



# Clinical Design and Innovation 2024

## A Year in Review

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**13 evidence-based** clinical designs published including 3 co-designed Models of Care, 8 guidelines, 1 framework and 1 decision support tool.



**Captured the voice of service users** through 'Your Voice Matters Transitions of Care Survey' and the establishment of an Older Persons Reference Group and a network of dual diagnosis peer researchers



**New e-Learning programmes:** Management of Neck Haematoma; Palliative Care Assessment; Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence; Swallow screen for patient with stroke



**2 new dual diagnosis clinics**



**4 new 'see and treat' dermatology clinics**



**New Physiotherapy referral** for radiological procedures



**New education resources** for people with asthma and diabetes.



**The introduction of Point of Care testing** for sugars and lipids nationally resulting in a **47% increase** in people with psychosis with a full physical health check.



**Congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV) pathway** implemented in all 19 maternity units nationally



**A digital Patient Reported Outcome Measures** solution was built and piloted for use by eating disorder teams.



**Early Supported Discharge Teams**, providing specialised stroke rehabilitation in the home, led to an 8% increase in discharges to home (766 in 2022 compared to 827 in 2023).



**Advanced Nurse Practitioner-led service** that reviews patients discharged from Critical Care to wards resulted in 50% reduction of In-Hospital Cardiac Arrests in 2023.

## A Message from the National Clinical Director for Integrated Care

As HSE National Clinical Director for Integrated Care, I am delighted to publish our Clinical Design and Innovation Year in Review for 2024.

The overall aim of CDI is to design and support the implementation of clinical models of care and pathways ensuring everyone has equitable and transparent access to high quality care, where and when they need it. 33 National Clinical Programmes and 4 service improvement initiatives are supported by national clinical design teams to work with staff across the HSE and patients and service users to co-design value conscious, and evidence-informed clinical designs. Informed by the latest innovations, best practice and technologies, clinical designs for integrated health and social care will enable better outcomes for our patients and service users, by delivering safe, timely and efficient services as close to home as possible.

The population of Ireland is growing, and people are living longer. This review provides an insight into the breadth and complexity of our innovative clinical design work to make the necessary transformative improvements to keep up with this increased demand and meet the needs of our entire population.

### Some key achievements last year include:

- **Publication of 13 evidence-based clinical designs**, comprising 3 models of care, 8 guidelines, 1 Framework and 1 decision support tool.
- **Enablement of the implementation the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015**, through the provision of clinical leadership at local, regional and national level. Regions and individual services have been supported through training, mentorship and wide stakeholder engagement.
- **Stroke Early Supported Discharge (ESD) Teams increased** - There are now 11 operational ESD teams nationally. ESD Teams, providing specialised stroke rehabilitation in the home, led to an 8% increase in discharges to home (766 in 2022 compared to 827 in 2023).
- **Congenital Cytomegalovirus pathway implemented** in all 19 maternity units nationally.
- **Dual diagnosis specialist adult services expanded**, with the roll out of two new units across HSE South-West and Mid-West regions.
- **Critical Care Outreach (patients review on discharge to wards)** - In 2024, there was expansion of coverage in existing services, which are now in place across 14 Acute Hospitals.

- In 2023, there were 60,000 episodes of care. Impacts to date include a reduction in In Hospital Cardiac Arrests by 50%.
- **Palliative Care Needs Assessment eLearning Programme rolled out**, with 1,727 participants having completed the course in 2024.
- **Dermatology See and Treat clinics implemented at four sites** nationally, providing same day consultation and biopsy, resulting in removal of 1,560 patients from dermatology outpatient waiting lists last year.

I invite you to continue reading to learn about many more achievements and successful outcomes throughout 2024.



*Siobhán Ní Bhriain*

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**Dr. Siobhán Ní Bhriain**

National Clinical Director, Integrated Care

## A Design of healthcare improvements

**Models of Care:** In 2024, the National Clinical Programmes co-designed Models of Care for [People Living with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus](#), [pre-assessment of patients due to attend for elective procedures involving the services of an anaesthesiologist](#) and [General Paediatric Surgery](#). These models outline best practice care and services for a person, population group or patient cohort across their continuum of care.

**Clinical Practice Guidance:** new clinical practice guidance and resource tools were developed to guide and support staff to implement changes that improve clinical practices. Some of these new designs are listed below.

- [Adult Type 1 Diabetes – National Clinical Guideline No. 17](#)
- [Anorexia Nervosa: The Management of the Paediatric Patient National Clinical Practice Guidance](#)
- [Clinical Guidance on the Diagnosis and Treatment of Breast Implant Associated Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma](#)
- [National Insulin titration guidelines for Nurses and Midwives working with People with Diabetes who require Subcutaneous Insulin Injections](#)
- [General Principles in the Management of Children with Diabetes Requiring Surgery](#)
- [Decision Support Tool for the Diagnosis of Paediatric Coeliac Disease](#)



All documents are available from [hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/](https://hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/) under the relevant programme.

