



THE ROYAL VICTORIA
EYE AND EAR
HOSPITAL DUBLIN



Nursing Directorate End of Year Report 2023



**OUR NURSES.
OUR FUTURE.**

International Council of Nurses

The economic power of care



ACADEMIC LINKS



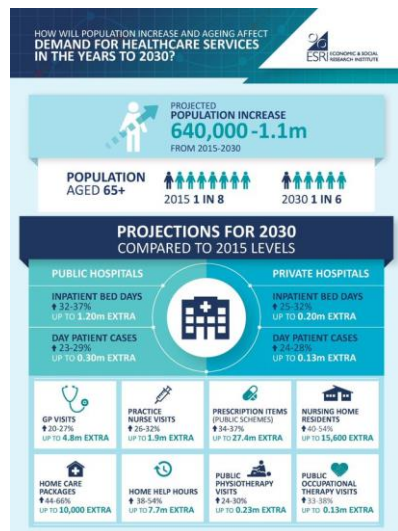
NURSE
TRAINING



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Foreword



Our nursing team in RVEEH consists of dedicated nurses, educators, nurse managers and support staff committed to upholding the highest standards of care. The RVEEH in partnership with RCSI runs the only PG diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing in Europe. Our fundamental purpose as a profession remains unchanged: delivering high quality safe effective patient care, growing our specialisation, serving more at home incorporating our values as system thinkers and patient advocates.

Continuing to demonstrate our economic value as a profession, impacting positively on access cost and control in line with Sláinte care. Structure, process and outcomes guide our practice, and we are very proud to be part of a multidisciplinary effort in achieving JCI accreditation for the 4th time in January 2024. We take pride in the care we provide and look forward to progressing integrated specialist ophthalmic nursing in partnership with our community colleagues in 2024.

Key Achievements of the Year



- ❖ In our 2023 Annual Nursing Report, we proudly acknowledge the invaluable contribution of our nursing teams. Nursing treated a total of 16,245 patients independently. This collaborative effort optimises our collective capability reduces patient waiting times and exemplifies the synergy within our healthcare system.
- ❖ Nursing administered 64% (9,965) of all intravitreal injections to patients in 2023.
- ❖ Subsequently, there was the addition of two new nurse prescribers which have bolstered the capabilities of our specialist nurses. This brings the total count of nurse prescribers to eight.
- ❖ Advanced Nurse Practitioner Ciara Liston was awarded a Fellowship in RCSI for recognition of her invaluable body of Expertise in Glaucoma.
- ❖ Advanced Nurse Practitioner Diana Malata presented a comprehensive guide to “Nurse Led Cross Linking” at the WAEH Annual meeting in Melbourne, Australia.
- ❖ The School of Nursing celebrated the graduation of five additional Post Graduate Diploma students in Ophthalmology. 28% of staff now hold a level 9 qualification.
- ❖ A second Clinical Nurse Specialist in Oncology was appointed to provide specialist holistic care to the only Ocular Oncology service within the Republic of Ireland.



Key Achievements of the Year

- ❖ Appointment of an additional Clinical Nurse Specialist (0.5) in Diabetes to align resources to service demand.
- ❖ A MSc scholarship was awarded to Deirdre Corroon who is the Clinical Nurse Manager II in the Emergency Department in Digital Transformation. Deirdre has been a key leader in the execution of Telephone Triage since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ❖ A location allowance was acquired for the Outpatient Nursing Staff which supports retention.
- ❖ Safer staffing funding was attained which will ensure an evidence-based approach to patient staff ratio and improve recognised outcomes for patients and staff.
- ❖ A new Central Sterile Services Department (CSSD) was constructed to complement the high demand of our ENT and Ophthalmic surgical services and future proofing.
- ❖ The Nursing Directorate successfully secured an Anaesthetic Clinical Nurse Manager II to address the needs of the College of Anaesthesiology and the educational needs of the surgical nursing staff.
- ❖ The Haemovigilance Officer role was restructured based on population needs analysis to align resources to service requirements.

Overview of the Nursing Service

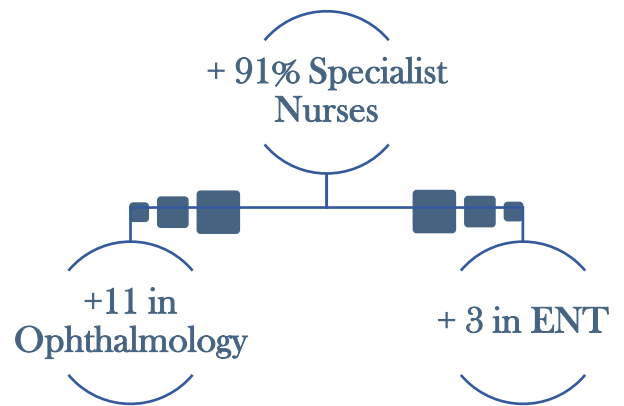


The Nursing Directorate is responsible for 45% of the overall RVEEH workforce. This comprises of 175 staff members, totalling 158 whole-time equivalent (WTE) staff across various departments such as the School of Nursing, Infection Control, Nursing, Healthcare Attendants, Haemovigilance, Household Staff, and Ward Clerks. The Director of Nursing leads the nursing profession in RVEEH and is responsible for the implementation of nursing strategies to support the care of service users and ensures the continued improvement of nursing practice is underpinned by evidence-based knowledge and competencies. The Nursing Directorate provides strong professional and clinical leadership for

all aspects of nursing. We support our staff and have a key role in creating an atmospheric culture where excellence can flourish with strong multidisciplinary collaboration across the service. The Director of Nursing contributes to the corporate management as a member of the Hospital Management Group & Subcommittee of Council for Quality and Safety. The Director of Nursing also represents the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear hospital on the Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) and is a member of the ethics committee.

Current Landscape of Nursing in RVEEH

The Nursing Directorate conducts its own recruitment. Currently, two-thirds of nursing staff work fulltime. International staffing rates are at 60% and there is a 79% female/ 29% male representation. Staff have a minimum of 1 year post graduate experience. In the domain of specialised nursing, we've witnessed a noteworthy growth of 91% since 2019, marking a journey of progress and dedication. Within this expansion, 14 pivotal posts have been established, 11 contributing to the noble field of ophthalmology, while 3 enrich the sphere of ENT. This acknowledges our strides forward, recognising the collective effort and commitment driving our path toward enhanced healthcare provision.



Royal Victoria Eye & Ear

DEC 2023	WTE DEC 2019	WTE DEC 2022(1)	WTE NOV 2023	WTE DEC 2023	WTE change since DEC 2019	% WTE Change since Dec 2019	WTE change since DEC 2022	% WTE Change since Dec 2022	WTE change since NOV 2023	No. DEC 2023
Nurse/ Midwife Manager	24	27	29	30	+6	+27.4%	+3	+10.8%	+1	31
Nurse/ Midwife Specialist & AN/MP	9	17	19	17	+8	+91.3%	-0	-1.0%	-2	19
Staff Nurse/ Staff Midwife	81	90	90	90	+9	+11.5%	+0	+0.1%	+1	104
Nursing/ Midwifery other	2	2	2	2	+1	+33.3%	+0	+0.0%	+0	2
Nursing & Midwifery	115	137	139	139	+24.5	+21.3%	+2.9	+2.1%	+0.1	156

Nursing has experienced 21% growth since 2019 with the highest growth in specialist practice.

Influences : Expert Review Body 2023

The 2023 publication by the Expert Review Body comprises 47 recommendations aimed at fostering the ongoing growth and professional development of nurses and midwives. These recommendations are instrumental in driving substantial reforms and ensuring the realisation of Slainte Care objectives. Divided into 5 chapters, the publication delves into various aspects of nursing and midwifery's future within the framework of Slainte Care's mandate. It acknowledges the pivotal role played by nurses and midwives in reshaping care pathways within the current context.

- Current context recognising the contribution of nurses and midwives in reforming care pathways.
- Workforce policy direction future modelling current state of register recommendations related to safe nursing care.
- Education and Professional Development undergraduate criteria places support structures, career pathways .
- Digital Health local digital leads .
- Governance and Leadership LRC management grades pay bands grading leadership roles.

Each chapter follows a consistent structure centered on four fundamental inquiries: "Where are we currently?", "What insights have we gathered?", "Where do we aspire to be?", and "What strategies will lead us there?" This methodology aligns with our dedication to workforce planning and lean methodology, aimed at enhancing our operational efficiencies.

