



THE ROYAL VICTORIA  
EYE AND EAR  
HOSPITAL DUBLIN



# Nursing Directorate End of Year Report 2024





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# Celebrating 50 years of Nurse Education

In 1944, Mary Frances Crowley served as Assistant Matron at the RVEEH. Driven by a passion for advancing nursing education, she became the Founder and Director of Nursing Education at RVEEH. Her pioneering vision led to a ground-breaking achievement in 1974 when she became the founding Dean of the newly established Faculty of Nursing at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). This was the first faculty of its kind in Ireland and the UK, and a rarity worldwide at the time. Crowley's leadership and advocacy for nurse education played a transformative role in shaping the profession. She championed continuous professional development, enabling nurses to pursue education to the highest academic levels, including MSc and PhD qualifications. Her influence helped develop postgraduate programs that equip nurses with the skills and expertise to provide specialist care. She opened new career pathways for nurses, supporting their progression into advanced roles such as Clinical Nurse Specialists and Advanced Nurse Practitioners. This higher level of decision making grounded in today's healthcare in competency-based training, research and evidence-based outcomes has ensured nursing is a key enabler to service reform in modern healthcare. The year 2024 proudly marks the 50th anniversary of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at RCSI, a lasting legacy of Dean Crowley's vision and dedication to the advancement of nursing in Ireland and beyond.



# Foreword



RVEEH is Ireland's national tertiary referral centre for Ophthalmology, offering every subspecialty in one location. This affords nurses the chance to work at the top of their licence within a culture of shared responsibility for access to patient centred care. RVEEH run the only PG Diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing in Europe in partnership with RCSI. The year 2024 was a busy and challenging year with 3 major audits (JCI, NMBI, and HIQA). The National Patient Experience survey highlighted RVEEH's high-quality patient care, exceeding national averages across all scores.

A recruitment embargo led to suboptimal staffing, but patient and staff safety remained a priority through risk assessments and controls, despite restrictions on direct recruitment during the Pay and Numbers strategy. As the health service transitions to integrated regions, we remain focused on a team approach to maximise

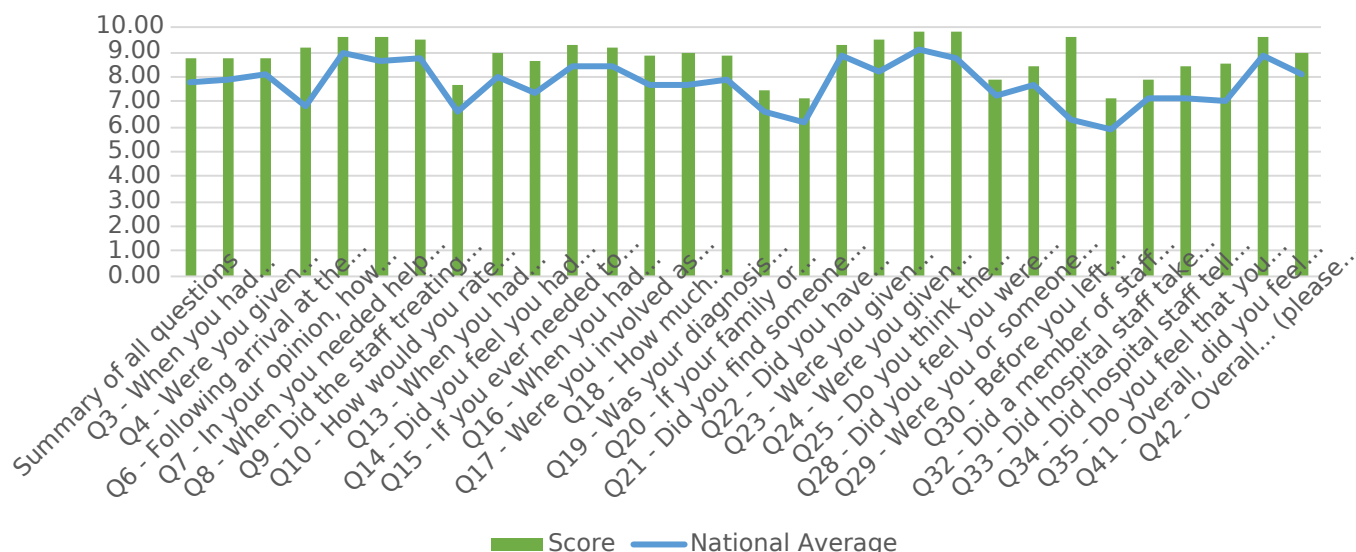


our collective capacity demonstrating our economic value as a profession, impacting positively on access cost and control in line with Slaintecare. Structure, process and evidence-based outcomes guide our practice. A proof-of-concept pilot in partnership with CHO7 in 2024 enabled Ophthalmic Nursing to broaden its scope to better meet the needs of our community population, making integrated care a reality. As a profession we continue to drive the digital and sustainability agenda.

The year ended on a high note, building on the international stage with a site visit from Sinéad Cucanic, Director of Surgical Services at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Melbourne to learn more about our nurse led services following a presentation by our ANP Diana Malata @ WAEH Annual meeting in Australia in 2023 & the WAEH Community of Practice for Nurses in 2024 (Photo on cover).

## Key Achievements of the Year

**NIES RVEEH Scores - 2024**



❖ The National Patient Experience survey reflects the high-quality care delivered in RVEEH with our service topping the national average on every score. Participation in the survey was 56%, higher than the national response rate of 41%. The overall satisfaction was significantly higher for inpatient care at RVEEH with a score of 8.9/10 compared to the national average of 8.

❖ JCI Accreditation was achieved in January 2024.

❖ A NIMBI site inspection was conducted in March 2024 to evaluate the education provided to postgraduate nurses in conjunction with RCSI, with all standards met. There was clear evidence of valuable learning experiences for RCSI students, with numerous examples of innovative teaching methods and a strong commitment to continuous professional development. Learners benefited from significant support, as well as extensive clinical exposure and expertise.



## Key Achievements of the Year

- ❖ HSE Press Release regarding Nurse Led Services in RVEEH, Thursday, 28 November 2024.  
<https://about.hse.ie/news/hse-shared-care-ophthalmology-service-protecting-peoples-sight/>
- ❖ In 2024, Ophthalmology and ENT nurse-led independent patient episodes totalled 13,928 patient episodes and 739 from shared care (Glaucoma Assessment Clinic) = 14,725. This reflects a slight decrease compared to 2023, when there were 16,245 patient episodes. This is due to unfilled maternity related specialist posts and a recruitment moratorium.
- ❖ Five students successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma in Ophthalmology in 2024, in conjunction with RCSI. This included three internal and two external candidates. Currently, seven students are enrolled in the program.
- ❖ In the Emergency Department, 13,577 patients were triaged virtually in 2024, 79% by Nursing (10,725).
- ❖ 18,322 intravitreal injections were administered in MTC in 2024. Nursing delivered 51% (9,325).
- ❖ RVEEH won the poster competition at the AONI Conference, representing MTC and RVEEH in Cork.
- ❖ There were 1064 ENT OPD patients treated inhouse by Otology CNS (Ear Care Service). This equates to 13% of total ENT OPD attendances being managed in the Nurse Led Clinics.
- ❖ Ophthalmic ED became digital in Q4 of 2024.

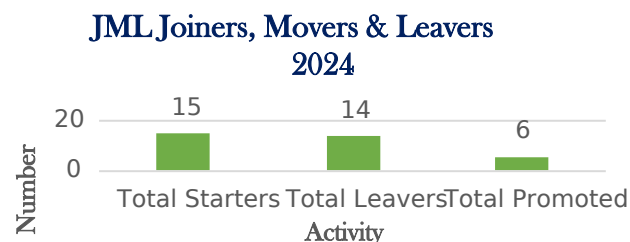
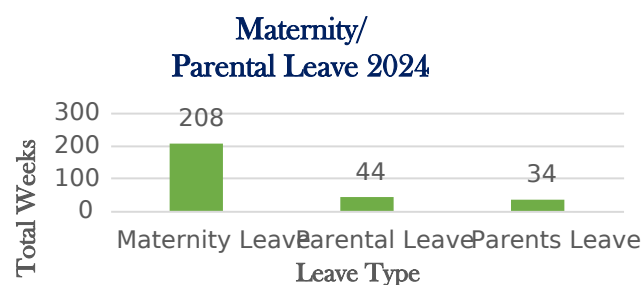
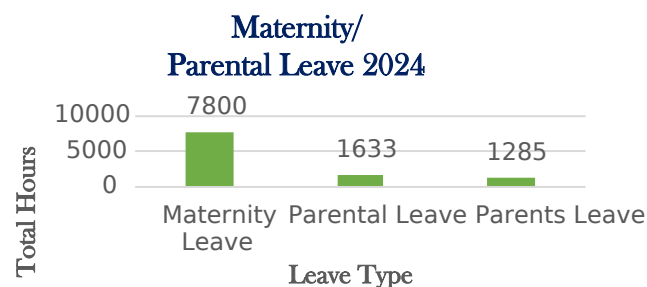


## Key Achievements of the Year

- ❖ Ms Diana Malata, was a speaker at the Nurse-led Corneal Cross-linking Service in Ireland, Inaugural Virtual Conference on Ophthalmic Nursing: Recognizing Excellence and Innovation, Asia Pacific Ophthalmic Nursing Congress (APONC), Singapore, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2024.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ The CNS Glaucoma successfully completed the Professional Certificate in Nursing (Medicinal Product Prescribing) in July 2024, resulting in 9 nurse prescribers in RVEEH in 2024 .
- ❖ Funding secured by the ANP Glaucoma via Spark innovation in 2025 which will be utilised to facilitate training and upskilling in YAG laser, currently only conducted by medics.

## Overview of the Nursing Service

The Nursing Directorate is responsible for 45% of the RVEEH workforce. The team is made up of 1 Director of Nursing, 2 x Assistant Directors of Nursing, 0.8 HR Officer and 2 x 0.5 PA'S and works very closely with the School of Nursing. The Directorate has 194 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, Ms Cathriona Ennis contributes to the corporate management as a member of the Hospital Management Group & Subcommittee of Council for Quality and Safety and represents the RVEEH as part of Dublin South East. She is a member of the ethics committee. With focus on showcasing and building on international partnerships, she proudly represents the voice of Nursing on the National Integrated Access to Care forum.

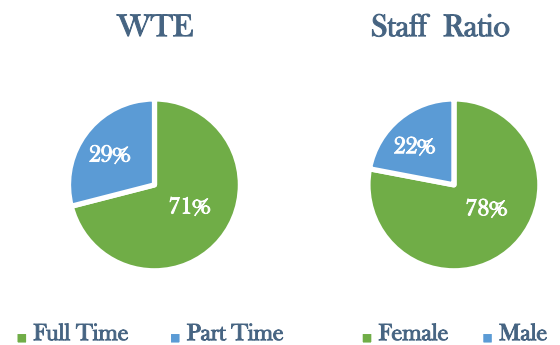
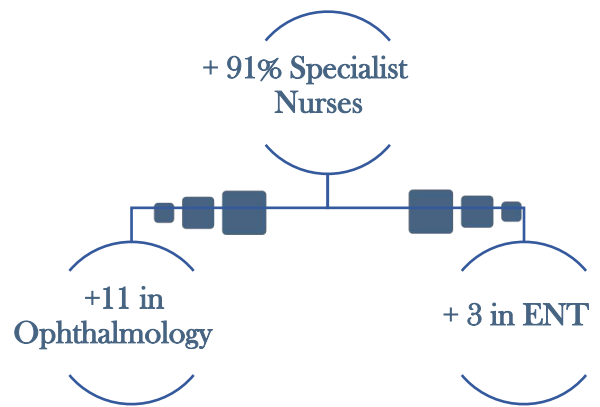


















## Growth

	WTE DEC 2019	WTE DEC 2022	WTE DEC 2023(1)	WTE NOV 2024	WTE DEC 2024	WTE Change 2023	WTE Change 2024	WTE Change NOV 2024	WTE Change Dec 2022 to Dec 2024	WTE Change Dec 2019 to 2022 to 2024	% WTE Change Dec 2022 to 2024	DEC No. DEC 2024
Royal Victoria Eye & Ear												
Nurse/ Midwife Manager	24	27	30	30	30	+3	+0	+0	+3	+7	12.14%	32
Nurse/ Midwife Specialist & AN/MP	9	17	17	17	17	-0	-1	+0	-1	+8	-3.92%	18
Staff Nurse/ Staff Midwife	81	90	90	94	93	+0	+2	-1	+3	+12	2.88%	104
Nursing/ Midwifery other	2	2	2	3	3	+0	+1	+0	+1	+1	41.00%	3
Nursing & Midwifery	115	137	139	144	143	+3	+3	-1	+6	+28	4.41%	157

## Current Landscape of Nursing

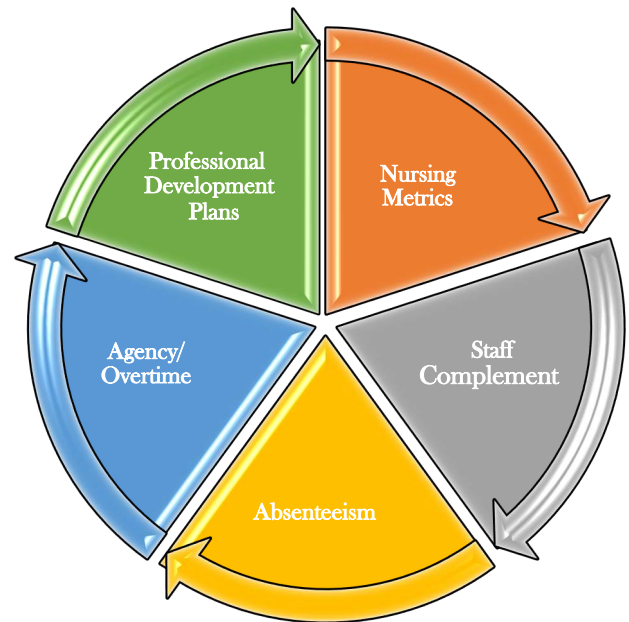
The Nursing Directorate conducts its own recruitment. Currently, 71% of nursing staff work fulltime. Female staff represents 78% of staff with male representing 22%. Staff have a minimum of 1 year post graduate experience. In the domain of specialised nursing, there has been a growth of 91% since 2019. RVEEH has a diverse and multi-cultural workforce who interact daily with patients and families from diverse cultures. The range of cultural perspectives brought by nurses from different backgrounds enhances patient care by promoting empathy, improving communication, and offering a broader understanding of patients' unique needs. Our commitment to diversity enables us to attract a wider talent pool.



