

# Annual Report 2024



**Research. Evidence. Action.**

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# Outcomes and impact in 2024



€13m

for 73 Capacity Building & Leadership awards



€12m

value of HRB supported applications for Horizon Europe funding programme – above EU average.



€18.7m

invested in 14 European Joint Awards (including €14m in co-funding from European funding agency partners)



€64.3

overall investment including co-funding worth €16.8m



€28.2m

invested in 82 projects and programmes



832,188

live records on LINK



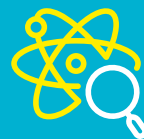
3,362

active users on LINK online data system



€2.5m

funding to support clinical practice guideline development



224

awards made across 25 host institutions and research-performing organisations



32

awards with co-funding/co-investment



83

number of Oireachtas debates which mentioned the HRB



~100

committee members supported across 5 National Research Ethics Committees (NRECs) delivering 491 ethics opinions



10

Evidence Products delivered to the Department of Health, comprising 3 evidence reviews and 7 evidence briefs



6 HRB reports



6 peer-reviewed journal articles

# Chairperson's report



*Tracy Cunningham*

**Dr Tracy Cunningham**  
Chairperson

This is my first year as Chair of the Health Research Board (HRB), and I am pleased to report that we are making excellent progress towards achieving the goals outlined in our corporate strategy, *Health research – making an impact*, which runs until 2025.

This report provides an insight into our wide-ranging activities over the past year, highlighting key investments, collaborations, and the impact of our work on people's health, patient care, and policy.

It also demonstrates our importance in society, with mentions in 83 Oireachtas debates in 2024; the key role we played informing Government policy on the development of the first National Mental Health Research Strategy; and the highly relevant research on aspects of the Growing Up in Ireland longitudinal study.

We provided evidence that informed both policies and services in the areas of disability, drugs and alcohol, homeless deaths and mental health in conjunction with the Department of Health; the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; the Department of Justice; and the Department of Social Protection.

As a Board, we also continued to show our commitment to best practice in governance with the publication of a Register of Interests and Board meeting minutes on our website, while our Audit and Risk Committee ensured that the HRB's internal control systems and audit activities were actively monitored.

The Board held seven meetings in 2024 and established a new Board subgroup, the Development Committee, which focuses on the development of senior management, culture, and organisational structure.

Board training during the year included the following topics: key public sector trends, the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*, Board effectiveness, and the role of the Board in strategy development.

I wish to thank all HRB staff for their excellent work in advancing our corporate strategy and supporting the Board and our committees.

I also wish to take this opportunity to place on record my gratitude to Professor Seamas Donnelly and Professor Charles Normand, whose terms as Board members concluded, and to welcome onto the Board Professor Mark Lawler of Queen's University Belfast, Dr Martina Ní Chúlain of the University of Galway, and Professor Peter Doran of University College Dublin.

My gratitude also goes to Martin Higgins for his work as external member of the Audit and Risk Committee, and I welcome the newest member, Sinéad Ward.

Finally, I wish to extend my gratitude and thanks to my predecessor, Professor Bernadette Hannigan for her outstanding work in guiding the HRB through a period of development and expansion as we hired more staff, took on more responsibility, widened the scope of our collaborations at home and abroad, and of course, met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the next year, I will oversee the implementation of the existing corporate strategy and, most importantly, the development of a new strategic plan (2026–2030) that will enhance the national health research ecosystem and deliver trusted evidence to optimise health and social care into the future.

# Chief Executive's report



*Mairéad O'Driscoll*

**Dr Mairéad O'Driscoll**

Chief Executive

This year, our organisation made major advances in enhancing data quality, promoting evidence-based policy-making, and expanding collaborations to support the health research landscape at home and abroad.

The confidence Government, State agencies, European Union (EU) partners, academia and civil society have in the research we fund and conduct is evident in this report, which provides practical examples of our funding, collaborations, management and key achievements.

## Funding high-quality research

In 2024, our overall investment amounted to €64.3 million, including co-funding worth €16.8 million. We made 224 awards across 25 host institutions and research-performing organisations.

There were 73 Capacity Building and Leadership Enhancement awards to the value of €13 million and €2.5 million in funding was allocated to support clinical practice guideline development.

Some €26.5 million was invested in 82 projects and programmes; while €18.7 million was invested in 14 European Joint Awards, including €14 million in co-funding from European funding partners.

## Strengthening data quality and integrity

One of our notable successes was certification under the Irish Statistical System Code of Practice (ISSCoP) for the National Psychiatric Inpatient Reporting System (NPIRS) and the National In-Patient Reporting System (NPIRS) managed by the Health Research Board (HRB).

This accreditation means these national data systems provide official statistics based on the European Statistics Code of Practice, co-ordinated in Ireland by the Central Statistics Office.

## Driving national strategy in mental health research

The publication of Ireland's first National Mental Health Research Strategy was another pivotal accomplishment. We were central to the development of the strategy in partnership with an Expert Group that included representatives from the public sector, academia, non-profit organisations, and – crucially – people with lived experience of mental health challenges.

## European Health Data Space

We also participated on the Project Steering Board for an EU-funded, Department of Health-led project to design a Health Data Access Body for the secondary use of health data for policy and research purposes to comply with harmonisation requirements set out in the European Health Data Space regulation.

## Delivering insights on substance misuse and homelessness

In April, we published our fifth alcohol overview report, a comprehensive resource tracking emerging trends and the broader consequences of alcohol use.

Highlights of this year's findings:

- Approximately 50% of drinkers engage in hazardous drinking
- Irish alcohol prices are the second lowest in the OECD adjusted for wages and inflation
- Seventy-three percent of the population resides within 300 metres of a licensed premises

We also published an analysis of people who died while homeless based on national data from closed coronial files – building on a pilot requested by the Department of Health.

The data show that almost all who died had a history of substance use and there was a high prevalence of mental health and medical conditions. It also showed average median age at the time of death was 36.5 for women and 42 for men.

## Evidence

Our Evidence Centre continued to deliver evidence to support health and social care policy, producing 10 evidence products.

For example, we conducted an overview of 47 systematic reviews to inform Department of Health policy on the safety and effectiveness of medicinal cannabis.

There was some evidence to support the use of medicinal cannabis for clinical indicators for which it has traditionally been recommended but the findings for most other outcomes were inconsistent at best.

## Expanding research and funding partnerships

The HRB continues to engage in strategic partnerships that deliver tangible benefits to health research. For instance, 2024 was the 11th year of our partnership with Health Research Charities Ireland (HRCI). We contributed €1.9 million to research grants in areas such as social connectivity in dementia; promoting healthy sleep in new parents; and diagnosis and therapies for systemic sclerosis, cancers, multiple sulfatase deficiency, ocular disorders and cystinosis.

One of the benefits of this funding model is that smaller charities can pursue pioneering investigations. And in instances where rare disease research requires expertise from outside Ireland, funds may be channelled internationally.

### **Capturing long-term impact of HRB investments**

In 2023, we launched Researchfish – an online reporting system capturing research outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The first submission period concluded in March 2024, resulting in an extensive dataset to guide strategic planning and future funding decisions.

By gathering evidence on collaborations, further funding, policy influence, and public engagement, Researchfish helps us build a fuller picture of the impact of HRB-funded projects even after formal grant periods end.

### **Groundbreaking genomic research**

Another significant long-term initiative, the Genome of Ireland (GoI) project, received €1.45 million from the HRB and the European Commission (EC) in October.

This complements our €400,000 funding for the Genomic Data Infrastructure (GDI) project, which aims to create a cross-border network of national genome collections and other data to advance personalised medicine.

These projects feed into the Genome of Europe (GoE), which consists of 49 partner institutions across 27 European countries and is part of the 1+Million Genomes (1+MG) initiative.

### **Participating and collaborating internationally**

We continued to develop our activity with international partners contributing to EU-level agencies, working groups, initiatives and networks.

For instance, we participate in the European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS), a Horizon Europe initiative supporting more sustainable, inclusive, and innovative healthcare systems. A core activity of THCS is joint funding of cross-border research projects.

The National Office for Research Ethics Committees – a business unit within the HRB – supported nearly 100 members across the National Research Ethics Committees (NRECs) to deliver a single national ethics opinion for 491 applications for regulated research studies, and deepened its European involvement, reinforcing Ireland's reputation as a key player in research ethics.

It contributed to the European Medicines Agency (EMA); the Heads of Medicines Agencies (HMA); and the EC, supporting the harmonised implementation of EU regulations such as the Clinical Trials Regulation (CTR), Medical Devices Regulation (MDR), and In Vitro Diagnostic Medical Devices Regulation (IVDR).

### **Investing in Irish researchers**

One of our core functions is to fund research across a broad range of researchers at individual, institutional and Government level.

For instance, we are cultivating research leadership through the Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA) and Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards (ECSA) through a €12.5 million investment. These schemes support early-career researchers and practitioners transitioning to independent careers.

### **Enhancing HRB performance**

We continued secretariat support to the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee (HRCDC), which provides statutory consent for processing personal data for health research under the Health Research Regulations 2018.

The HRB Human Resources Unit launched an initiative to enhance workplace culture, benchmarking our performance against other public sector organisations.

This involved short, anonymous questionnaires yielding real-time staff feedback on engagement, culture, innovation, retention, and recruitment.

Initial findings reflected a positive, supportive workplace, with staff valuing flexibility, respect, collaboration, and societal impact.

### **Communications**

There was also a significant development in HRB communications with the launch of a new website and Content Management System (CMS).

The new CMS improves long-term functionality, makes the user experience for key stakeholders simpler – particularly funding applicants – and enables easier updates by non-technical staff.

The new site is mobile-compatible and compliant with World Wide Web Consortium and EU accessibility standards, using strong GDPR-aligned security protocols.

### **Conclusion**

Finally, I want to thank our staff, Board members and our associated committees whose expertise and dedication ensured our work met the highest standards and continued to enjoy public trust.

I also want to thank our partners and stakeholders and the researchers we fund for their commitment to the mission we all share in harnessing research and evidence to create transformative impacts on health and social care in Ireland and further afield.



# Snapshot of HRB activities 2024

## HRB invests €12.5 million in 13 new projects to develop future research leaders

This funding was awarded under the HRB Research Career Framework, which provides emerging researchers with opportunities to establish themselves as independent investigators. Research projects supported covered topics such as suicide prevention in children, adolescents, and young adults; enhancing well-being in residential care; and biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease in people with Down syndrome.

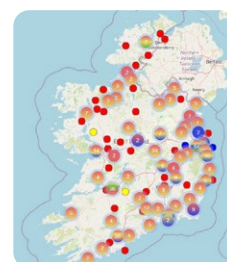
## Bibliometric analysis of HRB-supported publications finds positive trends

The HRB commissioned bibliometrics specialists Digital Science to conduct an analysis of HRB-supported publications covering 2018–2022. Their report found positive trends in open access publications, fewer uncited publications, and higher than average citations in most health research fields when compared with other funders in Ireland. Dr Teresa Maguire, HRB Director of Research Strategy and Funding, said that bibliometric analysis is regarded as “a robust method to estimate scientific quality and impact of research findings at many levels”.



## New interactive map for locating drug treatment faster

This HRB/Department of Health initiative provides a comprehensive view of all publicly funded addiction treatment and family support services across Ireland. Users can search by address or zoom in on their location to see all nearby services. The map also displays the types of treatment available.



## HRB implements Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID)

HRB grant applicants and grant holders can link their HRB-related activities to their ORCID profile through a unique alphanumeric identifier connecting them to their related research data. The HRB Grant Electronic Management System has been updated to facilitate smoother integration with ORCID. The data in an ORCID record are always controlled by the registrant.



## New Irish alcohol statistics dashboard

The HRB periodically publishes alcohol overviews, collating information about alcohol use, trends, and consequences. The new dashboard means that alcohol statistics, with data visualisation and interactive tables and graphs, are updated as new information becomes available. This development will aid policy-makers, those working in public health, students, researchers, service providers, and those advocating for recognition of the harms caused by alcohol.

## Mayo winner of HRB special prize at BT Young Scientist Exhibition 2024

Aoibheann Mangan from Mount St. Michael Secondary School in Claremorris won the HRB special prize for her machine-learning-based app to help children with asthma use their inhalers correctly. “Proper drug delivery is so important for effective asthma management and if you have poor inhaler technique, then that’s going to lead to poor asthma control,” Aoibheann said.



## Horizon Europe

The HRB hosts the National Delegate and National Contact point in Ireland for the Horizon Europe Health Cluster to maximise Irish participation in the programme. Ireland continues to punch above its weight in securing health research funding from this programme, with expert support and advice provided by the HRB team. In 2024, there were 17 successful Irish projects, securing more than €12 million for key areas including mental health, cancer, women's health, personalised prevention, healthcare access, and pandemic preparedness.

## HRB awards €2.5 million to support patient safety research

This 4-year award supports the Centre in Ireland for Clinical guideline support and Evidence Reviews (CICER), which provides scientific support and evidence to underpin national clinical guidelines aimed at improving patient safety. This information is published through the Department of Health's National Clinical Effectiveness Committee (NCEC).

## HRB invests €12.4 million in research to address health challenges

This funding will support 29 Investigator-Led Projects across 3 overarching themes: patient-oriented research, population health research, and health service research. Project topics include immune function in obesity, personalised exercise rehabilitation in cancer survivorship, psychosis, and more.

## HRB event celebrates value of public reviewer contribution

The HRB brought together our public reviewers and people interested in reviewing health research funding applications in November. The event celebrated the contribution of public reviewers and was an opportunity for attendees to hear from, and speak with, HRB-funded researchers and their Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) partners about the creative ways they have incorporated PPI in their research.



## New report to inform cancer-research funding strategy

A new HRB report, *Cancer Research Investment in Ireland (2019–2022)*, has mapped the types of cancer research funded in Ireland and identified gaps that can be addressed. The study supports the National Cancer Research Group's development of a new strategy for funding cancer research.

€1.25 million in co-funding with the Health Service Executive (HSE) for a new five-year initiative to establish the Evidence-based Quality Improvement and Patient Safety (EQUIPS) research network.

The HRB resumed data collection for probable suicide deaths using the National Drug-Related Deaths Index (NDRDI) methodology at the request of the Department of Health.

Participated in the research subcommittee of the new Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland (GRAI) and consulted with them about the possibility of expanding the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) to include gambling addiction.

Contributed National Psychiatric Inpatient Reporting System (NPIRS) data to the World Health Organization Mental Health Atlas on behalf of Ireland.

Achieved the Central Statistics Office's (CSO) Irish Statistical System Code of Practice (ISSCoP) quality assurance mark for two systems: NPIRS and the National Ability Supports System (NASS).

Launched a pilot funding call for a new Evidence for Policy (EfP) Research Programme to support the Department of Health's *Statement of Priorities: Health and Social Care Research 2023–2025*.

Invested €1.4 million in five new research projects as part of a pilot scheme designed to stimulate cross-border and transatlantic cancer research and innovation.

In line with an international drive to reform the publication of research, the HRB changed its policy to ‘full and immediate open access’, effective from January 2025.

The NPIRS shows a continuing trend of depressive disorders and schizophrenia being the most common diagnoses for adults, while eating disorders and depressive disorders are a key feature of child and adolescent admissions.