Delivering Quality

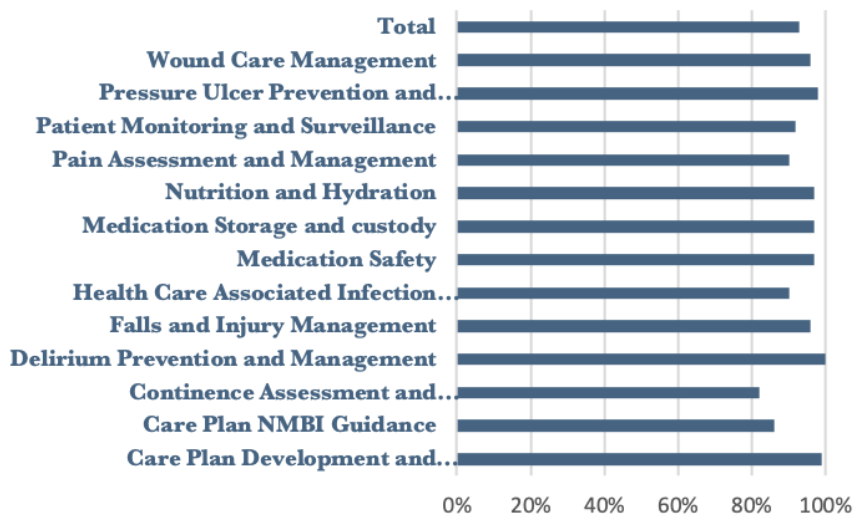
Ensuring the provision of high-quality nursing care involves various indicators, including patient and staff experiences, performance metrics, infection control rates, competency-based training, standardisation of key performance indicators (KPIs), end-of-year reports, incident/accident reports, feedback (complaints, compliments), and monitoring medication errors.

The Nursing Directorate
oversees five pivotal metrics:
Nursing Metrics, Staff
Complement, Professional
Development Plans,
Absenteeism, and
Agency/Overtime.



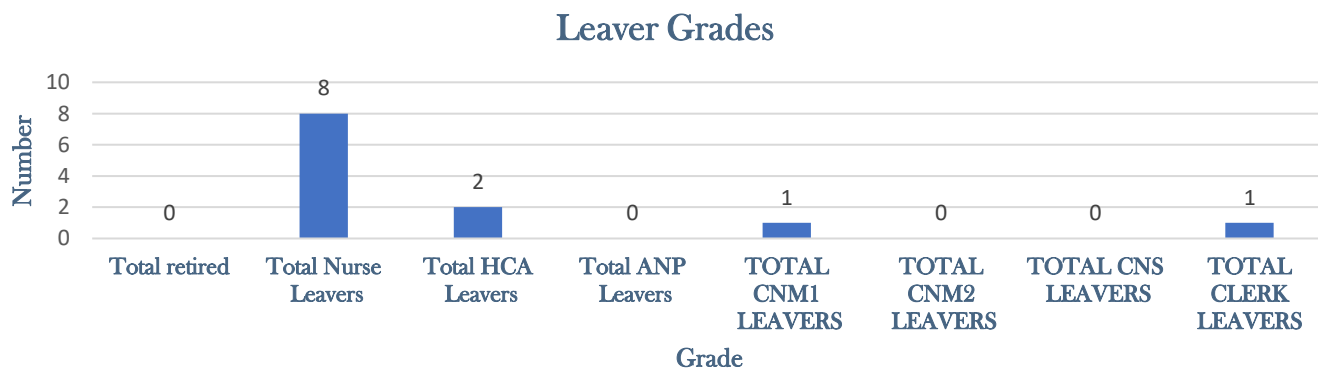
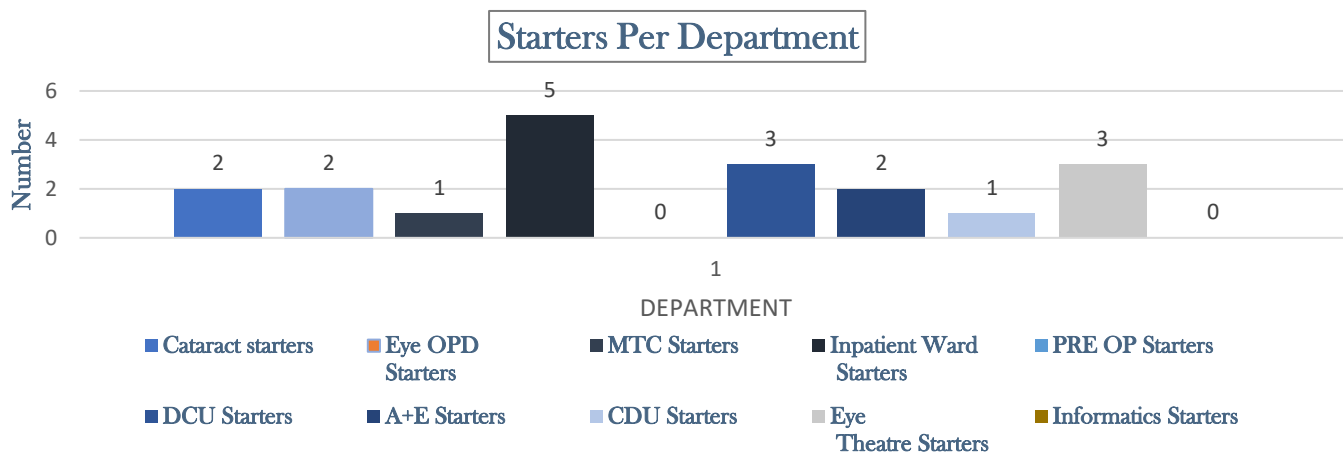
KPI: Nurse Metrics

Nurse Metrics 2023: RVEEH



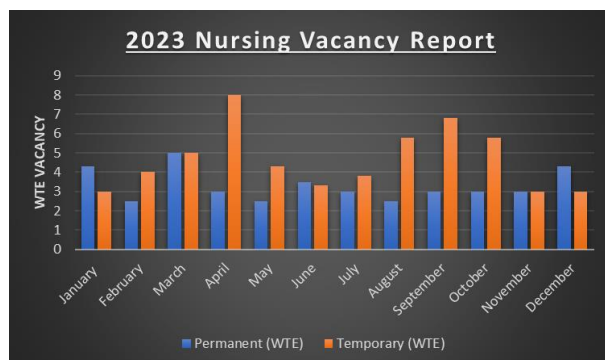
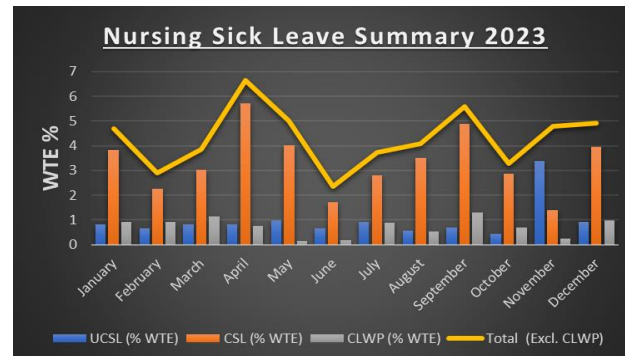
Monthly Nurse Metrics provide a snapshot in a moment of time and are a means of measuring quality nursing care. The target is 90% in all domains and anything below this triggers a quality improvement plan.

KPI: Staff Complement



KPI: Absenteeism

High absenteeism negatively affects overall activity within units, increases agency/overtime costs and may impact patient satisfaction due to cancellations/longer wait times. High absenteeism may also be an indicator of employee dissatisfaction.



Attrition in 2023 was 7% in comparison to 23% in 2022 where 21 staff started and 13 left. Anticipating and aligning resources is instrumental in ensuring safe patient care. Permanent vacancies were less than 2.5% which provides a safety net for temporary vacancies and was very important when the moratorium began in 2023.

KPI: Agency Overtime

This data is collated weekly and reported monthly. This KPI will track whether staffing levels are appropriate in each nursing department. Adequate staffing is essential for optimal patient care and the data is used to drive business change whether by recruiting additional staff or implementing process improvements to reduce costs.

KPI: Professional Development Plans

The Royal Eye & Ear Hospital Nursing Directorate focuses on a collective leadership approach – taking responsibility to work together to deliver safer better healthcare.

Engagement is meaningful conversation. The Nursing Directorate protects 1:1 time annually for all staff to have at a conversation with their line manager.

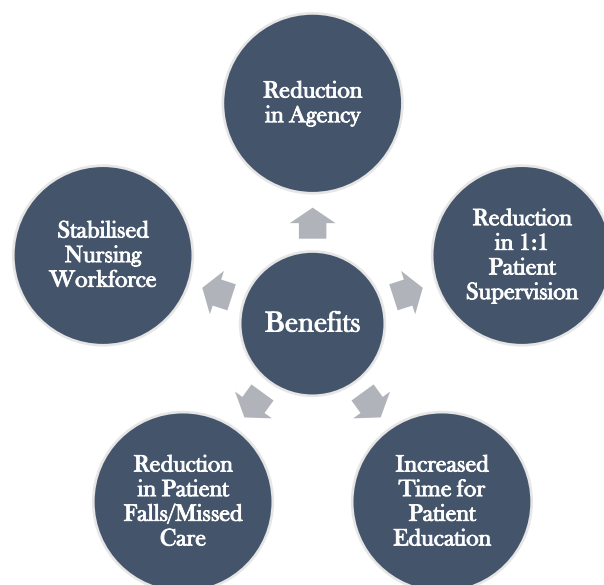
Aim: An exceptional employee experience that engages the talent and nurtures the leadership capability of all individuals and teams working together to deliver safer better healthcare.

Finance

The notable variance in Nursing budget in overtime and agency spend is in direct correlational to the inability to recruit due to the national moratorium . Key vacant posts were replaced with agency to maintain essential services when redeployment options where exhausted.

