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**Beyond 2020 –**  
*Statement of Strategy 2016–2021*



## The Irish College of General Practitioners

### *About the Irish College of General Practitioners*

The Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) is the professional body for education, training, research and standards in general practice.

### *College Activities*

- Teaching, training and education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
- Accreditation of specialist training programmes in general practice
- Operates a professional competence scheme under arrangement with the Medical Council
- Examining body for membership in general practice (MICGP)
- Continuing education and professional development
- Research
- Practice management support through training, advice and consultancy
- General practitioner health
- Public relations and media liaison on behalf of the profession
- General practice publications, guidelines and protocols
- Advice and support to members
- Advocacy on behalf of the profession with external agencies

### *Contact Us*

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## President's Introduction

I welcome the publication of the College's latest strategy document. This is the culmination of a lot of hard work by many individuals and is truly an important document produced by the members for the members.

It builds on previous strategy documents, retaining the best of those ideas whilst reflecting the current priorities for a College which must remain dynamic if it is to be relevant to evolving medical care and to its members.

I would specifically like to thank Brendan O'Shea, Kieran Ryan, the College Council and the Board members for their active participation in bringing this document to fruition.

I commend this strategy to you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fergus O'Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

**Prof Fergus O'Kelly**

President



## Chairperson's Introduction

A strategy according to the dictionary is “a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim”. Developing this strategy for the Irish College of General practitioners involved examining where the College is now and what its aim is for the future. The current document was reached by a combination of surveying a cross section of faculties and discussing the results of that survey at Council meetings, Board meetings and workshops. I would like to thank all of the members who contributed to it.

The vision of the Irish College of General Practitioners is “an Irish healthcare system where general practice is central to providing excellence in continuing personal care for all”. The words in this vision statement were carefully chosen to echo the values of general practice, that is, comprehensive continuing personalised care.

This document has taken inspiration from the College's previous strategy documents published in 1989 and 2008. While the College's core values of quality, leadership, service and care remain the same, the stresses on general practice, general practitioners and the College have multiplied with increased demands, decreased resources, the emigration of new members and demands for increased accountability.

At times of such uncertainty, it is important to take the time to reassess priorities and re-affirm our vision and mission statements. Six strategic goals were identified – support for members, further developing GP training, developing educational resources for members, promoting general practice, actively supporting leadership and research, as well as ensuring the highest levels of governance and management of the college.

It is however not enough to simply formulate a strategic plan. This is a live document which will be regularly reviewed by the Board of the College to ensure that targets and implementation plans are reached.

The success of this strategy depends not just on the College centrally but on each and every member of the College. I am confident that together we can achieve the vision of the College with a strong general practice workforce supported by its College and given the respect it deserves from society, medical colleagues and the state.

“Ní neart go cur le chéile.”

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Mary Sheehan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

**Dr Mary Sheehan**  
Chairperson



## CEO's Introduction

The ICGP has achieved so much to promote the professionalism and standards of Irish general practice over the past 31 years. The Irish health services continue to undergo many changes but one thing is certain – general practice will remain the cornerstone of healthcare provision for all Irish citizens. The College must adapt and develop its services to support members in the delivery of high quality medical care.

This statement of strategy was developed with the membership and for the membership. This strategy provides the necessary focus on key priorities for the ICGP so that the College remains relevant to the needs of members, and meets its responsibilities as the recognised professional and training body for the specialty of general practice.