Published a review of 30 studies from nine countries which found no conclusive evidence of links between fluoridated water supply and bone health, cancer, kidney stones, infant abnormalities, or death rates.



# Key deliverables in line with corporate strategy 2021–2025

The Health Research Board (HRB) is Ireland’s lead public funding agency supporting innovative health and social care research.

As outlined in the HRB’s *Strategy 2021–2025: Health research – making an impact*, our vision is for better health through excellent research, data, and evidence, and our mission is to support research that improves people’s health, promotes evidence-informed care, and creates solutions to societal challenges.

Core elements of the HRB strategy also detail our commitment to placing people at the heart of everything we do, as led by our values as an organisation: leadership, independence, accountability, quality, responsiveness, collaboration, and inclusiveness.

In order to achieve this, our strategy describes six strategic objectives that guide our activities. This annual report highlights key achievements during 2024 in line with these objectives, and showcases examples of significant outcomes and successes.

## Core elements of HRB strategy 2021–2025





## Strategic objective 1

### Research that makes a difference

Research enables advances in health and social care that make a real difference to people's lives. The HRB is committed to investing in research that delivers value for health, the health system, society, and the economy.

We do this through a strategic, well-balanced funding portfolio that responds to real-world needs; collaborating with partners to address challenges and drive innovation in our health system; and supporting meaningful involvement of patients, carers, and the public in research. This ensures that HRB-funded research is applied in practice and contributes to better outcomes for Ireland and its people.

#### Key items delivered

- The HRB published a report which shows Ireland spent €106 million on cancer research between 2019 and 2022 – an upward trend in investment. The report shows the type of research conducted, highlights where there are gaps, and helps identify priority areas for investment in the future. This will underpin the work of the HSE National Cancer Research Group to inform the new national cancer strategy and support a strategic and coordinated approach to cancer research investment in Ireland.
- In line with Recommendation 93 in *Sharing the Vision – A Mental Health Policy for Everyone*, the HRB convened the National Mental Health Research Expert Group in 2023 to develop Ireland's first National Mental Health Research Strategy. Following a series of Expert Group meetings in 2024 and a public consultation on a draft strategy, and a series of stakeholder workshops, the Strategy was launched in the Department of Health in late 2024.

- The HRB co-designed and launched a new Evidence for Policy (EfP) Research Programme with the Department of Health to harness academic research capacity and expertise to inform health and social care policy. The HRB invested €2.4 million in seven projects that addressed priorities set out by the Department of Health. Topics include understanding and tackling drivers of the increase in sexually transmitted infections; the impact of Advanced Practice roles for Health and Social Care Professionals and managing primary care therapy waiting lists.
- Together with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Research and Development Division in Northern Ireland, the HRB co-funded a further 5-year phase of the all-island Palliative Care Research Network aligned with the publication of the new *National Adult Palliative Care Policy*.
- The HRB awarded funding to the Dementia Research Network Ireland to continue to support and promote interdisciplinary collaboration between researchers, academics, policy-makers, Public and Patient Involvement (PPI), and other stakeholders involved in dementia research.
- The HRB participated in the review conducted for the Minister of Health which was tasked with designing 'a dedicated, emerging health threats function'. The final report's key recommendations were to strengthen Ireland's preparedness for public health crises, ranging from pandemics to the effects of the climate emergency. Further recommendations included:
  - establishing an expert advisory group to provide scientific and technical advice to support Government decision-making during health emergencies
  - strengthening the 'One Health' approach to emerging health threats
  - establishing an evidence synthesis hub and rapid activation mechanism for emerging health threats
  - enabling and supporting Ireland's participation in multinational studies and adaptive trials to facilitate the development and deployment of medical countermeasures.
- The HRB joined the National Clinical Trials Oversight Group convened by the Minister for Health to oversee a strategic roadmap for the transformation of the clinical trials landscape in Ireland. The group includes representatives from the academic and hospital sectors, the trials community, the Health Service Executive (HSE), the HRB, industry, and patient groups.



- The HRB invested €12.4 million in 29 Investigator-Led Projects in 2024 to support innovative and internationally competitive projects in the broad-based areas of patient-oriented research, population health research, and health services research.
- The HRB continued to collaborate with Health Research Charities Ireland (HRCI), making 12 awards from 65 applications that were submitted by participating charities. The HRB provided almost €2 million of the overall €3.4 million investment.
- The HRB co-funded three new Applied Partnership Awards (APA) with partners from the HSE and the Football Cooperative. The APA scheme was designed to bring knowledge users and researchers together to collaboratively develop research projects that address a documented need within the Irish health or social care system.
- The HRB awarded €1.75 million in funding to Wave 6 of the Intellectual Disability Supplement to the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (IDS-TILDA), with funding provided by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. IDS-TILDA is a longitudinal study researching ageing in Ireland among people with an intellectual disability aged over 40 years. It aims to create a better understanding of the health inequities faced by older adults with intellectual disabilities as they age.
- The HRB approved business cases for the provision of core funding to HRCI and the Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science & Industry (IPPOSI) to support them in advancing activities complementary to the HRB strategy.
- The HRB published a bibliometric analysis of HRB-supported publications during the period 2018–2022. This showed a steady growth in HRB-funded publications and highlighted that 85% of HRB publications are now open access. This report was the first to explore evidence of policy impact as determined by citations in policy documents.
- The HRB analysed and reported on the outputs, outcomes, and impacts of HRB investments received from the first submissions to Researchfish from grant holders.





## Case Study 1

# Evaluating outputs, outcomes, and impacts from HRB investments

As a funder, it can be difficult for the HRB to capture the longitudinal impacts of our investments, given the complex and long-term nature of health research. To address this, the HRB introduced a new online reporting system, Researchfish, for our grants in 2024.

Researchfish is a tool that allows researchers to report research outputs, outcomes, and impacts and enables the HRB to gather and evaluate these important insights.

By capturing detailed information about the outcomes of research awards – even after an award has ended – Researchfish allows funding organisations like the HRB to demonstrate the value and impact of funded research. This information is crucial for assessing the return on investment of health research and for guiding future funding decisions.



Professor Keelin O'Donoghue, University College Cork, National Bereavement Advisory Group.

### Rich dataset

The first submission period for Researchfish ended in March 2024, leading to the successful collection of a rich dataset representing a wide array of research outputs. The dedication and hard work of our researchers have been instrumental in compiling these comprehensive data.

Researchfish was designed to collect concise, structured data on a wide range of research outputs and outcomes throughout the funding period and for several years after a grant has ended. Examples of these outputs include:

- collaborations and partnerships
- further funding
- influence on policy, practice, patients, and the public
- research databases and datasets
- engagement
- next destination of funded researchers.

We anticipate this in-depth analysis will not only help showcase the importance of funded research but also identify areas for future improvement and investment.

The goal is to extract meaningful insights that will inform both our strategic planning and our understanding of the broader impacts of research funded by the HRB. We intend to build on the robustness of the dataset in the submission periods to come – the stronger our data, the clearer our impact.

### National Bereavement Advisory Group

As an example of rich insights that came through the first submission period, we learned more through Researchfish about an ILP that received €443,883 in funding in 2019. Led by Professor Keelin O'Donoghue from University College Cork, the project explored the impact of dedicated recurrent miscarriage clinics in the Republic of Ireland.

One of the main contributions to policy and practice from this award was the creation of the National Bereavement Advisory Group under the HSE's National Women and Infants Health Programme. The purpose of the Advisory Group was to oversee the ongoing development and progress of the *National Standards for Bereavement Care Following Pregnancy Loss and Perinatal Death* across the 19 Maternity Units in the Republic of Ireland.

Additionally, evidence generated through this project was used within the *National Clinical Practice Guideline for Recurrent Miscarriage* and has led to new/improved professional practice. It has also been cited in policy documents (e.g. *PLACES: Pregnancy Loss (under 24 weeks) in Workplaces: Informing policymakers on support mechanisms*).

### Using the data

While the data submission phase for 2024 has concluded, the process of understanding and leveraging this information has only just begun. Our team has begun to analyse the data in order to highlight trends, identify key outcomes, and generate reports that reflect the substantial contributions of funded research to the health sector.

We anticipate this in-depth analysis will not only help showcase the importance of funded research but also identify areas for future improvement and investment. There is still much work to be done, and we are committed to maximising the use of the data we collect.

## Case Study 2

### HRB makes joint funding investment with health research charities

The HRB contributed €1.9 million of a €3.4 million joint investment to support internationally competitive and innovative research in areas of strategic relevance to Irish health research charities. Projects are expected to create new knowledge and evidence of benefit to health or healthcare.

The 12 grants funded in this round will support research in areas of strategic importance to co-funding charities in areas such as social connectivity in dementia; promoting healthy sleep in new parents; and diagnosis and therapies for systemic sclerosis, cancers, multiple sulfatase deficiency, ocular disorders, and cystinosis.

#### Unique funding mechanism

The HRB collaborates with members of HRCI under the HRCI-HRB Joint Funding Scheme. This scheme is unique in that the HRB co-funds awards with charity partners (either 50:50, or 75:25 for very small charities).

This is the only scheme of its kind that we are aware of in the world. Where expertise is not available in Ireland, it allows for funding to be spent outside the country, which is particularly beneficial for rare disease charities.

Co-funding charities included Cystinosis Ireland, the Rotunda Foundation, the Irish Thoracic Society, Fighting Blindness, Breakthrough Cancer Research, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, the Multiple Sulfatase Deficiency Action Foundation, and the Irish Cancer Society.

HRB Chief Executive Dr Mairéad O'Driscoll said:

The HRB has a long-standing commitment to working with Irish health research charities. This was the twelfth round of this scheme, with 163 grants made so far.

The collaboration has been fruitful not only for the participating charities, but also for the HRB. By listening to what research would make a difference to patients, this scheme has been able to consistently punch above its weight in terms of research outputs and policy and practice impacts.

#### Impact

For example, Professor Mary McCarron from Trinity College Dublin is a previous recipient who has shown the big impact these awards can make.

The HRCI-HRB Joint Funding Scheme is the only scheme of its kind that we are aware of in the world. Where expertise is not available in Ireland, it allows for funding to be spent outside the country, which is particularly beneficial for rare disease charities.

Her project, co-funded by the Alzheimer Society of Ireland in 2020, looked at including best practices and the voices of those with personal experience in developing post-diagnostic dementia support guidelines for people with an intellectual disability.

The National Dementia Strategy has helped people with dementia, but it does not meet the unique needs of people with intellectual disabilities. This led Mary and her team to create special support guidelines for people with intellectual disabilities who are diagnosed with dementia. To ensure those guidelines would be widely used, the team included the HSE National Intellectual Disability Memory Service (NIDMS) and voluntary disability services.

More than 124 people shared their views in workshops and events designed to open minds and spark conversations to help create these guidelines. This resulted in the development of 33 care standards that explain how to provide better care. Tips and links to helpful resources were also included. People with intellectual disabilities were deeply involved in the research as co-researchers, helping to shape the project every step of the way.

The guidelines were then shared with caregivers and services, in academic papers and conferences, and through partnerships with groups like the National Dementia Office, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, and the HSE.

These guidelines are already making a big impact. The NIDMS uses them to help caregivers and to provide advice to disability services across Ireland. They also shaped a new strategy for dementia care (2025–2029) for people with Down syndrome in Ireland.



Professor Mary McCarron, Director of the Trinity Centre for Ageing and Intellectual Disability and Executive Director of the National Intellectual Disability Memory Service.



## Strategic objective 2

### An independent voice

We aim to be an independent, credible voice for research and evidence, and a trusted thought leader. The HRB Evidence Centre continues to support the generation of independent, credible evidence to inform the decisions of policy-makers, practitioners, and the public.

We also seek to enhance coordination between those involved in evidence synthesis nationally and internationally, and strive to earn and maintain people's trust in the evidence produced, while facilitating dialogue on emerging health research topics.

#### Key items delivered

- The HRB delivered 10 evidence products to the Department of Health comprising three evidence reviews and seven evidence briefs.

The first of the three evidence reviews covered the safety and effectiveness of remote pre-hospital triage for appropriate emergency department attendances. The second covered the efficacy and safety of medicinal cannabis in adult populations.

The seven evidence briefs covered several policy-relevant topics including:

1. professional development processes and career pathways for advanced nurse and midwife practitioners
2. international approaches to the investigation and management of complaints against regulated health practitioners
3. approaches to dedicated child health workforce models in three case countries
4. pharmacy-level substitution of biosimilar medicines
5. priority frameworks and related criteria in health systems
6. financial supports for medical students in three jurisdictions
7. services and supports for older people in three jurisdictions.

- We updated the HRB position statement (which already excluded researchers in receipt of funding from the tobacco industry from applying for HRB funding) to exclude those in receipt of funding from the alcohol industry. This reflects the lead role the HRB plays in collecting and reporting data on alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harm for policy-makers in Ireland.
- Aligned with other national funders, the HRB developed guidance and a code of conduct for peer reviewers prohibiting the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the review and assessment process. Peer and panel reviewers are required to certify that they fully understand and will comply with the confidential nature of the review process, including the prohibition on uploading or sharing content from grant applications to generative AI tools.
- We hosted an open science workshop, led by our HRB Open Research publishing platform partners, Taylor & Francis/ F1000Research. The workshop brought together a select and diverse group of stakeholders in the Irish research system to help shape thinking around research publishing services now and into the future.

- The HRB awarded the Centre in Ireland for Clinical guideline support and Evidence Reviews (CICER) a 4-year grant worth €2.5 million to produce systematic reviews of clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, budget impact assessments, and other outputs as required to support the development of national clinical guidelines. CICER is hosted by the Health Information and Quality Authority and comprises a partnership with Trinity College Dublin.
- We supported 35 conference and events grants for health research-related events and workshops.
- We made 30 Knowledge Translation Awards at a cost of €1.3 million.





## Case Study 3

### Report shows 30% increase in deaths among homeless people

Based on national data from closed coronial files, the HRB report, *Deaths among people who were homeless at time of death in Ireland 2020\**, shows an increase of almost 30% on 2019 figures in the number of deaths among homeless people.

The analysis shows that 121 people who were homeless died in 2020 compared with 92 in the previous year. The data also show that those individuals were much younger than the Irish average at the time of their death, with a median age of 36.5 years for women and 42 years for men.

Almost all those who died had a history of substance use or dependency, and there was a high prevalence of mental health and medical conditions.

Commenting on the report, HRB Chief Executive Dr Mairéad O'Driscoll said:

Behind each of these numbers is a life lost. The findings of this report highlight the very difficult situation faced by some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

The Health Research Board's aim in capturing and analysing the data on the nature and circumstances of these deaths is to provide evidence that can inform harm-reduction strategies and future policies to support those experiencing homelessness.

This study builds on the pilot requested by the Department of Health, which looked at 2019 deaths among people who were homeless in order to present a more complete national picture of premature mortality within this population. In addition to demographic data, the research includes information on the circumstances and cause of death. These figures were largely similar to those recorded for 2019.

The Health Research Board's aim in capturing and analysing the data on the nature and circumstances of these deaths is to provide evidence that can inform harm-reduction strategies and future policies to support those experiencing homelessness.

