialty. Tim discussed the current roll out of the Integrated Eye Care Team Model in Ireland, led by Consultant Medical Ophthalmologists to deliver specialist eye care for the areas of greatest patient demand (namely medical retina, glaucoma and paediatric eye care) across the acute hospital and community care setting.

Prof Tunde Peto was a guest speaker at the ICO Annual Conference in Kilkenny earlier this year where she presented at the Clinical Trials session on the 'Trials and tribulations of using the results in everyday practice'.

A dedicated Patient Engagement Day took place on Saturday, 15th October, completing this year's Pan Ireland Ophthalmic Conference event.

International Ophthalmology

In January 1998 Dr Bjorn Thylefors, the Director of the Programme for the Prevention of Blindness and Deafness at the World Health Organization (WHO), published an editorial in the American Journal of Ophthalmology alerting the ophthalmic community to the then estimated worldwide problem of 38 million blind and 110 million severely visually impaired people¹.

This report of about 150 million visually disabled people in the world estimated a projected steady increase because of population growth and aging. The article outlined an action plan for a Global Initiative involving three main areas of intervention: (1) Disease Control and Eye Care including cataract, trachoma, onchocerciasis, childhood blindness, refractive errors, and low vision care; (2) Human Resource Development including the provision of at least one ophthalmologist per 50,000 to 250,000 in Asia and Africa; and (3) Technology and Infrastructure development for eye care. This led to the launch of Vision 2020 – The Right to Sight with the aim of eliminating avoidable blindness in the world from the above 5 diseases by 2020². The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and the WHO were partners to implement and monitor the initiative.

Two major recent publications, the WHO Report on Vision³ and Lancet Commission on Global Eye Health⁴ have described the progress and achievements of the Vision 2020 programme as well as the current and future challenges and opportunities for global eye health care. Significant progress has been made in the prevention and treatment of vitamin A deficiency, onchocerciasis, and trachoma due to the implementation of large scale public health initiatives including mass distribution of azithromycin/ tetracycline, ivermectin, and vitamin A. The rate of cataract surgery has increased but struggles to keep pace with increasing demands due to the aging population. The treatment of glaucoma, age related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and retinopathy of prematurity present increasing challenges. The provision of integrated people-centred eye care with universal access is a challenge to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs)⁵. New opportunities have been provided by the increasing use of technology for example telemedicine and online eye health education.

Both the WHO Report on Vision and Lancet Commission on Global Eye Health address the provision of eye health care in low and middle income countries. The WHO Report discusses the importance of universal health coverage (Chapter 5) and integrated people-centred eye care (Chapter 6). The Lancet Commission supports this view and stresses the importance of the delivery of universal eye health care through an effective and supported primary health care system.

The global organisations that promote and advise on strengthening health systems and eye care services are the World Health Organization (WHO) for Member States, and the International Association for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) for international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), professional bodies and academic institutions.

There are in addition many organisations who support the provision of eye care services by the work of trained eye care personnel. These organisations have varying priorities and methods of working, including a

sustainable element of teaching and training for local eye care teams. The work for volunteer eye care personnel to support these organisations is both challenging and rewarding. The clinical conditions are often significantly more advanced than those seen in developed countries, the patients may previously have undergone multiple and varied treatments, language barriers may need to be overcome with the use of an interpreter, and there may be other cultural barriers. The work of a visiting healthcare team needs to recognise these difficulties and be sensitive to local needs and expectations in order to make a significant contribution to strengthening the local healthcare system and services.

References:

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Eye Care Team and Patients Following an Eye Camp. Rajasthan, India