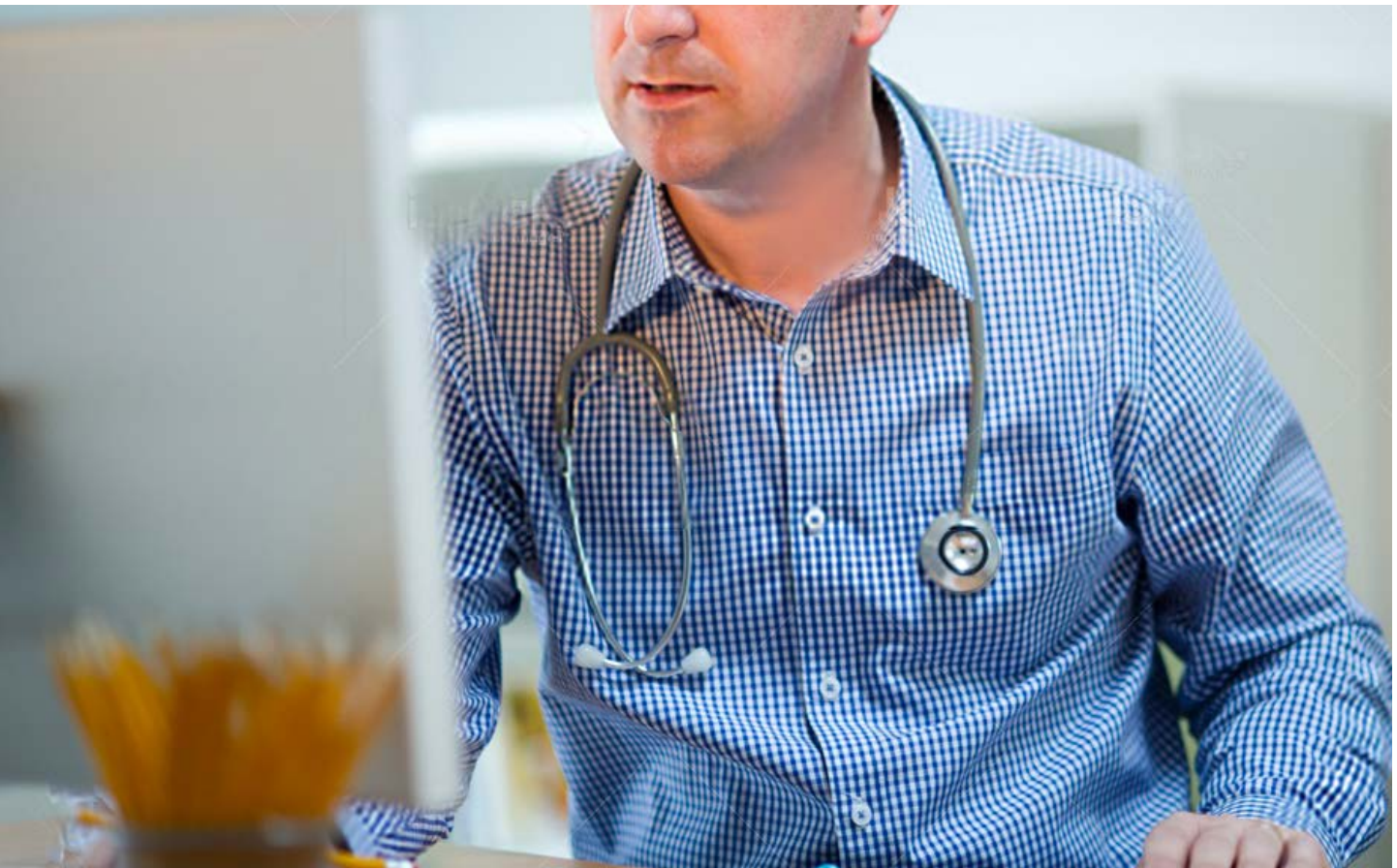
I wish to acknowledge the input and support of the College Board and Council in assisting us in the development of the strategy. We are also very grateful for the time and feedback we received from the members who took our survey and attended the workshops with our faculties. I also wish to specifically thank Dr Brendan O'Shea who expertly oversaw the engagement and analysis elements of the strategy development process.

'Beyond 2020 – ICGP Statement of Strategy 2016-2021' articulates the vision, mission and core values of the Irish College of General Practitioners. To give effect to the mission of the college, we identified six strategic goals. These goals will have specific implementation plans whereby the College Board can monitor our progress and ensure that all the resources of the College are utilised so that there is maximum value to the membership and positively contribute to the implementation of the strategy. In everything we do, we will have to ask ourselves how it contributes to the vision and mission of the ICGP. We look forward to the continuous development of the ICGP in support of our members.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kieran Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kieran" and the last name "Ryan" clearly distinguishable.

**Kieran Ryan**

CEO



## Background

This statement of strategy builds upon the previous strategy (2008-2013) and the ICGP document produced in 1989, entitled ‘Future of General Practice in Ireland’, otherwise known as ‘The Blue Book’.

The purpose of this statement of strategy is to express the view of the members of the Irish College of General Practitioners on:

- The future structure and role of the ICGP in support of members of the College and in the continued development of high quality general practice.
- The priorities for the ICGP in its core services of training, education, research, quality and standards, and representation.