Nursing Pay Analysis																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12				
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	YTD Budget	Variance	
Basic	647,466	652,426	657,946	662,029	662,201	683,230	666,017	672,238	669,984	686,690	691,725	705,534	8,057,485	7,938,197	-2%	
Overtime	7,728	7,460	6,714	5,090	10,506	5,567	9,311	8,211	8562	6,302	8,868	4,530	88,850	75,288	-18%	
On-Call	2,950	2,950	2,669	3,152	2,722	3,152	3,009	3,009	3248	3,009	3,103	3,200	36,173	37,139	3%	
Allowance	38,683	45,668	39,893	42,083	39,775	43,230	42,595	40,909	42345	42,439	42,541	42,422	502,584	480,474	-5%	
Week-End	27,263	26,333	22,924	22,987	26,039	22,746	21,972	22,626	22159	19,236	26,780	18,913	279,979	219,018	-28%	
Night Duty	8,256	8,543	7,994	9,101	8,233	8,815	8,130	8,658	8709	8,619	8,519	9,105	102,681	98,547	-4%	
PRSI	74,123	78,185	74,598	75,201	75,887	77,389	75,704	76,026	76240	77,388	79,141	79,251	919,134	884,671	-4%	
Agency	19,823	-3,399	9,619	17,244	25,141	25,333	15,796	11,379	7431	-370	7,823	9,677	145,496	76,187	-91%	
Total	826,294	818,167	822,358	836,888	850,504	869,462	842,535	843,055	838,678	843,312	868,498	872,633	10,132,382	9,809,521	-3%	
Budget	781,023	781,023	796,644	796,644	796,644	796,644	796,644	910,048	827,676	839,676	839,676	847,181				

Safer staffing framework is a scientific evidenced based framework to calculate patient/staff ratio recommending an 80% Nurse/ 20% Healthcare Attendant staffing ratio. The Clinical Nurse Manager II is supervisory, and staffing is determined by ward case mix, acuity, dependency, and patient turnover. It ensures the appropriate number of nurses are always available across the continuum of care with suitable education, skills and experience to ensure patients' needs are met and working conditions support staff to deliver quality patient care. Safer staffing framework addition posts were approved in Q4 of 2023. Finance was approved in 2023 for 4.5 additional Staff Nurses and 5.5 Healthcare Attendants but remains outstanding due to moratorium.



Finance

Proof of concept funding of €12,500 was awarded from National Nursing and Midwifery Unit (NMPDU) following an application to pilot a Clinical Nurse Specialist in CHO 7. Three sessions/week to demonstrate the economic value and impact of such a role and develop an integrated pathway. It is anticipated that 546 patients per annum can be seen independently by the Clinical Nurse Specialist .

In 2023, the RVEEH nursing team in collaboration with Clinical Engineer (Andrew Kennedy) secured €462,000 in equipment funding, which was instrumental in improving clinical outcomes, patient safety and efficiencies across the organisation.

Funding was also secured for RVEEH Staff Appreciation Day which was a success and is an important day in the calendar to acknowledge the hard work achieved by RVEEH staff.

Operations

Understanding our services is instrumental to align our resources to ensure the delivery of safe patient care. Nursing has invested in data analytics to streamline our efficiencies and support our lean methodology approach, looking at what we do, how we do it, and can we could do it differently. Data also affords the opportunity to analyse demand vs capacity, identify quality improvement plans and optimise capacity.

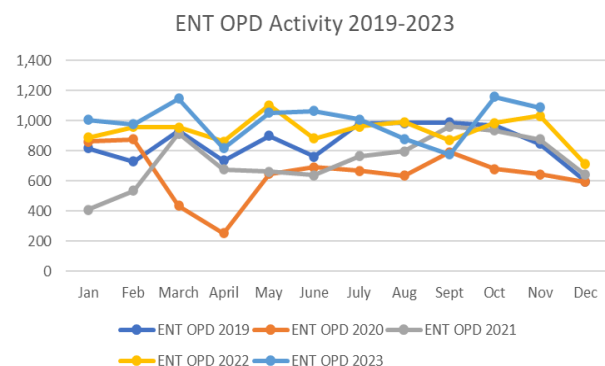
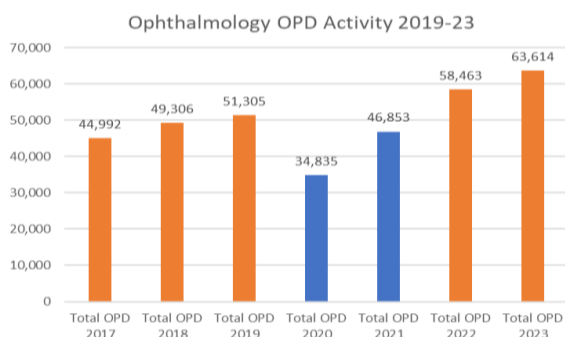


Operations: Theatre

There was an 8% increase in theatre activity between 2022 and 2023 with further growth anticipated with the opening of the second Cataract Unit in 2024 which will provide an additional ten sessions per week.

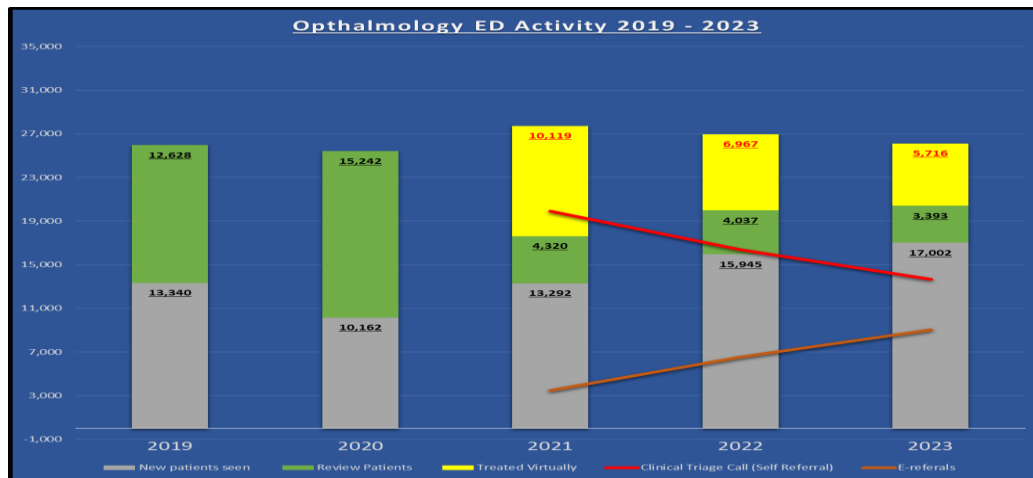
Year	Eye Theatre	Cataract Unit	ENT	Total
2019	5535	1473	1189	8197
2020	4079	1075	1449	6603
2021	5204	1151	1622	7977
2022	5417	1549	1614	8580
2023	5735	1813	1740	9499

Operations: Ophthalmology and ENT OPD



Operations: Emergency Department

The Emergency Department continues to maintain Telehealth as a model of care with nurse led triage enabling patients to be treated in the comfort of their own home with treatment/advice over the phone. This graph demonstrates that 25% of all ophthalmic ED patients were treated virtually in 2023 . Growth in electronic referrals has tripled in the last three years and the figures in 2023 indicate the increase is in direct correlation with the decrease in self-referrals.



Operations: Virtual Glaucoma Assessment Clinic

There are 3 nurse-led Virtual Glaucoma Assessment Clinics run each week. The patients' exam and diagnostics are reviewed virtually by a consultant over 5 hours optimising capacity.

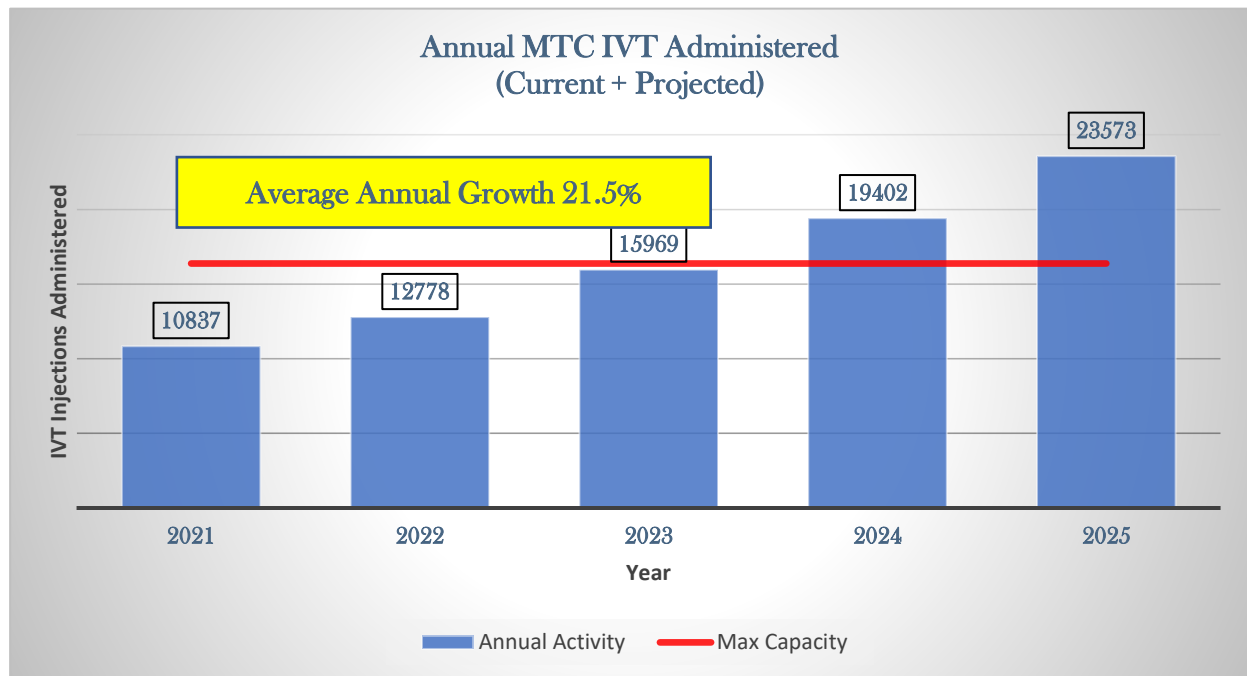
GAC 2023 breakdown of numbers and referrals

