

# IHCA

IRISH HOSPITAL  
CONSULTANTS  
ASSOCIATION

## 35<sup>th</sup> IHCA AGM

## National Council Annual Report 2022/2023

**Martin Varley, Secretary General**



#CARECANTWAIT



## National Council

- National officers elected at the National Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- Membership of the National Council is on page 29 for ratification following this report
- National Council Committees (pages 3 to 5)
- Council met on 11 occasions in the past year



## 2022 – 2024 National Council

IHCA National Council 2022/2024		
Name	Hospital/Region	Specialty
<b>Eastern Region</b>		
Dr Angus Burns	Dublin Dental University Hospital	Orthodontics
Prof Gabrielle Colleran	CHI at Temple Street/NMH	Radiology
Prof Anne Doherty	Mater Hospital	Psychiatry
Dr David Kevans	St James's Hospital	Gastroenterology
Mr Rustom Manecksha	Tallaght University Hospital	Urological Surgery
Mr Timothy Martin Murphy	Tallaght University Hospital	Orthopaedic Surgery
Dr Patricia Walsh	Naas General Hospital	Psychiatry
<b>South East</b>		
Dr Carmel Ann Daly	University Hospital Waterford	Radiology
Prof Robert Landers	University Hospital Waterford	Histopathology
Dr Conor O'Riordan	St Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny	Radiology
<b>Midland</b>		
Prof Clare Fallon	Midland Regional Hospital, Mullingar	Geriatric Medicine
Dr Conor Meehan	Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore	Radiology
<b>North East</b>		
Dr Rachel Cullivan	Cavan General Hospital	Psychiatry
Dr Mike Staunton	Our Lady of Lourdes, Drogheda	Anaesthesiology
<b>North West</b>		
Dr Áine Burke	Sligo University Hospital	Haematology
Dr John Scully	Letterkenny University Hospital	Anaesthesiology
<b>West</b>		
Dr Brian Egan	Mayo University Hospital	Gastroenterology
Dr Jan Steiner	Galway Clinic	Anaesthesiology
Vacant		
<b>Mid-West</b>		
Mr Colin Peirce	University Hospital Limerick	General Surgery
Prof Clodagh O'Gorman	University Hospital Limerick	Paediatrics
<b>Southern</b>		
Ms Eimear Conroy	University Hospital Kerry	Orthopaedic Surgery
Mr Greg Fulton	Cork University Hospital	Vascular Surgery
Dr Sinead Harney	Cork University Hospital	Rheumatology
Vacant		
<b>Co-Options</b>		
Prof Elizabeth Barrett	CHI Temple Street	Psychiatry
Dr Gerard O'Connor	Mater Hospital	Emergency Medicine
Dr Ikechukwu Okafor	CHI Temple Street	Paediatrics

## National Officers

**President**

**Prof Robert Landers**

University Hospital Waterford

**Vice Presidents**

**Prof Gabrielle Colleran**

Children's Health Ireland, Temple St

**Prof Anne Doherty**

Mater Hospital

**Membership Secretary**

**Dr Conor O'Riordan**

St Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny

**Treasurer**

**Prof Clare Fallon**

Midland Regional Hospital, Mullingar

## National Committees & Chairs

- 1. Focus Group**  
National Officers and immediate past president, *ex officio*
- 2. Finance Committee**  
Prof Clare Fallon
- 3. Legal Affairs Committee**  
Prof Robert Landers
- 4. New Entrant Discrimination Committee**  
Prof Robert Landers
- 5. New Entrant Working Group**  
Dr Laura Durcan
- 6. Contract Negotiation Group**  
Prof Robert Landers
- 7. Psychiatry Committee**  
Prof Anne Doherty
- 8. Private Practice Committee**  
Dr Conor O’Riordan
- 9. Full Time Private Practice Committee**  
Mr Peter Ryan (Chair), Mr Colm Fahy (Vice Chair)
- 10. Health Insurer Schedule Reviews**  
National Officers & representatives of relevant specialties

## #CareCantWait

THERE ARE **896,700** PEOPLE ON SOME FORM OF NTPF WAITING LIST.

THIS IS AN INCREASE OF OVER **26,600** PEOPLE THIS YEAR ALONE.