This document is closely informed by results from a survey of a representative sample of ICGP members, involving six ICGP faculties (Cork, Galway, North Dublin, Kildare, Carlow and Kilkenny), with responses from 384 members. Results were collated, reflected back to the participating faculties, and considered by the ICGP Council (September 2014) and ICGP Board (February 2015).

In 2015, the difficulties experienced by GPs and their patients can be summarised as follows:

- Reduction in funding for services to medical card patients through the GMS in the order of 35 to 40%.

- Increased financial stress experienced by GMS ineligible patients in accessing essential healthcare.
- Continuing difficulties in retaining newly trained GPs in Ireland, particularly in rural and deprived areas.
- Continuing failure of the HSE and Department of Health to effectively plan for and resource chronic disease management.
- Growing shortfalls in the acute hospital and long term care sectors.
- Growing difficulties in the areas of suicide, alcohol misuse, care of older citizens, and inequality.

Nonetheless, Irish GPs remain confident and ready to strive towards better outcomes for all patients, and remain committed to the concept of best care, based on medical need, delivered with sensitivity, professionalism and competency.

ICGP members believe that further improvements in the health of all members of society can be achieved, and that better efficiency can be realised in the use of finite resources throughout the health system.

Following consultation with the membership of the college, the following issues were felt to be of importance for the College to address in a strategic plan for the next five years.

### ***Service Developments***

- Further develop the process of long term co-ordinated personal care of individuals and families.
- Inform and assist in the full deployment of information technology throughout the health system.
- Communicate clear, practical and detailed standards in terms of service delivery, applicable to all citizens.
- Lead in the transfer of chronic disease management from a predominantly hospital based system towards a co-ordinated, efficient and inclusive community based system.
- Establish, validate and disseminate new models of best practice relevant to Irish communities.
- Take a leadership and advocacy role for the allocation of appropriate resourcing of general practice.

### ***Relationships and Communications***

- Confront and address inequalities, and champion disadvantaged groups in Irish society.
- Develop strong regional centres of professional activity based on self-selecting local configurations of ICGP faculties, GP training schemes,

GP co-operatives and academic university departments, aligning where appropriate with hospital groups and community health organisations.

- Maintain close and effective relationships with all relevant agencies in the primary care domain and in other health systems where relevant.

### **Education**

- Support the professional development of members, trainees, their practice staff and allied disciplines. Build capacity within general practice and the GP team through professional development, education, research and training.
- Enable individual GPs to engage more in policy development, special interests, advanced care, complex care, education and research, broadly in line with nationally agreed objectives and ICGP policy and guidelines.

### **Vision**

#### **THE VISION OF THE IRISH COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS**

An Irish healthcare system where general practice is central to providing excellence in continuing personal care for all

### **Mission**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

As the professional membership body, the Irish College of General Practitioners will support its members to deliver healthcare of the highest possible standard to patients and communities

The above mission statement of the College is founded upon the core values and goals of the College and its membership.





## ICGP Core Values

The core values of the College are quality, leadership, service and care expressed through:

1. The fostering of high quality evidence based patient care delivered through a service resourced to support the complex and comprehensive nature of general practice patient centered consultations.
2. The provision of appropriate and high quality training, research and continuous medical education in support of continuous quality improvement.
3. Advocacy for the centrality of general practice in the delivery of an effective and equitable healthcare system designed to meet the needs of patients including acute, chronic and continuing care.
4. The alignment of policies, guidelines, structures and services to provide leadership to members in what is a very complex and demanding role.
5. The encouragement and support of members to enable them to maintain a healthy work/life balance and to work towards having a rewarding and valued career.



### ICGP Strategic Goals

1. To provide appropriate and responsive services to support College members.
2. To develop, deliver and accredit the highest possible standard of specialist general practice training and assure a sustainable and adaptable workforce for Irish general practice.
3. To develop and deliver the most relevant and evidence-based educational resources, professional development and practice guidance for our members.
4. To promote the role of general practice in Irish society and develop our relationships with all stakeholders in the health services so that general practice is understood, respected and supported to deliver the highest quality of care to patients and our communities.
5. To actively support leadership, innovation and research in close collaboration with universities, associated health disciplines and agencies.
6. To ensure the highest level of governance and management of the College.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

### Strategic Goal 1

*To provide appropriate and responsive services to support our members*

- 1.1. The ICGP will continue to regularly consult with members in determining the appropriate services and supports they require of the College.
- 1.2. The ICGP will develop programmes of professional development, training and research in support of the broad range of professional roles of members.
- 1.3. The ICGP will identify and support innovation and best practices in the delivery of general practice services.