**Data-driven strategic planning:** Central to the design of services and educational resources is the integration of evidenced based data, along with insights from experts by experience and experts by knowledge. The following examples highlight how we have collaborated with patients and service users in 2024 to inform healthcare design, underpinned by patient-centric data and metrics.

- Your Voice Matters is a national survey tool that captures the lived experiences of service users. A national survey of Transitions of Care from paediatric to adult services was completed. Participants spanned 14 counties and engaged with 21 different healthcare specialties, offering a broad representation of the challenges encountered in transitioning to adult care. For more information, go to [Your Voice Matters - HSE.ie](#)
- The accurate recording and analysis of clinical data is key to the effective care delivery that meets patient needs, for example, patients with eating disorders, suicidal ideation or who self-harm. Working with eHealth, an electronic cloud-based platform, titled CASTOR, was piloted with HSE's Suicide Crisis Assessment Nurses to collect and analyse real time clinical data entries. Full roll out of this electronic system is planned for 2025.

**Service User and Patient Engagement:** A National Older Persons Reference Group was established, with representation from 35 Older Persons Councils across Ireland, harnessing the wisdom of our older adult population. The group gathers feedback on the needs and concerns of older adults, which informs proposed health system improvement changes to promote health and support our population to age well. The group met with the National Ambulance Service to share their experiences and suggestions for a more age-attuned service – just one of the many co-participatory engagements between OPRG and healthcare services during 2024.



**Members of the older person’s reference group share what matters to them during a recent engagement.**

**Fidelity to evidence-based clinical design:** A report on the [2023 Review of Post-Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Services](#) was published. The review identified variation in availability and access to rehabilitation services across Ireland and provided recommendations to enhance our integrated rehabilitation services, as outlined in a HSE webinar: [‘Insights into rehabilitation in Ireland: First steps to enhancing person-centred integrated rehabilitation’](#)



An Audit of “out of scope presentations” at Injury Units was undertaken. Of the 161,000 attendances in 2023, 15,494 (9.6%) patient presentations/attendances were deemed not appropriate for care in the injury unit setting. Findings were shared with the Patients for Patients Safety Ireland Forum. A public awareness campaign is currently under consideration to educate people on when and how to use injury units.

The HSE’s [Safe Surgery Audit Tool](#) was updated to monitor implementation of HSE’s National Policy and Procedure for Safe Surgery across hospitals to support the safest care possible for patients undergoing surgery, enabling systems to enhance outcomes.



**Central to the design of services and educational resources is the integration of evidenced based data**

### **Clinical designs in development for 2025:**

- National Guideline for Venous Thromboembolism prevention, diagnosis, treatment, long-term management and recovery.
- Transition of Care Framework for young people transitioning to adult service.
- Nursing Home Specialised Services guidance document to support GPs, nursing, care staff and others to support residents in long-term care.
- The HSE National Clinical Programme for Gender Healthcare is being established to develop an updated Model of Care for gender healthcare services in Ireland, with an aim of providing safe and effective health and social care for those seeking healthcare services.

## **B Enhance Clinical Services through the implementation of clinical strategies and clinical designs**

### **Chronic Disease Models of Care:**

**Asthma care:** diagnostics access in primary care was enhanced by the development of a specialist pathway to provide GP's with direct access to Spirometry diagnostics and a new Maintenance and Reliever Therapy Adult Asthma Action Plan was co-designed with the Asthma Society of Ireland. A "one-stop shop" for patients with asthma and COPD delivered by the Galway City Integrated Respiratory team and Galway University Hospital won an "Excellence in Care" award at the Hospital Professional awards 2024. New videos to support the implementation of the Models of Care for COPD and asthma are available from the [Respiratory page on the CDI website](#).



**Spirometry testing on patient referred by GP into the Integrated Care Hub** (Image from Video 3. *HSE NCP Resp GP access to spirometry revC* available from HSE Ireland Youtube channel).

**Diabetes care:** a short Talking about diabetes: Language Matters guide was co-produced in collaboration with Diabetes Ireland, persons living with diabetes and clinical experts, to raise awareness of how improving communication with and about people with diabetes can make a difference in supporting people living with the condition. Public-facing information was updated about type 1 diabetes (signs and symptoms; getting diagnosed; managing your insulin; checking your blood glucose levels; living with the condition) and is available from HSE's [Type 1 diabetes Health A-Z Guide](#).