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IHCA IRISH HOSPITAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

Almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of those waiting for inpatient/day case treatment in Ireland are in the West and North-West

But only **36** additional acute hospital beds were opened in the region's hospitals in the last two years

#CARECANTWAIT

- Launched in 2019
- **Capacity deficits**
- **Consultant recruitment and retention crisis**
- **Increase public & political awareness**
- In past year:
  - Twitter/X followers  $\uparrow$  4%
  - +250 posts (incl. 70 videos, audio clips or infographics)
  - **23 references (avg.) to IHCA in media each month**
  - 600K annual Twitter/X impressions

### A DECADE OF DESPAIR FOR PATIENTS

Impact of Government's decision to cut new Consultant pay since 2012

OUTPATIENT WAITING LISTS	INPATIENT/DAY CASE WAITING LISTS	MORE THAN A	SOME	OVER
<b>100x</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>100x</b>	<b>1400</b>
HAVE SURGED BY <b>240,000</b> (+62%)	HAVE INCREASED BY ALMOST <b>30,000</b> PEOPLE (+60%)	INCREASE IN PATIENTS WAITING LONGER THAN <b>ONE YEAR</b> FOR HOSPITAL TREATMENT	<b>SOME 1400</b> SPECIALIST DOCTORS HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM THE REGISTER	<b>OVER 900</b> PERMANENT CONSULTANT POSTS VACANT OR NOT FILLED AS NEEDED

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THERE ARE **98,000** CHILDREN ON SOME FORM OF NTPF WAITING LIST

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## Pre-Budget Submission 2024

IHCA IRISH HOSPITAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION #CARECANTWAIT

### HEALTH BUDGET 2024

must ensure realistic funding for the INCREASED DEMAND AND COST OF HOSPITAL CARE.

### AT LEAST 5,000 BEDS

are needed across public hospitals by 2030 – or 700 extra hospital beds each year for the next seven years. STARTING WITH THE RAPID DELIVERY OF 1,500 ACUTE BEDS IN 2023 AND 2024 - AS ANNOUNCED BY THE MINISTER.

### AN INCREASE TO 10%

of the total health budget is needed for Ireland's Mental Health Services - currently only 5.7% is allocated to

THE CARE OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE PATIENTS.

### 930 PERMANENT CONSULTANT POSTS

that are vacant or temporarily filled must be filled as needed and **OVER 2,000 CONSULTANTS** must be appointed by 2030.

### 1.1 MILLION PEOPLE

REMAIN ON SOME FORM OF HOSPITAL WAITING LIST for assessment, diagnostics and care. Budget 2024 must both commit and deliver necessary funding for these patients to get the care they need.

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# IHCA

## #CareCantWait Videos

Waiting lists due to **public hospital and mental health service capacity deficits** and the **1 in 5 permanent Consultant posts not filled as needed** and already **low number of Consultants** on a population basis



**OVER**  
**3,500**  
**APPOINTMENTS**  
**CANCELLED**  
**BETWEEN**  
**DEC 2022 AND JAN 2023**



ACROSS THE UL HOSPITALS GROUP

**A MINIMUM OF 5,000 ADDITIONAL PUBLIC HOSPITAL BEDS BY 2030**

**or 700 extra hospital beds each year for the next seven years.**



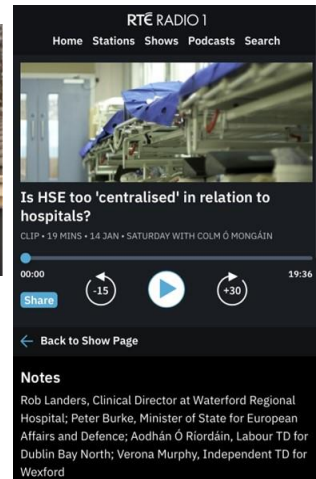
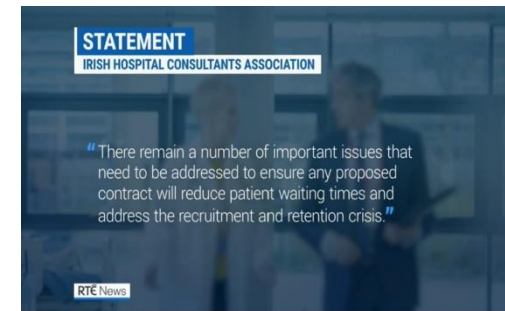
**131,600**  
**PEOPLE**  
**ON**  
**WAITING LISTS**



ACROSS HOSPITALS IN THE  
SAOLTA UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE GROUP

# IHCA

# Media Coverage





# IHCA

## Doctors and Donnelly clash over out-of-hours work appeal

IHCA consultants 'not confident' new contract will address recruitment challenge

IHCA criticises Donnelly comments: 'Consultants already working weekends'

Department and doctors at odds over waiting lists

Decade of hospital and EI 'overcrowding' raised at HSE meeting over driving up waiting lists, 'delays to contract change decisions'

Minist to work on Midlands 'Ignored' In Government's Hospital Bed Plan  
Consultants warn of resources as 838 recorded on trolleys

Trolley crisis: Waterford hospital 'shows solution in plain sight'