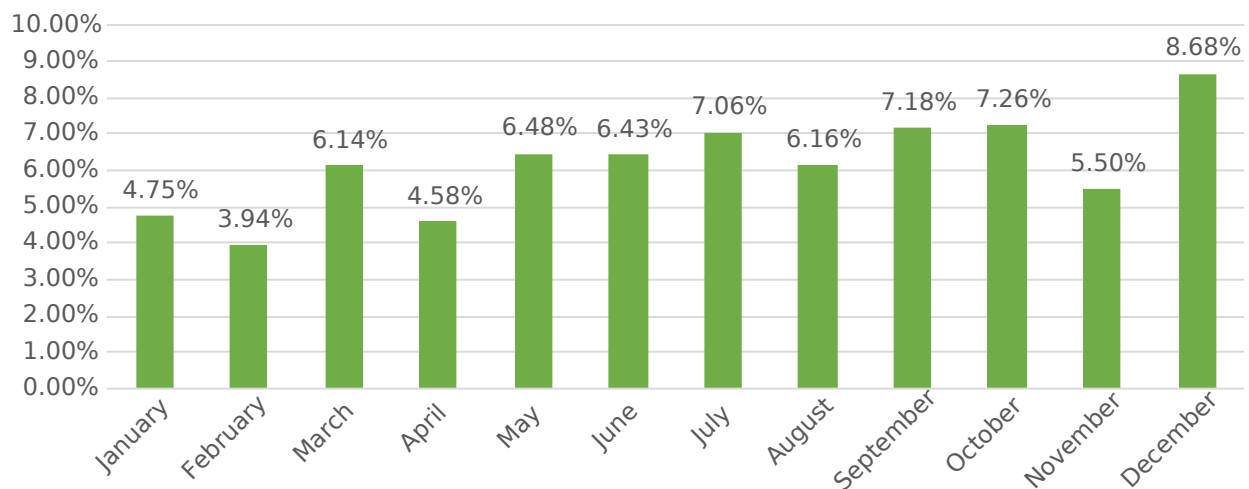
Country	Percentage	Country	Percentage
Republic of Ireland 	42.27%	Poland 	1.03%
Philippines 	31.96%	Brazil 	1.03%
India 	11.86%	Cyprus 	0.52%
Romania 	2.58%	Ethiopia 	0.52%
Croatia 	2.06%	Canada 	0.52%
Spain 	1.55%	Mauritius 	0.52%
Italy 	1.03%	Serbia 	1.03%
United Kingdom 	1.03%	Zimbabwe 	0.52%

## Delivering quality

The Nursing Directorate oversees five key performance indicators: Nursing Metrics, Staff Complement, Professional Development Plans, Absenteeism, and Agency/Overtime. We ensure the provision of high-quality nursing care by assessing 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. In 2024, we navigated various staffing challenges, including periods of sick leave and maternity leave, while maintaining our commitment to high-quality patient care and service delivery.



### Total Nursing Sick Leave



# Finance

The notable variance in Nursing budget in overtime and agency spend in 2024 is in direct correlational to the inability to recruit due to the national moratorium. Some key vacant posts were replaced with agency to maintain essential services when redeployment options where exhausted.

## Nursing Pay Analysis

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	2023
Basic	725,579	726,679	717,170	723,106	724,565	718,827	738,638	734,043	739,629	740,135	705	737,388	8,761,268	8,057,485
Overtime	7654	4,391	6,530	5,495	3,552	3,675	4,748	5,050	7,810	5,060	7,671	6,258	67,984	88,850
On-Call	2763	7,130	5,604	2,909	3,123	3,272	2,854	3,455	3,154	3,205	3,236	3,186	43,891	36,173
Allowence	41,118	46,179	43,830	46,109	45,547	45,468	44,349	44,720	45,490	45,924	44,644	45,545	538,923	502,584
Week-End	31,769	23,063	22,059	28,101	23,967	24,189	28,739	19,982	24,013	23,864	24,146	20,846	294,736	279,979
Night Duty	8,432	9,162	8,357	8,980	9,097	9,629	8,883	9,444	8,496	9,363	9,098	8,918	107,859	102,681
PRSI	80,802	87,375	82,560	83,902	93,742	85,570	88,030	86,647	88,075	88,384	88,330	87,716	1,041,131	919,134
Agency	17,095	23,533	2,438	15,665	4,250	22,726	12,656	6,309	10,664	3,545	10,760	-3,263	126,378	145,496
Total	915,212	927,512	888,549	914,266	907,842	913,355	928,897	909,650	927,331	919,429	929,590	906,594	10,982,205	10,132,382

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 posts and finance was approved for 4.5 additional Staff Nurses and 5.5 Healthcare Attendants but remained unfilled due to a moratorium in 2024 and lack of identified funding.

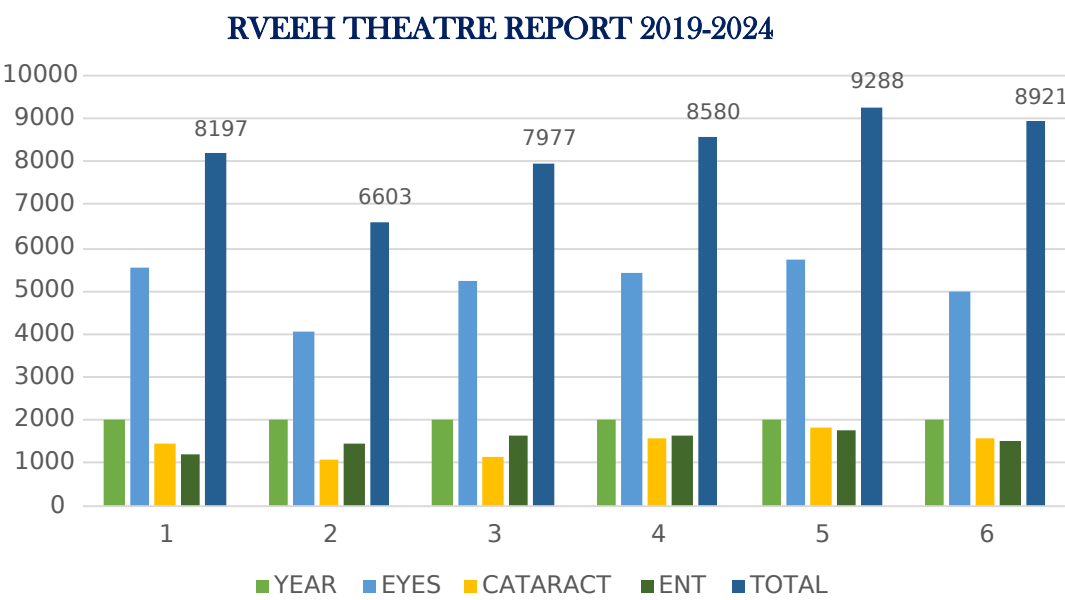
# Operations

Understanding our services is instrumental in aligning our resources to deliver 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 optimising capacity. From a nursing perspective, addressing these strategic priorities involves ensuring capacity and capability within the nursing workforce to respond to growing population demands, an infrastructure deficit, and a need for high-throughput scheduled care. The Covid-19 environment further highlighted the need for agility in nursing practices, while national health reforms such as Sláintecare and the delivery of ENT and Eye National plans call for integrated, patient-centred nursing services. The Nursing Directorate plays a pivotal role in operationalising these strategies through leadership, innovation in care models, and advocacy for resources that support safe, effective, and equitable patient care.



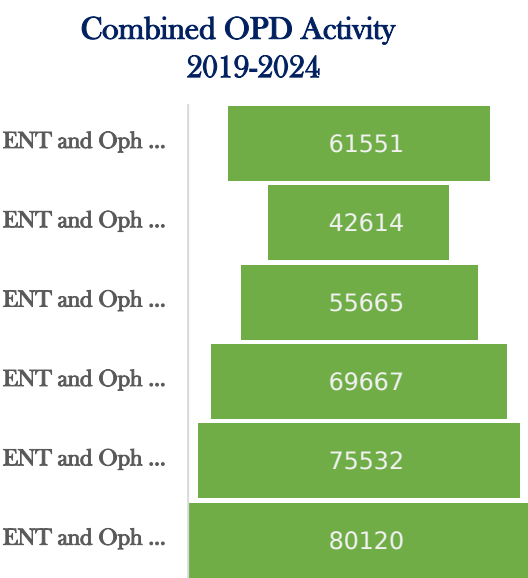
## Operations: Theatre

There were 7 additional nursing staff employed in 2024 to support the opening of a second cataract unit to future proof our service until 2030. The graph below reflects our activity over a 5 year period with a noticeable 3.9% decrease in overall activity in 2024 due to rolling theatre closures in Q4 secondary to financial constraints.



## Operations: Ophthalmology and ENT OPD

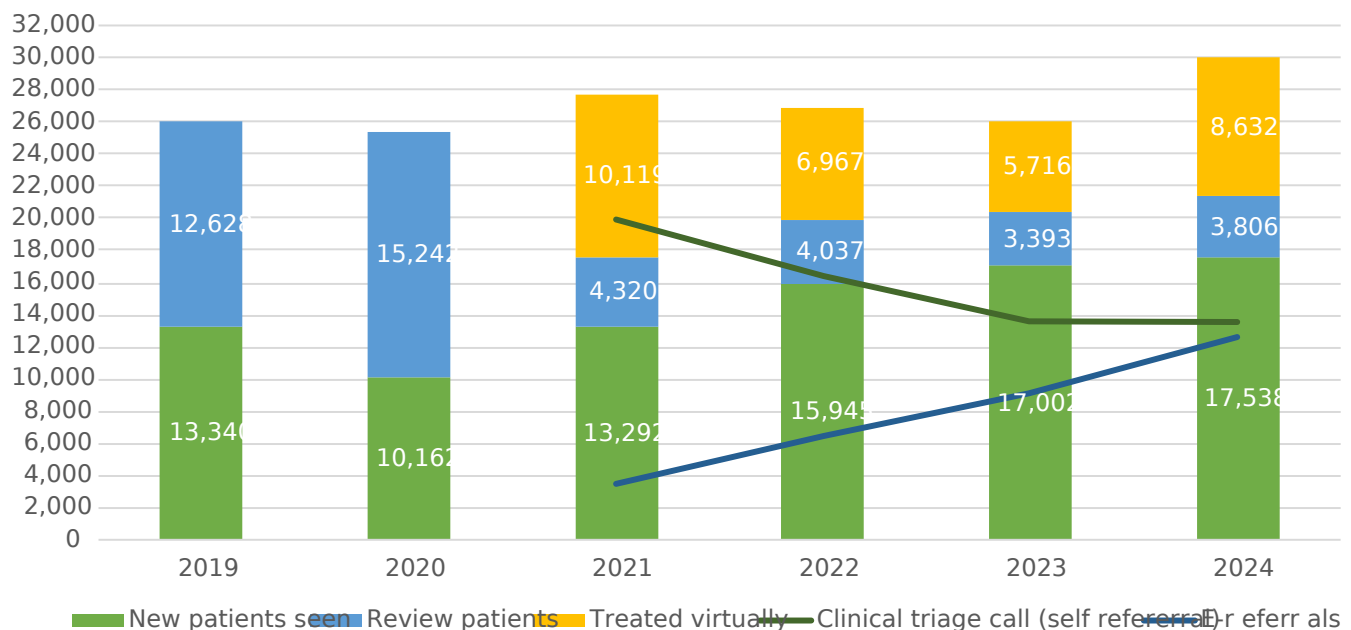
Increased activity at Community Clinics has significantly reduced long waiting times, with appointments rising to approximately 13,000 in 2024. This increase contributed to a sharp drop in patients waiting over 24 months for treatment, from 1,615 in January 2023 to just 346 by December 2024. In 2023, 64% (1,036) of these long-wait patients were removed from the list, followed by an additional 37% in 2024. At this pace, the >24-month waiting list is expected to be fully eliminated by Q2 2025.



# Operations: Emergency Department Ophthalmology

The Emergency Department continues to maintain Telehealth as a model of care with virtual triage ensuring clinical prioritisation and enabling patients to be treated in the comfort of their own home with treatment/prescription/advice over the phone as appropriate, avoiding hospital presentation. This service runs 7 days a week with Nursing conducting 19/24 sessions a week over 24 hours between 8-5pm with doctor-to-doctor referral only after 5pm. The RVEEH can deal with all ocular emergencies that present with/without referral, ensuring safe patient care. This graph demonstrates that 20% of all ophthalmic ED patients were treated virtually in 2024. Doctor to doctor growth in electronic referrals has tripled in the last three years. 1 in 4 patients are now review patients in comparison to 50% of all patients attending in 2019. RVEEH took pride in showcasing our service to St Michaels Hospital in 2024 to share the learning as they aspire to provide a similar model in their Emergency Department. The service became digital in Q4 2024. The appointment of a full-time consultant will facilitate the team to further pathways to streamline efficiencies. The ENT ED received 9,329 health mails & calls 6080 patients seen (35%).

Opthalmology ED Activity 2019 - 2024



## Operations: Glaucoma Assessment Clinic

In September 2024 clinic capacity was increased to 9 patients per session. In September 2024, a number of patients booked for an appointment at GAC RVEEH have now been moved to CH07, closer to home in line with Slainte care.

There are 3 Glaucoma Assessment Clinics per week where nursing staff have been upskilled. The patients' diagnostics are reviewed virtually by a consultant over 5 hours, optimising capacity.