**Cardiac Rehabilitation:** funding was secured to provide psychology posts as part of cardiac rehabilitation teams in the 30 Specialist Ambulatory Care Hubs for chronic disease nationally. A service level agreement was also secured with the Irish Heart Foundation to support a prevention behaviour change programme for this population cohort.

### **National Stroke Strategy implementation:**

**Stroke prevention and management:** A swallow screening e-learning programme was developed to support healthcare professionals who work with stroke patients in standardising safe swallow screening for patients with stroke. Progress in stroke prevention and management was also made last year, by the roll out of hypertension primary care-delivered case finding and treatment strategy in over 45-year-olds. High blood pressure a major risk factor for stroke so to help address this, a clinical care pathway for the case finding, diagnosis, and treatment of high blood pressure in GMS patients over 18 years of age at primary care level was developed. This pathway was rolled out in 2024.



 

# Swallow Screening in Acute Stroke

Let's begin

Module last reviewed: 12/06/2024

**Access to care closer to home:** Early Supported Discharge Teams provide timely access to safe quality care for stroke patients and reduce the need to stay in an acute hospital longer than is required. These teams provide specialist and stroke-specific rehabilitation in the home setting. A study day was provided in 2024 for ESD teams and specialist nurses working in stroke, attended by 95 healthcare professionals.

## Implementation of mental health clinical designs

We are committed to promoting our population's mental health. Early interventions and improved access to person-centred mental health services, in line with the policy Sharing the Vision, are a priority for CDI and will remain so.

**Dual diagnosis** specialist adult services expanded, with the roll out of 2 new units across HSE South West and Mid-West regions. Two adolescent addiction services were also provided with funding to bring their teams to the required staffing levels needed to support adolescents living with addiction and mental health issues. A network of dual diagnosis peer researchers was established, in partnership with HSE's Social Inclusion colleagues. A series of learning sessions was rolled out to bring together key service provision partners, such as people with lived experience, Department of Health, Social Inclusion, Integrated Alcohol Programme, Maternity Services, General Hospitals, Quality Improvement, the Central Mental Hospital, non-governmental organisations, advocacy groups and the Irish Prison Services.



**Eating Disorders:** Enhancement of eating disorders services was progressed through the delivery of evidence-based training, with online supervision groups providing cognitive-behaviour therapy for eating disorders and Family-based treatment led by clinical subject matter experts. Patient Reported Outcome Measures collect health outcome data directly from the people who are experiencing them and are key in enhancing clinical decision-making and stimulate quality improvement. A digital PROMs solution was built and piloted for use by eating disorder teams in

2024. Digital PROMs provide data to clinicians before patient appointments, increasing teams' capacity to deliver clinical care and reducing the time to process and report outcomes. The project received commendation recognition in the 2024 HSE Excellence Awards (Digital solutions section).



**Early interventions and improved access to person-centred mental health services, in line with the policy Sharing the Vision, are a priority for CDI and will remain so.**

**Early Intervention in Psychosis:** Webinars took place throughout the year, to support clinicians across HSE with an interest in early intervention in psychosis, policy makers in Department of Health, forensics services and senior HSE mental health managers.

#### **Enhancing clinical strategies and clinical designs in 2025:**

- Improving outcomes for stroke patients by improving access to specialist staffing in acute stroke units and expanding Early Supported Discharge teams nationally will continue in 2025.
- Enabling timely access to neurology services, through implementation of a hub and spoke service delivery model, chronic neurological management pathways and deep brain stimulation service provision.
- Working with partners with lived experience, HSE Social Inclusion and Mental Health Recovery and Engagement teams to co-design education and learning modules on mental health and dual diagnosis

## C Enable productivity and efficiency improvements

The programmes have enabled the upskilling of the national health and social care workforce to work to the **top of their licence** to improve patient experience and outcomes in 2024.

**Diagnostics access:** Physiotherapy referral for radiological procedures. The first cohort of physiotherapists in Ireland invited to complete their training in referring for chest x-ray in 2024.

**Integrated care for older people:** A Knowledge and Skills Framework for Healthcare Professionals working with older people was launched. This co-designed framework supports teams to develop the knowledge and skills to provide integrated interdisciplinary care to older people across healthcare settings.

### Evidence-informed training and skill set in care

**provision:** A suite of new HSeLanD e-learning programmes was developed throughout the year based on expressed needs:

- Management of Neck Haematoma Post-Thyroid Surgery in a ward setting
- Palliative Care Needs Assessment
- National Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Training Programme and screening tool



**Clinical subject matter experts reviewed 184 of the HSE's citizen health guides related to common health conditions, medicines and treatments.**

## Palliative Care Needs Assessment (PCNA)

Let's begin

Module last reviewed: 20/11/2024



**Duration:**  
60 minutes

**Patient empowerment:** Patient-facing information available through the Health A-Z section of the HSE website was updated. Clinical subject matter experts reviewed 184 of the HSE’s citizen health guides related to common health conditions, medicines and treatments. Citizens access these health guides to allow them proactively manage and improve their health and wellbeing, with 13 million views of this information recorded in 2024.

