



ICGP Chairman's Address - Dr. John Gillman

2018 ICGP Graduates

03 November 2018

Croke Park

Welcome and Thanks

Welcome all of you, our newest members, to the Graduation Ceremony of the Irish college of general practitioners

Today is a day of great celebration and joy. We come together as colleagues, families and friends to mark your substantial achievement.

Congratulations to each of you who has been awarded your membership of the college. The MICGP Certificate presented to each of you today signifies more than the passing of an exam. It is the mark of your membership of the Irish College of General Practitioners, which was founded 34 years ago by family doctors who saw the need for a professional body for General practice in Ireland. Today you become part of a respected, hardworking group of medical professionals, at the forefront of patient-centred care in Ireland.

Today is a just reward for your hard work, your dedication, your determination and commitment to study. It is a statement of excellence in respect of the patients you have treated, healed and comforted.

On your behalf, and on behalf of Your College, I would like to thank and congratulate the people who helped you get here. Parents who have shaped and moulded you through your

formative years, siblings, partners friends and as we can hear your children who have been there behind you, supporting you as you progressed through your training.

I would also like to thank the Directing Teams, Trainers and Administrators in each of your Training schemes who have supported you on a day to day basis as you progressed through training.

Our appreciation also the College's GP Training Unit, Dr Karena Hanley National Director GP Training, Ms Martina McDonnell, Manager the unit administrators Ms. Pauline Tierney and Ms. Sylvia Browne.

I wish to thank the MICGP Examination Committee, the panel of MICGP Examiners represented here today by Dr Molly Owens Chair of the Examination Committee.

General Practice as a Profession

What is a GP?

“What is a GP in 2017”?

General Practitioners are specialist generalists who are trained to work at the frontline of the health care system and are usually the first point of contact and intervention for patients.

As General Practitioners we see patients regardless of age, gender, race, religion or social circumstances and not limited by whether their complaint is physical or related to their mental health.

We are personal doctors who provide both acute and continuing care. We provide comprehensive care so that while dealing with acute episodes of illness we also provide care for chronic conditions and give advice on prevention and health promoting behaviour.

We have an enduring, continuing relationship with patients built up over many years that is not often replicated in other specialities. Our position within the healthcare structure is unique and privileged. We are rooted in our communities we are part of the pride of the little village.

We integrate physical, psychological, social and cultural factors using the knowledge and trust created by repeated contacts.

We care for people in the context of their family, their community and their culture always respecting the autonomy of the individual and empowering them to make informed decisions about their health.

We have a responsibility to make an efficient use of health care resources through the co-ordination of care, working with other professionals in the primary health care setting, managing the interface with other specialities, and taking an advocacy role for the patient when needed.

As you continue to grow and develop as General Practitioners within your own communities and professional networks you will continue to shape and evolve the definition of General Practice. Your work henceforth will help mould the future of General Practice in Ireland.

The College

So, *WHAT ABOUT THE COLLEGE?*

As our newest members we actively encourage you to become involved in the work and development of *YOUR COLLEGE*, for it is just that *YOUR COLLEGE*.

The activities of the ICGP include:

- Teaching, training and education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
- Accreditation of the fourteen specialists training programmes
- Examination of candidates for membership of Your College
- Promotion of continuing education, professional development and research
- Practice management support
- Promotion of general practitioner health
- Public relations and interaction with the media on behalf of the profession
- Making available relevant publications for, and on behalf of, its members
- Giving informed advice to its members and to the government when requested

These are many, diverse areas in which you can become involved in and I actively encourage you to do.

Involvement with your local faculty will give you an opportunity to interact with GPs in your area. Faculties are always looking for new volunteers to support the organisation of local meetings. Involvement in your faculty is an ideal way to develop a network of colleagues outside your practice.

The **ICGP Network of Establishing GPs (NEGS)** will host our Winter Meeting in Athlone on November. NEGS offers a forum for young doctors to meet and exchange ideas and mutual support; it is your first opportunity to engage as the newest members of your College. I look forward to meeting you there!

General practice is at a crossroads

At this time the long awaited talks on a new GP contract are ongoing.

The current stagnation and active neglect of general practice is not a viable ongoing option for government to pursue

Slaintecare is in its infancy and the structure of this roadmap to the future needs to be determined.

Any healthcare model must have at its centre the people who live on this island, it must be safe, it must have equitable access it must be affordable.

The perseverance endurance and resilience of the Irish people must be acknowledged, respected and cherished.

This is the core test of character of government.

A recent department paper spoke of securing efficiencies in general practice. What is abundantly clear to me is that the authors never spent a day of their lives working in Mullinahone's of this world.

Blue sky thinking is one thing but blue sky daydreaming is another.

We act as gatekeepers; we provide excellent cost efficient humane compassionate patient centred service.

We advocate for our patients our communities and our profession.

We are accountable we are accessible and we are responsible.

The corporate structures of the state must also pass this test of character.

For every cent of taxpayers money wasted on creating an unwieldy behemoth of bureaucracy signifies the theft of dignity of every person left on a hospital trolley or left on a waiting list, signifies the theft of humanity from every marginalised person left homeless on a cold street, signifies the theft of basic human rights from every hungry person who is left unfed.

The contractor model of general practice has well served the Irish people and any rush to a for profit corporate model where monetary kpis takes precedence over the intrinsic dignity of our patients does not reflect the core character of the Irish people it does not reflect our way of life it is humanity hanging from a cross of greed .

As a core message we must address:

- Resources
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Retirement
- Cherish what we do
- Resource us to do it
- We can and shall deliver