Month	No. of clinic sessions	Total Clinic Capacity	Total number of Clinic slots filled	DNA rate for Clinic	Total Virtual Reviews completed	No of patients Discharged	Referred	Referred to Dr Clinic	Referred to CNS clinic	referred to ANP	GAC Kinamanagh	GAC RVEEH
Jan-22	12	96	63	9	55	1	18	9	2	2	5	44
Feb-22	12	96	77	11	66	3	21	6	15	0	0	53
Mar-22	15	120	104	20	84	8	29	13	8	0	8	67
Apr-22	12	96	78	5	73	6	31	11	7	0	13	40
May-22	15	120	74	16	79	7	19	7	9	0	3	53
Jun-22	12	96	82	8	74	4	21	15	3	0	3	57
Jul-22	12	96	82	5	77	5	28	13	11	0	4	49
Aug-22	15	120	102	11	91	4	17	13	3	0	1	81
Sep-22	12	96	90	10	80	9	19	9	7	1	2	62
Oct-22	12	96	81	7	74	3	16	5	8	1	2	62
Nov-22	15	120	105	11	94	7	32	13	7	0	12	66
Dec-22	9	72	68	7	61	1	24	7	9	0	8	43
Totals	153	1224	1006	120	908	58	275	121	89	4	61	677
%		100%	82%	12%	90%	6%	27%	12%	9%	0%	6%	67%



Operations: Macular Treatment Centre

This department is running at full capacity. Delivering intravitreal injections in the community is key to creating additional capacity. Workforce planning is instrumental in ensuring sufficient staffing to meet future service needs.



Operations: Diabetic Retinopathy Service

An additional DRS session was added in 2023 and 13 sessions a week were facilitated with the support of a 0.5 Clinical Nurse Specialist in Diabetes. There were 1,105 patients requiring intravitreal injections, and the Diabetic Clinical Nurse Specialist has been upskilled in this procedure to meet service need, furthering the professional development opportunities in nurse lead intravitreal injections.

Specialist Practice

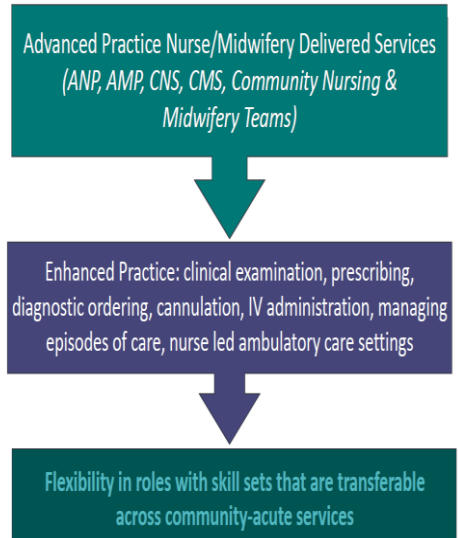
Specialist practice is a key enabler to service reform. Nursing remains committed to making access to care everyone's responsibility by optimising our collective capacity, streamlining our efficiencies and developing alternative roles to allow our profession to work at the top of our licence.

The Nursing Directorate in line with RVEEH corporate objectives continued to develop experienced confident and competent nurses in 2023 in a variety of roles (Staff Nurse, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Advanced Nurse Practitioner) in ophthalmology and ENT who can treat large numbers of low complexity patients, making independent treatment decisions and prescribing medications, thus improving access and optimising medical capacity.

- RVEEH has 8 nurse prescribers and a 9th anticipated to qualify in 2024.
- 3 Advanced Nurse Practitioners in medical retina, glaucoma, and anterior segment with one Advanced Nurse Practitioner Candidate in ED due to qualify Q4 2024

Advanced Nurse Practitioners can diagnose, treat, and discharge. They can see and treat new and review patients and can list patients for surgery. Seeing approximately 80% review and 20% new patients collectively. Clinical Nurse Specialists can see and treat chronic stable patients.

CAPABILITY OF THE WORKFORCE



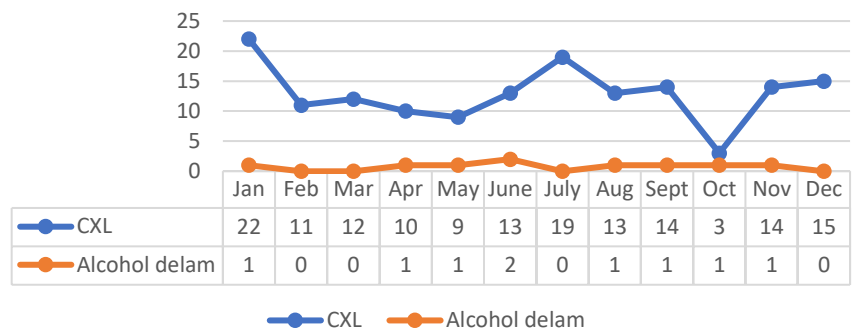
Specialist Practice: ANP in Anterior Segment

Clinic	No. of Patients Seen
OPD	642
Virtual clinic	443
Total number of patients	1,085

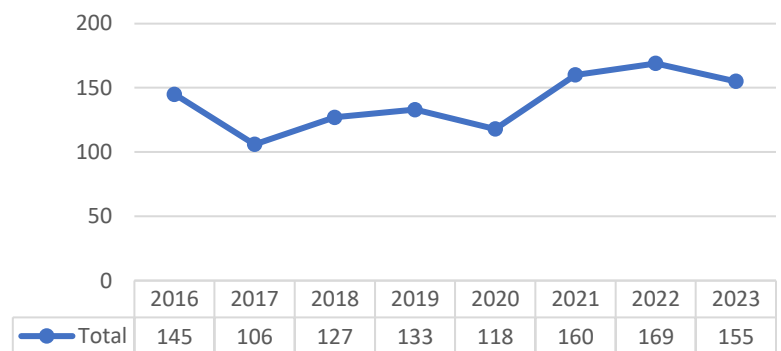
Specialist Practice: ANP in Anterior Segment

A total number of 164 eyes were treated in nurse-led CXL service from January to December 2023. This includes 155 eyes for CXL and 9 underwent alcohol delamination. An impressive 1,113 eyes were cross-linked by the Advanced Nurse Practitioner service from 2016 to 2023.

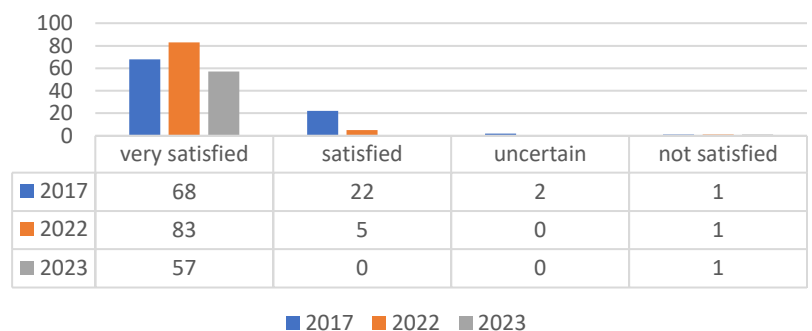
Total Number of CXL patients per month



Eyes Cross Linked 2016-2023



Patient Satisfaction Survey Results
2017, 2022 & 2023

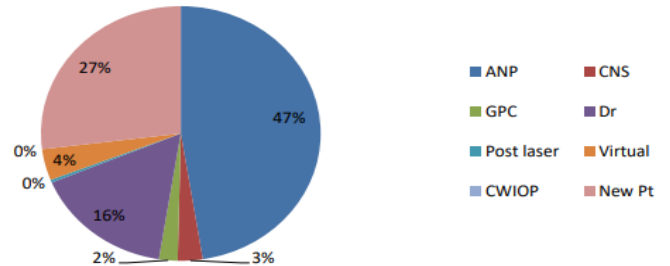


High satisfaction rates were observed across this service highlighting the pivotal role of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner in providing timely and effective patient care.