Hospital has avoided patients on trolleys by purchasing locally, says Dr Rob Landers

Limerick professor says health service has 'taken eye off the ball'

## Almost 85,000 hospital cancellations so far this year

IHCA raises concerns with Govt over some details of new consultant contract

'It's our duty to speak out' - Sligo Hospital consultants say facilities not up to scratch

## Elderly patients left waiting more than 24 hours in ED

Over-75s kept in for two hours more than the general population

## Growing mental health crisis among young

Hospital waiting lists at a 'virtual standstill'

Reduction targets to be 'significantly' missed as over a million wait

RTÉ NEWS SPORT ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS LIFESTYLE CULTURE PLAYER TV RADIO  
NEWS > HEALTH > Ireland World Business Ukraine Climate Politics Nuacht RTÉ Investigates

By Lisa O'Donnell  
THE Government is on course to significantly miss its waiting-list reduction targets, consultants warn, as more than one million people await hospital care.  
The Irish Hospital Consultants Association (IHCA) described waiting lists as a "virtual" standstill.  
Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly said the government is committed to reducing waiting times and improving patient health and safety.  
The latest figures show that 1.1 million people are waiting for treatment, with 524 patients on trolleys.  
The IHCA said that 2022 had seen some trends made into cutting the number of those waiting longer than 12 months for an outpatient appointment or inpatient treatment. However, it said many of those gains have been lost due to a shortage of hospital beds.  
Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly recently announced a rapid build programme aimed at delivering 1,500 additional beds in acute public hospitals over the next three years.  
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IRISH TATLER  
Business Post  
Decades on from HILLSBOROUGH  
Revealed: Government's plan to break medics' resistance to seven-day rosters  
Business Transformation Index 2023  
BTI 2023  
Varadkar's leadership in question as 'readiness drift' erodes the deal

## Waiting list woes go on

Over 1.1 million people are still in need of hospital care... with 'long waiters' rising

## Consultants warn of growing waiting lists across the West and North West

breakingnews.ie  
TOP STORIES  
IRELAND  
Almost 98,000 children on hospital waiting lists, figures show

By Helen Bruce  
MORE than 1.1 million people are waiting for some form of hospital care, with the number of long waiters on the rise again as overcrowding persists.  
Emergency department attendances are up 194,000 compared with the pre-pandemic levels of 2019, leading to 41,800 cancellations in the first two months of 2023.  
The Irish Hospital Consultants Association (IHCA) has said the latest waiting list figures for the end of April, released by the Department of Health, show that 1.1 million people are still in need of hospital care, with the number of long waiters rising.  
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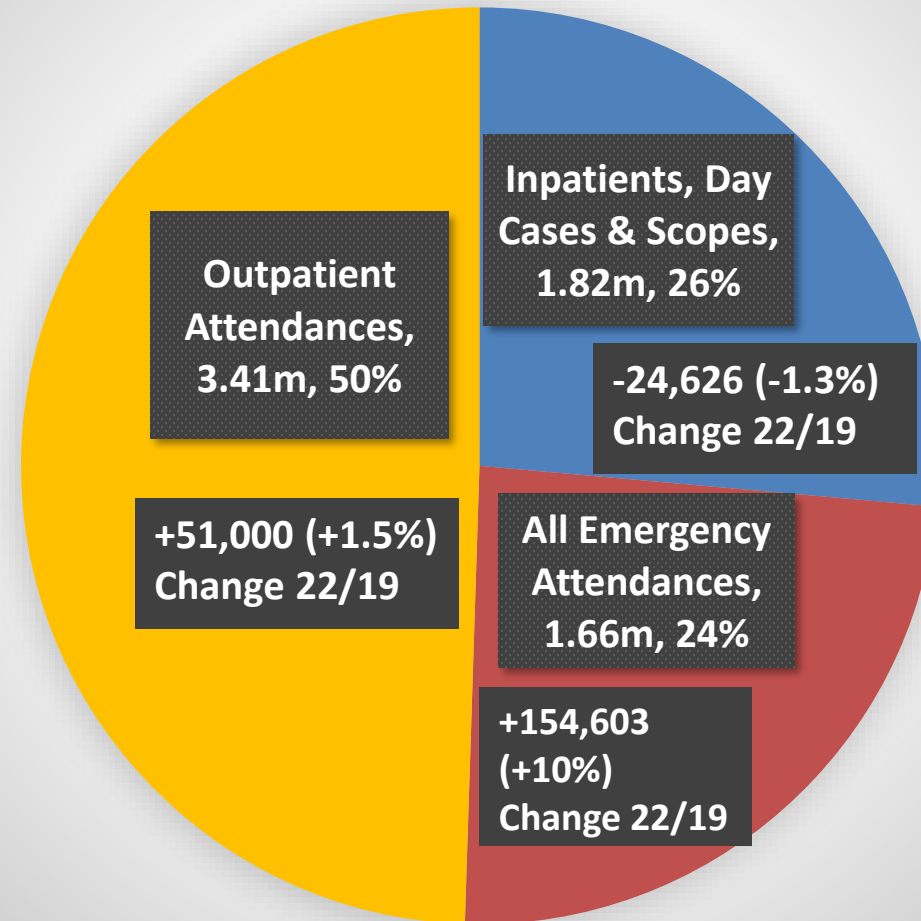
By Craig Hughes  
Political Correspondent  
Minister's hospital bed plan 'outdated'

