



**Chairman's Address - Dr John Cox, Chair ICGP
ICGP 2019 Graduation Ceremony
2nd November 2019
The Convention Centre Dublin**

Welcome to the Irish College of General Practitioners 2019 Graduation Ceremony. Congratulations to all of you celebrating with us today.

You are indeed an extremely talented group of people and I am not just talking about the academic arena! On our local GP training scheme we have a scratch golfer and someone else who had a trial for Chelsea Football Club. Indeed, a graduate from the TCD scheme went on to become Minister for Health and is now our Taoiseach!

It is with great pleasure I welcome you as members of the Irish College of General Practitioners. Your College was formed in 1984 to support us members in delivering the highest possible standard of healthcare of to our patients and communities. We have over 3,800 members and there are 787 doctors training in the higher speciality of general practice.

Your College is here to help you to be the best doctor you can be by supporting you in education, training, research and quality in general practice. All of you have completed a 4-year of training programme based on your College's curriculum for general practice. All of you will have read, and some of you contributed to, Forum, the leading journal of general practice in Ireland. Some of you have attended your College's national events including the Winter Meeting & the Annual Conference and other programmes providing on going education. Most of you have done a research project while in your training practices and some of you have published these as papers. I hope you will, with your College's support, publish many more.

You are all now entitled to enrol on the Specialist Division of the Register of the Irish Medical Council. You will also join your College's Professional Competence Scheme which will be there to advise you on how to fulfil your CPD commitment

We would hope that you will become leaders in your specialty by joining your local faculties. Many of you are already attending your local faculty meetings. If not, I would strongly recommend that you do so. You should think about becoming involved – not just by attending but by offering to help. Becoming secretary of your local faculty is an excellent way to get to know your colleagues. I remember the welcome I got when I attended my first meeting of the Wexford Faculty in 1992. I soon became secretary and to this day I still count of the support I get from those doctors I got to know then. Remember, frontline general practice can be incredibly challenging at times and your faculty can provide you that vital sense of community we all need the going gets tough.

Your first job as a general practitioner is often an overwhelming moment and is indeed a critical period in your career. The College's Network of Establishing General Practitioners provides a programme of support to assist and guide you during this important transition.

I would encourage you to engage with and contribute to this programme. I attended the Establishing GP conference in September and was very impressed by the young GPs who presented on the practical challenges they encountered in establishing in practice. I would strongly recommend you to attend this event next year.

General practice in Ireland particularly suffered from the negative effects of the FEMPI legislation in 2009. However, there is a new sense of optimism out there; the world of general practice in Ireland has seen a number of significant changes, the most important being the agreement earlier this year between the Irish Medical Organization and the Department of Health & HSE on a new fee structure and expansion of chronic disease management in the community led by GPs. Already we are noticing an increase in our capitation earnings in the practice which bodes well for the future.

On your behalf, and on behalf of your College, I would 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 your training.

Our appreciation goes also to our College's GP Training Unit; Dr Karena Hanley, National Director of GP Training; Ms Martina McDonnell, Unit Manager; Ms Pauline Tierney & Ms Sylvia Browne, Unit administrators.

I wish to thank the MICGP Examination Committee and the panel of examiners represented here today by Dr Marie Hogan, Chair of the Examination Committee.

Now, last but not least, 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 now ask you, our newest members, to stand, turn around and applaud your families and friends. (All graduates stand up, turn around and applaud their families and friends)

Thank you.