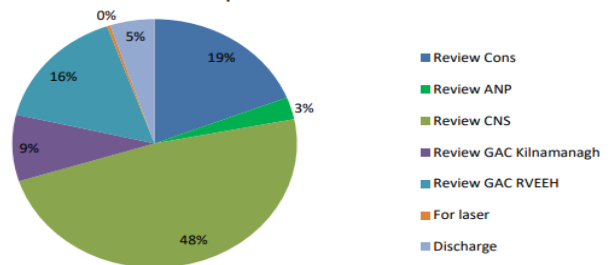
Specialist Practice: Glaucoma Service

There were a total of 60 Advanced Nurse Practitioner clinics carried out between January and the end of March in 2023, before the Advanced Nurse Practitioner commenced maternity leave, with a total of 278 patients booked into clinics.

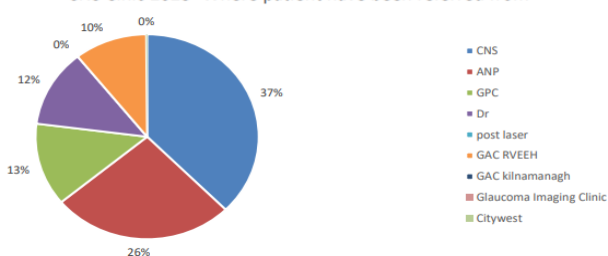
ANP Clinic 2023 - Where Patients have been referred from



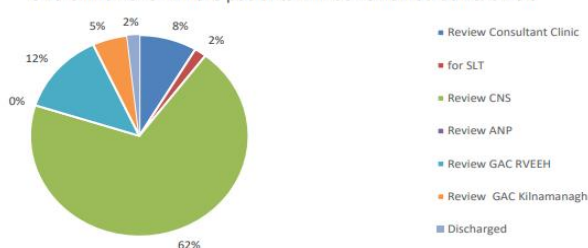
ANP Clinic 2023 - Where patients will be reviewed at next visit



CNS Clinic 2023- Where patient have been referred from



CNS Clinic 2023-Where patients will be reviewed at next visit



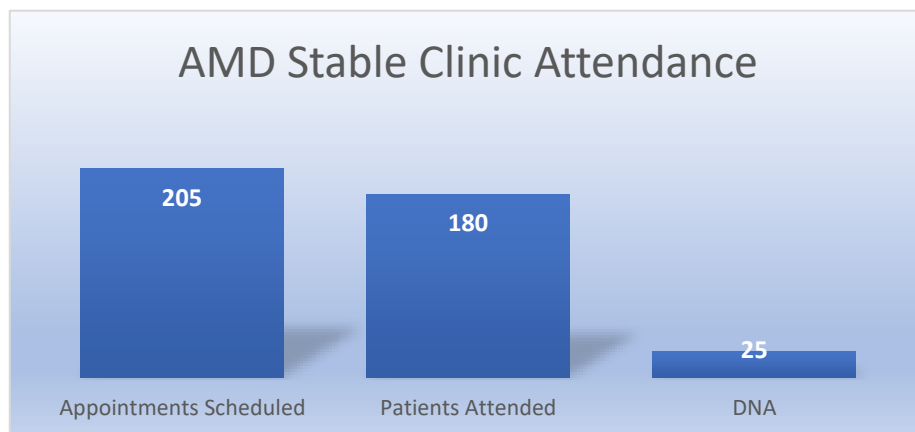
To drive the National Agenda, Glaucoma Consultants and the Director of Nursing will explore the possibility of conducting Clinical Nurse Specialist clinical glaucoma sessions in the Community CHO7 with the Integrated Eye Care Team in the year ahead. This initiative involves two Clinical Nurse Specialist led glaucoma sessions and one post-operative cataract session. Evolving the role to meet our patients needs in the community.

Specialist Practice: Age Related Macular Degeneration Service

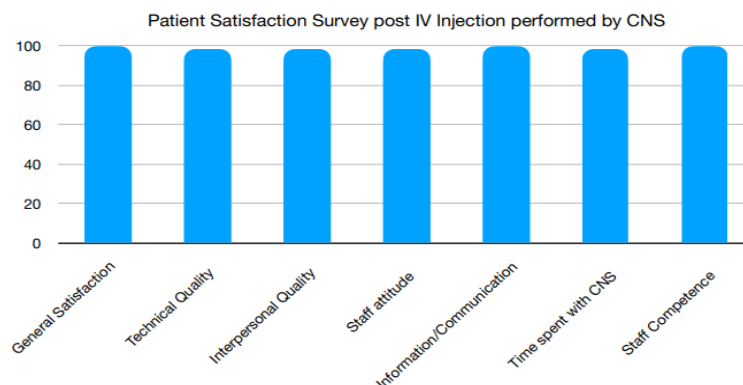
The ARMD Advanced Nurse Practitioner teaching role supported the Eye Community Liaison Officer by setting up a stand for World Sight Day to educate and highlight staff and patients on ARMD and other Retinal conditions and to inform them of the resources available.

The Advanced Nurse Practitioner delivered two lectures with 20 attendees at the Nurse Led Intravitreal Workshop and Study Day at SIVUH Cork. She also assisted in a Wet Lab session, demonstrating the technique, while also observing and guiding the students to practice the sterile technique. This was an important opportunity to represent and showcase RVEEH expertise and leadership in this area.

The Advanced Nurse Practitioner provided their specialist service to 180 patients in 2023, alleviating the demands of the Retinal Ophthalmic Team.

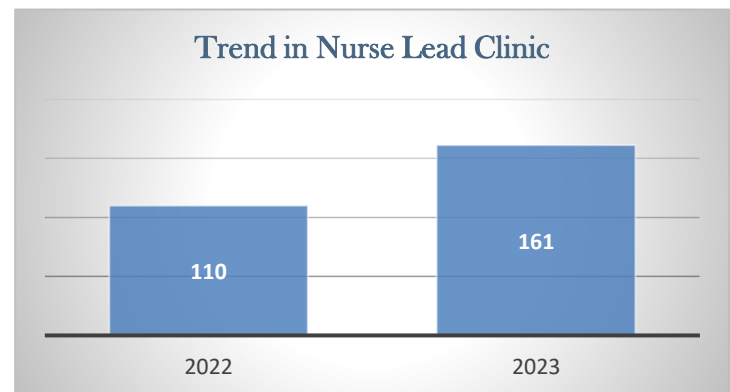
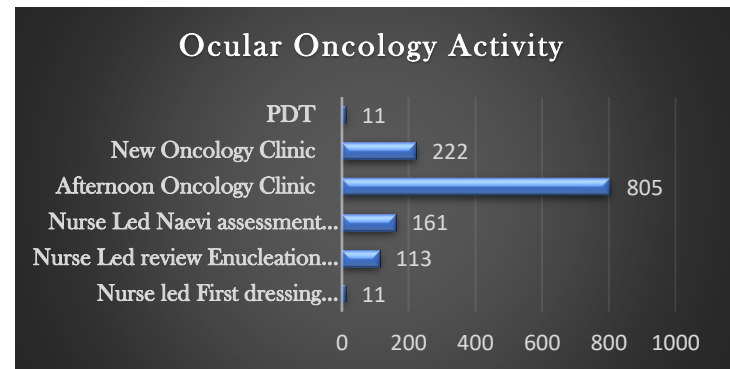


In 2023, the Advanced Nurse Practitioner in collaboration with the Retinal Clinical Nurse Specialists administered an impressive 64% of all injections, totalling 9,965 procedures. Patient satisfaction results were high across all their area of expertise.



Specialist Practice: Ocular Oncology Service

The Nurse Lead Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist service saw 383 new referrals in 2023. These were triaged by the consultant and 161 were deemed suitable for the Nurse Lead Clinic. The RVEEH have the only Ocular Oncology site in Ireland. A 2nd Ocular Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist post was secured in 2023 which will be instrumental in optimising capacity, enhancing patient care and reducing waiting times for these time sensitive patients.

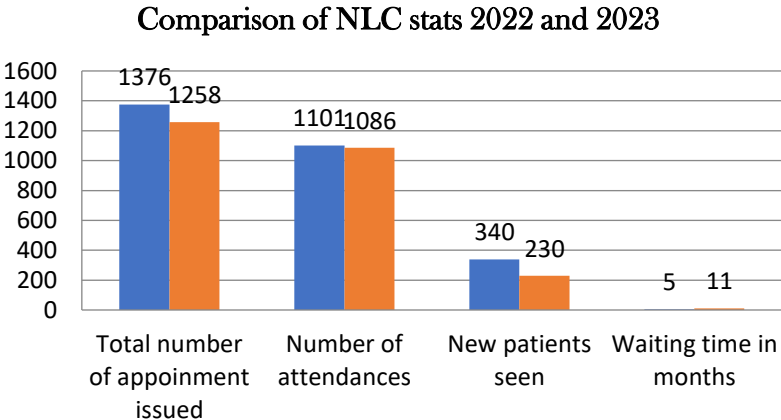
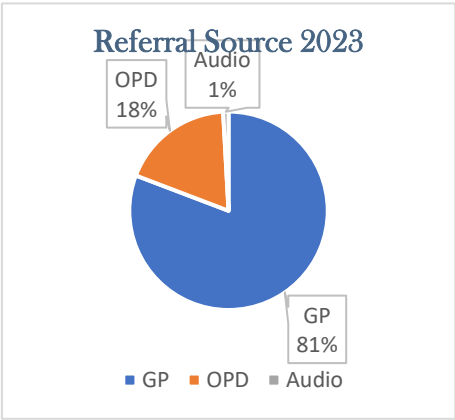


Specialist Practice: Oculoplastics Service

Our Oculoplastic Clinical Nurse Specialist treats patients with Thyroid Eye Disease, as they await diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring from three different specialists. This complex condition requires close monitoring from both Endocrinology and Ophthalmology to prevent irreversible blindness, and patients may also need input from ENT and Radiology. In September 2021, in collaboration with two Endocrinology consultants and two Ophthalmology consultants, a combination clinic was established where patients are seen simultaneously from both perspectives. The only one of its kind in the Republic of Ireland, the clinic receives referrals from across the country. Some patients have been referred for surgical options for long-term management of their thyroid once it has burned out.