general population during this time was 7.5 hours, compared to 11.5 hours at the start of 2023. However, as we exit the pandemic, it is expected that the number of patients waiting will have fallen to pre-pandemic levels.

**Public Hospital  
Medical &  
Surgical Care  
provided to  
almost 6.9m  
patients in 2022**

(6.7m in 2019,  
5.8m in 2020 &  
6.3m in 2021)

## Public Hospital Activity in 2022

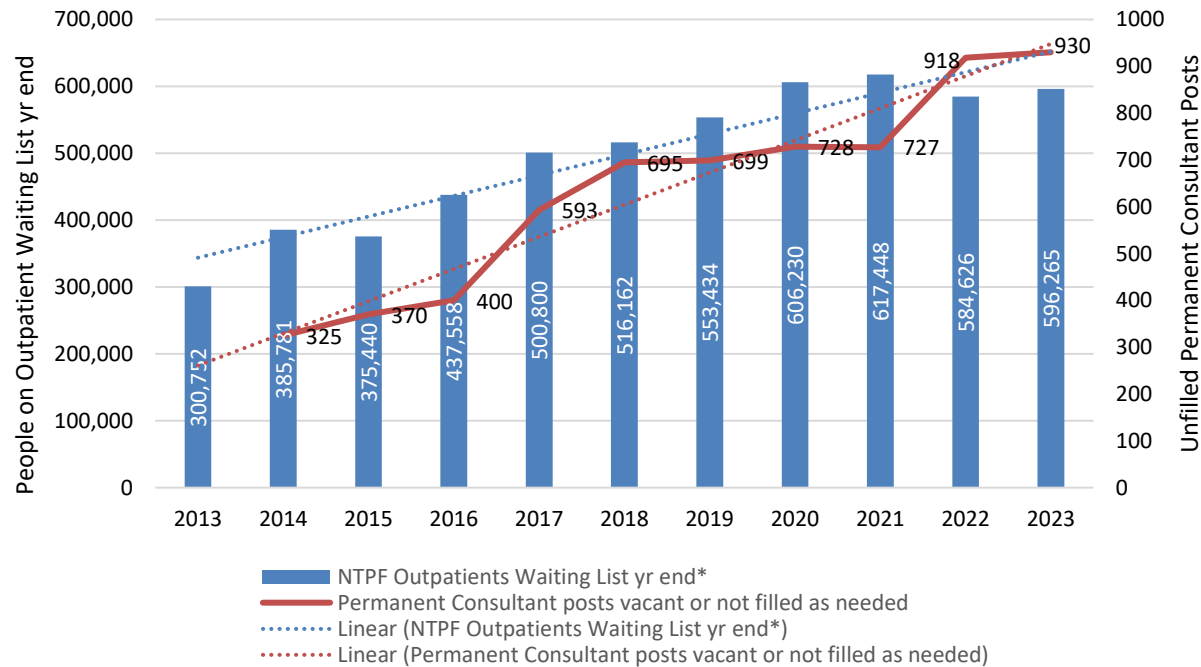


**Despite increase in activity, nearly 900,000 people are on NTPF waiting lists**

## Consultant Vacancies

- **Govt. must restore trust to fill the 933 permanent Consultant posts vacant or temporarily filled**
- **Govt. must fund and appoint 2,000 additional Consultants by 2030 – or +300 Consultants p.a.**

Strong trend and relationship between increasing levels of Consultant vacancies/temporarily filled posts and growing waiting lists