Reflecting on the findings, Dr Suzi Lyons, Senior Researcher at the HRB, said:

In 2020 we see the impact of problem substance use and mental health conditions, with the majority of those who died, dealing with one or both of these issues at the time of their death.

Our findings show that these cases are complex, and that a co-ordinated approach is needed between drug and alcohol treatment services, mental health supports and approaches to harm reduction.



Dr Suzi Lyons, Senior Researcher, HRB.

## Key findings

### Number of deaths, demographics, and circumstances of death

- There were 121 deaths among people who were homeless in 2020.
- Three in four of those who died were male, and one in four were female.
- Half the males who died were aged 42 years or under.
- Half the females who died were aged 36.5 years or under.
- More than half the deaths occurred in Dublin.
- More than two-thirds of deaths were among people who were homeless and in temporary or crisis accommodation. Twenty-three people who died were known to have been sleeping rough.
- Of those who died, 1 in 5 females and 1 in 10 males were known to have spent time in prison.

## Substance use

- Some 91% of the people who died had a history of substance use, with high levels of polydrug use.
- Heroin (61%) was the most common drug used by those with a history of drug use, followed by cocaine (56%) and benzodiazepines (36%).
- Of those who had used substances, more than 4 in 10 were alcohol dependent.

## Cause of death

- Poisoning was the cause of nearly 6 in 10 deaths. The most common drugs implicated in deaths were opioids (mainly heroin and methadone), followed by benzodiazepines and cocaine.
- Just over half of those whose death involved opioids had previously received substance-use treatment, and almost 2 in 5 were in treatment at the time of their death.
- There were 52 non-poisoning deaths recorded among people who were homeless, with the majority (85%) among males.
- There were 11 deaths (9%) among people who were homeless and who had no recorded history of drug or alcohol use. Over half had a known history of mental health issues.

\* The most up-to-date figures are for 2020 because they relate to the year of death, but in some cases coroners' findings are not determined until some time later.

## Case Study 4

# Developing Ireland’s first mental health research strategy

The HRB played a lead role in the delivery of Ireland’s first National Mental Health Research Strategy, which was published in December 2024.

The new research strategy is fully aligned with *Sharing the Vision – A Mental Health Policy for Everyone*, Ireland’s policy to enhance the provision of mental health services and supports across a broad continuum, from promotion of positive mental health to specialist mental health service delivery. *Sharing the Vision* identified research as a key enabler to support and encourage change.

### Comprehensive framework

The new strategy aims to address current challenges, foster innovation, and build a future where mental health research underpins policy and practice. Overall, it provides a comprehensive framework to guide and advance mental health research in Ireland.

The HRB appointed an expert group in 2023 to deliver the Strategy and supported it throughout their deliberations. The Expert Group was chaired by Dr Fiona Keogh, who brought extensive research experience in academia and in the non-profit sector to the role.

Membership of the Expert Group included lived-experience experts, academic leaders, chief executive officers (CEOs) of non-profit organisations, and public sector experts. The HRB provided secretariat services to the Expert Group and appointed a dedicated programme manager to support all aspects of its work.

The programme manager acted as the key point of contact for engagement with the National Implementation and Monitoring Committee and its specialist groups, and ensured that the national mental health research agenda was advanced in the context of international opportunities and in accordance with best practice.

### Public consultation

The Expert Group first met in June 2023 and met monthly over the period of a year to develop the Strategy. As part of the development process, the HRB managed a comprehensive public consultation and conducted workshops with key stakeholder groups to ensure the Strategy reflects the perspectives of people with lived experience, researchers from diverse fields, policy-makers, and service providers.



Standing (L – R): Dr Philip Dodd, Mental Health Policy and Clinical Specialist, Department of Health; Professor Mary Horgan, Chief Medical Officer, Dept of Health; Dr Camille Boostrom, Programme Manager for Mental Health, Health Research Board; John O’Neill, Head of the Research and Innovation Policy Unit, Department of Health; Dr Fiona Keogh, Chair of the National Mental Health Research Strategy Expert Group; Seated (L – R): Dr Mairéad O’Driscoll, Chief Executive Officer, Health Research Board; Siobhán McArdle, Assistant Secretary, Social Care, Mental Health, Drugs Policy and Unscheduled Care, Department of Health.

The Strategy’s key recommendations include the following:

- Increase and sustain funding across the mental health research system.
- Focus on 15 research priority areas to advance mental health research in alignment with *Sharing the Vision*.
- Strengthen research infrastructure, research workforce capacity, co-production and lived-experience engagement, and collaboration among researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners.
- Maximise the impact of mental health research on the wellbeing of people with mental health difficulties and their families, supporters, and communities.

The implementation of this cross-sectoral strategy will be overseen by a dedicated implementation and oversight group, which will be chaired by the Department of Health. The group will collaborate with key stakeholders to ensure the Strategy’s goals and actions are achieved.

### Funding

The Department of Health has provided additional funding to the HRB each year since 2022 to support the development of this strategy and to scale up the level of support for mental health research that aligns with the priorities set out within *Sharing the Vision*. This enhanced investment has delivered a portfolio of mental health research awards relevant to policy and practice.

Ongoing communications and engagement with researchers and other key stakeholder groups throughout the Strategy’s development process resulted in a community primed to respond to the research challenges identified in the national strategy, ensuring those with lived experience are engaged throughout the research process.

The HRB’s leadership in developing the National Mental Health Research Strategy reflects its mission to support research that improves people’s health, promotes evidence-informed care, and creates solutions to societal challenges.



## Strategic objective 3

### Trusted data

Access to health and social care data, especially when linked with research and statistical data, has the potential to transform healthcare delivery and how we manage our own health. The HRB is already playing a leading role in enabling this transformation.

We are committed to promoting and enabling the use of data to shape health policy, enhance healthcare delivery, and drive broader research and innovation initiatives. Moreover, we will work to increase public understanding of the importance of facilitating secure access to health and social care data for research, policy, and planning. We will also support the adoption of best practice in data management, governance, and reuse by data producers and researchers.

#### Key items delivered

- The HRB participated on the Project Steering Board for an EU-funded, Department of Health led project to design a Health Data Access Body for the secondary use of health data for policy and research purposes.
- The HRB published 6 National Health Information Systems (NHIS) StatLink reports and bulletins, 3 supplementary bulletins, and 18 regional bulletins.
- We published three peer-reviewed journal articles using NHIS data covering the following topics:

- factors that determine length of stay in inpatient mental health facilities using National Psychiatric Inpatient Reporting System (NPIRS) data
- sudden deaths in people with epilepsy using NDRDI data
- etizolam in drug poisoning deaths.
- We responded to 99 requests from external data users, researchers, and academics for data from our information systems.
- We participated in the EU's Second Joint Action Towards the European Health Data Space (TEHDAS2) Community of Practice working groups at EU and national level, which are designed to progress the European Health Data Space work in Ireland.
- Data from two systems, National Psychiatric In-patient Reporting System (NPIRS) and the National Ability Supports System (NASS), were published on the Central Statistics Office (CSO) open data portal, PxStat, with data from the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) published in the format of interactive tables on the HRB National Drugs Library.
- We contributed NPIRS data to the World Health Organization Mental Health Atlas on behalf of Ireland.
- The HRB achieved the CSO's Irish Statistical System Code of Practice (ISSCoP) quality assurance mark for two systems: NPIRS and NASS.
- We engaged with the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) in order to advance PPI engagement in NASS work.

- We secured a fifth data source, the HSE's Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS), for the NDRDI. This will allow better validation of the source of prescription medication to be recorded in the NDRDI going forward.
- We resumed data collection for probable suicide deaths using the NDRDI methodology at the request of the Department of Health.
- The HRB participated in the research subcommittee of the new Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland (GRAI) and consulted with it about the possibility of expanding the NDTRS to include gambling addiction.
- The HRB provided additional data for sampling for the IDS-TILDA.
- We visited those overseeing the Trusted Research Environment and the Data Institute in Northern Ireland to share learnings and discuss opportunities for cooperation and harmonisation as Ireland advances a Health Information Bill and plans for the requirements set out in the European Health Data Space Regulation.
- We funded 10 awards under the Secondary Data Analysis Projects (SDAP) scheme at a cost of €2.3 million. This scheme supports innovative health research projects that exploit and optimise the use of existing health and social care data sources to inform policy and/or practice.
- We complied with the contractual requirements of the European Union Drugs Agency.

- We published three issues of Drugnet Ireland.
- We updated our HRB National Drugs Library online repository with 2024 publications on alcohol and drugs in Ireland.
- We published an overview of *Alcohol: availability, affordability, related harm, and policy in Ireland*.
- We hosted the Secretariat to the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee (HRCDC). The Committee convened 10 times, making 12 consent declarations and approving 25 amendment requests to facilitate the use of personal data for health research in the public interest in the absence of explicit consent.

The Secretariat also did the following in 2024:

- It processed 70 annual reviews of existing consent declarations made for health research to support the monitoring of consent declarations on behalf of the HRCDC.
- It undertook a major redesign of its website to improve the clarity and accessibility of information for applicants. The site now offers more transparent guidance on the application process, the role of the HRCDC, and the decision-making process.
- It worked closely with the Data Protection Commission and the Department of Health to clarify specific queries around data protection regulatory requirements.



## Case Study 5

### Alcohol overview

The HRB published our fifth alcohol overview in April 2024. Using data from published Irish and international literature and information systems and surveys, the report examined how much people drink in Ireland, trends over time, and the consequences of alcohol use. This report also examined alcohol availability and affordability.

In 2023, alcohol use per person aged 15 years and over in Ireland was 9.9 litres of pure alcohol, a decrease from 10.2 litres in 2022. Survey data indicate that approximately 50% of drinkers in Ireland can be classified as hazardous drinkers, a higher proportion of whom are male. There is also a growing minority of young people choosing not to drink, rising from 18% in 2002 to 28% in 2019.

#### Access and cost

Despite an 8% decline in the number of pubs in Ireland since 2012, the country ranks third highest in the world per 100,000 population. A geospatial analysis of the location of licensed premises indicated that 73% of the population lives within 300 metres of one – and that there are more pubs in areas of higher deprivation.

Although the cost of alcohol in Ireland was fourth highest in the EU, in 2021, Ireland had the second most affordable alcohol prices among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) members. Price increases have kept in line with inflation, meaning that alcohol is as affordable now as it was in 2003.

#### Alcohol-related harm

To understand alcohol-related harm, the overview examined the number of alcohol-related hospitalisations. There were 18,877 discharges in 2021 wholly attributable to alcohol use, a 16% increase compared to 2001. However, when population increases are factored in, this represents a 17% decrease per 100,000 people.

However, alcohol-related liver disease continued to rise, even when population increases are considered, with 2021 seeing the highest ever number of hospitalisations for the condition, representing an 80% increase over the 20-year period from 2001 to 2021.



The association between alcohol use and suicide and self-harm is evident, with one-third of self-harm hospital presentations in 2020 involving alcohol use.

Data from the PULSE system (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively) show there were 5,527 incidents of drink driving, 9,917 incidents of 'drunkenness', and 237 liquor licensing incidents in 2022.

The Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study estimates that four people die in Ireland every day due to alcohol use, and that this has risen from being the 13th leading cause of death in 1990 to the eighth leading cause in 2019.

Data from the NDTRS show that the number of cases entering treatment in which alcohol was the main problem drug decreased by almost 3% between 2015 and 2022. However, there was a substantial increase over the same time period of cases where cocaine was the main problem drug and alcohol was a secondary problem substance.

#### Alcohol as a public health issue

The most important development in alcohol policy in Ireland in the last decade has been the enactment of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018. The legislation, based on the World Health Organization's 'best buys' recommendations, sees alcohol as a public health issue.

Most provisions of the Act have been commenced and, in May 2026, Ireland will be the first country globally to have detailed and comprehensive labelling on alcohol products.

Despite a recorded decline, Ireland continues to have a high level of per capita alcohol use remaining above the Department of Health's reduction aim and the HSE's low-risk drinking guidelines.

The consequences of alcohol use in Ireland are outlined in the report, and future overviews will continue to observe alcohol use and related harms, providing evidence of any impact of legislation or policy changes.



Case Study 6

Two HRB information systems receive ISSCoP accreditation

National Ability Support System (NASS), and the National Psychiatric Inpatient Reporting System (NPIRS), both of which are managed by the HRB, received the Irish Statistical System Code of Practice (ISSCoP) certification in 2024.



ISSCoP certification mark

This accreditation, developed by the CSO and based on the European Statistics Code of Practice, aims to enhance Ireland’s national data ecosystem and strengthen trust in official statistics by ensuring independence, objectivity, integrity, and confidentiality.

According to Dr Mairéad O’Driscoll, Chief Executive at the HRB:

This achievement highlights our continued commitment to provide policy-makers, service providers and researchers with high-quality, independent, and trusted data.

NASS

NASS gathers detailed information on HSE disability-funded services that are currently received or identified as necessary by service providers.

The services covered under NASS include support for individuals with autism; intellectual disabilities; developmental delays; and physical, sensory, neurological, learning, and speech and/or language disabilities.

The purpose of NASS is to facilitate the planning, development, and organisation of HSE disability-funded services. Individuals qualify for NASS registration if they receive or are expected to require a HSE disability-funded service within the next five years, as identified by their service provider.

The HRB manages four national information systems, with NASS becoming the second to achieve ISSCoP certification, following NPIRS being accredited earlier in 2024.

NPIRS

NPIRS gathers data on patient admissions to, and discharges from, psychiatric hospitals and units throughout Ireland. It engages with stakeholders by means of an advisory committee composed of people with lived experience of psychiatric illness, service users, the Department of Health, the HSE, independent/private service providers, the Mental Health Commission, and advocacy groups. NPIRS data are collected from all approved centres on the Register of Approved Centres under the Mental Health Act 2001.

The data collected have been reported annually since 1965 and play a central role in the planning of service delivery, informing policy and practice. The data collected by NPIRS include demographic details, socio-economic data, admissions and discharges to and from approved centres, diagnosis on admission and discharge, and deaths.

ISSCoP

Public sector bodies producing official statistics are encouraged to achieve ISSCoP certification, to ensure their statistical outputs meet the highest quality standards.

The ISSCoP framework is built on five core principles:

- 1. **Professional independence:** The production of official statistics is based on the application of independent, transparent, and objective standards and free from any political or other external interference.
- 2. **Timeliness and punctuality:** Official statistics are released in a timely and punctual manner in accordance with a predetermined and publicly available release calendar.

- 3. **Accessibility and clarity:** Official statistics are presented in a clear and understandable form, are released in a suitable and convenient format, and are available and accessible on an impartial basis with the appropriate supporting information.
- 4. **Commitment to quality:** Compilers of official statistics should systematically and regularly review processes to support continual improvement in process and product quality.
- 5. **Confidentiality:** Public authorities that produce official statistics must ensure that statistical outputs do not lead to the direct or indirect identification of an individual or entity.

Dr Sarah Craig, Head of National Health Information Systems at the HRB, said:

With an increased focus on official statistics in the area of health, it is essential that we can provide robust and trusted evidence to inform decision-making and policy development.

It is also important to build and sustain public trust in the statistics and provide assurance that this is done in an independent and objective way.