### Enabling productivity and efficiency improvements in 2025

- Education programmes for anaesthesia care: Fundamentals of anaesthesia and post anaesthesia care for nurses and midwives commencing March 2025 in Technological University of Shannon.
- Developing inter-disciplinary care for older people: The Health Research Board Knowledge Translation Award was secured to support the further development of inter-professional collaboration in team-based community care for older people.
- Improving cardiovascular services: Piloting a new cardiovascular imaging service and supporting increased access to cardiac rehabilitation services.
- Delivering sustainable emergency care: The Green Emergency Department Project kicks off in the first of four pilot sites. These sites are helping define pathways for delivering emergency care more sustainably through funding from the HSE Sustainability Team and Spark Innovation.
- Implementing Activity Based Funding for Emergency Departments. In collaboration with the Healthcare Pricing Office an implementation plan for 2025 has been agreed for the introduction of coding into EDs to facilitate ABF.

## D Facilitating organisational clinical change

**Age-attuned services:** A series of engagements and co-design workshops took place with HSE’s South-West Health Region, to co-design an approach to implementing The Age-Friendly Health System “4Ms” Framework across the region’s health and social care settings. The 4Ms are What Matters, Mind, Mobility and Medication and together offer a structured holistic tool within which healthcare professionals can frame their individual and multi-disciplinary team comprehensive screening, assessment and care planning with all older adults.

**Frailty education in older people and intellectual disability services:** The National Frailty Education Programme (NFEP) ensures that all those who work with older people understand the fundamental aspects of frailty and the difference their care can make to outcomes for this vulnerable population. In 2024, a report on the development and impact of the NFEP demonstrated measurable benefits of this eLearning programme. The report provides recommendations in developing an Age - Attuned Workforce. Work is underway with Intellectual Disability (ID) Sector and with Public Health and Age Friendly Ireland to adapt this programme for delivery to people with ID and the public.



**Work progressed to embrace the potential of innovative solutions transforming healthcare.**

**Mental Health:** International evidence shows that people with psychosis die 15-20 years younger than the general population, typically due to cardio-metabolic problems. The introduction of Point of Care testing for sugars and lipids across all 5 Early Intervention in Psychosis teams nationally has resulted in a 47% increase in people with psychosis availing of a full physical health check. It is hoped this will improve the longevity of this population through early detection, diagnosis and interventions, where cardio-metabolic issues are detected.

**Patient needs enabled by Clinical Data and Clinical Documentation Standardisation:** A high-level scoping project was completed to explore standardisation, management and governance of clinical documentation and clinical data collection. Information and knowledge are a core enabler of integrated care. A roadmap and discussion paper was produced to outline a case for change and key steps required to deliver uniform standardisation, management and governance of CDCDS, based on leading practice approaches, methodologies and stakeholder consultation.

**Digital for Care:** Work progressed to embrace the potential of innovative solutions transforming healthcare. Digitally enabled healthcare solutions such as video-enabled care, health monitoring and virtual consultations such as the Virtual Fracture Assessment Clinic helped reduce patient wait times. Online supports and the use of mobile health applications also proved effective in improving patient experience and enabling self-management at home, increasing capacity for hospitals and healthcare professionals to dedicate their clinical expertise to those with the most complex needs

**Integrated Care Enablement:** The National Clinical Programmes' Conference took place in September. To view some presentations from the day, go to [hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/resources/](https://hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/resources/).

QPS Talk Time webinar 'Introducing a whole system approach to Integrated Care' took place in October, with 87% of attendees providing positive feedback that they gained a better understanding of integrated care afterwards. Recording of webinar is available from [youtube.com/@NationalQPS](https://youtube.com/@NationalQPS)

### Facilitating Organisational Change in 2025

- Developing Health and Wellbeing Profile for Older Adults: A HSE Spark Impact Award Grant was secured to develop a profile to provide information on demographics, health status, use of health and care services, social determinants of health, and community assets for those aged 65 and older.
- Ensuring patient preferences for palliative care: A pilot started in late 2024 will continue to investigate if introducing a Future Care Plan document ensures that patient preferences for palliative care are followed in the event of a 112/999 emergency call, or an out-of-hours call to a specialist palliative care service.
- Enabling sustainable practice education placements within Children's Disability Network Teams: Continue to support a quality placement experience for the child and family, student and practice educator.
- Enhancing Digital and Assistive technology for people with a disability.



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