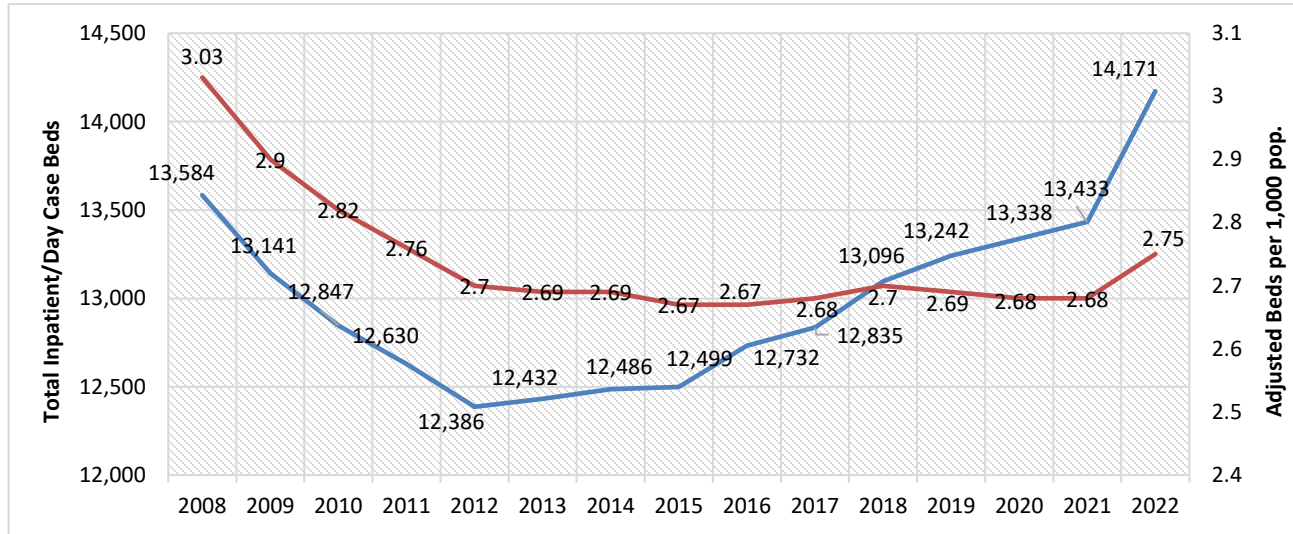


Sources: See Pre-Budget Submission

- Ireland has **34% fewer Consultants than EU avg.** and longest waiting lists in Europe
- Record **933 Consultant posts (22% of total)** vacant or filled on temporary/ agency basis
- HSE forced to fill vacant posts with **109 non-specialists** at end of June in breach of MPA 2007, HSE recruitment rules and Consultant Contracts
- **1,400 specialists have voluntarily withdrawn** from Medical Council's Specialist Division since 2012
- **Workload, burnout and lack of medical teams** and other supports are among factors leading to decision to leave
- Recruitment problems remain – **no appointments in 86 out of 252 completed PAS competitions in 2022**

# Public Hospital Demand and Capacity

## Change in Total Average Inpatient/Day Case Beds 2008-2022



Sources: Health in Ireland: Key Trends, 2014, 2017 & 2021, DOH; Department of Health Open Beds Report – March 2021, 12 July 2021; HSE PQ response to Deputy David Cullinane, 7 April 2022; HSE PQ response to Deputy David Cullinane, 14 February 2023

Since 2008:

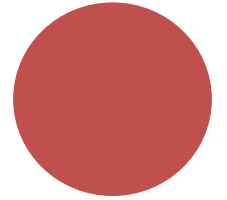
- **Population** ↑ **664,000 (15%)**
- **Inpatient/Day Case Beds** ↑ **587 (4%)**
- **But on a Population Basis Hospital Beds** ↓ **10%**
- Lowest number of hospital beds in EU – **40% below EU27 avg.**
- Highest bed occupancy rate – **95% avg.** (Jan-Feb 2023)
- HSE accepts this level of bed occupancy is **“unsafe”**

- Ireland needs minimum **5,000 additional public hospital beds by 2030** – or **700 extra hospital beds each year** for next 7 years
- Must start with **rapid delivery of the 1,500 acute beds** Minister for Health committed to open in 2023 and 2024
- Minister acknowledged proposed increase of **2,600 beds in Capacity Review and NDP was “lowballed”**
- Even additional **1,000 inpatient beds since 2018 is 25% below target** of +260 beds p.a.
- Current **323 ICU beds need to increase to:**
  - **579 beds** as per Prospectus Report (2009) – **+79%**
  - **Then 720 to reach OECD avg.** on population basis – **+123%**

# IHCA

## Public Hospital Capacity

- Ireland has **5.2 operating theatres per 100,000 pop.** in public hospitals – **half the EU avg. (10.3)**
- **Expansion of theatre capacity is needed in all public hospitals** – not just in planned **6 surgical hubs (€100m-€120m)** and **4 elective hospitals (€3bn estimated capital cost)**
- Above costs are significant but just a **fraction of Govt. forecast budget surpluses of €26bn** in 2023 & 2024
- Increase in capacity required to address overcrowding
  - **Annual Trolley Count could be as high as 123,000 in 2023**
  - **Cancelled appointments: 250,000** this year if current rates persist & capacity not expanded urgently
  - **500-plus patients on a daily basis are awaiting step-down care in community often for months**