## Case Study 7

# Assessing the safety and effectiveness of medicinal cannabis

The HRB Evidence Centre conducted an overview of systematic reviews to assess the evidence on how safe and effective medicinal cannabis is for treating certain conditions or symptoms among adults.

The purpose of the HRB overview was to inform the Department of Health on the suitability of cannabis-based products for various clinical indications. For simplicity, we use ‘medicinal cannabis’ as an umbrella term to refer to both pharmaceutical cannabis-based medicines and the cannabis plant.

### Overview of 47 reviews

Of the 47 included reviews, 26 assessed how effective medicinal cannabis was for relieving symptoms of specific health conditions.

The reviews found moderate- to very low-certainty evidence that medicinal cannabis was effective for reducing pain related to cancer, multiple sclerosis, rheumatic diseases and fibromyalgia, and spinal cord injuries.

There was also moderate- to very low-certainty evidence that medicinal cannabis reduced nausea/vomiting due to chemotherapy, and that it significantly improved various spasticity-related outcomes in multiple sclerosis.

However, some reviews found no effect for these outcomes. Findings on the effectiveness of medicinal cannabis for reducing withdrawal symptoms related to cannabis use disorder, opioid use disorder, and tobacco use disorder were mixed, and were of moderate- to very-low certainty.

The remaining 21 reviews investigated how effective medicinal cannabis was for improving symptoms across various conditions. There was high- to moderate-certainty evidence that medicinal cannabis significantly improved sleep quality, and high- to very low-certainty evidence that it significantly reduced pain across mixed health conditions.

Low- to very low-certainty evidence was also found in respect of medicinal cannabis significantly improving quality of life, spasticity, certain other measures related to sleep (such as sleep disturbance, sleepiness, and insomnia), and overall function or disability.

Fourteen reviews presented evidence on the safety and tolerability of medicinal cannabis. The evidence related to safety was generally of low- to very-low certainty, and found that compared with usual care, mixed controls, or placebo, medicinal cannabis had a significantly higher likelihood of causing nausea and several nervous system adverse events (including dizziness, sedation, drowsiness, dry mouth, headache, and any nervous system disorder), as well as a significant risk of other serious adverse events. Some reviews found that participants were significantly more likely to withdraw from studies due to experiencing adverse events, while others reported mixed findings or no significant differences; the evidence was of low- or very-low certainty.

### Fragmented body of research

Overall, our review revealed a fragmented body of research and a low- or very-low degree of certainty in the evidence for most outcomes, in agreement with the findings of other overviews of reviews. The methodological quality of the included reviews was generally very low, which makes it very difficult to draw well-founded conclusions.

Most studies compare medicinal cannabis with placebo, not with standard medications that reflect up-to-date treatment options. All of this means that future research findings are likely to change the conclusions we have drawn.

### Inconsistent findings

There was some evidence to support the use of medicinal cannabis for indications for which it has traditionally been recommended, such as nausea and vomiting in cancer, spasticity in multiple sclerosis, and neuropathic pain. The findings for most other outcomes were inconsistent at best. Serious adverse events appear to be uncommon, although there was evidence that medicinal cannabis had a significantly higher likelihood of some specific adverse events (including dizziness, dry mouth, sedation, and headache) compared with usual care, mixed controls, or placebo. Further high-quality research is needed to more firmly establish the effectiveness and safety of medicinal cannabis for the conditions of interest in adults. We concur with the authors of other overviews of reviews in their recommendation that if medicinal cannabis is to be prescribed to a patient, it should – like any drug – be carefully tailored to the individual’s circumstances and closely monitored.





## Strategic objective 4

# Thriving research environment

Health research that delivers value needs an enabling environment to thrive, from skilled researchers and access to infrastructure, to policies that support and enhance good research practice.

The HRB plays a lead role in building a strong, supportive environment for health research in Ireland, fostering connections between the academic and healthcare systems in the process. In partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, we work to ensure that funding for researchers and infrastructure is delivered effectively; that the highest standards of governance, quality, and ethics are met; and that innovative practices are developed and taken up here in Ireland.

### Key items delivered

- The HRB made seven Emerging Investigator Awards and six Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards, representing an investment of approximately €12.5 million. These highly competitive schemes target experienced researchers in academic settings who wish to advance health and social care research, as well as health and social care practitioners who deliver health or social care and who wish to spend up to 50% of their protected time conducting research.
- We awarded 54 Summer Student Scholarships to provide opportunities for undergraduate students to gain research experience at an early stage in their career journey.
- We participated in an implementation project group to develop a nationally agreed clinical academic career framework for nurses and midwives in line with the Department of Health's *Report of the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery*.
- The National Office for Research Ethics Committees supported nearly 100 National Research Ethics Committee (NREC) members to review a total of 491 ethics applications, over the course of 53 meetings.

- The National Office and related committees also:
  - oversaw the complex transition and ethics assessment of 184 clinical trial studies that have transitioned from the Clinical Trials Directive to the Clinical Trials Regulation
  - implemented a new structure for the National Research Ethics Committee for Clinical Trials (NREC-CT), from two committees to four committees, enabling greater capacity to deliver ethics opinions
- commenced the development of an application management system, the Consent and Ethics Review Application System (CERAS), with the HRCDC
- convened the National Irish COVID-19 Biobank (NICB) Research Ethics Committee in 2024 and delivered a final favourable consensus-based ethics opinion for the NICB, underpinned by best international ethics practices for biobanks
- hosted a 'World Café' style Members' Forum on 6 December, bringing together National Research Ethics Committee (NREC) and HRCDC members to discuss key aspects of ethics and consent and to further inform the National Office and Secretariat on guidance and best practice in research ethics
- collaborated with HSE Research and Development and the Irish Platform for Patients Organisations, Science & Industry (IPPOSI) to shape and develop a health and social care research ethics training programme for Patient, Public and Carer Involvement representatives
- hosted six 'Lunch and Learn' educational sessions for the benefit of the NRECs and the wider research ethics community, discussing topics such as phase I studies, the ethics of ionising radiation exposure, 'healthy volunteers', and best practices in genomic research.



## Case Study 8

# International genome project of unparalleled scale

Some 100,000 participants from across Europe will have their genomes mapped as part of the Genome of Europe (GoE) – an innovative project of unparalleled scale. The genomic data will be aggregated with those of other countries at European level, making the GoE one of the world’s most comprehensive genomic endeavours to date.

### Enabling groundbreaking research

A genome is the complete set of genetic information in an organism, providing all the information it requires to function. Genomics is the large-scale study of groups of genes, and it enables groundbreaking medical research that can lead to improved disease prediction, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. It benefits rare diseases and cancer research, advances in personalised medicine, and feeds into public health policy development.

The GoE is part of the 1+ Million Genomes (1+MG) initiative (which Ireland joined in November 2022) and is designed to improve Europe’s genomic infrastructure and capacity. The GoE consists of 49 partner institutions across 27 European countries with a budget of €45 million and is funded under the Digital Europe Programme.

### Genome of Ireland

The Genome of Ireland (GoI) project, which received funding in October 2024, will facilitate Ireland’s contribution to the wider European initiative, with funding of €1.45 million from the HRB and European Commission.

The project is led by Professor Gianpiero Cavalleri of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) University of Medicine and Health Sciences, uniting a consortium of six institutional partners across the island of Ireland.

This landmark project – the first of its kind in Ireland – will recruit 1,200 people from across the island of Ireland to participate in mapping their DNA in order to identify gene characteristics, compiling a representative dataset of Ireland’s population genome.

Some 200 participants will be selected from one or more groups that are over-represented in Irish clinical genetics services and under-represented in terms of knowledge of genetic variations.



Professor Gianpiero Cavalleri, RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences.

This will assist diagnostic technologies to stratify patients, aiming to create targeted therapies and individualised medicines to act on specific biological features of disease in individual patients in the future.

### Genomic Data Infrastructure

This project complements an existing HRB investment of €400,000 to co-fund the Genomic Data Infrastructure (GDI) project. The aim of the GDI is to design, develop, and operationalise a cross-border federated network of national genome collections and other relevant data to advance data-driven personalised medicine for European citizens.

Ireland’s participation in these large-scale European projects ensures our researchers; clinicians; patient and public representatives; ethics, data governance, and data analytics experts; and others are at the forefront of international health innovation and collaboration efforts.

The GDI will establish a roadmap for data infrastructure in Ireland and across Europe, with Irish collaborators conducting proof-of-concept work using synthetic data.

### International best practice

Simultaneously, the GoI will map the Irish population’s genome in accordance with international best practice and quality standards outlined by 1+MG. Ireland is actively contributing to Europe’s improved future genomics infrastructure and to its research and development capabilities.

The projects’ collective vision is to enable future authorised data users such as clinicians, researchers, and innovators to advance our understanding of genomics for improved and quicker clinical decision-making, diagnostics and disease prediction, treatments, and pathways, as well as improved public health measures that lead to enhanced public healthcare that benefits the economy, healthcare systems, and, most critically, citizens. Genomics has the potential to significantly impact the future of global health.

## Case Study 9

### Investing in Ireland's future research leaders

The HRB is developing the research careers of individuals who can drive meaningful change that leads to positive health impacts. Two specifically designed schemes, Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA) and Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards (ECSA), cultivate a pipeline of future leaders in health and social care research.

This investment aims to create a critical mass of collaborative investigators who can address current and emerging health research needs. It also supports the career transition between postdoctoral research and independent research.

The ECSA scheme targets health and social care practitioners who wish to integrate research with service provision. The EIA scheme is open to health and social care researchers in academic settings.

#### Strengthening research leadership

Dr Anne Cody, Head of Investigator-Led Grants, Research Careers and Enablers, said:

This €12.5 million investment reflects the HRB's strategic commitment to developing the next generation of health and social care researchers, and to strengthening research leadership in both academic and clinical environments in Ireland.

By supporting the career development of talented health and social care researchers, these schemes aim to produce high-quality, rigorous research that is both timely and relevant to the health and social care system, with strong potential to influence policy and practice.

The 13 grants awarded will tackle research questions that include topics such as better assessing mobility in people with multiple sclerosis; enhancing wellbeing in residential care; biomarkers in Alzheimer's disease in people with Down syndrome; and innovative planning for community-based unscheduled care.

Two projects led by our newest emerging investigators/clinicians are outlined below.

#### Tackling inequalities in self-harm and suicide prevention

The issue of self-harm in children, adolescents, and young adults is of increasing concern, and Ireland is experiencing an increase in rates of young people going to hospital having harmed themselves.



Dr Gráinne Sheill, Trinity College Dublin.

Dr Elaine McMahon from University College Cork focuses on targeting inequalities in self-harm and suicide in this population. Inequalities such as deprivation, poor education, and poor housing all have an impact on the risk of suicidal behaviour, as do mental health factors, substance use, and adverse events. However, the role of inequality has not been reflected in the design of policies to reduce suicide. This research aims to change that.

Collaborating with the National Office for Suicide Prevention, national and international research leaders, and clinical professionals with experience of policy impacts, Dr McMahon is working to ensure that research findings lead to improved health outcomes. At the same time, Dr McMahon believes the EIA grant will facilitate her transition to research independence, enhancing her competitiveness in the research and innovation ecosystem.

#### Advancing rehabilitation for patients undergoing stem cell transplants

Dr Gráinne Sheill from Trinity College Dublin, a grant recipient of the ECSA scheme, is investigating how treatment affects the physical performance of patients undergoing haematological stem cell transplants.

The goal is to develop a rehabilitation programme tailored to these patients' needs. Patients who receive these transplants can experience numerous weakening side effects, such as decreased physical performance, which negatively impact on their quality of life.

Dr Sheill will use experience-based co-design, a method that helps patients and clinicians work together in order to improve healthcare services, to develop a patient-centred rehabilitation intervention. Dr Sheill's research is very closely aligned to her experience as a clinical specialist physiotherapist with over 12 years of clinical experience.

The ECSA grant will allow Dr Sheill to have Protected Research Time, while continuing to provide clinical care. It will also provide funding to drive physiotherapy research at the forefront of the international cancer rehabilitation research agenda. Ultimately, this opportunity will be a catalyst to making Dr Sheill an international leader in cancer survivorship research.



## Strategic objective 5

### Productive international partnerships

From pandemics to climate change, many of the greatest health challenges we face are global and can only be addressed through international partnership.

In order to meet these challenges, we are committed to fostering and enhancing European and international coordination, collaboration, and engagement in health research. We support Ireland's research community to compete for EU and international funding, and work with policy-makers and other stakeholders to identify opportunities to engage in initiatives that can advance health and broader Government objectives.

#### Key items delivered

- The HRB provided co-funding to support Ireland's participation in the Genome of Europe (GoE) project. This will be led by the RCSI and will involve recruitment and de novo genome sequencing of 1,200 individuals on the island of Ireland alone, with more than 100,000 people in participating countries across Europe. The GoE is part of the 1+Million Genome (1+MG) initiative, which Ireland joined in 2022, and is designed to improve Europe's genomic infrastructure and capacity.

- In partnership with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Cancer Institute in the United States, the HRB designed and launched a new grant scheme to advance collaborative research and innovation in projects on cancer to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the All-Ireland Cancer Consortium. Five projects were granted funding to a value of almost €1.4 million across clinical research/trials, cancer care delivery and survivorship, and genomics/precision medicine.
- We funded two awards with partners from Ireland under the European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS) Joint Transnational Call, Healthcare of the Future, and four awards under the topic Joint Transnational Call, Innovate to Prevent.
- We funded one award with partners from Ireland under the European Partnership for Personalised Medicine topic Joint Transnational Call, Identification or Validation of Targets for Personalised Medicine Approaches (PMTargets).



- Together with partners from Ireland, the HRB made two awards under the ERA4Health Partnership Joint Transnational Call, Modulation of brain ageing through nutrition and healthy lifestyle, and participated on a working group of the EU ERA4Health Partnership which aims to develop a funding and monitoring mechanism for multinational, investigator-initiated clinical studies.
- The HRB funded two awards with partners from Ireland under the EU Joint Programme in Anti-Microbial Resistance Joint Transnational Call, Interventions moving forward to promote action to counteract the emergence and spread of bacterial and fungal resistance and to improve treatments.
- We funded two awards with partners from Ireland under the EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research Working Groups Call, Use of digital technologies in neurodegenerative disease research and care.
- We contributed to public consultations, surveys, and benchmarking initiatives set by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the World Health Organization, most notably the modernisation of the Declaration of Helsinki.
- The HRB represented the National Office, NRECs, and Ireland's interests at an international level through participation on EU expert groups such as the MedEthicsEU and Accelerating Clinical Trials in the EU (ACT EU), and the Collaboration for Prevention and Treatment of Multi-Drug Resistant Bacterial Infections (COMBINE) project, to drive harmonisation of the implementation of EU regulations and clinical trial research activity in Ireland.
- We expanded our research ethics network to participate at the European National Ethics Councils Forum and continued to collaborate with the European Network of Research Ethics Committees (EUREC) on ethics initiatives.

## Case Study 10

# Strengthening European collaboration for ethical health research

The HRB supports the National Office for Research Ethics Committees remit to drive the NREC system in Ireland for clinical trials on medicinal products for human use; clinical investigations of medical devices; and performance studies for in vitro diagnostic medical devices.