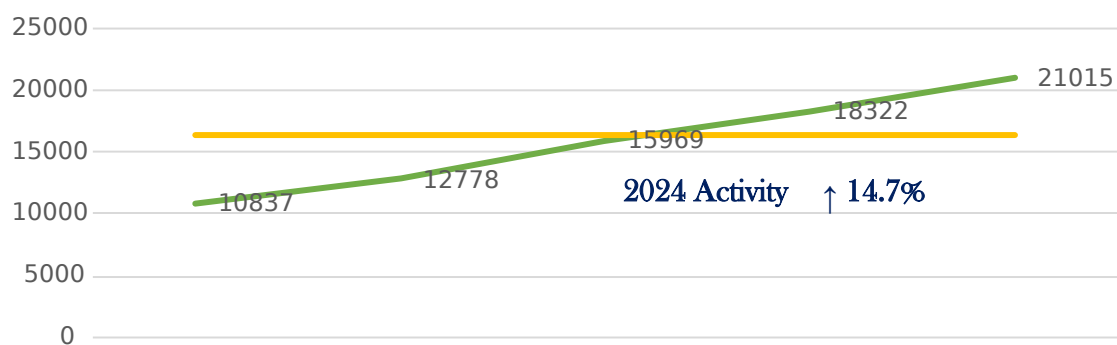


Month	No. of Clinic Sessions	Total Clinic Capacity	Total Number of Clinic Slots Filled	DNA Rate	Total Patient Episodes Completed	D/C	Referred	Consultant Clinic	CNS Clinic	CNS CH07	ANP	CH07 GAC	CH06 GAC	RVEEH GAC
Jan-24	15	120	92	16	76	5	18	11	2	0	0	6	0	68
Feb-24	12	96	88	11	77	4	24	11	2	0	0	11	0	60
Mar-24	12	96	83	15	68	5	21	10	5	0	0	0	0	57
Apr-24	12	96	58	7	61	5	13	5	5	0	0	0	0	40
May-24	15	120	99	14	85	13	31	9	6	1	1	1	0	55
Jun-24	12	96	69	9	60	11	23	14	0	0	2	2	0	35
Jul-24	12	96	67	10	57	12	16	6	2	0	3	2	0	39
Aug-24	12	96	89	12	77	6	26	6	4	1	7	1	2	57
Sep-24	12	108	81	7	74	7	29	3	6	0	4	4	8	45
Oct-24	15	135	73	9	64	10	30	3	1	0	5	19	2	33
Nov-24	12	108	70	6	64	1	27	3	1	0	13	1	0	42
Dec-24	9	81	48	14	34	0	13	4	0	0	9	0	0	35
Totals	150	1248	917	130	797	79	271	85	34	2	44	47	12	566
%		100%	73%	14%	87%	9%	30%	9%	4%	2%	5%	5%	9%	62%

# Operations: Macular Treatment Centre

Age related macular degeneration is a progressive eye disease that affects the macula, the central part of the retina responsible for sharp, detailed vision. It is a leading cause of vision loss, particularly in older adults. The administration of intravitreal treatment can halt the progression of the disease. Historically only doctors administered intravitreal injections. Nursing has been upskilled since 2017 and now deliver 51% of all injections in the MTC. 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, as well as exploring alternative treatment options discharge planning and nurse led stable clinics.

Annual MTC IVT Administered  
Current and Projected



## 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 led intravitreal injections. A 0.5 WTE CNS vacancy was not replaced in 2024 due to the recruitment embargo. There were 3882 attendances in 2024, indicating 15% more patients were seen in comparison to 2023. There was 15% growth in review appointments in direct correlational with a 6% drop in volume of new patients seen. Saturday clinics to address delays in waiting times have not been an option due to financial constraints. Building capacity and QIP for 2025 is priority for RVEEH in 2025.

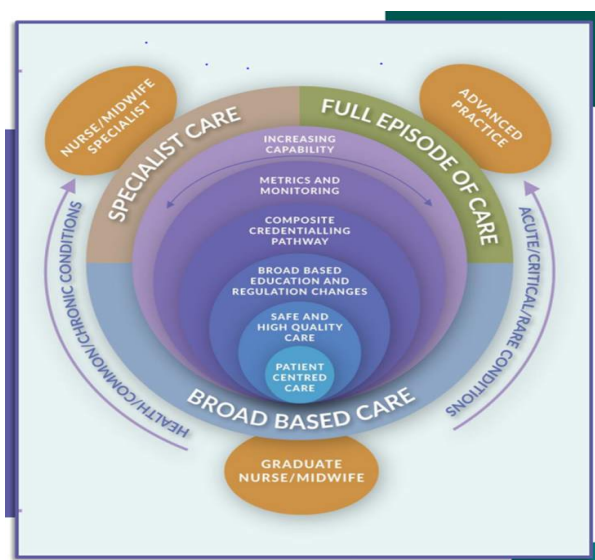


# Specialist Practice

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. Optimising medical capacity and making access to care everyone's responsibility.

The Nursing Directorate in line with RVEEH corporate objectives continued to develop experienced confident and competent nurses in 2024 in a variety of roles (Staff Nurse, CNS, ANP) in Ophthalmology and ENT who can treat large numbers of low complexity patients, make independent treatment decisions and prescribe medications, thus improving access and optimising medical capacity. ANPs and CNSs consistently apply their core competencies to deliver the highest standards of patient care.

RVEEH has 9 nurse prescribers with 4 being ANPs in medical retina, glaucoma, anterior segment and in Emergency Department. ANPs 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. CNS's can see and treat chronic stable patients.



## 11 CNS's:

Glaucoma  
Ocular Oncology  
Oculoplastics  
Medical Retina  
Diabetic Retinopathy  
Emergency Department  
ENT

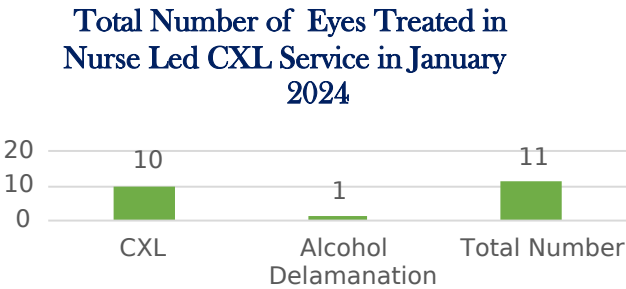
## 4 ANPs:

Glaucoma  
Cornea  
Medical Retina  
Emergency Department

# Specialist Practice: ANP in Anterior Segment

The Nurse-led Corneal Cross-linking (CXL) service was established in January 2016. The Nurse-led post-operative clinic started in February 2017 and was converted to nurse-led virtual post-cataract service in March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This clinic was converted to the Nurse-led clinical validation virtual clinic in November 2022. In October 2018, the Nurse-led keratoconus clinic (NLKC) was set up to improve the healthcare experience and outcomes for keratoconus patients in RVEEH. The NLKC virtual clinic was set up in May 2020 in response to Covid 19 pandemic. There were 10 CXL procedures and 1 Alcohol delamination procedures conducted in January 2024. In September 2020, the keratoconus screening for Down Syndrome patients started in partnership with Tallaght Down Syndrome Children’s Health Ireland at Tallaght University Hospital. In August 2022, a HCA pentacam training started for the keratoconus imaging clinic. A HCA-led keratoconus Imaging Clinic started in October 2022. Ms Diana Malata was Group Lead recently at the Community of Practice for Nurses, World Association of Eye Hospitals (WAEH). Ms Diana Malata, presented the Nurse-led Corneal Cross-linking Service in Ireland, Community of Practice for Nurses (CoP), World Association of Eye Hospitals (WAEH), 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Mark Crocker, Clinical Nurse Consultant contacted the Nursing Directorate after the CoP WAEH presentation in September 2024 as they are eager to replicate the RVEEH, Ireland Nurse-led CXL service in the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service, Queensland, Australia. Shared the RVEEH, Ireland Nurse-led CXL policy with Mark and with WAEH. The graphs below reflects a one/two-month period for 2024 due to unplanned leave.

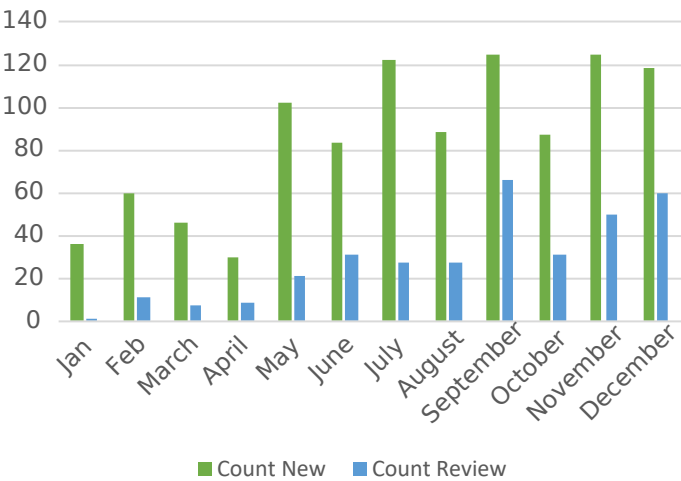
Clinic	Number of Patients Seen	
	January	February
OPD	54	15
Virtual Clinic	29	8
Total Number of Patients Seen	83	23



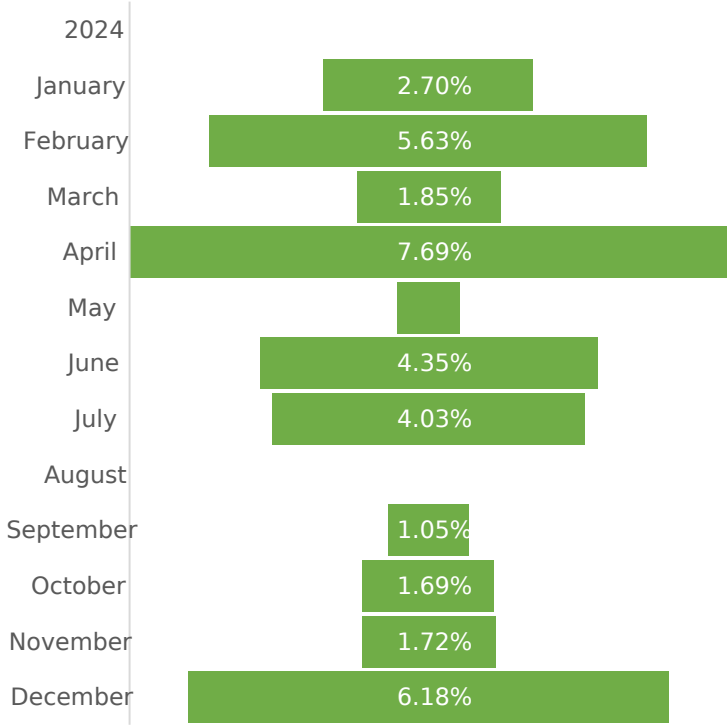
# Specialist Practice: ANP in Emergency Department

Qualified as a Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner in the Emergency Department in September 2024, the ANP attended to 1,365 patients, which included 1032 new and 342 review patients. The ANP issued 1,129 prescriptions in clinics, with around 50 additional electronic prescriptions sent through the Telehealth service.

New/Review Patients 2024



Unplanned Re-Attendances 2024

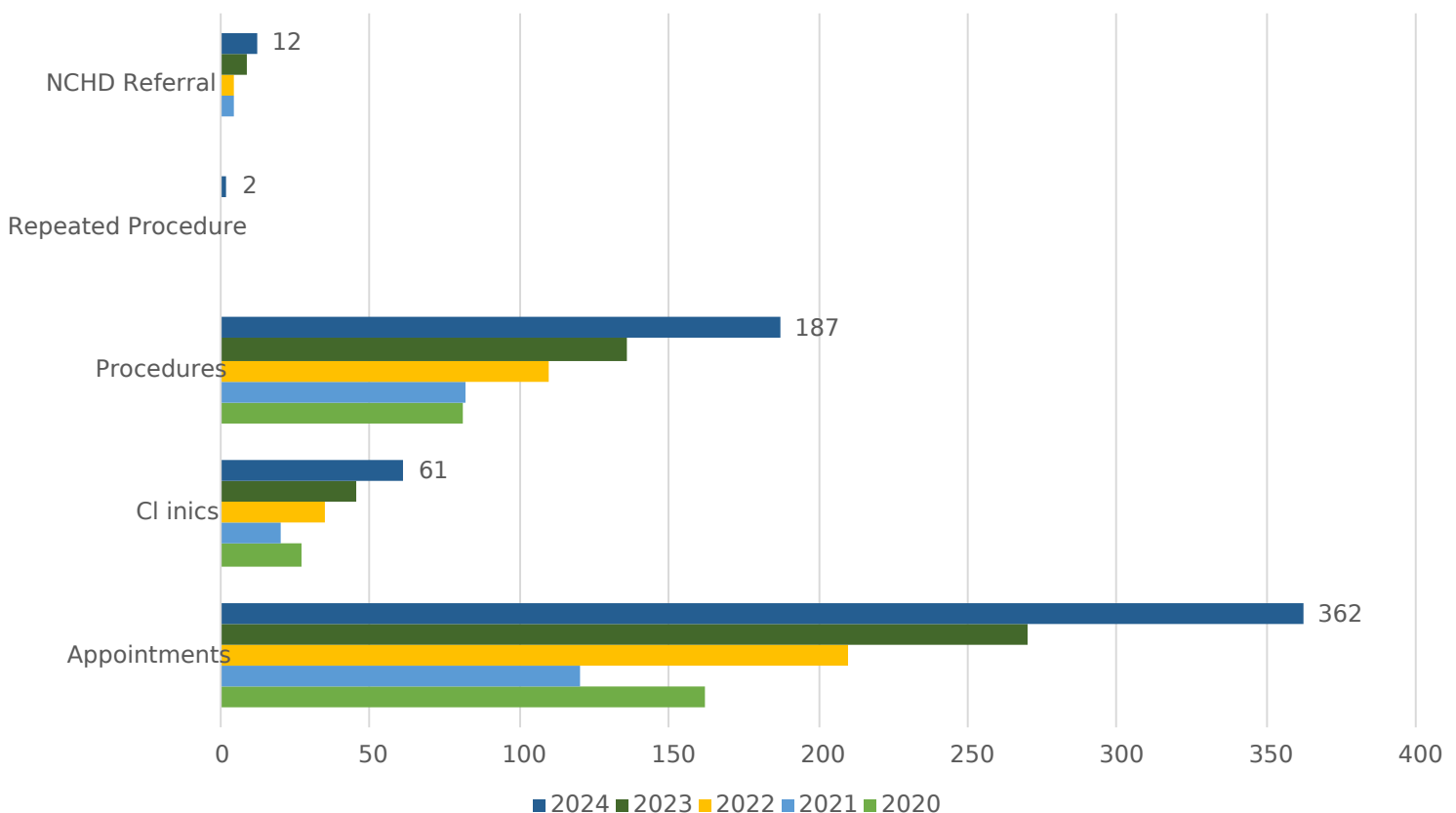


When starting the service, it was essential to determine whether the service was safe and effective. A key measure to assess this was to capture the rate of unplanned re-attendance. Due to the limited number of ANP-led clinics within the Eye Emergency Services, no established benchmark existed. However, Moorfields Hospital has set an unplanned re-attendance rate at 5% within a 7-day period for their entire acute service provided in the ED. This figure considers that half of the patients present with acute issues and the other half with chronic conditions such as dry eyes. The benchmark is set at 5% within a 30-day period.