## Waiting Lists

**Consultant vacancies and capacity deficits causing persistent and damaging waiting lists for assessment and treatment**

- **896,700** people on some form of NTPF waiting list
- Already **+1.1m awaiting hospital care given 250,000 also waiting for diagnostic scans: MRIs, CTs, Ultrasounds**
- **€443m WLAP target ↓ 69,000 (10%) in 3 main waiting lists by end 2023**
- **Lists ↑ 18,200 by end August v 45,500 pro rata reduction target by Aug – a 63,700 shortfall**
- **2.7% (+181K) ↑ in overall hospital active in 2022 v 2019 (mainly ED ↑ 155k)**  
**OPD ↑ 1.5%      IP/DC/Scopes ↓ 1.3%      ED ↑ 10%**
- If **Outpatient ↑ >2%** on 2019 levels, it could take **14½ years** to clear estimated backlog of care over past 4 years and reduce current unacceptable waiting lists
- If **IP/DC ↑ >2%** on 2019 levels, it could take **13 years** to clear est. backlog and waiting list
- Dependent on increase in Consultant numbers and expansion in public hospital capacity



## Capital Investments

- Over €4bn capital funding needed for announced hospital developments not yet provided for:
  - 4 new Elective Hospitals (est. cost over €3bn)
  - 1,500 rapid build hospital beds promised by end of 2024 (€1bn)
  - 6 Surgical Hubs (€100m-€120m)
- Overruns with **National Children's Hospital** must be funded separately to avoid cancellation/delay with other projects
- Capital funding has not been provided for **essential equipment replacements** – when HSE estimated in 2017 this would **cost €3.64bn**
- **Urgent need to fund National Electronic Health Record without delay**
- HSE needs to invest in new IT systems, replacing legacy IT equipment and upgrading its cybersecurity



## Pre-Budget Submission: Budget 2024

- **Ensure realistic funding for the increased demand and cost of hospital care**
- **€4 billion in capital funding to build and open essential hospital improvements already announced by the Minister for Health**
- **+5,000 acute hospital beds and more than double ICU beds**
- **Rapid delivery of the 1,500 acute beds the Minister committed to open in 2023 and 2024**
- **Immediately fill the record 933 (1 in 5) approved Consultant posts vacant/filled on temporary basis & appoint 2,000 additional Consultants by 2030 to address waiting lists**
- **Expand theatre capacity for essential scheduled care across our acute hospital base not just in six surgical hubs and four elective hospitals**



## Mental Health Budget

### Ireland has:

- **Third lowest number of inpatient psychiatric beds in EU**
- **Third** of all permanent Consultant Psychiatry posts are **not filled as needed**
- Mental Health **Teams significantly below** recommended levels in *A Vision for Change* (2006)

### Government must:

- Open an additional **300 adult psychiatric inpatient beds**
- More than **double** number of **CAMHS beds from 50 to 130**
- **Fill the 32% of Consultant Psychiatry posts** not filled as needed plus approve additional posts
- **Address shortfalls** in Community Team **staffing**
- At **5.7% of overall Health Budget**, Mental Health Budget is half most Northern European countries
- Should be **increased to 10% of Health Budget** as recommended in Sláintecare



- Recent CAMHS reports underline scale and severity of deficits
- Some CAMHS Teams 50% below recommended staffing levels
- Consequences of under-resourcing exposed in **South Kerry CAMHS** – no permanent Consultant Clinical Lead for **7 years**

## Consultant Contract Negotiations

- **Ministerial instruction to implement 2023 Consultants' Contract from 8<sup>th</sup> March formally brought an end to negotiations prematurely**
- **Regrettable that significant number of concerns not satisfactorily addressed**
- **Association carried out negotiations in good faith with aim of achieving Contract that would attract Consultants back from abroad and those in training**
- **Survey found 73% of public contract respondents more likely to remain on their current contract**
- **Concerns borne out as just 379 (9%) Consultants switched to 2023 CC by mid-Sept v 85% of Consultants who had signed up to 2008 CC over similar period**
- **Ability to fill 933 vacant Consultants posts plus 2,000 additional posts and address record waiting lists will be the acid test of the new Contract**

## Clinical Indemnification

- **Consultant clinical indemnity costs** more than doubled – up to quadrupling in some specialties – since 2012
- **State Claims Agency costs increasing** – ↑ 4-fold in 8 years
- **Contributory factors:**
  - Capacity constraints
  - Consultant vacancies
  - Waiting lists and delays
- **Reform** Tort Law, pre-action protocols, mediation
- Met with **Interdepartmental Working Group** on clinical negligence claims in May