From March 2023, patients were offered a 12-week infusion of steroid for active Thyroid Eye Disease. Research shows that spreading the infusion over this period improves quality of life and 13 patients have received treatment. The Clinical Nurse Specialist role has significantly improved access to care, with necessary services under one roof, aligning with the national agenda of Slainte Care sustainability, enhancing the patient journey, and optimising efficiencies.

Specialist Practice: Ear Care Service



In 2023, the Clinical Nurse Specialist treated 1086 patients. These included new patients (21%) and review patients (79%). There were 241 patients with mastoids, which was a 37% increase of more complex care. The CNS was able to discharge 10% of patients overall. The Clinical Nurse Specialist coordinated and delivered four microsuction education sessions for healthcare professionals in 2023.

Specialist Practice: ENT Oncology Liaison Service

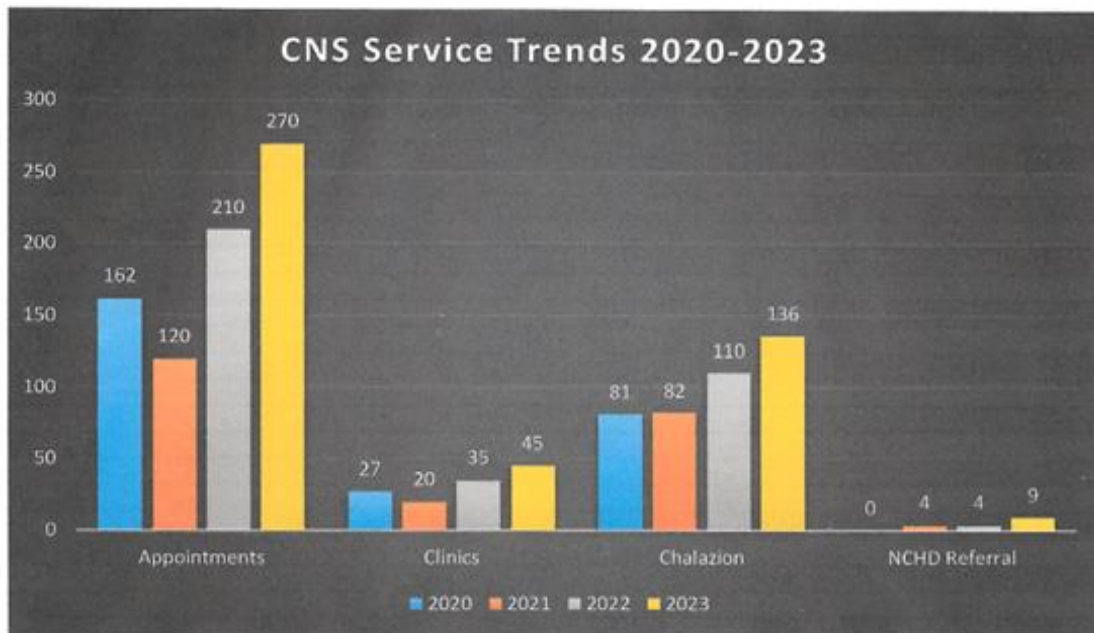
The number of new oncology referrals attending Mr Lennon’s clinic has led to the significant increase in new diagnoses. The role of the ENT Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist is instrumental in coordinating patient care and supporting patients on their journey.



Total Number Diagnosed	166
New Diagnosis	159
Recurrence’s	7
Oncology Reviews in Clinic.	392

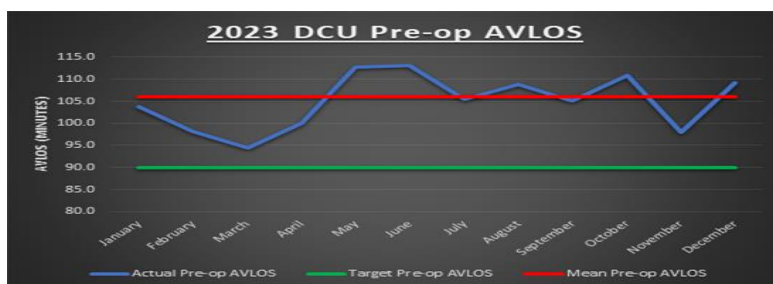
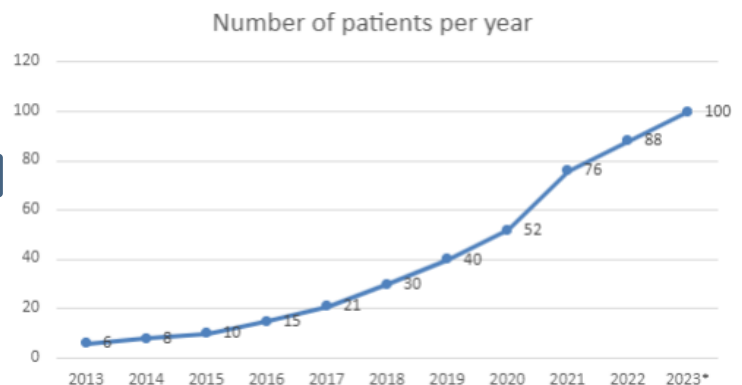
Specialist Practice: Ophthalmic CNS Emergency Service

The Clinical Nurse Specialist supports the nursing staff in Telephone Triage and is a nurse prescriber. She provides a chalazion removal service to patients not responding to conservative management. The graph below demonstrates the services provided by the Clinical Nurse Specialist including Nurse Lead Services. Teaching patients and staff is a key component of her role.



Optimising Capacity

The Nursing Directorate restructured the role of Haemovigilance Officer (HVO) with a successful business case for a 0.5 WTE standalone post to meet the current and future needs of our patients and service to include education and training on haemovigilance and now manages 100 patients on serum eye drops.



Since the submission of the Daycare unit optimisation proposal in October 2022, the following has been actioned and improved in 2023:

- ❖ 21% additional patient capacity
- ❖ 75% (3 sessions) increase in minor op list including thyroid eye disease infusion clinic
- ❖ Additional 2.29 WTE RGN in DCU
- ❖ Additional 0.66 WTE in PACU
- ❖ Reinstated DCU discharge lounge
- ❖ Additional DCU patient bay x 1 (Total = 18)
- ❖ Daily admission meetings ongoing which contribute to enhanced surgical scheduling through collaboration of nursing and patient services team

Challenges

- ❖ Moratorium
- ❖ Recruitment, lack of agency staff, difficulty filling temporary vacancies, attrition.
- ❖ Lack of Paediatric nurses
- ❖ Hours lost to Haddington Road agreement
- ❖ Lack of a designated training facility for school of nursing
- ❖ ENT & Tracheostomy care: no Diploma program
- ❖ Housing & cost of living in Dublin

School of Nursing

Ms Sabrina Kelly Practice Nurse coordinator is an honorary lecturer with RCSI. She is the lead for the only Post Graduate Diploma Programme in Ophthalmic Nursing within the European Union. In 2023, there were 5 students who completed the programme. During the years 2018-2023, 25 students graduated with a Post graduate diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing. Two are now Advanced Nurse Practitioner candidates in this specialist area and twelve have become Clinical Nurse Specialist/Clinical Facilitators. The school is instrumental in building competency documents for all new posts and achieving JCI accreditation.

The School is responsible for mandatory training in Basic Life Support and Manual Handling for all 400 employees in RVEEH.



In the realm of nursing education and support, the School of Nursing is committed to equipping healthcare professionals with the skills and knowledge needed for excellence. Through meticulous role scoping, interviews, and quality monitoring, the School ensures individuals are positioned for success. Additionally, a specialised short course in Ophthalmic Nursing & a modified ENT course have been facilitated, catering to specific professional needs.

The School extends its support, aiding ophthalmic departments across the hospital with competencies, policies, and service advice. This collaborative effort enhances skills and ensures consistency in patient care. Support has been extended to Clinical Nurse Specialist/Advanced Nurse Practitioner services through the provision of KPI Excel Tools & patient satisfaction surveys, facilitating the illustration of their specialist services.