The National Office works closely with the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) to ensure that national decisions on regulated research align with both national and EU legislation. Ensuring the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of patients and research participants in Ireland is central to this mission.

### Strengthening European engagement

Throughout 2024, the National Office expanded its role at the European level, participating in key expert groups in order to represent Ireland's interests on pertinent research ethics matters and ensure harmonisation of best research ethics practices. These efforts have reinforced Ireland's reputation as an active and trusted EU Member State in the field of research ethics.

European organisations coordinating these collaborations include the EMA, the Heads of Medicines Agencies (HMA), and the EC. Their shared goal is to harmonise the implementation of the Clinical Trials Regulation (CTR), the Medical Devices Regulation (MDR), and the In Vitro Diagnostic Medical Devices Regulation (IVDR).

In addition to supporting nearly 100 committee members across five NRECs in Ireland, the National Office has actively contributed to several significant European initiatives.

### MedEthicsEU

The National Office participated in the inaugural MedEthicsEU meeting, which includes representatives from 26 European countries and focuses on aligning research ethics committees' procedures while ensuring the highest ethical standards in regulated health research.

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The role of the National Office is to share best practice for ethics assessment and research committee operations, ensuring that Ireland's voice is heard in shaping European best ethics practices for regulated research.

### Accelerating Clinical Trials in the EU (ACT EU)

ACT EU is an ambitious initiative that aims to improve the efficiency of clinical trials in Europe by establishing a more competitive hub for innovative health research. The National Office contributes to several ACT EU priority action groups, with a focus on:

- clinical trials in public health emergencies
- good clinical practice modernisation
- clinical trials methodologies.

The National Office also plays a key role in the CTR Collaborate initiative within ACT EU, which fosters closer collaboration between national competent authorities and ethics committees, ultimately driving quality in clinical trials.

### The COMBINE project

The implementation of the CTR, MDR, and IVDR has introduced complexities for researchers conducting studies involving both medicinal products and medical devices, requiring compliance with overlapping legal frameworks.

In response, the EC established the COMBINE project, which brings together multiple stakeholders – including research ethics representatives – to identify challenges and develop solutions.

The National Office actively contributes to the COMBINE project, collaborating with the HPRA to ensure Ireland can contribute to collective European efforts to make regulated health research more efficient and streamlined.

## Case Study 11

# Transforming health and care systems partnership

The HRB participates in the European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS). Co-funded under the Horizon Europe programme, this partnership of funders and other stakeholders aims to address core common challenges which require harmonised and coordinated solutions.

### European Network of Research Ethics Committees (EUREC)

The National Office also plays a role in EUREC, a network dedicated to knowledge sharing and ethical best practices for current and emerging research methodologies and technologies. As a formal member, the National Office has helped shape EUREC's 'Vulnerability' webinar series, which addresses inclusivity in health and social care research.

Additionally, the National Office team contributed a position paper on ethical considerations regarding compensation for research participants, reinforcing Ireland's commitment to upholding participant rights and wellbeing.

### Harmonising research ethics across Europe

Dr Emily Vereker, Head of the National Office, highlighted the impact of integrating ethics assessment into regulatory processes, noting the fast pace of change in Ireland and across Europe. She emphasised that harmonisation is now the collective goal of all stakeholders, driven by European agencies.

Dr Vereker said:

The National Office team's involvement at a European level is already delivering tangible benefits. By working together with European counterparts, we are shaping best practices, informing procedures, and ensuring health research remains rooted in strong ethical foundations, while keeping the interests of participants at the centre of what we do.

Through strategic European collaborations, the National Office continues to elevate Ireland's research ethics framework, ensuring it aligns with international standards while safeguarding the rights and well-being of research participants.

The general objective of THCS is to contribute to the transition towards health and care systems that are more sustainable, efficient, resilient, and innovative. Making systems more people-centred and equally accessible to all is a key aim.

A core activity of the partnership is funding research and innovation projects on common priorities and topics through joint transnational calls involving a large number of funding organisations. Under this partnership, the HRB promotes grant opportunities and funds successful applicants from Ireland. The following is an example.

### Innovate to Prevent

Professor Stephen Behan of Dublin City University was successful in the second THCS Joint Transnational Call, Innovate to Prevent, which aims to improve personalised prevention in health and care services in order to make them truly person-centred while supporting better use of existing IT and digital-based technologies. He is a partner in the successful ENABLE project, working with researchers from France and Switzerland.

The motivation for this project is that children with neurological diseases, such as cerebral palsy and neuromuscular disorders, often experience significant motor impairments, which deeply affect their quality of life.

Being able to preserve or restore mobility is a key issue, and healthcare professionals need accurate diagnoses of motor function to guide their clinical decisions. Functional assessments are currently conducted in standardised healthcare settings according to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health focusing on the individual capability or capacity of the child.





THCS Annual Conference 2024 in Brussels.

However, these assessments often overlook the individual's functional mobility in their daily environment, despite it being known to substantially influence motor behaviour. They are also time-consuming and costly (system acquisition, personnel, and training) and are therefore not as accessible as they should be.

Nonetheless, conducting longitudinal assessments of children's functional disabilities remains crucial because growth and maturation significantly influence motor capacity and performance over time.

### ENABLE project

The ENABLE project has the dual purpose of regularly investigating and assessing the capability and performance in children with neuromotor disorders in their daily environment, and re-educating their functional disabilities caused by these disorders.

The cornerstone of this initiative is a user-friendly mobile application designed for the evaluation and tele-rehabilitation of motion in children (developed in collaboration with MoveAhead).

This innovative tool will be implemented with the assistance of AI and will allow parents to conduct motor behaviour assessments at home using their smart devices, significantly increasing the frequency of evaluations.

Being able to preserve or restore mobility is a key issue, and healthcare professionals need accurate diagnoses of motor function to guide their clinical decisions. Functional assessments are currently conducted in standardised healthcare settings according to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, focusing on the individual capability or capacity of the child.

This will allow the research team to comprehensively explore the impact of neurological diseases on movement, connect specific outcomes such as motor signatures to neurological diseases, and study how these impact various movements in daily life. The children's motor signatures will also serve as valuable markers to monitor the effectiveness of rehabilitation.

Overall, the tool developed by the ENABLE project will allow for personalised, intelligent, and adaptive tele-rehabilitation programmes for children with neuromotor disorders. This tool holds significant promise as a simplified and cost-effective approach to addressing functional motor disabilities with greater frequency and accessibility.

Its potential integration into both clinical practice and home settings aims to empower parents to actively participate in their children's care.

For physiotherapists and physicians, this solution will streamline the identification of neurological diseases through motor signatures, facilitating accurate recognition, diagnosis, and monitoring.

Furthermore, this application will enable remote supervision by a clinical team, allowing for ongoing progress monitoring and feedback. It will also facilitate personalised home-based rehabilitation programmes, reducing the need for frequent clinic visits and increasing the accessibility of rehabilitation for children with neuromotor disorders.

## Strategic objective 6

# Organisational excellence

As a leading agency for health and social care research, evidence, and data, the HRB's goal as an organisation is to be the best in every way.

We will further develop the HRB as a progressive place to work, where our people are supported to be innovative and responsive. We will maintain our culture of organisational excellence based on shared values that attract the best talent, embrace change, and deliver solutions. Our governance structures will support informed and accountable decision-making, and we will communicate with impact to strengthen our reputation across stakeholders.

### Key items delivered

- We managed the recruitment process for 22 additional positions across the organisation in line with business needs.
- We continued cybersecurity training for staff, with monthly courses achieving a 97% completion rate and a 94% pass rate. The courses help prevent human error and increase understanding among staff of the role they play in combatting cyberattacks. A range of topics were covered including phishing, internet and email use, and mobile device security.
- We provided support for seven Board meetings and four Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meetings, and ensured a smooth process for the appointment of three new Board members and the recruitment of one external ARC member.
- We commenced a series of surveys to measure employee engagement and organisational culture to better understand how staff connect with what we do and how we do it. The results will be used to monitor staff sentiment and identify key areas for improvement.
- We launched the new HRB website, which is designed to help people access the information they need quickly and easily.

- We ensured the effectiveness of internal controls and undertook internal audits of key risk areas within the HRB to benchmark against best practice.
- We upgraded our antivirus software and the firewall on the cloud platform that contains all the data from our national health information systems.
- We supported a series of new IT projects across the organisation, including the development of a new online application system (which allows people to apply for consent and ethics approval for research projects) and the roll-out of the new HR/Payroll system and corporate website.
- We introduced new risk-management software to streamline both the management and reporting of risk in the HRB.
- We fulfilled seven Freedom of Information requests in line with statutory timeframes.
- We secured significant coverage across media platforms, with almost 850 interviews or mentions of the HRB on television and radio and 149 stories in national papers. Using the industry standard measure of Equivalent Advertising Value, this coverage would cost more than €3.5 million through paid-for advertising.
- We established a cross-organisational Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) committee and secured the Investors in Diversity Bronze award from the Irish Centre for Diversity. To achieve this, the EDI committee reviewed and created policies, and the committee and our management team took part in inclusive leadership training.
- We worked with our Chairperson to establish a new Development Committee of the Board with responsibility for the performance and development of the senior management team, succession planning, and culture and organisational structure in the HRB.
- We reimagined how we approach communications in the future. Ideas included adopting three focused themes each year to grow awareness about strategic topics and developing more digital content such as podcasts and videos.
- We implemented the integrated HR and payroll system, which combines time and attendance records with salary and expense payments.
- We expanded the HRB's presence on LinkedIn to more than 9,000 followers and connections, an increase of 2,530. A total of 80 posts attracted strong engagement, reflecting an active and engaged audience.



## Case Study 12

# Taking the pulse of our workplace culture

The Human Resources Unit, on foot of a request from the Board of the HRB, began a process to better understand our culture and workplace experience.

Following a competitive tender process, we selected global HR consultancy, Culture Amp who serve other public sector clients, so that we can benchmark against similar organisations and better understand how we can continue making the HRB a great place to work.

### Psychology and data science

Using the award-winning platform, which deploys psychology and data science to help organisations engage with and understand their employees, we began a process of regularly getting feedback from staff in the form of pulse surveys.

Culture Amp's software guarantees anonymity of responses, thereby keeping feedback confidential.

The overall objective of the pulse surveys is to increase staff engagement and measure workplace culture, ultimately enhancing the HRB's performance, innovation, staff retention, and ability to attract talent.

Pulse surveys are short questionnaires or feedback tools used to gather real-time insights, typically consisting of a short questionnaire that can be completed quickly.

### Baseline survey

By the end of 2024, the Human Resources Unit had developed a baseline survey, which consisted of 44 questions. The aim of this was to provide qualitative data and guide us on the focus for future pulse questionnaires that will establish continuous feedback loops through frequent surveys.

The first of our series of monthly pulse surveys will be launched in January 2025 and run until May 2025, when another baseline survey will be conducted, ultimately feeding into an in-depth analysis of our culture and engagement.

The results from the baseline survey conducted in November and December (2024) yielded an overall participation rate of 69%, with responses from 88 out of 128 staff members at the time of the survey.

Using the award-winning platform, which deploys psychology and data science to help organisations engage with and understand their employees, we began a process of regularly getting feedback from staff in the form of pulse surveys.

Among the participants, the engagement level – which measures employees' emotional and psychological commitment to their work and their organisation – was 79%, which is 1% higher than other comparable organisations.

### Positive and supportive culture

When staff were asked questions regarding our culture, their responses showed a general sense of working in a positive and supportive culture. Employees appreciated the flexibility, respect, and collaboration among colleagues. They also valued the organisation's commitment to research excellence and its positive impact on society.

Additionally, employees expressed interest in questions related to training needs, vision for the organisation, and personal impact on EDI. Overall, the responses suggest a desire for greater transparency, specificity, and individual agency within the organisation.

### Positive suggestions

The results of the baseline survey show that employees were engaged with the process and contributed positive suggestions for the conduct of pulse surveys; for instance, suggesting that questions should be more specific and tailored to individual teams or experiences.

We will continue to conduct monthly pulse surveys until May 2025, and then release another baseline survey. We will analyse any changes in responses over the survey period and between the two baseline surveys with a view to enhancing the HRB's working culture and environment.



## Case Study 13

# New website and content management system

We launched a new HRB website with supporting content management system (CMS) in 2024, upgrading the functionality, user experience, and look and feel of the public-facing part of our website.

The move to a new WordPress CMS, which is used throughout the online publishing industry, also creates more stability in terms of long-term support from a wide variety of suppliers.

### Cross-organisational team

The project brought together a large team from across the organisation to ensure that key stakeholders' user journeys were represented. In addition to the website being a showcase for the work we do, it also provides two essential services for stakeholders:

1. It provides funding information for new grants.
2. It hosts a library of publications used in research, service planning, and policy decisions.

It was essential that we tailored these parts of the website with those users in mind.

### Design and development

Developing the sitemap and main navigation was key. This journey had to be seamless and also look good, so the team spent a lot of time reviewing and testing different options presented by our project advisors, Matrix International, to ensure it was fit for purpose.

During this process, we developed specific modules for funding information and publications. Once the navigation, configuration of these specific modules, and the design concepts were signed off, we moved into the development phase. This was driven primarily by Matrix, which allowed HRB staff to focus on content for the website.

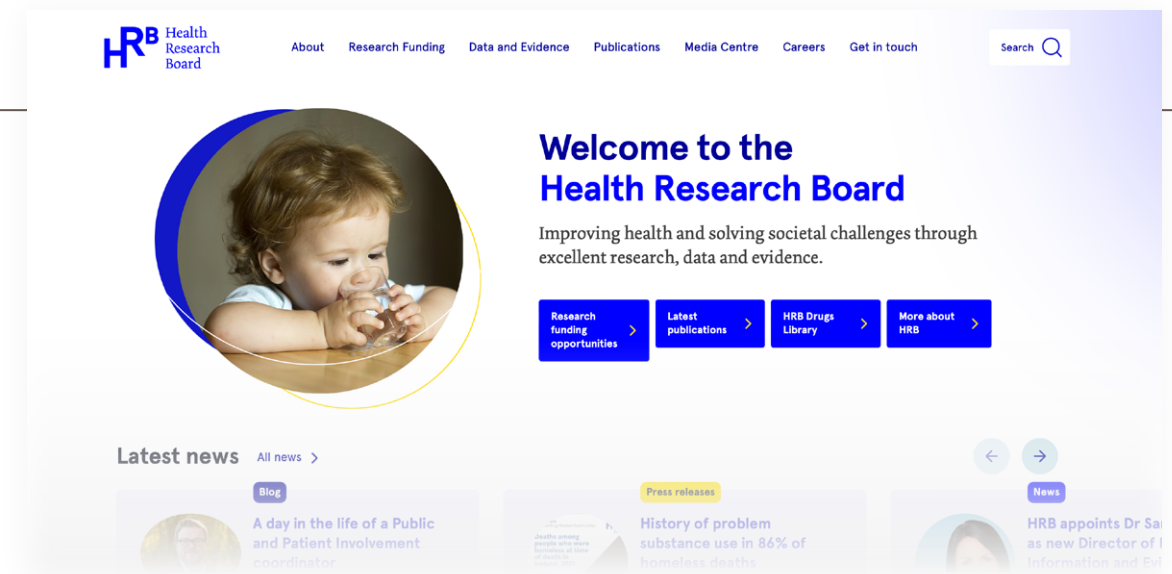
### Content audit

We conducted a comprehensive audit of existing content while the development phase was under way. We removed redundant and outdated content, and updated key pages to reflect the latest developments and resources across the organisation. Training for content administrators was a crucial part of the transition in order to ensure that staff could seamlessly manage their own content updates.