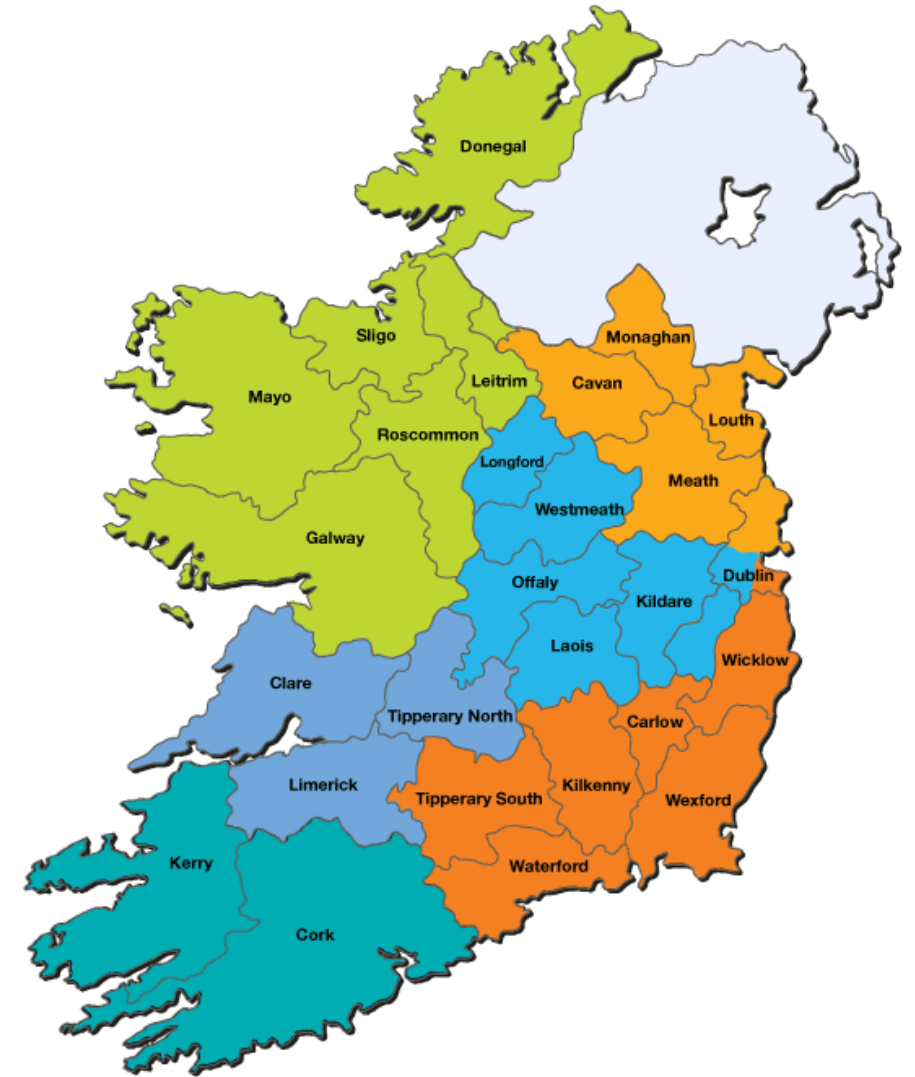
# IHCA

## Governance & Restructuring

- Six new **HSE Health Regions** must be empowered through the **devolution of authority, responsibility and accountability** to local hospitals and services
- **Streamlined service** essential to facilitate **effective decision making**



- FSS an Iarthair agus Iarthuaiscirt  
HSE West and North West
- FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus an Oirthuaiscirt  
HSE Dublin and North East
- FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus Lár na Tíre  
HSE Dublin and Midlands
- FSS an Iarthar Láir  
HSE Mid West
- FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus an Oirdheiscirt  
HSE Dublin and South East
- FSS an Iardheiscirt  
HSE South West



- **Redirect resources to increase staffing directly involved in providing frontline patient care**

## Health Insurance

- Extensive discussions with insurers
- **Updated 2023 Schedules:**  
VHI, Laya and Irish Life Health
- Further specialty meetings