## Specialist Practice: CNS in Emergency Department

The CNS in the Emergency Department is currently 0.8 WTE. Teaching is an integral part of this CNS role, where students undertaking the Post Graduate Diploma in Ophthalmology are required to each participate in sessions with the CNS as part of their placement. The Prescribing Audit conducted in 2024, indicated that the CNS of the Emergency Department was a 100% compliant with the prescribing parameters. There were 77 patients' prescriptions written by the CNS via Healthmail/Telehealth. The CNS also contributed to over 90 telehealth sessions. In Q4 2024, the CNS acted up as the GP Liaison Officer to cover for maternity leave in conjunction with their normal CNS duties. This was for 8 hours per week.

CNS Service Trends 2020-2024



# Specialist Practice: ANP Glaucoma

RVEEH has the only ANP Glaucoma in Ireland.

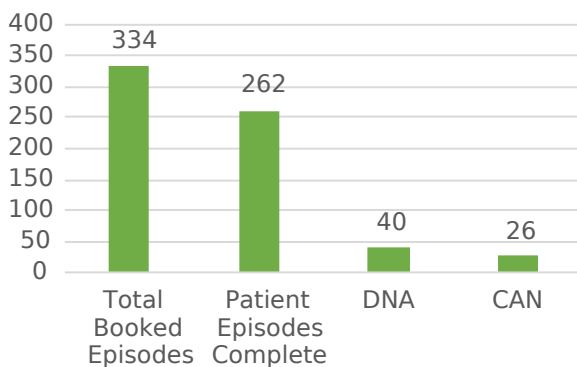
She is a nurse prescriber who can diagnose

prescribe and discharge . The following is a snapshot of the service:

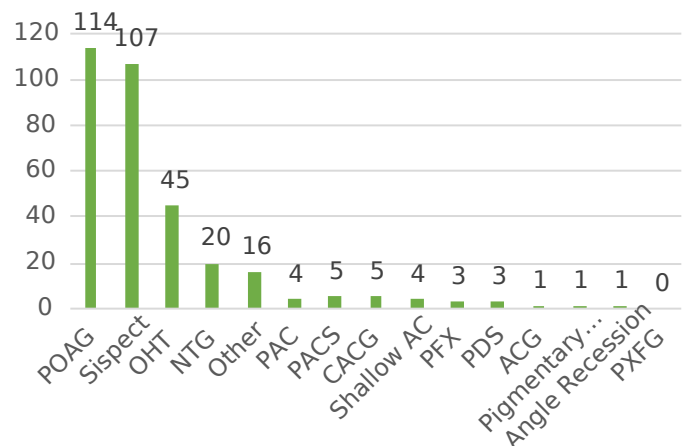
- 3 review clinics per week / 2 new patient clinics per week.
- 1 session for Long Waiter Chart Reviews/Screening for overdue patients/Imaging clinics.
- 1 session Audit, Planning & Development, Education and Research.
- 1 session is allocated to CNS, Nursing and HCA Staff Support/ Education & Training.
- 1 (3 hour) session for Virtual Review letters, Clinic Chart Prep and Clinic admin such as EMR documentation finalisation and prescriptions.

The 2024 service ran from Jul - Dec 2024 and included 92 clinics (36% new and 63% review).

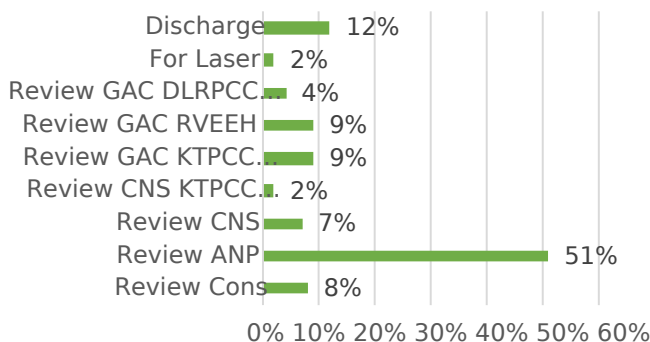
**Clinic Activity 2024**



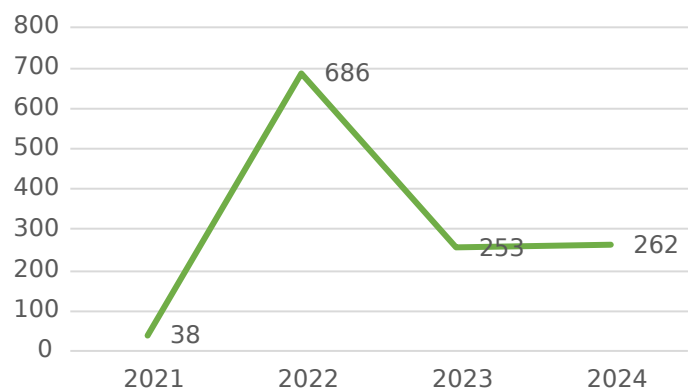
**Diagnosis**



**ANP Clinic 2024**  
**Where Patients will be Reviewed at Next Visit**



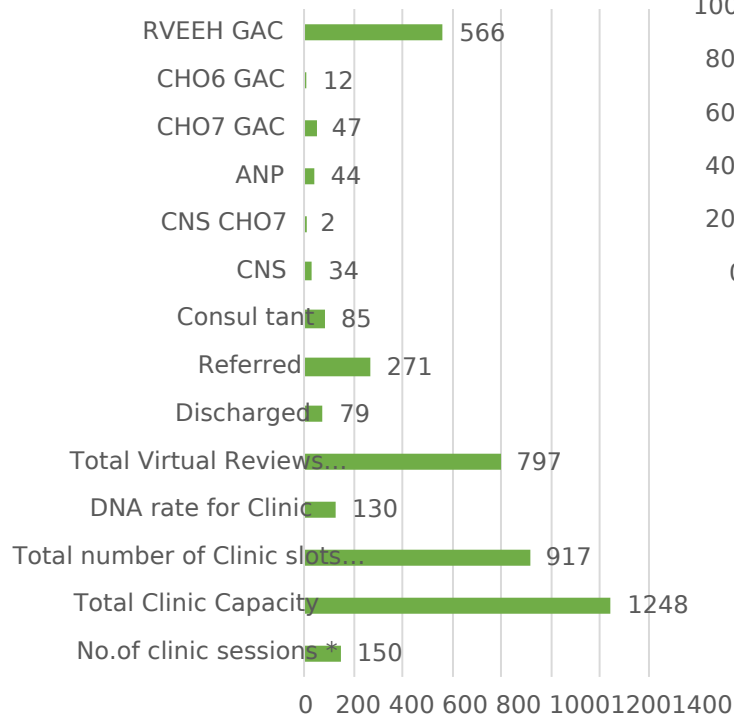
**Number of Patient Episodes Year on Year**



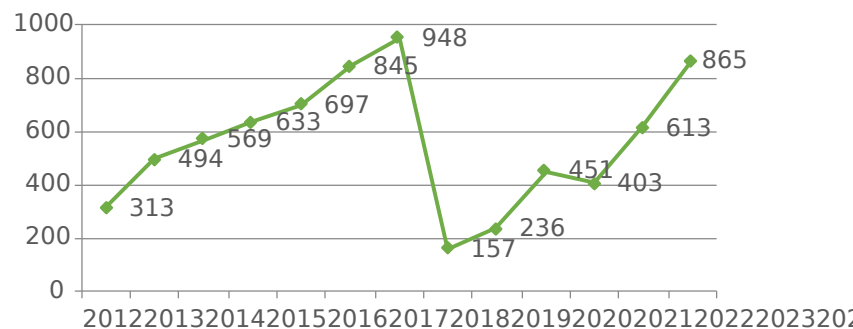
## Specialist Practice: CNS Glaucoma

Since its establishment in March 2012, the number of patients seen in the clinic has increased each year (Graph 1). These numbers reduced significantly in 2019 due to patients being referred to the virtual clinic and the CNS having to assist in running this clinic. In February 2024, in line with the Sláintecare and as part of the Integrated Eye Care Team, the Glaucoma CNS, in collaboration with Glaucoma Consultants and the Director of Nursing, initiated a community-based glaucoma service in Kilnamanagh, Dublin 22 (CHO7 area). This broadened the scope of the CNS to meet the needs of the community population. Competency based training and policy development was required to upskill in post operative cataract care which included observation for post operative inflammation, fundus assessment, macula OCT scan interpretation, and listing for the second eye. Competence in gonioscopy examination was also achieved. During 2024, 6 CNS Glaucoma Clinic sessions took place per week, 4 in RVEEH and 2 in CHO7. Education and Teaching is instrumental to ensure staff nurses are upskilled in Outpatients to support the Glaucoma Assessment clinic and Imaging clinic.

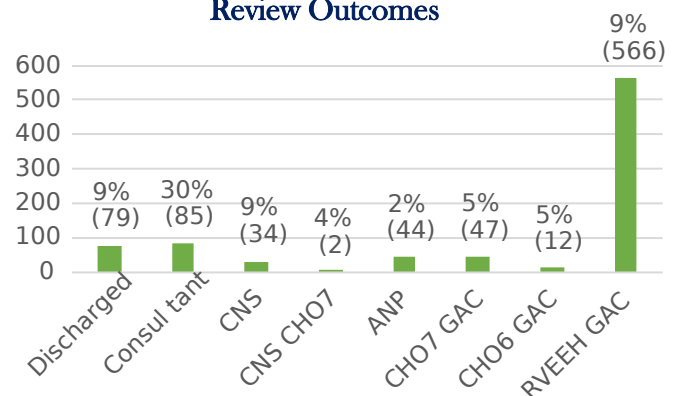
**Clinics and Referrals**



**Number of Patients Seen Each Year**



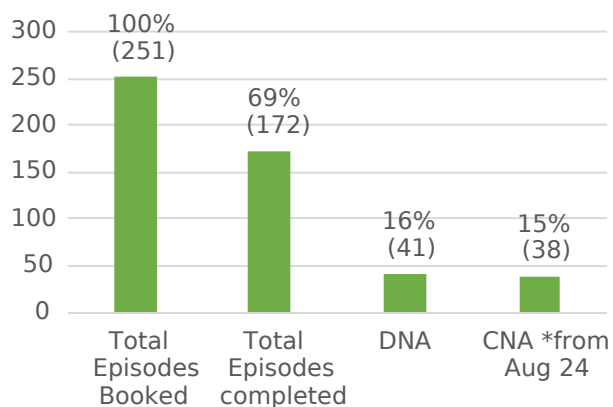
**Review Outcomes**



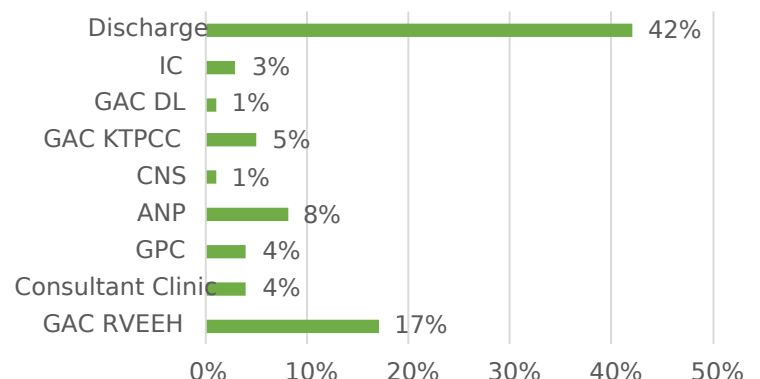
# Specialist Practice: Glaucoma Imaging Clinic

The Glaucoma Imaging Clinic, under the governance of Ms Aoife Doyle Ophthalmology Consultant was established in July 2023. It screens patients referred from the Diabetic Retinal Screening Service, who failed grading due to suspected glaucoma. These graphs below summarise the activities, patient outcomes, and key observations during the 18 months since its establishment. There were 38 clinics, with one member of OPD Nursing Staff per clinic session. The patient undergoes a visual acuity, Visual Field Test, iCare, dilation drops, and Kowa images and receives a patient information leaflet. The diagnostics are reviewed virtually by a Consultant Ophthalmologist within a week. Following review, the Consultant generates a patient and GP letter communicating the outcome of the visit. Patients are either referred to the appropriate glaucoma care pathway or discharged.