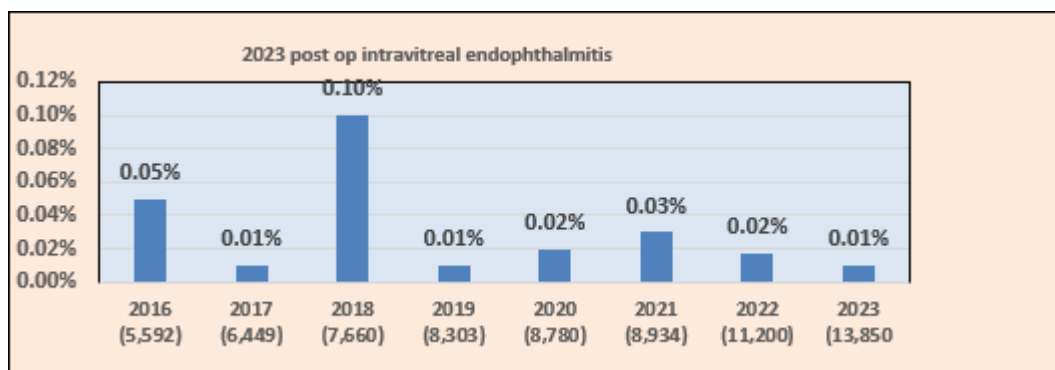
Two external site audits (Bon Secours & Our Lady of Lourdes Drogheda) were conducted (to assess placement suitability for nurses wishing to do the PG. Dip in Ophthalmic Nursing. A nurse from the Bons Secours is due to commence an 8-month placement here in the RVEEH to fulfil the experience required for the PG. Dip in Ophthalmic Nursing.

Moreover, new in-house training programs such as Anaphylaxis, Venepuncture, Tracheostomy care, and Preceptorship are now provided.

The second virtual ophthalmic nursing conference was organised by the School of Nursing & held on Saturday 15th April 2023. The event was very well received and provided a variety of ophthalmic presentations that tailored for all 157 guests logged in for the conference. The ENT nurses conference was held on Saturday 21st October 2023. The event was held in-house and catered for 76 delegates.

Infection Control

Figures indicate that 61 % of all RVEEH staff received the influenza booster in 2023 and 32% received the covid-19 booster. However, this does not reflect the true volume of staff vaccinated as they may have been vaccinated in the community. GDPR prohibits accessing this information. There were several incentivised days in the RVEEH to promote uptake.



Corporate Risk Register

The Corporate Risk Register reflects the lack of Paediatric Nurses in RVEEH. Further PEARS training was conducted in 2023 to ensure early detection, escalation, and rapid transfer of the paediatric patient.

The service is currently sponsoring a HCA to train as a Paediatric Nurse who is due to graduate in Q1 2025.

The moratorium and the inability to recruit in 2023 necessitated risk assessing, recalibration of targets and implementation of control measures to ensure safe staffing and safe patient care.

Staff Appreciation



Staff Appreciation Day was hosted for the second year on May 11th, 2023, to celebrate and recognise our wonderful teams and collective capability. This included long service awards to all staff working in RVEEH over 25 years. In 2023, we celebrated Larry Merriman (Facilities), Hugh Nolan (Photography), Professor William Power, Clinical Nurse Manager I Emergency Department Paul Rowan and Clinical Nurse Manager II Inpatient Area Martina Sheridan.



International Nurses' Day on May 12th was another day of celebration in RVEEH where we came together to acknowledge and recognise our profession.



Research and Auditt

Ms Diana Malata, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital (RVEEH), Dublin presented and won the Best Poster (Members Choice) Award at the 17th World Association of Eye Hospitals (WAEH) Annual meeting held at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital in Melbourne, Australia on the 10th - 15th October 2023. The poster shows the evolution of the Nurse-led Cross-linking Service to the Nurse-led Keratoconus Service in RVEEH, Dublin, the first of its kind in Ireland.



The Irish Ocular Oncology Service

- Uveal Melanoma
- Treatment Pathways
- Plaque Brachytherapy
- Proton Beam radiation
- Enucleation
- Systemic Surveillance
- Support



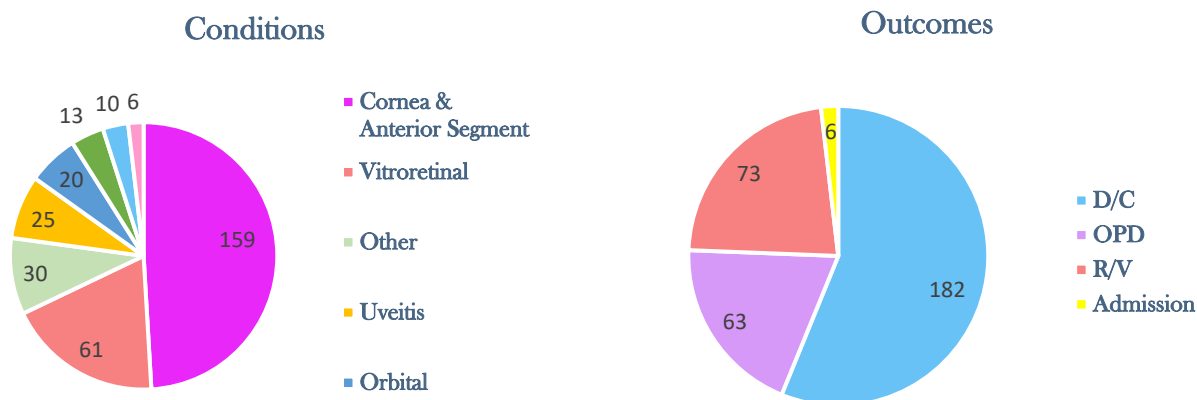
Valerie O'Neill, Ocular Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital

Ms Valerie O'Neill, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Ocular Oncology, wrote an informative article for pharmacynewsireland.com which provided an overview of the only ocular oncology service run in Ireland.



Research and Audit

A population needs analysis was conducted by Advanced Nurse Practitioner Candidate Barbara Lewandowska over 1 week with 324 patients who attended ED in January 2024. Corneal and anterior segment conditions constituted the majority of the cases (49%), with vitreoretinal conditions coming in next (19%). Other sub-specialties accounted for the remaining 32% of visits. A notable figure of 22 patients (equivalent to 7% of the total visits), had no abnormalities in their ocular assessments.



Taking into consideration the inclusion and exclusion criteria of which types of patients the ED Advanced Nurse Practitioner can review, revealed that 134 out of the 324 patients (41%) could have been effectively managed by the Advanced Nurse Practitioner service. This presents an opportunity to optimise the utilisation of ophthalmologists for more complex cases. The audit identifies a substantial quotient of non-emergency or minor conditions presenting to the ED that are amenable to virtual management. There were 55 patients who were suitable for virtual clinic which, amounts to 11 patients per clinic, 5 days a week. Cultivating a telehealth system for these presentations could potentially reduce in-person attendance by 15%, thus allowing more focused care for severe cases. Incorporating the Advanced Nurse Practitioner's capabilities into telehealth services also streamlines patient care, particularly for conditions like chalazions, dry eyes, blepharitis, and conjunctivitis. This makes the case for a quality improvement project exploring a virtual platform such as T-Pro to treat patients virtually providing efficient, effective, and sustainable healthcare.

Michelle Riglar the Clinical Nurse Specialist in ENT co-authored a paper on unique approaches to the management of recalcitrant cases of psoriatic otitis externa. The case study was published in July of this year in the Journal of Acta Oto-Laryngologica case reports.

ACTA OTO-LARYNGOLOGICA CASE REPORTS
2023, VOL. 8, NO. 1, 80–82
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23772484.2023.2220555>



CASE REPORT

OPEN ACCESS



A novel approach to a recalcitrant case of psoriatic otitis externa

N. J. McInerney, M. Riglar and P. Casserly

Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Ireland

Developing the role of an ophthalmic technician in Ireland

Cathriona Ennis, Director of Nursing
Cathriona.ennis@rveeh.ie

Introduction

Ophthalmology is a workforce in crisis. Ireland has only 194 WTE ophthalmic specialists in Ireland HSE personnel census.¹

Ophthalmology demands the second highest use of outpatient service.² Timely diagnosis and access to outpatient services is instrumental to mitigate risk of preventable blindness particularly in the face of ageing demographics.³

A solution is urgently required to develop allied ophthalmic personnel to improve access to care and optimize professional capacity.⁴ This pilot study will develop a new ophthalmic technician role in Ireland by upskilling an existing workforce HCA in visual field testing previously done only by allied health professionals.

This research completes a new education curriculum. It will define the role and responsibilities of an ophthalmic technician for the first time in Ireland.

OD/Change Process

The change project focused on our collective capability to improve access to care. It was framed on an international literature review which demonstrated mixed practice with roles and responsibilities, training, and qualifications of allied ophthalmic personnel.

It provides a clear education pathway for the development of an ophthalmic technician role in Ireland using a competency-based training programme. This was achieved using the HSE's People's needs defining change.⁵

To increase chances of success the project began with people and culture. Readiness for change was assessed, SWOT analysis created and key stakeholders identified.

Evaluation (Results)

Evaluation was based on competency-based training using structure process and outcome.

- 100% competency in field testing was achieved. HCA now conducts 2 sessions a week.
- Increased fields capacity by 14% per week achieved at end of August 2023
- Increase throughput for ANP clinic by 1 patient per clinic for new patient clinics (2 per week) resulting in additional 84 patients per year / an increase of 8% overall or a 40% increase in new patients seen per annum. Planned for 2024.
- Cost analysis: 9 hours a week of professional time is saved.

