



Recommended Reading

Irish College of GPs Library

Welcome to the January/February issue of Recommended Reading.

Every month, the library scan resources of interest to General Practice and recommends reports and research articles from reputable sources. Previously published issues are available on our website <https://www.irishcollegeofgps.ie/Home/Clinical-Hub/Publications-and-Journals/Evidence-Based-Resources>. We welcome any feedback or comments which can be emailed directly to library@icgp.ie.

Inside this issue:

College News & Publications	GPs In the News	Latest from the Department of Health	Key Health Reports
Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) Round-up	Spotlight on Irish Articles	Spotlight on Research Articles	Top Tip



College News & Publications



Forum February 2026

Reshaping the future in GP Training

Blood Tests in General Practice: Smarter Use for Better Care (January 2026)

Authors: Sean Montague, Paul Nolan, Patricia Patton, Caroline McCarthy, Suzanne Kelly, Raj Rajpal, Emer O'Brien

This *Practice Points* document is designed to assist Irish GPs in the effective and judicious use of blood tests in general practice.

Cancer Survivorship: General Practice Update (January 2026)

Authors: Caroline Burke, Emma Wallace

This GPU outlines longer-term health considerations for people living with and beyond cancer, with a particular focus on breast and prostate cancer.

Recent contributions to medical literature by Irish College of GP's affiliated researchers:

1. **A feasibility study of the use of a patient leaflet for respiratory tract infection consultations in general practice in Ireland.** *Antimicrob Steward Healthc Epidemiol.* 2025 Dec 22;6(1):e5. doi: 10.1017/ash.2025.10253.
College Affiliation: Dr Scott Walkin.

[🔗 Read Article](#)

2. **A quantitative study of general practitioners' experience and confidence with subdermal contraceptive implant devices.** *Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod Biol.* 2026 Jan 14;318:114967. doi: 10.1016/j.ejogrb.2026.114967.

College Affiliation: Louise Fitzgerald.

[🔗 Read Abstract](#)



Guidance for GPs

HSE Incident Management Framework (IMF) and Open Disclosure Audit tools

Designed as a self-assessment tool, this may be used for peer-to-peer audits or by external agencies to provide assurance that incident management principles are embedded in practice.

The audit aims to ensure that the six key principles of the IMF are applied in incident management:

- ➔ Person-Centred: Prioritise the needs of service users and staff throughout the review process.
- ➔ Fair and Just: Treat all affected parties fairly and embedding a Just culture.
- ➔ Open and Transparent: Keep all parties informed in line with the Open Disclosure Policy.
- ➔ Responsive: Act timely and proportionately following an incident.
- ➔ Improvement-Focused: View incidents as opportunities to improve.
- ➔ Learning: Promote learning locally and across the wider service.

This new tool:

🔗 supports staff and services in implementing and complying with the IMF and Open Disclosure policy.

🔗 aims to ensure that key principles of the IMF is applied to incident management.

🔗 highlights areas of improvement and corresponding action plans.

[🔗 Access Audit Tools](#)

HSE Sharing information with Service Users

Under the GDPR, service users have the right to request access to their personal data including their medical information. When a service user requests to see or get a copy of their personal information in a care setting, healthcare workers should facilitate this where possible.

[🔗 Read Guidance](#)



GPs In the News: What's making headlines?

- 🔗 **Medical Independent, 23 Dec 2025**
[Minister publishes paper on future health and social care workforce](#)
- 🔗 **Medical Independent, 8 Jan 2026**
[GP Winter Agreement eases pressure on out-of-hours services](#)
- 🔗 **The Irish Times, 8 Jan 2026**
[Breastfeeding linked with reduced risk of depression and anxiety for mothers, study suggests](#)
- 🔗 **The Irish Times, 13 Jan 2026**
['It's often not right': Dr AI unlikely to replace GPs any time soon](#)

- 🔗 [The Anton Savage Show, 17 Jan 2026](#)
[Trump's claim that paracetamol causes autism debunked](#)
- 🔗 [The Irish Examiner, 23 Jan 2026](#)
[HSE's free contraception scheme 'should be expanded'](#)
- 🔗 [Medical Independent, 23 Jan 2026](#)
[Study calls for system-wide reform to tackle GP workforce crisis](#)
- 🔗 [Medical independent, 23 Jan 2026](#)
[Changing GP work patterns and the implications for medical workforce planning](#)
- 🔗 [The Irish Times, 26 Jan 2026](#)
[Recent guidelines on weight-loss drugs are a 'groundbreaking' shift in obesity treatment](#)