### Key improvements and features

The new website was designed with future-proofing in mind. Among the core improvements are the following:

- **Robust security:** Enhanced security measures and regular updates from our IT service provider to protect against vulnerabilities and ensure robust General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) protections.



- **Enhanced user experience (UX):** The site features a streamlined structure, a responsive design for mobile compatibility, and a refined visual hierarchy to direct users efficiently to key content. It also complies with EU web accessibility legislation, achieving Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 compliance.
- **Improved search and navigation:** New search functionality allows users to find relevant content more quickly, including publications, grant information, events, and news updates. Filter functionality in different sections also helps users find what they are looking for with greater ease.
- **Content flexibility:** The CMS allows for the creation of diverse content formats, including tables, videos, infographics, and links to event-booking platforms.
- **Search engine optimisation:** The website follows best practices for search engine optimisation, ensuring that HRB content reaches a wider audience.
- **User-friendly platform:** The new system enables non-technical staff to update and manage content efficiently.

- **Stylistic consistency:** We created a range of page templates and content blocks were created to accommodate different content requirements while achieving stylistic coherence across the site.

### Launch

The new site went live in July 2024, marking a significant step forward in the HRB's digital presence. Initial feedback from internal stakeholders and external users has been positive, with improvements noted in ease of navigation and the overall user experience.

### Future plans

Looking ahead, the HRB will continue to refine and enhance the website based on user analytics and feedback. Plans for further improvements include:

- expanding multimedia content to engage a wider audience
- exploring additional integrations with data visualisation tools
- implementing further refinements to search and filtering capabilities
- regularly reviewing accessibility compliance.

# Appendices

2

## Appendix A

### List of HRB publications in 2024

#### HRB REPORTS

Kelleher C, Keegan E and Lyons S (2024) *Deaths among people who were homeless at time of death in Ireland, 2020*. HRB StatLink Series 16. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Casey C, Fanagan S O’Sullivan M, Caffrey N and Lynn E (2024) *Overview of people engaging with disability services, 2023*. HRB StatLink Series 17. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Lynch T, Condrón I, Lyons S, and Carew AM (2024) *2023 Drug Treatment Demand*. HRB StatLink Series 18. Dublin: Health Research Board.

O’Neill D, Ní Luasa S, Lyons S and Carew AM (2024) *2023 Alcohol Treatment Demand*. HRB StatLink Series 19. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Kelleher C, Riordan F and Lyons S (2024) *Drug Poisoning Deaths in Ireland in 2021: Data from the National Drug-Related Deaths Index (NDRDI)*. HRB StatLink Series 20. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Daly A, Lovett H and Lynn E (2024) *Annual Report on the Activities of Irish Psychiatric Units and Hospitals 2023*. HRB StatLink Series 21. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Irish Focal Point to the EMCDDA (2024) *Drugnet Ireland*. Issue 87, Winter 2024. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Irish Focal Point to the EMCDDA (2024) *The Citizens’ Assembly on Drug Use. Drugnet Ireland*. Supplement to Issue 87, Winter 2024. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Irish Focal Point to the EMCDDA (2024) *Drugnet Ireland*. Issue 88, Summer 2024. Dublin: Health Research Board.

Irish Focal Point to the EMCDDA (2024) *Drugnet Ireland*. Issue 89, Autumn 2024. Dublin: Health Research Board.

EVIDENCE REVIEWS

Lambe K, Teahan Á, Lee C, Fitzpatrick JM, Cagney O, Patje D and Long J (2024) *The efficacy and safety of medicinal cannabis in adult populations: An evidence review*. Dublin, Ireland: Health Research Board. Available from: <https://www.hrb.ie/publication/the-efficacy-and-safety-of-medicinal-cannabis-in-adult-populations-an-evidence-review/>

Burns A, Fitzpatrick J-M, Teahan Á, Clements K, Lee C, Lovett H, McGrath N and Long J (2024) *Safety and effectiveness of remote pre-hospital triage for appropriate emergency department attendances and service use: An evidence review*. Dublin, Ireland: Health Research Board. Available from: <https://www.hrb.ie/publication/safety-and-effectiveness-of-remote-pre-hospital-triage-for-appropriate-emergency-department-attendances-and-service-use/>

Teahan Á, Farragher A and Long J (2024) *Analysis of clinical negligence claims in a range of jurisdictions: An evidence brief*. Dublin, Ireland: Health Research Board. Available from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9bcc5-interdepartmental-working-group-on-the-rising-cost-of-health-related-claims-report/>

Pratschke J, Glanville J and Kelly P (2024) *Integrative review on place-based and other geographically defined responses to drug-related threats in communities*. HRB Drug and Alcohol Evidence Review 9. Dublin: Health Research Board. Available from: <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/40846/>

Doyle A, Mongan D and Galvin B (2024) *Alcohol: availability, affordability, related harm, and policy in Ireland*. HRB Overview Series 13. Dublin: Health Research Board. Available from: <https://www.hrb.ie/publication/alcohol-availability-affordability-related-harm-and-policy-in-ireland/>

Doyle A and Houghton F (2024) Alcohol availability and accessibility around schools in Ireland: an examination of liquor licences proximity. *Ir J Med Sci*, 193(2): 1109–1110. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11845-023-03514-3>

Doyle A, Foley R and Houghton F (2024) A spatial examination of alcohol availability and the level of disadvantage of schools in Ireland. *BMC Public Health*, 24(1): 795. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-18261-y>

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

De Morais J, Van Aerts L, Evans–Brown M, Gallegos A, Christie R, Jorge R, Néfau T, Planchuelo G, Sedefov R, Victorri-Vigneau C, Povilanskiene R, Grasaasen K, Palmqvist D, Mongan D, Killeen K, Duarte AO and Santos AS (2024) Recreational Use of Nitrous Oxide – a Growing Concern in Europe. *Emerg Trends Drugs Addict Health*, 4: 100085. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.etdah.2023.100085>

Brick A, Walsh B, Hill L, Behan C, Daly A and Craig S (2024) Determinants of acute psychiatric inpatient length of stay in Ireland. *Ir J Med Sci*, 194(1): 211–213. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11845-024-03819-x>

Langan Y and Lynn E (2024) The incidence of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) in the Republic of Ireland. *Seizure*, 122: 34–38. Available from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1059131124002541>

Keenan E, Kelleher C, Lyons S and Sweeney N (2024) Etizolam and Irish drug poisoning deaths. *Ir J Psychol Med*, 41(4): 506–507. Available from: <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/42044/>

BOOK CHAPTER

Cody A and Daly M (2024) Ethical patient and public involvement – the perspective of research funders. In Minogue V and Salsberg J (eds) *Meaningful and Safe: The Ethics and Ethical Implications of Patient and Public Involvement in Health and Medical Research*. Ethics International Press. 176–197.

Appendix B

List of HRB awards made in 2024 to Principal Investigators

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Lung cancer Screening on the Island of Ireland: integrating Health economics and Outcomes	Queen's University Belfast	All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium (AICC)	Dr	Ethna McFerran	129,743
All-Island Cancer Atlas – Development and Delivery between Cancer Registries in Ireland	Queen's University Belfast	All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium (AICC)	Dr	Damien Bennett	129,892
Empowering the high-throughput characterisation of non-coding genome mutations for cancer precision medicine	Queen's University Belfast	All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium (AICC)	Professor	Nick Orr	235,899
TransAtlantic Cancer Alliance for Liquid Biopsy Research and Training	Trinity College Dublin	All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium (AICC)	Dr	Kathy Gately	427,969
Genomics Enabled Oncology Education Programme and Network supporting the education of current and future oncology healthcare providers	University College Cork	All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium (AICC)	Professor	Josephine Hegarty	428,749
Lung Cancer Early Detection Initiative: Stratified Screening Strategy for Ireland (LEAD-Ireland)	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Applied Partnership Awards (APA 2024)	Professor	Patrick Redmond	200,000
Developing a model for integrating participatory approaches into population based health needs assessment in Ireland	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Applied Partnership Awards (APA 2024)	Professor	Debbi Stanistreet	200,000
A hybrid, efficacy and translational formative evaluation of a community-based recreational football initiative for men to assess effectiveness and implementation at scale	South East Technological University	Applied Partnership Awards (APA 2024)	Dr	Paula Carroll	199,258



PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
BOB1 as a therapeutic target and biomarker of autoimmunity to lymphoma progression (BATMAN)	University College Dublin	European Partnership for Personalised Medicine (EP PerMed)	Dr	Vadim Zhernovkov	317,067
Lifestyle interventions to Prevent cOgnitive deficits in subjects with depressive symptoms: from mEchanisms to clinical pRactice (POWER)	University College Cork	EU Public-Public Partnership on Health Research topics (ERA4Health)	Professor	Yvonne Nolan	329,648
B-vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids to modulate brain ageing in European citizens through improved nutrition: the BOOMERANG project	Trinity College Dublin	EU Public-Public Partnership on Health Research topics (ERA4Health)	Dr	Maria O'Sullivan	344,051
Unravelling the Complexity of Rising Sexually Transmitted Infections in Ireland	University of Galway	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Dr	Chris Noone	374,249
The development of data infrastructures to support on-going analyses of the impact of reimbursed medicines on healthcare service utilisation in Ireland	Trinity College Dublin	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Dr	Laura McCullagh	366,199
A person centered evidenced informed approach to management of therapy waiting lists in primary care	University College Cork	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Professor	Margaret McGrath	353,622
Producing a Health in Transition health system review (HiT) for Ireland as part of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies HiT series	Trinity College Dublin	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Professor	Sara Burke	223,897
Advancing Practice –impact of interface musculoskeletal triage embedded in integrated pathways on access to care, clinical and cost outcomes, and potential for future implementation (MSK-ACCESS)	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Professor	Helen French	374,341

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Optimising PrEP delivery in Ireland: A model for an integrated digital-hybrid clinical service enhancing Value for Money in healthcare	Trinity College Dublin	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Dr	Irina Kinchin	375,000
Exploring value of digital health applications in stroke care	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Evidence for Policy (EfP)	Professor	Jan Sorensen	356,119
Sustained delivery of cysteamine prodrugs from nanobarrier contact lenses	Colorado School of Mines	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Professor	Anuj Chauhan	194,550
Restful Nights Happy Days: Promoting Healthy Sleep and Wellbeing Practices Among New Parents in Ireland	Dublin City University	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Anna Donnla O'Hagan	128,593
Reducing SSc–ILD Progression – Targeting the effects of the pulmonary microenvironment	Queen's University Belfast	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Bettina C Schock	64,999
Evaluate the protective effect of Astaxanthin for the treatment for nephropathic cystinosis in a cystinotic rat model	University of California San Francisco	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Minnie Sarwal	194,550
Exploring Innate Immune Pathways in Photoreceptors in Retinal Degenerative Disease	Trinity College Dublin	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Sarah Doyle	194,992
Exploration of gene agnostic therapeutic approaches for ocular disorders modulating mitochondrial dysfunction	Trinity College Dublin	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Professor	G Jane Farrar	195,000

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
ARMOR: tailored personalised Medicine for gastric cancer	Trinity College Dublin	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Professor	Jacintha O'Sullivan	194,853
Development of a Personalised Near Patient (PNP) Allogeneic NK–Cell Immunotherapy (PNP–NKimmunot) for Platinum Resistant High–Grade Serous Ovarian Cancer	Trinity College Dublin	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Sharon O'Toole	194,818
Hepato–ProMet: Proteomic assay of metabolic progression from steatosis to hepatobiliary cancer development	University College Dublin	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	David Hughes	144,843
INNEACH: Intergenerational Programmes to enhance social connectivity for people living with dementia	University of Galway	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Catherine Houghton	112,667
Glycosylation related changes in Multiple Myeloma and T cell Immunity (GlycoiMMuniTy)	University of Galway	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Professor	Michael O'Dwyer	194,783
Optimising Therapeutic Agents to Treat Multiple Sulfatase Deficiency by Combining DNA Encoded Chemical Libraries and Fragments	University of Southampton	Health Research Charities Ireland–Health Research Board (HRCI–HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Dr	Matthais Baud	130,965
Intellectual Disability Supplement to The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (IDS–TILDA) – Wave 6	Trinity College Dublin	IDS–TILDA	Professor	Mary McCarron	1,750,005
BIOMarkers of Treatment Response in Psychosis (BIOTRIP): An Proteomic Investigation of Complement and Coagulation Pathway Proteins for prediction of outcome in First Episode Psychosis	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	David Cotter	412,283

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
OncoVac: Development of mRNA vaccines targeting tumour–associated exons of Glypican 2 for adult and paediatric patients	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Olga Piskareva	429,000
The development of an adaptive cognitive rehabilitation intervention post–stroke	University of Limerick	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Associate Professor	Sara Hayes	423,493
PRECISION–ABI: Developing a precision medicine approach to improve acquired brain injury patient outcomes	University College Dublin	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Alistair Nichol	428,996
Gene–activated scaffolds for the treatment of Epidermolysis Bullosa	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Fergal O'Brien	428,830
ProjectHealth: Projecting 20–year Multimorbidity trends and their effect on Health Care Usage, Costs and Quality of Life in older Irish adults	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Rose Anne Kenny	411,728
Forecasting Vaping Health Risks with Machine Learning: Predicting Toxicants from Flavor Pyrolysis Reactions and Classifying Chemical Hazards for Future Public Health Challenges	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Dan Wu	453,240
Understanding new brain injury in hip fracture patients	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Colm Cunningham	428,458
Development of a Core Outcome Set for research studies evaluating the effectiveness of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment	University of Limerick	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Rose Galvin	428,904
Longitudinal deep phenotyping in the international multi–site programme 'PREVENT Dementia'	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator–Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Lorina Naci	447,390

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Enhancing Prescribing In Chronic kidney disease in primary care (EPIC)	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Frank Moriarty	436,500
The ALPACAS project: ALtering Persistent inflammation And multiorgan outcomes in children at high risk of Cerebral pAlSy	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Eleanor Molloy	428,450
Restoration of Immunological Tolerance in Rheumatoid Arthritis via Metabolic Reprogramming of Dendritic Cells	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Mary Canavan	428,997
Enhancing health, function and participation through rehabilitation for children and young people, and their families, after childhood brain tumours (the Brain-Restore Youth study)	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Ailish Malone	428,994
Inducing respiratory trained immunity for TB host defence in the human lung.	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Sharee Basdeo	428,996
Personalised Exercise Rehabilitation in Cancer Survivorship (PERCS) 2.0 – Developing an Evidence-Informed National Implementation Strategy	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Emer Guinan	411,634
Sources and Health Impacts of Dietary Potassium (SHIP)	University of Galway	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Andrew Smyth	411,832
Distinct Immune-Stromal cell Interactions are involved in the underlying mechanisms that distinguish RA and PsA pathotypes.	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Ursula Fearon	453,249
Targeting m6A regulating enzymes to control aberrant gene networks in epilepsy	University College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Gary Brennan	428,373