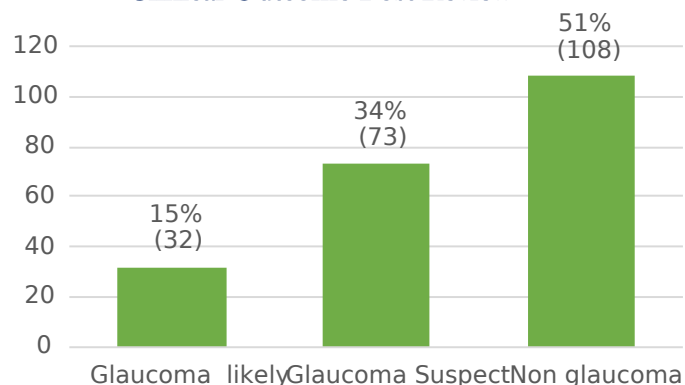
**Clinic Activity 2024**



**Episode Outcomes**

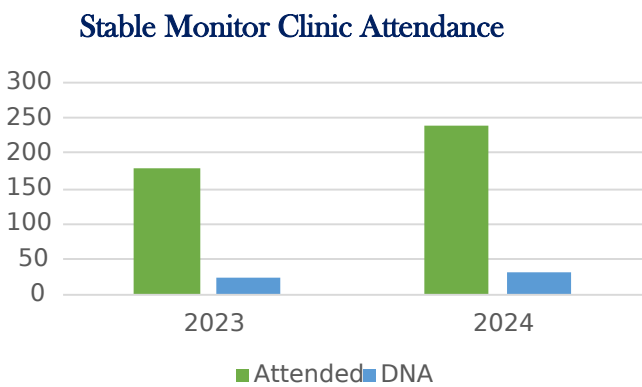
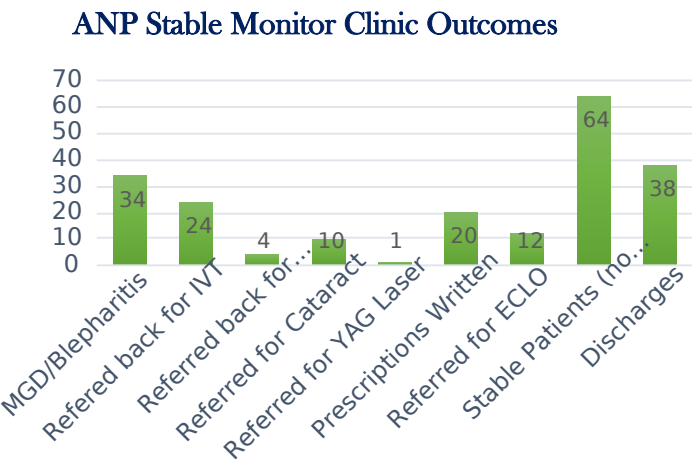


**Clinical Outcome Post Review**

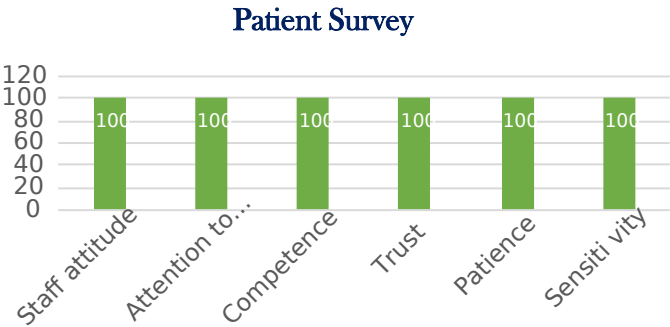


# Specialist Practice: ANP Medical Retina

The ANP in Medical Retina has a key role in administering intravitreal injections (IVTs), education and leads the monthly Lunch and Learn. At these sessions, nurses can enhance their clinical learning through educational presentations provided by specialist nurses. The ANP is a primary clinical educator for training nurse injectors, and mentors ANP candidates, CNS's, staff, and Optometrists in OPD and IVT techniques. She contributes to the Post Graduate Diploma students by delivering lectures on her specialist practice and slit lamp examination practical's. The ANP also presented a poster at the first AONI Conference in Cork: **"Empowering Ophthalmic Nurses – Enhancing Vision and Patient Autonomy"**. The ANP was appointed Director to the Research Foundation, representing nursing in 4-5 annual meetings. The ANP administered 1190 IVTs in 2024, an increase from 1130 IVTs in 2023, and runs a weekly stable monitoring clinic where patients are referred from all three medical retinal consultants and seen by the ANP for up to 2 years following their last IVT as illustrated below.



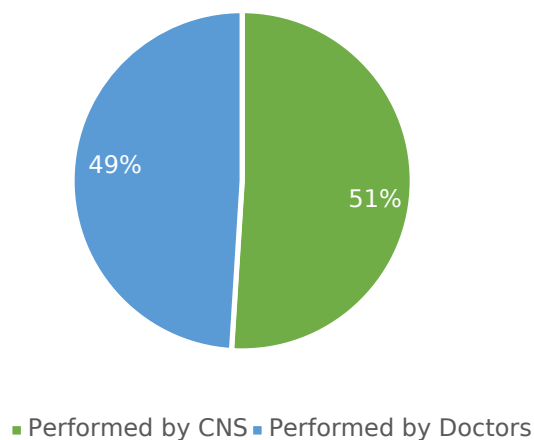
Anonymous patient satisfaction surveys were conducted in June and December 2024, with 25 participating patients, revealing very high satisfaction rates with the service.



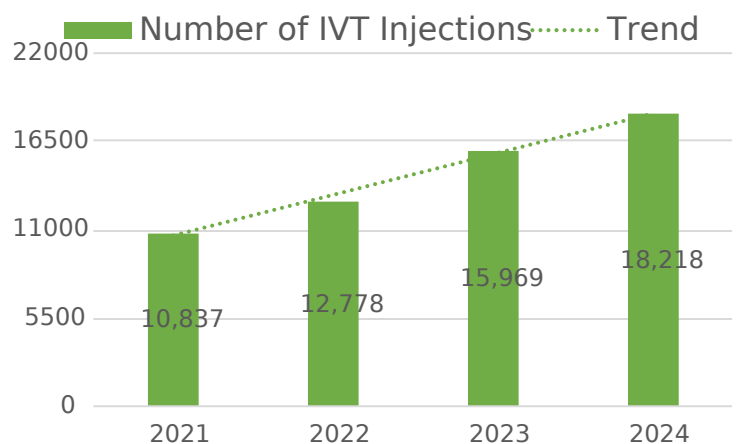
## Specialist Practice: CNS Medical Retina

From the total of 18,218 injections, the CNSs conducted 8,628 of them, accounting for 47%. This ratio is projected to decrease as the MTC reduced its Clinical Nurse Specialist positions from 3.5 WTE to 2.5 WTE in 2024 due to maternity leave and the departure of some injectors from their positions. The objective is to restore the number of CNS positions to 3.5 WTE by 2025.

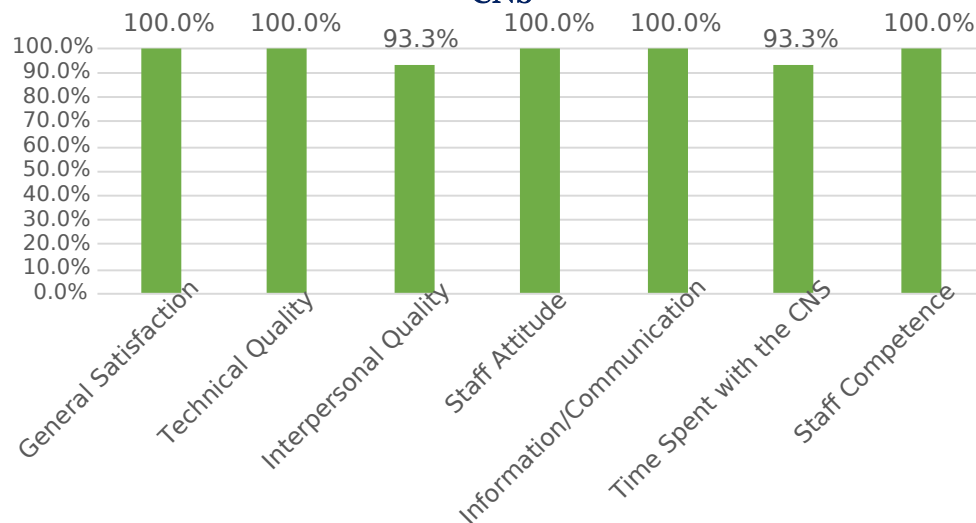
CNS Intravitreal Injection



Total IVTs Administered By CNS and ANP 21-24



Patient Satisfaction Survey Post IVT performed by CNS



## Specialist Practice: CNS Ocular Oncology

Ocular Oncology is the only service of its kind in Ireland and operates across St Luke's Hospital and the RVEEH. A 2nd Ocular Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist post was secured in 2024 which is instrumental to optimising capacity, enhancing patient care and reducing waiting times for these time sensitive patients. Patient attendance was as follows

- Nurse Led Naevi Assessment Clinic: 142
- Nurse Led Review Enucleation Clinic: 110
- Nurse Led First Dressing Enucleation Clinic: 17

## Specialist Practice: CNS Oculoplastics

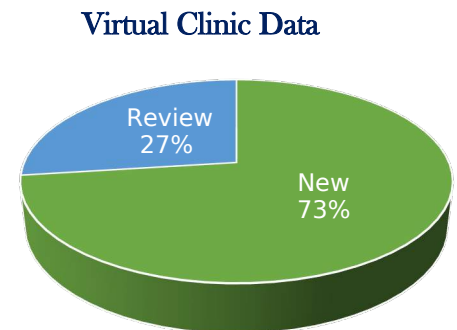
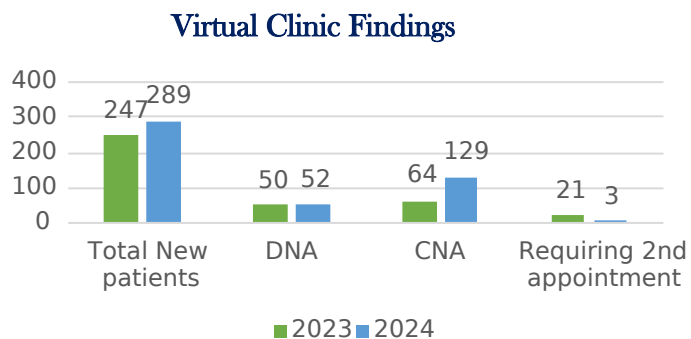
The appointment of the Oculoplastics CNS has reduced the waiting list by 4 years and supported the assessment of 25% more new patients.

	Clinic Capacity	No. of Clinics	New	Review	ROS	Epiphora	SM	Ptosis Measurement	Thyroid Assessment	Botox	Post Op	Lesions	Histology	Histology Result	Total Booked	Patient seen in Clinic A	Review in Cons Clinic	Review in CNS Clinic	Listed for procedure	Discharge	Virtual Phone
Jan	85	17	36	30	3	5	0	0	1	18	9	24	5	1	66	53	13	15	26	31	24
Feb	92	18	54	41	8	5	1	2	0	25	11	53	3	0	96	86	10	14	44	43	34
Mar	134	17	43	40	9	9	3	1	0	15	9	39	3	1	83	75	8	15	29	33	32
Apr	116	17	41	46	5	5	0	4	2	29	9	34	2	1	87	70	17	12	43	30	27
May	150	19	70	59	12	16	0	1	2	28	17	64	7	1	129	109	20	27	75	33	29
Jun	79	13	48	25	3	7	0	0	0	11	8	46	4	0	73	67	6	13	24	24	34
Jul	33	4	10	18	6	1	1	0	1	8	8	10	0	0	29	26	3	5	11	7	11
Aug	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oct	18	3	2	15	1	1	0	0	0	12	0	3	3	3	17	17	0	4	12	12	2
Nov	72	10	44	4	8	0	1	5	23	9	17	3	0		64	62	2	18	31	17	10
Dec	30	4	16	19	3	2	0	0	8	6	6	14	2		35	31	4	12	13	15	11
Total	809	122	364	297	58	51	6	13	37	161	94	290	29		679	596	83	135	308	245	40
	100%		54%	44%	9%	9%	1%	2%	6%	27%					100%	88%	23%	52%	41%	35%	7%

## Specialist Practice: Otology CNS: Ear Care Service

The Otology CNS (Ear Care Service) is a nurse prescriber who operates a Nurse-Led Clinic (NLC) who caters to both new and review patients referred by GPs or ENT consultants, addressing aural conditions, including chronic and acute otitis externa, otomycosis, wax impaction, foreign body removal, tympanic membrane perforations, exostosis, chronic suppurative otitis media, aural polyps/granulation, mastoid cavities. New patients are referred via GP referral. Review patients from the consultant clinics can be referred directly to the NLC. In 2024, there were 1064 patients (13% of total ENT OPD attendances) who attended the NLC, with 263 new patients (25%), 801 review patients (75%) and 224 mastoid cavity reviews.

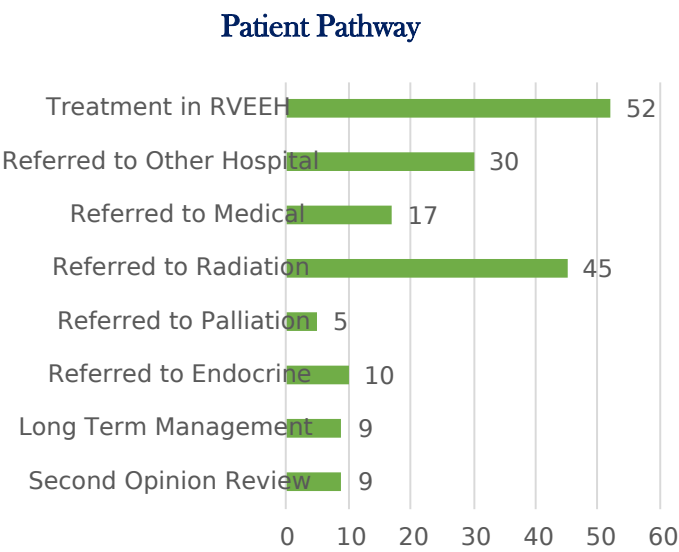
In 2023, the NLC faced a significant 11-month backlog. Appointment waiting times for new referrals currently stands at 6 months, a direct result of a new virtual clinic initiative. Commencing in 2024, this provides improved clinic efficiency with 496 patients virtually reviewed last year.