🏥 Latest from the Department of Health

Press Release, 23 Dec 2025

[Minister for Health publishes paper on Ireland's Future Health and Social Care Workforce](#)



An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health

Press Release, 26 Dec 2025

[Ireland Tops EU for Self-Reported Good Health](#)

Press Release, 5 Jan 2026

[Minister for Health welcomes increase in HSE Health app usage as registrations pass 125,000](#)

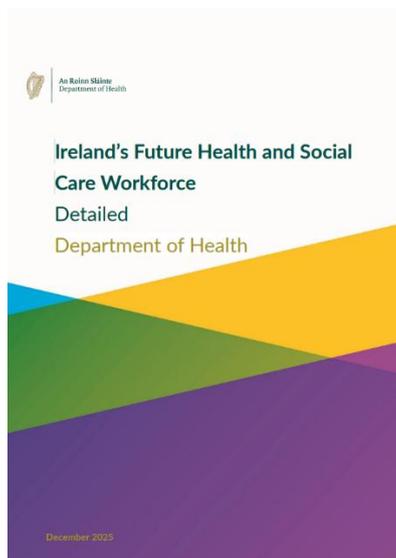
Press Release, 8 Jan 2026

[Minister for Mental Health Mary Butler announces €3 million investment in mental health research](#)

Press Release, 26 Jan 2026

[94% of Community Pharmacies sign up for the new Common Conditions Service](#)

📄 Key Health Reports



Ireland's Future Health and Social Care Workforce

This strategic planning report, published by the Department of Health (December 2025), sets out how Ireland must expand and reshape its health and social care workforce over the next 15 years (to 2040) to meet growing demand. The report finds that population growth, rapid ageing, rising chronic disease, and high reliance on internationally trained staff mean Ireland will face significant workforce shortages across most health and social care professions if current trends continue. Demand will grow, general practice will be central to the system, and Ireland must urgently expand, support, and redesign GP services if that role is to be sustainable.

🔗 [Read Report](#)

 **Key messages:*****1. Demand for GP care will rise significantly***

GP workload is expected to increase steadily to 2040, driven mainly by population growth, population ageing, and rising chronic disease. Older patients will account for a disproportionate share of consultations, with more complex and long-term care needs.

2. Ireland faces a GP supply shortfall without intervention

The modelling shows that current training, recruitment, and retention patterns will not be enough to meet future demand for GP services. Without reform, GP shortages are expected to persist or worsen, particularly in some regions and deprived areas.

3. General practice is central to Sláintecare

The report positions general practice as core to health system reform, with a strong emphasis on:

- “Shift left” from hospitals to primary and community care
- Managing more care in the community
- Improving access and continuity for patients

This means GPs will be expected to do more, but within redesigned, better-supported models of care.

4. Expansion of GP training places is essential

A key recommendation is a significant expansion of undergraduate and postgraduate GP training capacity, supported by a whole-of-government approach involving health, education, and public expenditure.

5. Retention is as important as recruitment

The report highlights that keeping existing GPs in practice is critical. It explicitly points to:

- Workload pressure
- Burnout
- Contractual and organisational issues

Addressing these is seen as essential to stabilising GP numbers, not just increasing trainee intake.

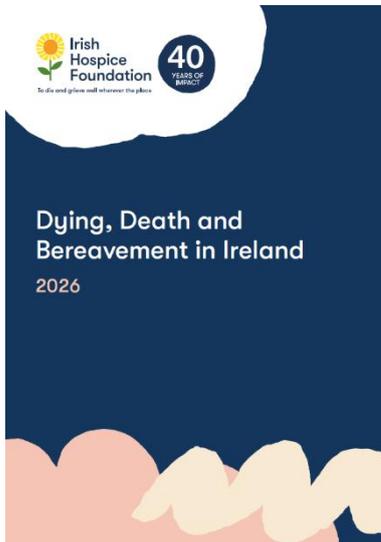
6. Greater multidisciplinary support in general practice

Future GP care is expected to be delivered through larger, multidisciplinary primary care teams, with expanded roles for nurses, pharmacists, and allied health professionals. This is intended to:

- Reduce pressure on GPs
- Allow GPs to focus on complex clinical care
- Improve patient access and integration.

7. Less reliance on internationally trained GPs

Ireland's high dependence on internationally educated doctors is identified as a strategic risk, given global workforce shortages. The report signals a move toward greater domestic self-sufficiency in GP supply over time.