Discussion & Conclusion

A standardized approach ensures skills can be transferred and integrated in acute and community services providing a strategic national workforce solution in Ireland. This research provides a clear pathway to progress a national application for a new grade code for an ophthalmic technician.

4,847 HCAs with QQI level 5 qualification (NFQ) already exist in Ireland. This training programme can be provided on the job.

The practical skills module is currently being forwarded for QQI Level 5 NFQ accreditation and is in line with the future education, role and function of the HCA in Ireland.⁶ This new grade of staff will be instrumental in supporting the integrated multidisciplinary eye care teams nationally to improve access to care, delivering safe effective ophthalmic care in the acute and community settings.

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Aim & SMART Objectives

Aim: Developing a national ophthalmic technician grade to improve access to care. SMART objectives:

- HCA Candidate will achieve 100% defined competency in field testing by the end July 2023
- Increase Fields capacity by 14% by end August 2023
- Plan increased throughput for ANP clinic by 1 patient per clinic, additional 84 patients per year = 8% increase of year volume 84 pa in 2024
- Demonstrate cost savings by August 2023

Design:

- Agreed to codesign operational model with key stakeholders.
- Test and refine through consultation
- Agreeing and communicating action plans

Deliver:

- Implemented actions locally
- Sustaining improvement through ongoing engagement, monitoring, KPIs, aligning & building additional resources.
- Expanding key stakeholders & planning for national implementation.

Slaintecare

Right Care. Right Place. Right Time

Ophthalmic Technician

HCA with QQI Level 5 in healthcare NFQ

Practical skills module in ophthalmology (VA/Autorefractor /I care/Fields /Pentacam)

Cathriona Ennis, Director of Nursing, did a poster presentation in Belfast on October 13th at Pan Ireland Ophthalmology Day “Developing the role of an Ophthalmic Technician in Ireland” to improve access to care.

Plans for the Year Ahead

- ❖ Represent nursing on new national acute operations forum to drive sustainable integrated ophthalmic agenda.
- ❖ Impact on access to care: e.g. revise ED and MTC business cases & clinical validation
- ❖ Continue to move towards full Electronic medical record, & electronic rostering . Using digital, virtual, and automated process engineering solutions to streamline efficiencies
- ❖ Realign Nursing Directorate in preparation for an 8% increase in staffing for new Cataract Unit, safer staffing and integrated care posts.
- ❖ Continue to restructure School of Nursing to support growth and key challenges.
- ❖ Bring ophthalmic nursing to CHO 6 & 7
- ❖ Workforce planning: Business case Clinical Nurse Specialist in Uveitis, continue to identify and train new nurses in glaucoma assessment, progress additional nurse prescribers.
- ❖ Nursing is ready to train in Yag laser when space is available.
- ❖ Patient advocacy forum and patient engagement projects.
- ❖ Drive the sustainability agenda:
- ❖ Develop Research and publication committee in partnership with RCSI.
- ❖ Continue to focus on initiatives to support staff retention, health and wellbeing.
- ❖ Engage with the National Inpatient Experience Survey in May 2024.
- ❖ Encourage nursing staff to engage with the Association of Ophthalmic Nurses Ireland



Conclusion

Understanding the current and future state of our services & the population we serve is instrumental in delivering high quality nursing care. As the only organisation in Ireland with every sub speciality in ophthalmology under one roof, there has been wonderful professional development opportunity for staff.

Nursing is flourishing in RVEEH. This would not be possible without the support of our School of Nursing, medical colleagues, hospital management group and our Chief Director of Nursing. We are informed, committed and ready for the challenges our service faces and are confident that our profession will be a key enabler to support our corporate objectives putting our people, patients and staff at the heart of our decision making and service design.

Our people are our biggest asset. The Nursing Directorate thrives on a partnership approach to safe patient care. We are very proud of the care we deliver and thank all our Nursing teams for their ongoing support and dedication. We extend our sincere thanks to all who made this end of year report possible and a special word of thanks to a dear friend and colleague Ms Colette Mullen (Personal Assistant) who in 2023 retired after a 30-year career dedicated to the Nursing Directorate.



Evolution and Progress Nursing Achievements in RVEEH

Diana Malata, RGN, RNP, ANP, MSc, FFNMRC SI

1944	The nurse training school was established by Ms Mary Frances Crowley who joined the RVEEH as assistant matron and nurse tutor ¹
1945	RVEEH had been recognised by the Irish General Nursing Council for nurse training ²
1947	Ms Crowley became Director of Nursing Studies ¹
1948	Ms Crowley established the ophthalmic nurse training school in RVEEH, the first in Ireland
1950	Ophthalmic nurse training was extended to the Moorfields's Eye Hospital in London, becoming the Ophthalmic Nursing Board Certificate of Great Britain and Ireland ² .
1974	In 1974, Ms Crowley established the Faculty of Nursing in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) the first of its kind in Ireland and the UK, in which she was appointed the first dean ² .
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) in Ophthalmology ED (Emergency Department) and CNS in ENT ED appointed to reduce patient waiting time in ED. Nurse-led chalazion/cyst clinic was set up.
2007	Oncology Liaison Nurse appointed in ENT OPD. The service works closely with Head and Neck consultants and is involved in the weekly Rapid Access Head and Neck clinic. The service involves support and advocating for the patients along their cancer journey and liaises with MDT staff in the RVEEH, St. James Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital.
2008	First nurse-led ear micro-suction clinic in Ireland.
2010	A dedicated ocular oncology service was established in the RVEEH in conjunction with St. Luke's hospital in Rathgar with a CNS in Ocular Oncology. Prior to this, all patients were referred to the St. Pauls Eye Unit in Liverpool for the radiological management (brachytherapy) of uveal melanoma. Patients are referred nationwide to the ocular oncology service in RVEEH.
2012	CNS Glaucoma Service set up to manage stable glaucoma.
2015	Ms Ann O'Sullivan was accredited as the first Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) in Ophthalmology in Ireland.
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ireland's first nurse-led corneal cross-linking service for the treatment of keratoconus started. The service was shortlisted at the HSE Excellence awards in 2017 and won the INMO CJ Coleman Research Award in 2017. It was featured in the New Zealand's Eye on Optics December 2021 issue. Nurse-led Medical Retina clinic was established. The service expansion resulted in the establishment of the first nurse-led intravitreal injection procedure lists in the Republic of Ireland. This initiative was shortlisted for review by the HSE Excellence awards in 2017.
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurse-led post cataract clinic was set-up A dedicated stand-alone Cataract Unit was set up. This stand-alone Unit looks after patients from admission to surgery to discharge.
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurse-led keratoconus clinic was established. Staff Nurses in Eye OPD were upskilled and started running the Glaucoma Assessment clinic, performing slit lamp examination, intraocular pressure measurement, Stereoscopic imaging and Visual Field testing. Following this assessment, the Medical Team completes a virtual review of the patients and communicates results to patient and GP via letters. This was the first such glaucoma clinic service in Ireland and has since been replicated in the community setting.
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nursing staff in the ward with the support of the Nursing management, school of Nursing, medical colleagues and a CNS in ENT looked after complex time sensitive head and neck surgery cases over an 8 week period. Not routinely done in RVEEH, it gave opportunity to upskill. The Directorate commends staff for their dedication and professionalism in caring for these patients in light of COVID 19. New nurse-led telephone triage was evaluated as a method of prioritising essential visits to the ED. This model of care ensured appropriate referral, reduced patient flow time and optimised medical capacity whilst also offering an opportunity to treat patients at home in line with Slainte healthcare. Ms Deirdre Carroon CNM2 ED was awarded the first Ophthalmic Nurse of the Year award by TheaPamex in recognition of her hard work, commitment and leadership in developing and supporting Telehealth a new innovative model of care developed in response to COVID 19. Nurse-led virtual keratoconus clinic and virtual post-operative cataract clinic were set up in response to Covid-19 pioneering Tpro (video consultation software) as a virtual platform. Nurse-led virtual rhinology clinic was set up.
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ANP Glaucoma appointed to manage stable complex glaucoma. The Macular Treatment centre opened and the first Intravitreal injection foundation course for nurse injectors was held, the first of its kind in Ireland, resulting in 4 new CNSs who are now competent in delivering 45% of all intravitreal injections. This unit is paperless.
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team of 7 staff nurses from RVEEH supported their colleagues in SVUH ICU for 4 weeks having a catalyst effect in the hospital group resulting in further support from other organizations. ENT Liaison Nurse Specialist was appointed Fellowship of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery (FFNMRC SI) by examination was awarded to Ms. Diana Malata ANP Anterior Segment.
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RVEEH Nurse tutor/Practice course coordinator, Ms Sabrina Kelly appointed Honorary Clinical Lecturer in RCSI in recognition of her contribution to nurse education. CNS in Oculoplastic appointed.
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fellowship of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery (FFNMRC SI) by examination was awarded to Ms. Ciara Liston ANP Glaucoma CNM2 Anaesthetics & 2nd CNS Ocular oncology appointed.
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