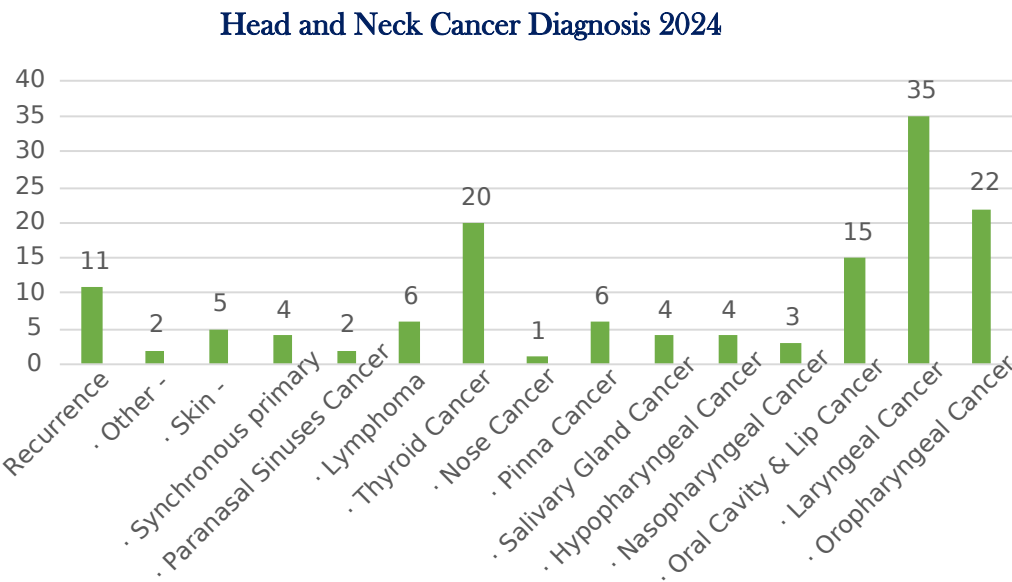
The Otology CNS has also coordinated and delivered four Ear Care and Microsuction Education Courses for Healthcare Professionals in 2024, including GP's, GP practice nurses, ANP and CNS. A Patient-Triggered Review system gave stable otology patients direct follow-up access and earned a 95% user effectiveness rating. In 2025, the CNS will train nurses in the local department to complete basic training in ear suctioning using competency-based training which will facilitate the CNS to see the most appropriate patients.

# Specialist Practice: CNS ENT: Oncology Liasion

The Oncology Liaison CNS position is a co-ordinator role between families, the MDT, community partners and treatment pathways.



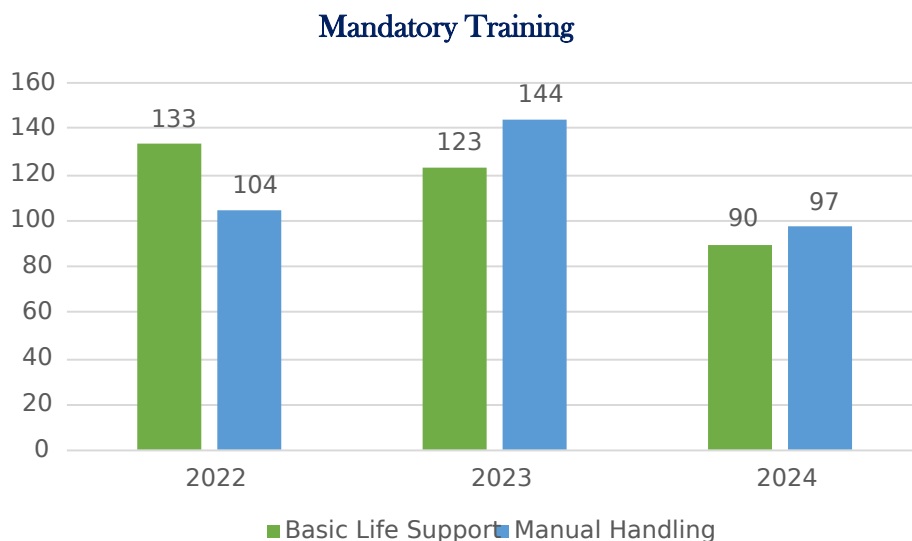
Total Number Diagnosed	137
Oncology Reviews in Clinic	Awaiting IT Stats
RVEEH ENT Oncology Patients listed for MDT SJH	150



# The School of Nursing

Ms Sabrina Kelly Practice Nurse Co-ordinator 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 2024, 5 students completed the PG. Dip, 3 of these students were inhouse and 2 were external students. Two of these students are now in a CNS post and one has commenced the post of Ophthalmic Clinical Facilitator in the RVEEH. There are currently 7 on the programme, 3 external students will complete the programme in May 2025.

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



Numbers of training in both BLS & Manual Handling appear lower in 2024 due to the amount of extra training that was carried out prior to the JCI audit in 2024.

Audits: Along with the 8 other continuous audits that the School is responsible for (CPR Trolley audits,, Controlled Drugs, Nurse Prescribing x 9 nurse prescribers, Monthly Nurse Metrics audits, monthly INEWS audits, HPSIR & regular ISBAR3 audits) the hospital had 2 other major audits/inspections in 2024. JCI inspection was conducted in

# The School of Nursing

January 2024. The audit was conducted over 4 days & the School & nursing administration were heavily involved in the audit process. The NMBI PG. Dip education audit was conducted in March 2024. A huge amount of work was carried out by the school to ensure our standards were compliant with NMBI & the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

Governance: The School sits on the following governance groups and is involved in discussion & decisions made by the groups: Health & Safety, Deteriorating Patient Committee, Drugs & Therapeutic Committee, RCSI Steering Committee, HSE Dublin & South East Hospital Group. The Association of Ophthalmic Nurses Ireland (AONI) was founded by a group of ophthalmic nurses in October 2023. The aim was to set up a national, educational & network association for nurses with a special interest in ophthalmology. S. Kelly is a member of the AONI committee & assists with webinars, conferences and training in ophthalmic practice. The first AONI conference was held on 5th October 2024 in the Silver Springs hotel, Cork. CNS Michelle Walsh presented at the event & ANP Colette O'Sullivan & CNS Marjorie Taleon (MTC) won the poster presentation competition.

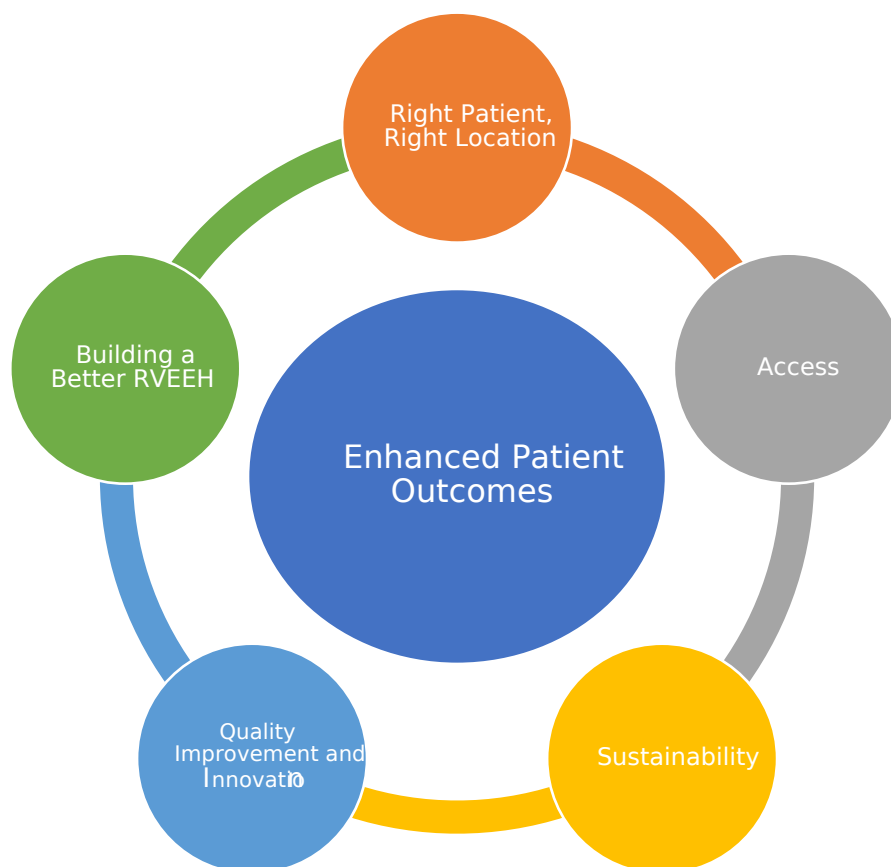
Documentation: A new nursing assessment document has been created by the School of Nursing. The document now incorporates the 4AT delirium assessment tool and the assessment process that needs to be carried out for patients in the Pre-assessment Unit, Inpatient Ward, Day Care Unit and Theatre Department. The rationale for this is to keep all documentation together and to streamline the flow of the patient throughout their journey from admission to discharge. A Biometry Preprocedural Question Diagram was developed by the School. The document was designed for the Pre-assessment, DCU, and Cataract Unit which is a guide to questions that need to be asked before performing an A-scan.

Conferences: The first hybrid ophthalmic nursing conference was organised by the School of Nursing & held on Saturday 27th April 2024. The event was very well received and provided a variety of ophthalmic presentations that tailored for all. A total of 170 guests attended the

# The School of Nursing

conference with 73 in person and 97 online. The ENT nurses conference was held on Saturday 19th October 2024. The event was held in-house and catered for 57 delegates.

Courses Delivered in 2024: Several courses have been delivered & introduced (17 in total) to the school which include: iCare training, ECLO training, ECG lead placement training, Visual Acuity training, 4AT & delirium training, PEWS training, Induction for new staff nurses, ISBAR training, Short Eye Course for Nurses, Sepsis refresher training, Administration of Intravenous Medications training, Biometry training, INEWS refresher training, Venepuncture & Cannulation training, Preceptorship and anaphylaxis training.



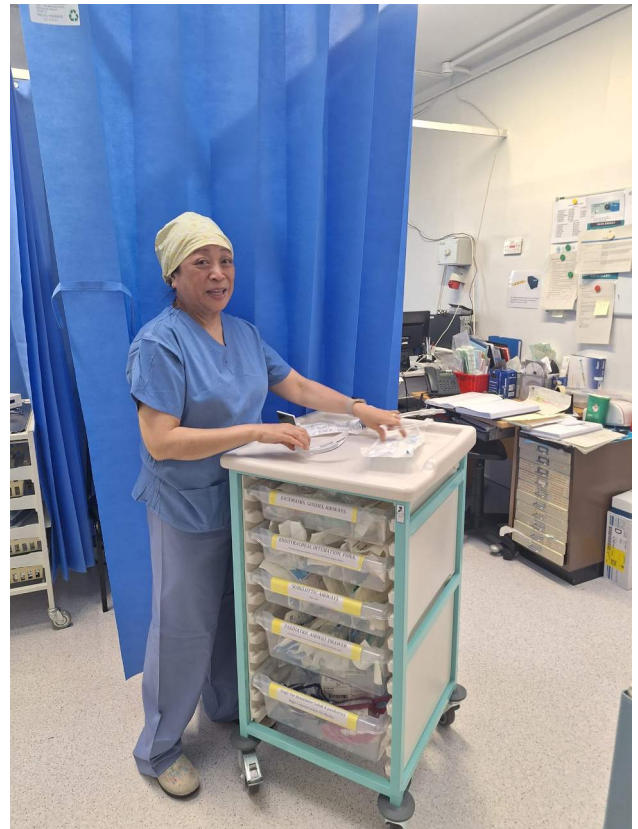
## Role of Anaesthetic CNM II

In 2024, 2,865 patients were admitted into the Operating Theatre for a general anaesthetic and 180 paediatric patients. The Anaesthetic CNM II provides fundamental education for the Operating Theatre staff which included 31 sessions in 2024 on essential topics such as Acute Bleed Protocol, AIRVO2 education, hypoglycaemia and sepsis management to name a few.

The CNM II is also responsible for the education of Clinical Skills in Theatre/PACU/Cataract Unit. The roll out of Difficult Airway Trolley for Theatre Department according to Difficult Airway Society, introduction of SCOOP pack,

used for management of acute haemorrhage in neck and consolidation of Consumables have been key achievements undertaken by the CNM II.

The CNM II is responsible for the Anaesthesia Documentation Audit. The Anaesthesia record in RVEEH must be fully completed whenever patients are receiving sedation or anaesthesia care. There were 240 (20 per month) patient Anaesthesia Records from Theatre Department audited from Jan to Dec 2024. The average of completed records was 73% during the first half the year, with an increase score of 85% from Jul to Dec. The CNM II issued the Quality Improvement project in Patient Safety in Anaesthetic Nursing. Daily anaesthetic safety checklists for Theatres in Cataract Unit, ENT & Eye Theatres have also been developed. The CNM II has also collaborated with the Safe Surgery KPI in the Operating Theatre.

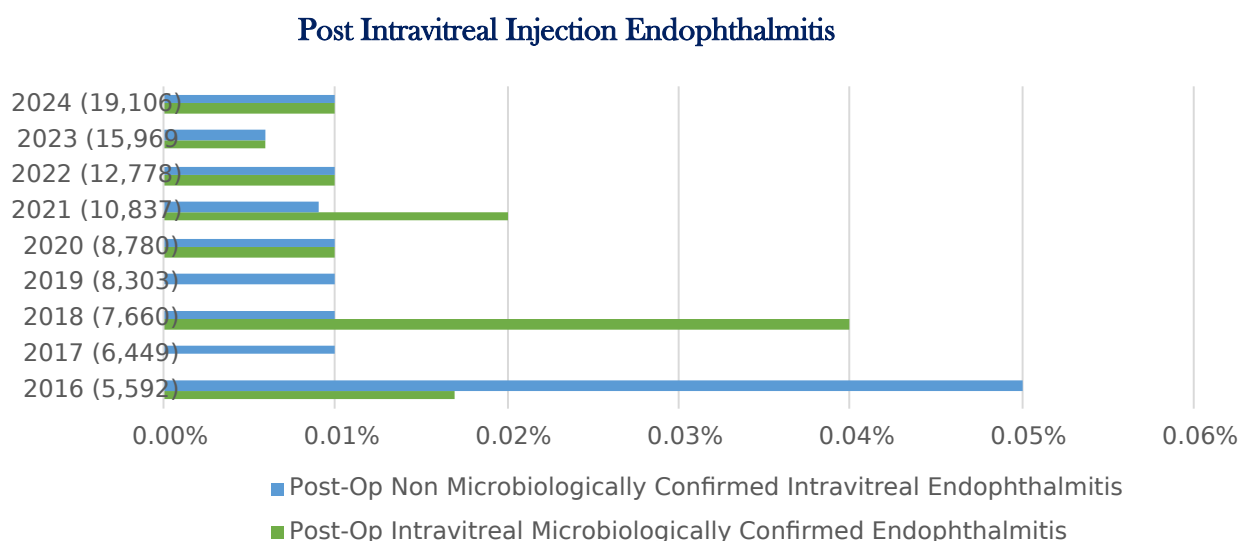


Anaesthetic

# Infection Control



The Infection Control Team is vital in preventing and managing infections, maintaining a safe environment for eye and ENT procedures, and monitoring staff vaccination rates. In 2024, 61% of staff received both influenza and COVID-19 boosters, though actual uptake may be higher due to community vaccinations, which cannot be verified due to GDPR. Incentivised vaccination days were held at RVEEH to boost uptake. The team also works with the RVEEH Sepsis Lead to raise awareness of sepsis, a life-threatening condition requiring rapid treatment. Additionally, they monitor endophthalmitis rates, which remained under 0.01% among 18,322 patients in 2024.