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Development of implementation strategies to promote an evidence-based approach to prevention of musculoskeletal complications among children with cerebral palsy; a mixed methods study.	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Jennifer Ryan	412,450
PINPOINT: Prediction aNd Prevention Of Venous Thrombosis durINg chemoTherapy- combining dynamic biomarker risk assessment, patient perspectives and health technology assessment.	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Lucy Norris	428,664
Evaluation of novel modulators of oxidative stress as add-on pharmacotherapies for rheumatic disease.	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Aisling Dunne	453,578
A multi-layered, pore-forming hyaluronic acid hydrogel with antimicrobial and pro-angiogenic properties for the treatment of chronic wounds	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Shane Browne	452,574
Targeting iron to boost immune function in obesity and improve patient outcomes	Maynooth University	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Andrew Hogan	401,014
Patient Involvement in Patient Safety – The PIPS Study	University of Galway	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Sinéad Lydon	408,085
Combination targeting of immunosuppressive sialylation and immune checkpoint pathways to maximise T cell responses in cancer	Trinity College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Professor	Joanne Lysaght	428,054
TERRA (Tracking and Evaluating Real-world Rhythms and Analytics)	University College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Cailbhe Doherty	439,994



PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
The role of protein glycosylation in the pathogenesis of endometriosis and association with microbiome	University College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Radka Fahey (Saldova)	428,763
Precision RNA therapeutics for lung adenocarcinoma	University College Dublin	Investigator-Led Projects (ILP) 2024	Dr	Rory Johnson	428,787
Fungal Genomics and Antagonistic Community Interactions (FuGACI)	University College Cork	Joint Programming Initiative–Antimicrobial Resistance	Dr	Hilary Browne	404,654
Deploying PURIne adjuvants to improve the Fight against Staphylococcus aureus AMR (PURIFY AMR)	University of Galway	Joint Programming Initiative–Antimicrobial Resistance	Professor	James O’Gara	527,144
Motivation for movement focused therapies in a metaVerse for Parkinson’s disease (MotiVerseP)	University of Limerick	EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research	Professor	Amanda Clifford	47,205
A Motor Neuron Disease Working Group for Sensitive and Well-Integrated Function Testing Technologies (MND-SWIFTT)	Trinity College Dublin	EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research	Dr	Deirdre Murray	50,000
Riding Towards Safety: Advancing Concussion Identification, Prevention and Care in Irish Horse-Racing	Dublin City University	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Dr	Siobhan O’Connor	173,125
Achieving a clear vision for myopia care in Ireland	Technological University Dublin	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	James Loughman	249,830
Investigating a data driven approach to inform population-based resource allocation for improved equity in primary care services in Ireland	Dublin City University	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	Veronica Lambert	247,864

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Impact of guidance issued during COVID-19 to expand take-home doses of opioid agonist treatment (OAT) in Ireland: a population-based analysis of prescribing practices and patient outcomes 2018 to 2023	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	Gráinne Cousins	229,163
Tailoring Lung Cancer Screening for Ireland: Using Existing Datasets to Generate Evidence-Based Recommendations for Health Policy	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	Patrick Redmond	246,981
Comprehensive analysis of traditional and novel risk factors for stroke in persons with kidney failure in Ireland	University of Galway	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Dr	Conor Judge	249,772
GEOMIA – Geospatial and Epidemiological Mapping of Inequality in Aging in Ireland	University College Dublin	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	Marie Therese Cooney	238,962
The Precision Cardio-Oncology Research Enterprise (P-CORE) – Development and validation of a risk stratification tool to assess cardiovascular risk in patients treated for Breast Cancer	University of Galway	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	Osama Soliman	239,396
Understanding the socio-economic drivers of maternal obesity and cardiovascular disease risk to improve long-term population health	University College Dublin	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Professor	Amy O’Higgins	240,764
Exploring the demographic and healthcare factors associated with breastfeeding in Ireland; a gap analysis to develop a national infant-feeding survey tool.	Technological University Dublin	Secondary Data Analysis Projects	Dr	Elizabeth O’Sullivan	204,626
ImPLementation of an Advanced TelerehabilitatioN solUtion for people with Multiple Sclerosis (PLATINUMS)	University of Limerick	European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems	Dr	Matthew Herring	368,904

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Bump2Baby and Me plus: Implementing a personalised, integrated remote system of care for women at high risk of gestational diabetes within routine maternity services in Ireland, Norway, Spain and Poland (B2B&Me+)	University College Dublin	European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems	Dr	Sharleen O'Reilly	528,344
Evaluation of motor capacities and telerehabilitation in children with neuromotor disorders (ENABLE)	Dublin City University	European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems	Dr	Stephen Behan	261,317
Data enabled, shared fluid management platform in haemodialysis (HARMONY)	University of Galway	European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems	Dr	David Keane	529,999
Involving underserved Screening Invitees in Decision-making and Research on cancer Screening (INSIDERS)	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems	Professor	Patrick Redmond	412,850
Standardized Profiling of Epigenetic Loci for decentralized Classification of Sinonasal Tumors and identification of therapy Response markers (SPELCASTER)	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	European Research Area Network (ERA NET - TRANSCAN-3)	Dr	Sudipto Das	348,738
Stromal Compartment and Immune Epigenome spatial networks to counter therapy evasion in Pancreatic Cancer (SCIE-PANC)	Trinity College Dublin	European Research Area Network (ERA NET - TRANSCAN-3)	Dr	Grainne O'Kane	250,491
MAEVE: Microbiota mediated flavonoid metabolites for cognitive health?	Teagasc	US-Ireland R&D Partnership Awards (USIRL)	Professor	Catherine Stanton	349,903
Effects of Maternal Exercise on Fetal Akinesia-Impaired Bone and Joint Development	University College Dublin	US-Ireland R&D Partnership Awards (USIRL)	Professor	Niamh Nowlan	349,500
				Total:	€28,242,161

ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
9th Annual Public & Patient Involvement Summer School	University of Limerick	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Jonathan Salsberg	5,000
PRiCAN 2025: Pioneering Primary Care in Cancer Research – Advancing Precision Prevention and Early Detection	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Patrick Redmond	5,000
Priorities for future Research on Marketing and Consumption of No/Zero and Low Alcoholic Beverages (NoLo) in Ireland: A One-Day Workshop with People Interested in Commercial Determinants of Health	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Emeka Dumbili	4,233
Equitable partnerships between research and stuttering communities: Uncovering the research priorities of adults who stutter to guide future research directions.	Trinity College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Amy Connery	5,000
Supporting Perinatal Mental Health at population level in Ireland: Evidence to date and plans for the future.	University College Cork	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Karen Matvienko-Sikar	4,922
International Society for Critical Health Psychology Conference 2025 – Contesting Borders	University of Galway	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Chris Noone	8,100
Health Psychology in Health and Social Care in Ireland	The Psychological Society of Ireland	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Niamh McGrath	4,999
Advancing Cancer Survivorship in Ireland: Connecting Research to Policy and Practice	Trinity College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Emer Guinan	4,576
All-Island Medication Safety Conference	Health Service Executive	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Ciara Kirke	5,000
Connecting Bodies: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Body Image Research in Ireland	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Amanda Fitzgerald	5,090

ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Advancing inclusive healthcare for people with intellectual disabilities: Sharing knowledge and connecting expertise	University of Limerick	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Sean Healy	5,000
Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Vision Loss Research: Empowering A Global Network for Collaboration	Fighting Blindness	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Ellen Moran	3,795
Early Career Researchers & Roundtable Meeting of the IASSIDD Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities Special Interest Research Group	University College Cork	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Anne-Marie Martin	4,972
2nd Refugee and Migrant health research networking and knowledge exchange seminar	University of Limerick	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Kathleen Markey	5,000
The Past, Present and Future of Cerebral Palsy Registers in Ireland; a stakeholder event to learn from national and international experiences	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Jennifer Ryan	5,000
Sex Differences in the Immune System	Trinity College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Cliona O'Farrelly	5,000
Collaborating Across Borders/CARA Network-AMS InSight	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Akke Vellinga	5,000
Your Ultrasound Journey and What to Expect	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Karen Flood	5,000
Developing consensus on an Irish Renal Registry for research: a multi-stakeholder event	University of Galway	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	David Keane	4,403
Health Data Analytics Summer School 2024	University of Galway	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Sonja Khan	5,000
National Conference on Women in Sport and Exercise Research	Dublin City University	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Brendan Egan	5,000

ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Breaking Barriers: Enhancing Cancer Care for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities	Trinity College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Martin McMahon	5,000
The First Positive Health Summit: Optimal Wellbeing Transformation	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Jolanta Burke	4,995
Integrating Disability Evidence into Action for Supports and Services (IDEAS 2024) for Older People with and Intellectual Disability: Translating IDS-TILDA Knowledge into Policy and Practice.	Trinity College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Mary McCarron	4,999
The 11th Annual National Lean Healthcare Symposium	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Sean Paul Teeling	4,996
Supporting Parents with Disabilities	University of Limerick	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Elaine Rogers	5,000
Cilia2024 Patient Workshop: patient-scientist-pharma exchange forum on cilia disease diagnosis, causes, and emerging therapeutics.	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Oliver Blacque	5,000
Breaking Barriers: Addressing Algorithmic Bias for Equitable Cancer Care Access	University of Limerick	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Conor Ryan	5,000
Developing a roadmap for Principles of Global Federated Platform Trials and their Application: An InFACT/ISARIC/ICC-CTN technical workshop	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Alistair Nichol	5,000
European Young Professionals Conference on Migration and Health	University College Dublin	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Mary Codd	9,992
Building Research Capacity in Ireland: The Role of the Research Nurse/Midwife	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Ms	Michelle Smyth	5,000



ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
20 Years of Early Intervention in Psychosis Care in Ireland: From Research to Evidence Based-Practice	Saint John of God Research Foundation	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Mary Clarke	4,350
European Grief Conference – Bereavement and Grief: Responding to need and building collaborative networks	Irish Hospice Foundation	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Ms	Mairéad Tully	10,000
Maternal Fetal Medicine Study Day 2024	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Prof	Fergal Malone	5,000
Exploring Research Together: Autism-Friendly Science Night for Children and Parents	Maynooth University	Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme (CES)	Dr	Lorna Lopez	4,960
Translating Knowledge into Enhanced Recording of Adverse Events in Hospital Administrative Data (HIPE): Co-production of Training Materials and Pilot	Dublin City University	Knowledge Translation Awards (KTA) 2024	Dr	Marcia Kirwan	39,024
Lived Experience Through Arts: Enhancing Health Literacy and Awareness of the Lewy body dementias	Trinity College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Iracema Leroi	59,985
Future ready: Building capacity in evidence synthesis for enhanced public involvement	University of Galway	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Declan Devane	59,531
Voices of Discovery	University of Galway	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Fidelma Dunne	60,000
Optimising team KT capacity for enhanced implementation and impact of MaxSBF	University College Cork	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Patricia Leahy-Warren	59,999
Enhancing public engagement and understanding of randomised trials through a MOOC platform	University of Galway	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Aoife Lowery	59,995

ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
From Insight to Impact: Re-designing our study website with the D1 Now Young Adult Panel	University of Galway	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Sean Dinneen	23,783
Enhancing the clarity, reach, and impact of core lessons from the ECHPI (Evidence for Children’s Palliative Care in Ireland) project	Trinity College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Samantha Smith	23,654
Translating evidence to foster interprofessional collaboration in team-based community care for older people into health professional education and training	University College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Deirdre O'Donnell	34,321
Digital Storytelling for Research	University College Cork	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Susan Calnan	22,000
Co-creation of multimedia educational material for healthcare professionals and patients to target antimicrobial resistance and over-use of antimicrobials for respiratory tract infections	Trinity College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Cristin Ryan	30,166
Implementing family-informed care for self-harm: PRISM-KTA	National Suicide Research Foundation	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Eve Griffin	59,394
Building awareness and capacity in Ireland to rollout the national gestational diabetes – diabetes prevention programme	University of Galway	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Molly Byrne	40,875
Building connections with general practitioners to support transition to adult health services for young people with childhood-onset physical disability	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Jennifer Ryan	23,996
Stroke SPEAK – Stroke Prevention, Education, Awareness, Kinship	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	David Williams	59,946

ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
A co-design approach to supporting mental health and well-being among young people with cerebral palsy	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Jennifer Ryan	11,449
An all Ireland bowel cancer focussed patient public involvement event	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Sudipto Das	34,125
HipForesst – Hip Fracture Outcome Recording: Empowering, Supporting and Sustaining Teams	University College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Mary Walsh	20,823
From Research to Community: Developing Informative Tools for Diabetes and Depression Comorbidity	University College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Sonya Deschenes	17,136
Co-creation of an online patient education resource for Gluteal Tendinopathy	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Helen French	32,892
Reel Ageing: Exploring TILDA Research Through Social Media Videos	Trinity College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Rose Anne Kenny	60,000
Stroke in Ireland to 2046: maximising knowledge translation of epidemiological modelling evidence	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Eithne Sexton	22,663
BRAIN-Restore: Rehabilitation needs of people with brain tumours in Ireland	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Kathleen Bennett	34,470
Scalable Training And Knowledge Exchange on guideline development for patients, public, and healthcare professionals: The STAKEholder project	Health Information and Quality Authority	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Mairin Ryan	59,995

ENABLERS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Blueprint for interdisciplinary doctoral education – learning from and feeding back into structured population health, policy and health services research education (SPHeRE)	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Mary Clarke	59,855
Cultivating a shared evidence-based understanding of Psychedelic Science in Ireland by PPI co-created Seminars and Workshops	Trinity College Dublin	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	John Kelly	39,383
Creation of a series of animations to counter the stigma in psychosis	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	David Cotter	36,104
Translating knowledge on Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to strengthen Health in All Policies (TRANSLATE-HIA)	University College Cork	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Dr	Monica O'Mullane	59,986
Mentoring for diversity and inclusion	University of Galway	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	Sean Dinneen	50,625
Supporting PPI Yields more Impactful Research and Research Dissemination	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Knowledge Translation Award (KTA) 2024	Professor	David Cotter	59,454
Total:					€1,440,010

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
A window into glomerular inflammation – the role of predictive biomarkers in glomerular disease	University College Cork	Emerging Clinician Scientist Award (ECSA)	Dr	Sarah Moran	1,424,280
Biomarkers in the identification of Alzheimer’s Disease in people with Down Syndrome (Bio-MinDS)	Trinity College Dublin	Emerging Clinician Scientist Award (ECSA)	Dr	Antoinette O'Connor	1,294,915
Intelligent and innovative planning for community based unscheduled care	University College Dublin	Emerging Clinician Scientist Award (ECSA)	Associate Professor	Tomás Barry	1,435,376
Use of sentinel skin flap vascularised composite allograft for real time immuno-monitoring and early identification of acute rejection in highly sensitised renal transplantation recipients	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Emerging Clinician Scientist Award (ECSA)	Ms	Roisin Dolan	1,109,209
Active lower airways dysbiosis with smoke exposure leads to physiological impairment consistent with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Emerging Clinician Scientist Award (ECSA)	Dr	Imran Sulaiman	1,265,334
Towards an evidence based and stakeholder informed model of rehabilitation for people with haematological cancer	Trinity College Dublin	Emerging Clinician Scientist Award (ECSA)	Dr	Gráinne Sheill	683,669
Enhancing Wellbeing in Residential Care: a focus on Body Composition and Skeletal Muscle Function (RES-FIT)	Trinity College Dublin	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Caoileann Murphy	662,254
Targeting opportunistic Enterobacteriaceae in ileal Crohn’s disease using D-amino acids	Trinity College Dublin	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Nicky O'Boyle	700,190
Blood-based liquid biopsy for prediction of Immunotherapy response in Multiple Myeloma	University College Dublin	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Kieran Brennan	614,633

