

# ICGP – an unfolding story...

**At a meeting of the Institute of General Practice in September 1983** the establishment of an Irish College of General Practitioners was considered. A key question posed was the obvious one: why do Irish GPs need an Irish college? There were several good reasons:

- for our own good
- to fill an administrative vacuum
- to give informed advice to the government and the profession
- to take our place internationally
- to help those entering our specialty
- to help the public understand the service we offer.

The case was compelling and the ICGP was formally founded in March 1984.

<b>President</b>	<b>Dr John Mason</b>
<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>Dr Cormac Macnamara</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Dr Michael Boland</b>
<b>Honorary Secretary</b>	<b>Dr Declan Murphy</b>
<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>	<b>Dr Norman Murphy</b>

## Priority areas from the outset included:

- The establishment of the membership examination (now end-point assessment for GP training/specialist registration). The development of the MICGP was given priority from the outset and was established with the appropriate national and international recognition
- The recognition of general practice as a specialty
- The establishment of GP vocational training nationally; Vocational training schemes had been established in Galway (1971), Cork ('72), Dublin ('75), Donegal ('81) and Sligo ('82) but were much under-funded and little else took place in the intervening years other than in the context of the GMS Service
- The establishment of a national programme of continuing medical education
- The establishment of departments of general practice in all medical schools
- The provision of a comprehensive policy for the development of general practice.

All of these priorities have been achieved, including the latter which of course is an on-going process.

## Strategic planning

In 1991 the college published the first strategic plan



*Gary Stack with Dan Murphy and Eamonn Shanahan*



*An MICGP examiners' group in the early days*



*Ellard and Beth Eppel with Cormac and Mary Macnamara*



*Sean O'Conchubhair with Seamus Ryan and Tom Rea*



*Fionán Ó'Cuinneagáin, Maeve Hillery, President Paddy Hillery with Paddy Henry and Garrett Hayes*



*The ICGP council line-up from 1993*

'The next decade'. This focused on education and research strategies, the establishment of the management in practice programme and in particular the establishment of the ICGP Research and Education Foundation.

The second plan was published in 1999 covering the period 1999-2004. This gave particular emphasis given to GP manpower, competence assurance, universal patient registration and healthcare reform.

A subsequent strategy "The future is in your hands" covered the period 2004-2008. This included the primary care strategy and the definition of general practice, college structures and membership participation.

At the AGM in 2008 'The strategic plan 2008-2013' was adopted. The priorities for 2008/2009 were:

- Primary care strategy and the GP contract
- Partnership with patients
- Interaction with members and other GPs
- Internal alignment of college resources

**The future**

With the establishment of the HSE and the roll-out of the healthcare reform programme the college is interacting on a range of fronts with the HSE and hopefully a confidence will develop which will allow for the necessary collaboration to enhance patient services, difficult though that may be in the current economic climate. Another challenge for the college and the medical profession as a whole will be the implementation of the Medical Practitioners Act, 2007.

An important development in recent years has been the establishment of the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies, representative of all recognised training bodies.

As we reflect on this the 25th anniversary of the college in 2009, there have been enormous developments and changes in general practice over the past 15-20 years. The ICGP has provided a cohesive structure which enabled a concerted development in the education/training area in particular and the broader development of general practice.



*Henry Jack with Leonard Condren*



*Eithne Conway-McGee*



*ICGP team for Bahrain; Michael Boland, Fionán Ó'Cuinneagáin, the under-secretary, Ministry of Health, Bahrain, Brian Coffey and Aiden Meade*



*John Madden makes a presentation to Michael Boland. Also pictured from left; Eve, Susan and Michael jnr*