# Corporate Risk Register

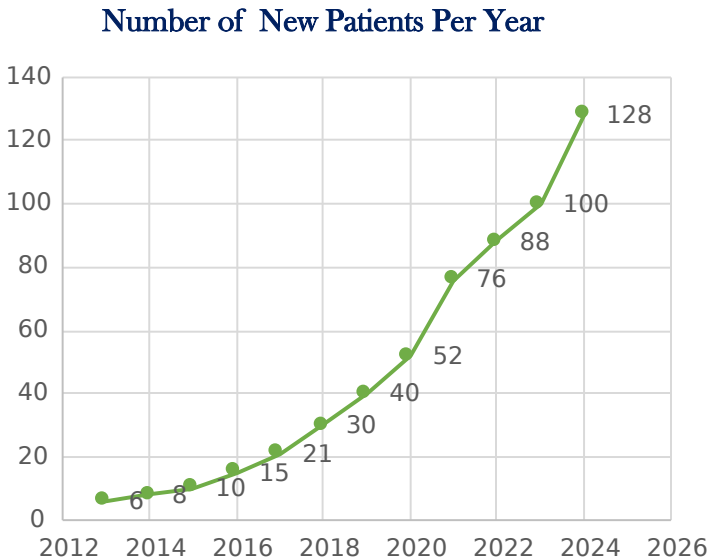
The Corporate Risk Register reflects the lack of Paediatric Nurses in RVEEH. Further PEARS training was is planned for 2025 to ensure early detection, escalation, and rapid transfer of the paediatric patient. A HCA is undergoing training as a Paediatric Nurse and is due to graduate in Q1 2025. The Macular Treatment Centre is noted on the Risk Register as 25 staff are working at 14% over capacity. Delays to treatment and service requirements indicate an additional 28% is required to meet service need. Staffing put on risk register Q4 as a direct result of the inability to recruit due to the moratorium.

# Haemovigilance Officer

The role of the Haemovigilance Officer (HVO) encompasses both the management and coordination of the Serum Eye Drops (SED) Service and Blood Transfusion management under the governance of the Director of Nursing., Clinical Director and corneal consultants. Hours doubled in 2024 (17.5 hours currently) to meet service demand. The service has its own dedicated mobile for patients to call and leave message outside the HVO hours.

The HVO co-ordinates serum drops to end stage dry eye patients. Allogeneic drops made in Galway Blood and Tissue Establishment (GBTE) cost €2,000 per batch and Autologous drops cost €2,500 per batch with most patients requiring 2 batches per year. The approximate cost for 2024 was €261,000 for all drops produced, including delivery to RVEEH. The Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) became the second provider of Allogeneic SED in 2023, when GBTE had reached full capacity in 2022. Allo-SED batches made in IBTS cost €1,919 plus delivery fee. The approximate cost for 2024 was €237,956 for the drops produced between Jan and Dec 2024, excluding delivery fee.

Year	Number of patients	Total New Patients per year	% Increase YOY of new patients
2013	6	0	0%
2014	8	2	33%
2015	10	2	25%
2016	15	5	50%
2017	21	6	40%
2018	30	9	43%
2019	40	10	33%
2020	52	12	30%
2021	76	22	46%
2022	88	12	16%
2023	100	12	14%
2024	128	28	28%
Average Increase			33%



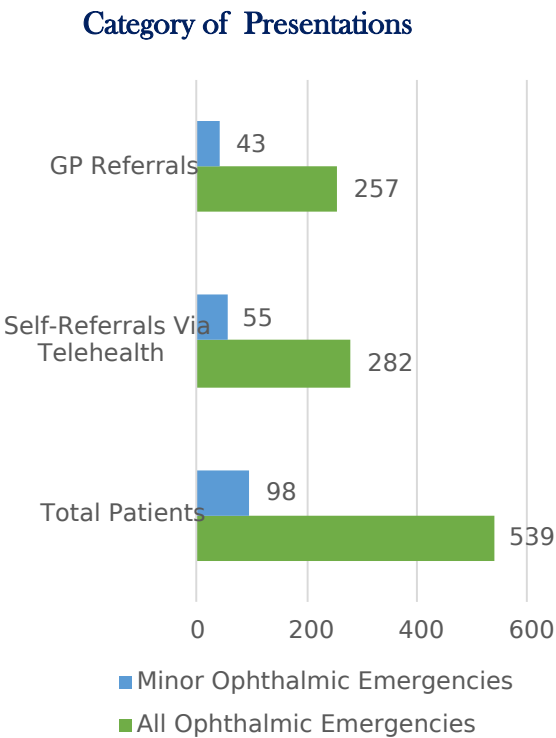
## Eye Clinic Liaison Officer

The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) role is provided by Vision Ireland and serves as a crucial resource for patients attending RVEEH, offering guidance and referrals to rehabilitation and community support services following a vision impairment diagnosis. Since starting in the RVEEH in March 2024, the ECLO has received 296 referrals from the MDT to the ECLO Service. Of these, 88% went on to receive support from Vision Ireland ranging from counselling support, low vision aids, mobility training, assistive technology training, and advice on benefits and entitlements. Several training sessions were carried out for staff in orientation and mobility training to help assist patients with sight loss and help staff understand their reality by walking in the shoes of the patients during interactive sessions. This training was conducted by the ECLO who acts as an essential link between medical/nursing services given in clinic and support services in the community.



# Research, Audit and Publications

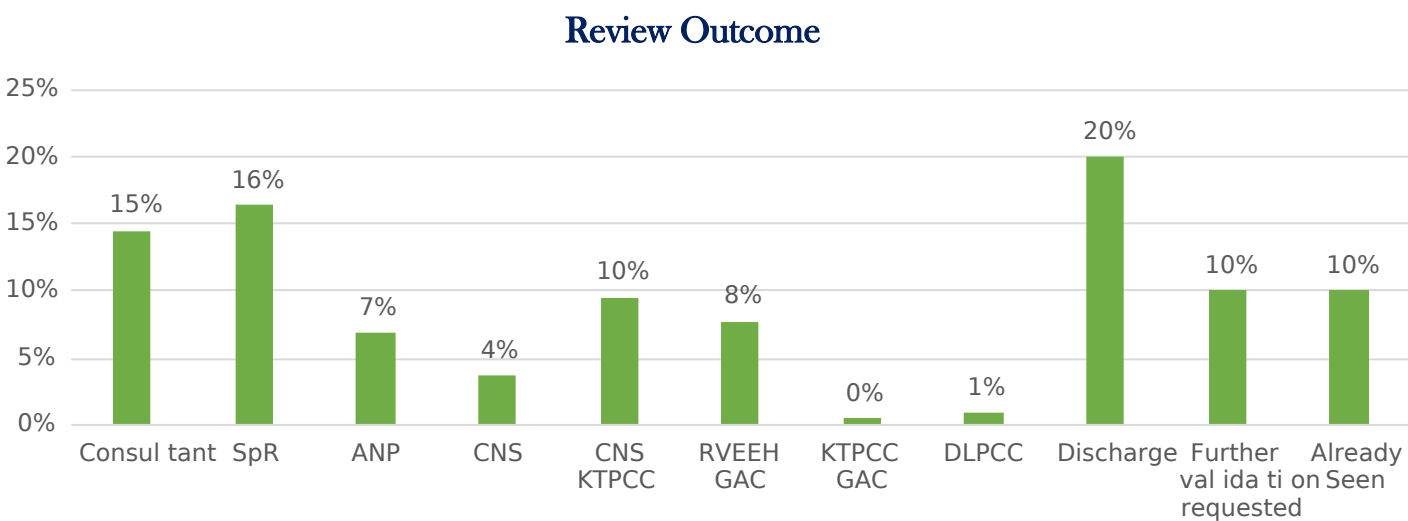
An audit titled ‘Comparison of Self-Referrals via Telehealth and GP Referrals for Minor Ophthalmic Emergencies’ was undertaken by ANP Barbara Lewandowska & Staff Nurse Merin Thomas from the 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 to evaluate the distribution of minor ophthalmic emergency cases, specifically chalazion/stye, dry eye, conjunctivitis, and blepharitis, among patients who self-referred via telehealth and those referred by GPs. The purpose was to compare the referral pathways and assess the suitability of these cases for a new virtual clinic service for minor ophthalmic emergencies.



Minor Ophthalmic Emergencies accounted for 18.2% (98/539) of the total ophthalmic emergency cases during the audit period. Self-Referrals for Minor Ophthalmic Emergencies make up 19.5% (55/282) of all telehealth cases, while GP Referrals for Minor Ophthalmic Emergencies constitute 16.7% (43/257) of all GP referrals. Given the nature of conditions like chalazion/stye, dry eye, conjunctivitis, and blepharitis, it is likely that many of the 98 minor ophthalmic emergency cases could be managed in a virtual clinic. There is potential to reduce In-Person visits as 55 self-referrals via telehealth were prime candidates for remote management. Additionally, a percentage of GP referrals could also be handled virtually, further optimizing resources. There is potential to encourage more patients to use telehealth for minor ophthalmic conditions by increasing awareness and accessibility of the virtual clinic service.

# Research, Audit and Publications

The ANP Glaucoma and Ms Doyle (Consultant Ophthalmologist) carried out 220 Chart Reviews of Long Waiter Patients. This group of long waiters last had an appointment in the time between May 2018 and Aug 2022. All patients were either allocated to appropriate glaucoma clinic for review, required further validation or were discharged. The graph below demonstrates the value of established multidisciplinary pathways ensuring the right patient is seen by the right team member.



In collaboration with the Director of Nursing, the CNS Glaucoma was also part of the HSE's "Good News Story," which aimed to highlight the positive development of a pilot integrated CNS service in the community. This initiative broadened the scope of nursing, allowed patients to receive care closer to home, and resulted in a significant positive impact on their experience.

Press release

## HSE shared care ophthalmology service protecting people’s sight

Published: 28 November 2024

[Copy link to page](#)

Nursing services at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital (RVEEH), Dublin, are improving access to integrated eye care for patients, protecting people’s eyesight while reducing waiting times for ophthalmology services by managing stable chronic patients in a controlled environment.

The HSE is highlighting key figures from the RVEEH nursing services, who managed 13,762 ophthalmology patient visits independently and 908 patient visits as part of a shared care clinic in 2023, an increase of 217% from 2019.

The eye conditions managed include some of the main causes of blindness in Ireland, such as age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and cataracts with nursing also supporting ocular emergency, cornea and oncology patients.

# Research, Audit and Publications



Specialist Nurses from the Macular Treatment Centre Staff won the poster competition at the AONI Conference in Cork. The poster represented the nurse-led intravitreal injection services provided at the RVEEH.

## NURSE-LED SERVICE IN INTRAVITREAL INJECTIONS: INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY IN OPHTHALMIC CARE

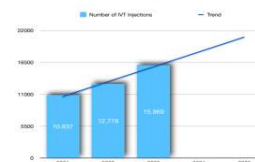
**Marjorie Taleon, Colette O'Sullivan, Carlos Barbera-Miron**  
Macular Treatment Centre, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital  
marjorie.taleon@rveeh.ie / colette.osullivan@rveeh.ie / carlos.barbera@rveeh.ie



### Introduction

Nursing is a key enabler to service reform (NMA2023, 2023). The National Coalition for Vision Health in Ireland (2017) reports that as retinal conditions rise with an aging population, pressure on services and medical staff increases. Timely treatment is crucial for preserving patients' vision, quality of life, and independence.

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is one of the leading causes of blindness in individuals over 50 years old worldwide (WHO, 2023). Patients suffering from this condition need treatment that involves injecting drugs called 'Anti-Vascular Endothelial Growth Factors' into the affected eye, also called intravitreal injection. In 90% of cases, treatment can stabilise or improve vision (Fogh et al. 2018).



### Aim

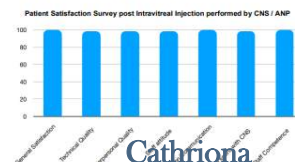
This study evaluates the efficacy and safety of intravitreal eye injections administered by trained ophthalmic nurses, a role traditionally performed by medical staffs in Ireland. Ophthalmic trained nurses delivering injections in a familiar environment enhance patient satisfaction and improve access to care.

### Methods

Involves comparing injection outcomes, including infection rates, patient comfort, and procedural accuracy, with those treated by medical staff.

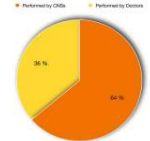
Data was collected through patient surveys and clinical assessments of 100 patients that had been injected by the ophthalmic nurse specialists (CNS) / nurse practitioner (ANP). Data was gathered over a period of one year.

Each nurse injector maintains a log of the patient details and number of injections administered per session. This practice is implemented to uphold competence and to monitor patients for any potential complications.