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Mobility mapping: Working with people with multiple sclerosis to map real-world walking experiences to digital mobility outcome measures, to improve clinical assessment	Trinity College Dublin	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Alison Keogh	698,391
Targeting Thromboinflammation in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus	Trinity College Dublin	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Gina Leisching	815,853
Targeting New Therapies for Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency by Linking Cellular Stress and Lung Immune Cell Outcomes	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Mark Murphy	814,145
Targeting inequalities in self-harm and suicide among children, adolescents and young adults (EQUALISE)	University College Cork	Emerging Investigator Awards (EIA)	Dr	Elaine McMahon	689,662
Smoke Free Homes – Influencing Factors and Experiences in Marginalised Communities to Reduce Exposure to Second hand Tobacco Smoke	University College Dublin	Fulbright 2024	Dr	Kate Frazer	17,434
Immunomodulatory biomaterial scaffolds to enhance stem cell therapeutics for spinal cord repair applications	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Fulbright 2024	Dr	Cian O'Connor	20,396
HRB Impact Award	University of Galway	HRB Impact Award	Professor	Andrew Murphy	49,974
HRCI Core Funding	Health Research Charities Ireland	Health Research Charities Ireland (HRCI Core Funding 2024)	Dr	Avril Kennan	288,000
IPPOSI Core Funding	Irish Platform for Patients Organisations, Science and Industry	Irish Platform for Patients Organisations, Science and Industry (IPPOSI Core Funding 2024)	Dr	Derick Mitchell	287,982



CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Ethical and Patient-Centered AI Implementation in Developing Countries' Healthcare: A Comparative Analysis	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Marjia Siddik	3,200
Barriers and Facilitators of Health-Seeking Behaviour for Ukrainian Refugees in Ireland: Exploring Mental Health	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Ellie Cunnane	3,200
An investigation of practical strategies used in managing withdrawal symptoms when discontinuing long-term antidepressant use	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Jessie Huang	3,200
A Pilot Study on health and performance during growth and maturation in Sport	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Nikolay Georgiev	3,200
Exploring the Theory-Practice Gap in Pediatric Emergency Nursing Education among Registered Nursing Staff in Mixed Emergency Settings in Ireland	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mrs	Sophie-Lee Sankey	3,200
Investigating the ability of psychedelic drug treatment to reverse molecular changes in addiction	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Abbie Burke	3,200
The development of an in vitro model in order to mimic common lung disease conditions affecting human pulmonary endothelial cells	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Oriana Henry	3,200
The barriers and facilitating factors associated with childhood vaccination uptake rates among migrants, refugees, and displaced parents: A mixed methods systematic review	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Samantha Balanuta	3,200

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Health Literacy among Intellectual Disability Nursing Students	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Thando Ngwenya	3,200
Effector equity: enhancing affected limb selection	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Owen Glancy	3,200
Exploring the environmental and lifestyle factors associated with cancer in people with intellectual disabilities	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Victor Agbaje	3,200
Patient-Oriented Research: Exploring Perspectives of Children Who Stutter Using Mixed Methods	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Siafra Conroy	3,200
Neurofilament light chain and cognitive testing in subjective memory loss: a feasibility and acceptability study	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Pedro Cafaro Loureiro	3,200
Evaluation of the Background Causes, Associated Factors, and Trends in the Increasing Caesarean Section Rates Observed in Primigravid Women in an Irish Obstetric Population	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Niall McGowan	3,200
Psychiatric and psycho-social characteristics of suicide completers: an 18-year comprehensive evaluation of psychiatric case records and post-mortem findings	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Ahmed AlHssar	3,200
10 Year Retrospective Review of Spinal Infections Presenting to a National Tertiary Referral Centre	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Ahmad Issa Alissa	3,200
Elucidating the potential of a novel pyrimidine nucleotide permease as an antimicrobial drug target in device-associated and diabetic foot disease isolates of Staphylococcus epidermidis	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Lisa Keegan	3,200

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Investigating the influence of social deprivation on foot disease outcomes in people with Diabetes and Chronic Kidney Disease: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Jana Albader	3,200
Investigating the relationship between anhedonia associated with bipolar disorder and white matter microstructural organization of the uncinate and superior longitudinal fasciculi	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Emma Ryder	3,200
Exploring Perceived Ethnic Discrimination among Emergency Department Staff: A Survey at St James's Hospital	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Aliza Ali	3,200
Advancing ALS Research: Innovative Biomarkers for Cognitive and Behavioural Impairment	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Peace Onakoya	3,200
The Effects of Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors On Physical Activity Levels: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Sean Martin	3,200
Assessing prevalence of chronic malnutrition and sarcopenia in older adults in Ireland	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Chloe Molloy Walsh	3,200
Developing an Implementation Plan: Breastfeeding Initiatives on University Campus	University of Limerick	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Andrea Pasztor	3,200
A systematic review of the laws in Ireland and the UK in relation to the use of epipens in public schools by trained and untrained persons	University College Cork	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	John Dunne	3,200

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Factors Influencing Smartwatch Use and Comfort with Health Data Sharing: A Mixed Methods Study	University College Cork	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Anthony James Goodings	3,200
Biomaterial-Aided Cellular Brain Repair for Parkinson's Disease: Therapeutic Validation in an Immunosuppressed Model	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Rayna Cox	3,200
Advancing the Treatment of Mental Health Disorders: Unravelling Underlying Disease Mechanisms and Enhancing Brain-Targeted Delivery of a Novel Therapeutic Approach	University College Cork	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Olga Andriyashchenko	3,200
The clinical efficacy of the OneTouch app in patients with gestational diabetes	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Elise Dawson	3,200
Identification of Gastric Risk Factors Using AI Based Image Analysis	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Tara Keane	3,200
Understanding and predicting transition from acute to chronic pain post-surgery: the role of the endocannabinoid system	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Filumena Flanagan	3,200
Biocides and biofilm formation in Klebsiella pneumoniae – not just for resistance or disinfection	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Zakariya Djimani	3,200
Comparative analysis of immune cell dysfunction in critically ill patients on invasive mechanical ventilation versus advanced respiratory support	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Ríonach Sheerin	3,200
Reconstruction and Computational Modelling for Inherited Metabolic Diseases	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Thea Mahbubani	3,200

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
A scoping review of the experience of adults with intellectual disabilities in 'future planning'	University of Limerick	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Aislinn Delaney	3,200
Determinants of outcomes in youth mental health	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Sarah Donohoe	3,200
Investigation of potential for a pre-habilitation programme to reduce biochemical and functional indices of frailty in patients undergoing cancer surgery: An observational study	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Caoimhe Laffey	3,200
"Is it working for you?", A Qualitative Exploration of the Views of Attendees of the Falls Prevention Community Exercise Programme	University of Limerick	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Mia Bannon	3,200
Assessment of gene delivery approaches in human osteoarthritis knee cartilage explants	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Ashraf Albishtawi	3,200
Applying User-Centered Evaluation in a Service Improvement Study on Phase Three Cardiac Rehabilitation	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Nithiesh Loganathan	3,200
To identify specific bacterial features that promote intracellular survival of the bacterium Staphylococcus aureus within human phagocytes	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Ryan Francis Brady	3,200
Characterizing anticholinergic burden's effect on Patient EEG	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Sofia Jimenez	2,400
The role of lncRNA dysregulation in temporal lobe epilepsy	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Neil Swan	3,200

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
An investigation into the experience of collective trauma in the Irish Traveller community. A systematic review	Dublin City University	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Rachel O'Keeffe	3,200
BodyWise: Body image beliefs and behaviours across the lifespan of people living in Ireland	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Molly McHale	3,200
Striving for better management of chronic knee pain: Integrating perspectives from patient and GP stakeholders in the Irish healthcare service	University of Limerick	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Luke Howley	3,200
Exploring the perspectives of a Stroke Rehabilitation Research Public and Patient Involvement panel	University of Limerick	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Niall Duffy	3,200
Systematic review and meta-analysis of the predictive accuracy of the 4AT tool for delirium detection in older adults attending the Emergency Department	University of Limerick	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Ríonach Cawley	3,200
GP Registrars experiences of the transition from hospital to general practice	University College Cork	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Fódhla Ní Dhálaigh	2,400
Investigate the EV-Functionalisation of Novel Hydrogel Delivery System to Accelerate the Clinical Translation of Bone Cell-Derived Extracellular Vesicles for Bone Repair	Trinity College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Sofia Kushchak	3,200
Pregnancy outcomes and Diabetes Mellitus Screening in patients with previous bariatric surgery in pregnancy	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Ka Yuet Emily Siu	3,200



CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Dietary Diversity as a predictor of Therapeutic Response in Inflammatory Bowel Disease	University College Cork	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Ms	Aisling Gouldson	2,400
A Systematic Review: Strategies To Reduce Burnout in Junior Doctors	University of Galway	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Mr	Oliver James Bourke	2,400
Exploring and supporting communication about research participation and consent in adults with intellectual disability and additional communication support needs	University College Dublin	Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2024	Miss	Kate Ní Bheaglaoich	3,200
Total:					€13,041,296

INFRASTRUCTURE AND NETWORKS					
Title	Host institution	Scheme	Lead researcher title	Lead researcher name	Total awarded (€)
Dementia Research Network Ireland	Trinity College Dublin	Collaborative Research Networks (CRN)	Professor	Sean Kennelly	999,959
AIHPC's Palliative Care Research Network (PCRN)	All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care	Collaborative Research Networks (CRN)	Dr	Mary Rabbit	1,000,001
Genome of Ireland	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Genome of Ireland (Invited Application from 1+MG National Mirror Group)	Professor	Gianpiero Cavalleri	1,000,000
HRB evidence synthesis award to support clinical practice guideline development (ESCG)	Health Information and Quality Authority	HRB evidence synthesis award to support clinical practice guideline development (ESCG)	Dr	Máirín Ryan	2,498,321
Total:					€5,498,281

## Appendix C

HRB co-funded awards in 2024				
Scheme	Co-funding partner	Co-funding allocation (€)	HRB share (€)	Total awarded (€)
European Research Area Network (ERA NET – TRANSCAN-3 JTC 2023)	INCA/ARC (France), BMBF (Germany), IT-MOH (Italy), ISCIII (Spain), FCAECC (Spain)	1,213,200	348,738	1,561,938
European Research Area Network (ERA NET – TRANSCAN-3 JTC 2023)	INCA/ARC (France), BMBF (Germany), ISCIII (Spain), FCAECC (Spain), NSTC (Taiwan), TÜBITAK (Türkiye)	1,245,000	250,491	1,495,491
European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (Old) (THCS JTC 2023)	IFD (Denmark); CSO-MOH (Israel); MUR (Italy)	610,809	368,904	979,713
EU Public-Public Partnership on Health Research topics (ERA4Health JTC 2024)	ANR (France), IT-MOH (Italy), MUR (Italy), NWO (Netherlands), NSTC (Taiwan)	1,437,414	329,648	1,767,062
ERA4Health Partnership: Fostering a European Research Area for Health Research (ERA4Health JTC 2024)	BMBF/DLR (Germany), NWO (Netherlands), RCN (Norway)	1,062,600	344,051	1,406,651
European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS JTC 2024)	IFD (Denmark), RCN (Norway), NCBR (Poland), ISCIII (Spain)	1,501,293	528,344	2,029,637
European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS JTC 2024)	ANR (France), FR MoH (France), SNSF (Switzerland)	1,384,706	261,317	1,646,023
European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS JTC 2024)	FFG/BMK (Austria), Scottish Government (Scotland)	646,093	529,999	1,176,092
European Partnership on Transforming Health and Care Systems (THCS JTC 2024)	ZonMw (Netherlands), CCDRC (Portugal), UEFISCDI (Romania)	649,466	412,850	1,062,316
Joint Programming Initiative on Antimicrobial Resistance (JPIAMR JTC 2024)	NHMRC (Australia), FRRB (Italy), ZonMw (Netherlands), RCN (Norway), UKRI (UK)	1,891,088	404,654	2,295,742
Joint Programming Initiative on Antimicrobial Resistance (JPIAMR JTC 2024)	BMBF/DLR (Germany), UKRI (UK)	749,125	527,144	1,276,269

HRB co-funded awards in 2024				
Scheme	Co-funding partner	Co-funding allocation (€)	HRB share (€)	Total awarded (€)
European Partnership for Personalised Medicine (EP PerMed JTC 2024)	ANR (France), BMBF/DLR (Germany), BMG/DLR (Germany), MUR (Italy), ZonMw (Netherlands)	1,595,307	317,067	1,912,374
US-Ireland R&D Partnership Awards (USIRL)	Science Foundation Ireland	349,903	349,903	699,805
US-Ireland R&D Partnership Awards (USIRL)	Science Foundation Ireland	349,500	349,500	698,999
Fulbright 2024	Fulbright Commission	5,811	17,434	23,245
Fulbright 2024	Fulbright Commission	20,396	20,396	40,792
Applied Partnership Awards (APA 2024)	Health Service Executive	40,000	200,000	240,000
Applied Partnership Awards (APA 2024)	Health Service Executive	40,000	200,000	240,000
Applied Partnership Awards (APA 2024)	Football Cooperative Ireland	39,852	199,258	239,110
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Cystinosis Ireland	149,654	194,550	344,204
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	The Rotunda Foundation	99,143	128,593	227,736
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Irish Thoracic Society	50,000	64,999	114,999
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Cystinosis Ireland	149,654	194,550	344,204
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Fighting Blindness	149,994	194,992	344,986
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Fighting Blindness	150,000	195,000	345,000

HRB co-funded awards in 2024				
Scheme	Co-funding partner	Co-funding allocation (€)	HRB share (€)	Total awarded (€)
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Breakthrough Cancer Research	149,997	194,853	344,850
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Breakthrough Cancer Research	149,999	194,818	344,817
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Breakthrough Cancer Research	113,486	144,843	258,328
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	The Alzheimer Society of Ireland	86,884	112,667	199,550
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Irish Cancer Society	149,972	194,783	344,755
Health Research Charities Ireland-Health Research Board (HRCI-HRB) Joint Funding Scheme 2024	Multiple Sulfatase Deficiency Action Foundation	33,581	130,965	164,546
Genome of Ireland (Invited Application from 1+MG National Mirror Group)	European Commission	498,932	1,000,000	1,498,932
Total:		16,762,856	8,905,311	25,668,166

# Corporate Governance and Financial Statements


The Corporate Governance and Financial Statements information will be published in a Part 2 to this document upon receipt of the audited financial statements from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

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