## Conclusions

- **Fill the 933 permanent Consultant posts not filled as needed and appoint 2,000 additional Consultants by 2030**
- **Credible, funded, time-bound plans needed from Government to rapidly increase acute hospital capacity**
- **Need an estimated 5,000 additional public hospital beds by 2030. Must start with the rapid delivery of 1,500 acute beds Minister for Health committed to open in 2023/24**
- **€4 billion in capital funding needed to build and open essential hospital improvements already announced by Minister Donnelly**
- **Essential that additional scheduled care is provided to patients in all public hospitals, not just in proposed 6 surgical hubs and 4 elective hospitals**
- **Consultants must be provided with adequate medical teams and other supports required to provide timely high quality safe care to patients**
- **Acid test for new Contract will be vacancies and waiting lists**

## Approval of the Annual Report Proposer and Secunder

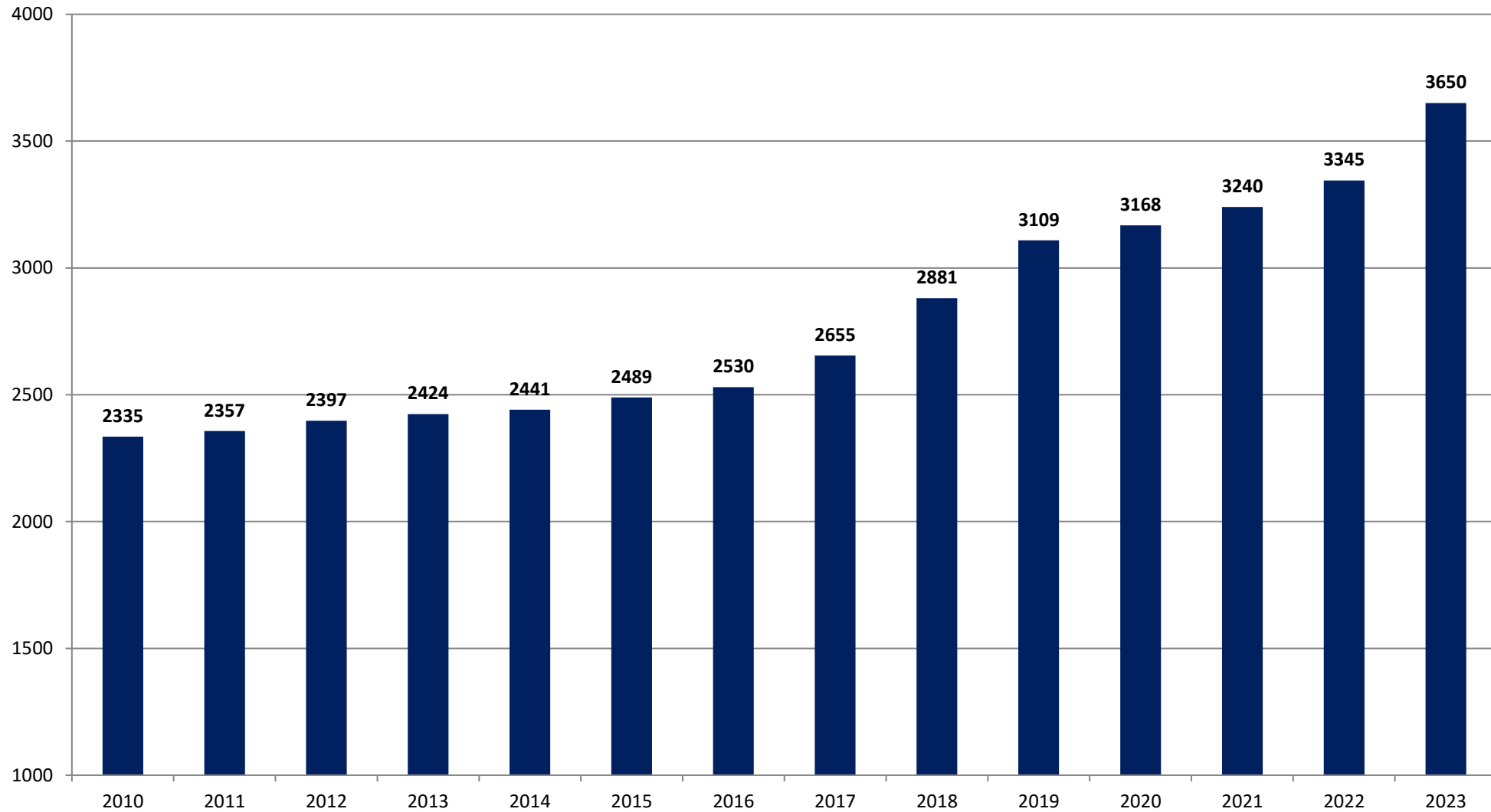


**Mr Martin Varley**  
**Membership Report**





## Membership Report



- **Membership – 3,650 plus hundreds of Associate Members**

## Membership Report Proposer and Secunder



**Reappointment of the Auditor**  
**Curran Nalty & Co**  
**Proposer and Seconded**