### Results

- No significant differences in infection rates or complications between the groups treated by medical staffs and those treated by nurses.
- Patient satisfaction surveys indicated high levels of comfort and trust in nurse-administered injections.
- Ophthalmic trained nurses now deliver 64% of the total injections performed in the hospital.



Endophthalmitis is a bacterial or fungal infection of the inside of the eye. It is a serious complication that necessitates urgent attention to prevent permanent vision loss (Zogalayan, 2022).

In 2023, 2 cases of endophthalmitis were observed from 15,969 intravitreal injections performed.

This means the prevalence of endophthalmitis following intravitreal injections in MTC was **0.01%**. This is notably low compared to incidences reported in studies conducted at other centres.

### Discussion

The nurse injectors in Macular Treatment Centre (MTC) play a crucial role in the medical retina service. Expanding the role of ophthalmic nurses showcases a team-based approach to enhancing care capacity.

Initially, ANP has been administering IVT injections since 2017, and two CNS injectors began their work in MTC in 2020. The team has since expanded to four CNS injectors in response to the increasing patient volume, with plans for further team expansion as patient numbers continue to rise.

The nurse injectors have demonstrated an innovative approach in addressing the complex needs of patients with retinal conditions who require IVT treatment. The increasing demand from patients has placed additional pressure on service delivery and treatment timelines.

However, effective management by the team and nurse injectors has successfully expanded the service's capacity, enabling more patients to receive treatment. As a result, doctors can continue assessing patients or fulfil duties in other departments where their presence is needed.

In 2023, 15,969 procedures were performed in MTC, representing an increase of approximately 25% compared to 2022 and 47% compared to 2021. The number of patients requiring intravitreal injections is steadily rising each year. Based on the observed trend since the MTC opened in 2021, it is projected that the number of IVT cases in 2025 will reach around 22,000.

### Conclusion

The study concludes that with competency-based training, nurses can safely and effectively perform intravitreal injections. Nurse-led injection services play a crucial role in preventing blindness by providing timely treatment and help reduce waiting lists.

Competency maintenance ensures medical capacity and provides a model that can be delivered in the community providing a standardized integrated team approach to safe patient care.



Irish College of Ophthalmologists  
Eye Doctors of Ireland » Protecting your Vision

### Eye Care in Focus

CONFERENCE 2024

October 1, 2024 - 8am - 4pm  
The Gibson Hotel, North Wall Quay, Dublin 1

**Clinical Education Conference for the  
Extended Eye Care Team**

View programme and register at [www.eyedoctors.ie](http://www.eyedoctors.ie)

**National Clinical Programme in Ophthalmology**

### SPEAKERS



**Developing the Eye Care  
Strategy: where to next?**  
Ms Aoife Doyle  
Ophthalmologist, Royal Victoria  
Eye and Ear Hospital and  
St James's Hospital, Dublin  
National Clinical Lead for  
Ophthalmology



**Orthoptics within the  
Public Health Service: the  
challenges and opportunities**  
Ms Sarah Spain  
Senior Orthoptist, Roscommon  
Primary Care Services; HSCP Lead  
for the National Clinical  
Programme for Ophthalmology



**Supporting and Developing  
the Role of Nursing and  
Ophthalmic Technician**  
Ms Cathriona Ennis  
Director of Nursing,  
Royal Victoria Eye and Ear  
Hospital, Dublin

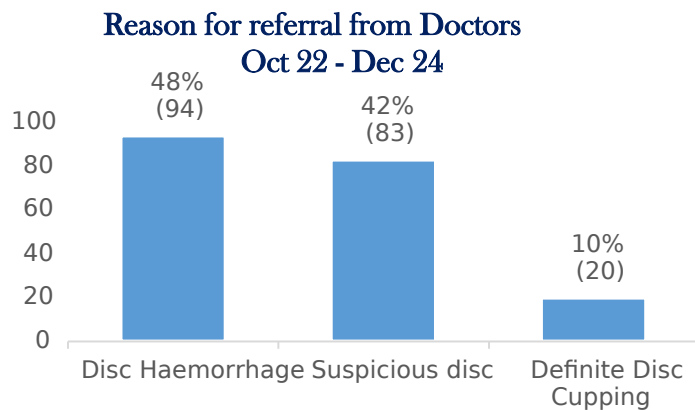
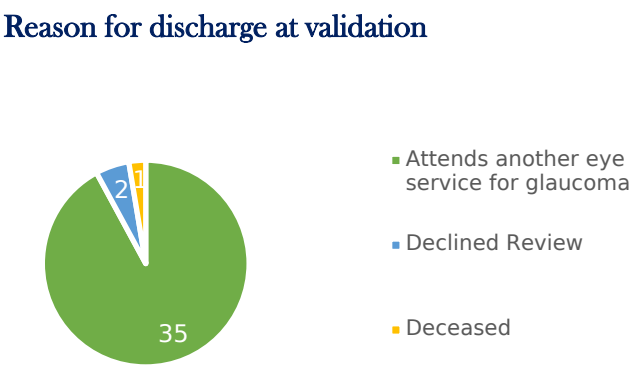
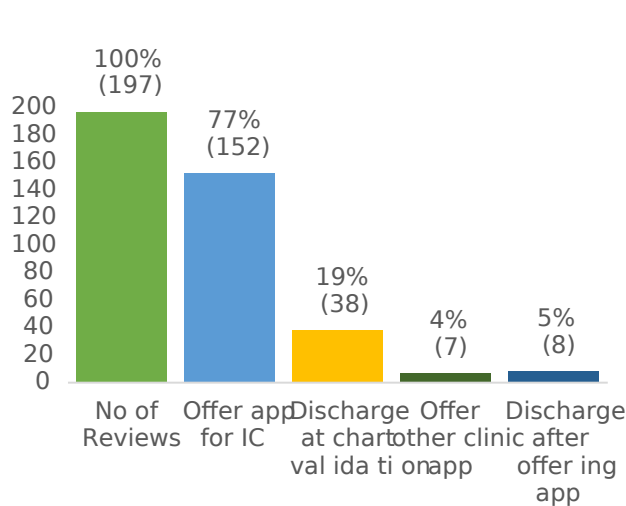
Cathriona Ennis presented at the Irish College of Integrated Healthcare: Advancing Health Service Reform Conference

Ophthalmologists conference

to explain how developing and supporting Nursing can be a key enabler to service reform as our health service moves towards an integrated team approach.

# Research, Audit and Publications

In response to high DNA and discharge rates in early 2024, the ANP conducted a Patient Validation Audit at the Glaucoma Imaging Clinic before scheduling new appointments. Of the 197 referrals reviewed between July and December, some patients were already under glaucoma care elsewhere, declined further attendance, or were found to be deceased. Patients who couldn't be contacted were still offered appointments, resulting in a 5% discharge rate post-offer.



Validation outcomes showed that 24% of referrals were discharged either during validation or before their scheduled appointment, due to patients attending another glaucoma service, declining review, or being deceased.

## Research, Audit and Publications

In 2024, 51% of patients who were reviewed virtually were redirected to more appropriate clinics within the glaucoma service, either at RVEEH or within integrated community care. The overall clinic slot utilisation rate was 90%, despite a 17% DNA rate and an estimated 15% cancellation rate, which attributed to unfilled slots on the day of the clinic. Appointment staff confirmed that all clinics were initially filled from the waiting list, and formal recording of the CNA rate only began in August 2024.

These outcomes, along with the impact of refined referral criteria and patient validation practices, have led to further planned changes for 2025. Visual field testing, using the 24-2 SITA FASTER strategy, will be reintroduced for all patients to ensure that only those requiring ongoing monitoring remain within the glaucoma service. Clinic capacity will be limited to five slots per session, and nursing staff will be responsible for recording patients' medical histories and medication lists.

Additionally, the imaging clinic will begin reviewing low-risk referrals from optometrists, with outcomes monitored to assess the effectiveness of this approach. A proposal will also be drafted for submission to the DRS, recommending that patients' ophthalmic histories be considered to optimise clinic slot utilisation.

# Plan for the Year Ahead

## Waiting List Action Plan (WLAP) 2025 – Pillars, Targets & Budget

WLAP 2025 is built upon three pillars, with four main performance targets shifting focus from Waiting List Volumes to Waiting List Times

WLAP 2025 – Three Pillars		WLAP 2025 – Four Targets	
1	Delivering Capacity	<b>1. Sláintecare Wait Time Targets</b> <b>OPD:</b> 50% of patients waiting < 10 weeks for care by end 2025 <b>IPDC / GI Scope:</b> 50% of patients waiting < 12 weeks for care by end 2025	
2	Reforming Scheduled Care	<b>2. Weighted Average Wait Time</b> <b>OPD:</b> 5.5 months by end 2025 <b>IPDC / GI Scope:</b> 5.5 months by end 2025	
3	Enabling Scheduled Care Reform (eHealth / HSE.ie / HPVP)	<b>3. % of Patients Waiting Less than 12 Months for Care</b> <b>OPD:</b> 90% of patients waiting < 12 months for care by end 2025	
		<b>4. Number of Patients Waiting the Longest for Care</b> <b>OPD:</b> 90% reduction in the number of patients waiting > 24 Months for care or at risk by end year <b>IPDC / GI Scope:</b> 90% reduction in the number of patients waiting > 24 Months for care or at risk by end year	

❖ Nursing is a key enabler to service reform. Impacting on access to care is a key priority for Nursing in 2025 in line with national targets and Slainte care.

❖ Continue to showcase our profession.

❖ Take ophthalmic nursing to the community.

❖ Pilot Virtual ANP minor ophthalmic emergency clinic in Emergency Department.

❖ Continue to move towards full Electronic Medical Records and electronic rostering.

❖ Continue to use digital, virtual, and automated process engineering solutions to streamline efficiencies.

## Plan for the Year Ahead

- ❖ Realign Nursing Directorate in preparation for safer staffing and integrated care posts.
- ❖ HCA due to qualify as a Paediatric & General Nurse in January 2025 through the HSE sponsorship programme, with a 5-year commitment to RVEEH.
- ❖ Continue to restructure School of Nursing to support growth, service reform and key challenges.
- ❖ Workforce planning includes rescoping CNS roles and progressing business cases for specialist posts in Uveitis, Vitreoretinal, Genetics, and Research.
- ❖ Plan for services delivered at Seamark, SVUH.
- ❖ Facilitate training and upskilling in YAG laser (currently only conducted by medics) through funding secured by the ANP Glaucoma via Spark innovation in 2025.
- ❖ Health promotion.
- ❖ Drive the sustainability agenda with a 2nd green theatre.
- ❖ Continue to focus on initiatives to support staff retention, health and wellbeing.

## Conclusion

Understanding both the current and future state of our services, as well as the population we serve, is essential to delivering high-quality nursing care. As the only organisation in Ireland offering every ophthalmology sub-speciality under one roof, RVEEH provides exceptional opportunities for professional development.

Nursing is truly thriving at RVEEH, thanks to the unwavering support of our School of Nursing, medical colleagues, Clinical Director Mr Donal Brosnahan, hospital management group, hospital council and our Regional Director of Nursing Mr Paul Gallagher.

We are informed, committed, and well-prepared to meet the challenges ahead. We believe that our nursing profession will continue to play a vital role in achieving our corporate objectives by placing people, patients, and staff at the heart of every decision and service design.

We are proud to demonstrate our impact through evidence-based outcomes and remain deeply grateful to all our nursing teams for their ongoing support, dedication, and excellence in care.



## Staff Appreciation and International Nurses Day





## Evolution and Progress Nursing Achievements in RVEEH

Ms Diana Malata, Ms Cathriona Ennis, Ms Sabrina Kelly, Ms Jo Kearney,  
Ms Ann O'Sullivan, Ms Lorraine O'Sullivan, Ms Ciara Liston, Ms Michelle Riglar

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 was recognised by the Irish General Nursing Council for nurse training	1
1947	Ms Crowley became Director of Nursing Studies	1
1948	Ms Crowley established the ophthalmic nurse training school in RVEEH, the first in Ireland	1
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	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
2000	The first full-time Infection Control Specialist role was established.	
2005	Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) in Ophthalmology ED (Emergency Department) and CNS in ENT ED appointed to reduce patient waiting times 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	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. RVEEH Nurse tutor/Practice course coordinator, Ms Sabrina Kelly was appointed Honorary Clinical Lecturer in RCSI in 2016, 2019 & 2022 in recognition to her contribution to nurse education Nurse-led Medical Retina clinic was set up. 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	Nurse-led post cataract clinic was set-up A dedicated stand-alone Cataract Unit was established and opened to meet the growing demand for cataract surgery that could not be met within the existing Eye Theatres. This stand-alone Unit looks after patients from admission to surgery to discharge.	
2018	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.	
2019	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 Thea Pamex 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	ANP Glaucoma appointed to manage stable complex glaucoma. In response to Covid-19, drive through set up in Citywest saw patients having their intraocular pressure checked by nurses in the comfort of their car using digital platform to risk assess glaucoma patients remotely. 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	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. One of our team Ms. Rose Reynolds was involved in developing a national foundation education module in Critical care Nursing RCSI as a direct result of her experience in ICU SVUH. Nursing lead a vaccination team which was formed and mobilized within 48 hours to the community to vaccinate 704 vulnerable patients & staff in 6 nursing homes over a 6 day period in the height of Covid-19. RVEEH & CHO staff were also vaccinated with 1,973 vaccines in total being administered. ENT Liaison Nurse Specialist was appointed. Fellowship of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery (FFNMRCI) by examination was awarded to Ms. Diana Malata ANP.	
2022	CNS in Oculoplastic was appointed.	
2023	Ms Colette O'Sullivan qualified as Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Medical Retina.	
2024	Fellowship of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery (FFNMRCI) by examination was awarded to Ms Ciara Liston ANP Proof of concept pilot study to develop a pathway for 1 * integrated CNS post conducted in collaboration with CHO 7 broadening the scope of clinical nurse specialist using competency based training to meet the needs of the community.	

### References

1. Crookes G (1993) Dublin's Eye and Ear, The Making of the Monument;
2. McAuliffe Curtin D (1990) History of Certificate in Ophthalmology Nursing (1948-1990) in Eye & Ear Hospital, Dublin Address to Faculty of Nursing, RCSI (Dublin)