### Strategic Goal 2

*To develop, deliver and accredit the highest possible standard of specialist general practice training and assure a sustainable and adaptable workforce for Irish general practice*

- 2.1. Maintain accreditation as the specialist training body for general practice from the Medical Council.
- 2.2. In collaboration with the GP training schemes, ensure the highest standards of training while respecting the regional needs and ethos of individual training schemes.
- 2.3. Maintain continuous development of the curriculum for GP training which is accessible, relevant, and up to date at all times.
- 2.4. Deliver examinations and assessment procedures towards the award of the qualification of membership of the Irish College of General Practitioners that are evidence based and benchmarked.
- 2.5. Subject to consultation with the relevant stakeholders and assessment of feasibility, the ICGP will assume responsibility from the HSE for the direct delivery of GP training in accordance with the ICGP National GP Training Programme.
- 2.6. Continue our collaboration in the Forum of Irish Post Graduate Medical Training Bodies.
- 2.7. Develop international opportunities in areas related to GP training, assessment and examinations.

### Strategic Goal 3

*To develop and deliver the most relevant and evidence-based educational resources, professional development and practice guidance for our members*

- 3.1. Continuously seek the views of College members on their education and training needs.
- 3.2. Invest in all our educational activities to ensure that they are user friendly and robust to deliver high quality learning.
- 3.3. Develop and publish a specific strategy for ICGP education.
- 3.4. Develop an education programme that supports the GP practice team and develops their skills and capabilities.
- 3.5. Implement systems for the formal evaluation of all ICGP educational activity.
- 3.6. Lead and inform on the development of measures and descriptors that demonstrate the standard and outcomes achieved by general practice.
- 3.7. Actively engage in multidisciplinary education and training activities to support general practice in the delivery of effective and evidence based care.

### Strategic Goal 4

*To promote the role of general practice in Irish society and develop our relationships with all stakeholders in the health services so that general practice is understood, respected and supported to deliver the highest quality of care to patients and our communities*

- 4.1. Maintain robust and open channels of communication with our key external stakeholders.
- 4.2. International linkages will be maintained and developed to demonstrate the global standards of Irish general practice.
- 4.3. Develop an effective communications strategy so that the College and our membership have a meaningful presence in the healthcare arena.
- 4.4. Ensure greater patient participation in College activities and structures.
- 4.5. Undertake and publish research into the evolving role of general practice in the delivery of evidence based and best practice healthcare.

## Strategic Goal 5

*To actively support leadership, innovation and research in close collaboration with universities, associated health disciplines and agencies*

- 5.1.** Implement the external Research Review conducted by Prof Mike Pringle in 2015 and continue to develop ICGP research which contributes to the evidence base that underpins quality general practice.
- 5.2.** Seek additional financial support for general practice specific research from the HSE, HRB, voluntary sector and others.
- 5.3.** In conjunction with AUDGPI, the HRB, the HSE and others, develop sustainable career paths for those involved in education, training and research.
- 5.4.** The College will support the development of research skills, capacity and infrastructure in general practice.
- 5.5.** Develop a planned programme of primary care based research in areas including, but not limited to, the use of new technologies, e-health, enhanced care pathways, new clinical skills and innovative therapies.

## Strategic Goal 6

*To ensure the highest level of governance and management of the College*

- 6.1.** The Board and management of the ICGP will continue to implement the highest level of good governance, management and operations of the College appropriate to its context.
- 6.2.** The Board of the College will show leadership to the membership through the publication of a future vision of Irish general practice which reflects the core values of the College, future developments in healthcare and the central role general practice plays in the provision of healthcare to our patients and communities.
- 6.3.** Trainee and establishing members of the College will be encouraged to get involved in the governance and activities of the College.
- 6.4.** The Board will conduct a regular evaluation of performance of management against deliverables on strategic objectives.
- 6.5.** The Board and management will identify opportunities to develop a diverse portfolio of revenue sources to assist in the development of services and supports to the membership of the College.
- 6.6.** The Board will ensure that appropriate financial oversight and management systems are implemented by College management.



**The Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) is the professional body for general practice in Ireland. The College was founded in 1984 and is based in Lincoln Place, Dublin 2. The College's primary aim is to serve the patient and the general practitioner by encouraging and maintaining the highest standards of general medical practice. It is the representative organisation on education, training and standards in general practice.**

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