Dying, Death and Bereavement in Ireland 2026

Irish Hospice Foundation has produced this report on Dying, Death and Bereavement in Ireland 2026 to provide an overview of how Ireland experiences, addresses and responds to issues surrounding end-of-life and bereavement care. To improve these experiences, we need to know where we currently stand.

The report brings together national and international research and data to examine the current realities of dying, death and bereavement in Ireland, revealing emerging trends in these areas, highlighting concerns, and actions and recommendations that will deliver improvements.

[Read Report](#)

Key Findings:

- ❖ Ireland is facing a significant demographic shift, with the population aged over 65 expected to double to more than 1.5 million by 2046. While currently around 35,000 people die in Ireland each year, this is expected to grow to 49,000 by 2046. As a result, the annual number of deaths is projected to rise substantially, increasing pressure on end-of-life and bereavement services.
- ❖ Communication around dying is a major concern. Two-thirds of bereaved people reported that their loved one had not been informed by a medical professional that death was likely. This lack of timely communication limited opportunities for advance planning and left families unprepared for imminent loss.
- ❖ Demand for palliative care is set to grow sharply, with deaths requiring general or specialist palliative care expected to increase by 57% over the next 20 years. At the same time, gaps in out-of-hours end-of-life support appear to be contributing to avoidable emergency department attendance, with nearly 5,500 people dying in or enroute to emergency departments between 2019 and 2023.
- ❖ There is currently no statutory right to bereavement leave in Ireland, which means that employers have no legal obligation to offer time off to employees who have lost a loved one. IHF research indicated that two out of three people who were recently bereaved were in employment and more than half of people surveyed changed their working arrangement following a loss.

The Prevalence of Dementia in Europe 2025



The Prevalence of Dementia in Europe 2025

Alzheimer Europe has launched The Prevalence of Dementia in Europe 2025, a report presenting updated prevalence figures for people living with dementia across Europe.

[Read Report](#)

Key Findings:

⌘ **More than 12 million people in Europe already live with dementia**

As Europe's population ages, dementia cases are projected to rise by nearly two-thirds by 2050.

⌘ **Women are disproportionately affected, accounting for about two-thirds of all dementia cases**

The gap widens at older ages as women live longer, but dementia affects women and men differently, with distinct impacts on families and services. At the same time, dementia among older men is rising, with higher prevalence in men aged 70+ than in 2019.

⌘ **Three countries alone will have over 7 million cases by 2050**

Germany: 2.7 million **France:** 2.3 million **Italy:** 2.2 million

Over one-third of Europe's dementia cases will be concentrated in just three countries.

⌘ **Dementia prevalence doubles every ~5–10 years after age 65**

Approximately affecting: **65–69:** 1% **75–79:** 7–8% **80–84:** 11–13% **90+:** up to 45%

Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) Round-up

January 2026 Therapeutics Today

This monthly newsletter is produced by the National Medicines Information Centre (NMIC) who are based in St James's Hospital. Evidence-based information is provided to prescribers to promote the safe, effective and efficient use of medicines.



TRIP Database: Evidence for Primary Care

A monthly summary of some of the most important new documents for primary care that have recently been added to the Trip Database.

BJGP Life: Episode 221: BJGP Top 10 research most read and published in 2025

This is a round table discussion with the editorial team of Sam Merriel, Tom Round and Nada Khan about the collection of the BJGP's top 10 research most read and published in 2025.

Many Faces of Alzheimer's Podcast

Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) has launched a groundbreaking 12-part podcast series exploring dementia through a powerful mix of patient experiences and expert insight. Hosted by Fionnuala Sweeney, the series features interviews with people living with memory difficulties alongside leading specialists from TUH's Institute of Memory & Cognition.

Spotlight on Irish Articles

- 1. Navigating the benefits and harms of GLP-1 and GLP-1/GIP agonists in obesity.**
O'Connor R., *Drug Ther Bull.* 2026 Jan 28;64(2):19-23. doi: 10.1136/dtb.2025.000039.
 [Read Full Text](#)
- 2. General practitioners' experiences of managing low back pain in primary care in Ireland.**
Mc Auliffe et al., *PLoS One.* 2025 Dec 22;20(12):e0339053. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0339053.
 [Read Full Text](#)
- 3. Interventions to improve adherence to clinical practice guidelines when treating cardiovascular disease.**
McErlean et al., *Ir J Med Sci.* 2025 Dec;194(6):2047-2077. doi: 10.1007/s11845-025-04057-5.
 [Read Full Text](#)
- 4. The role of general practitioners in dementia diagnosis.**
Cronin et al., *Fam Pract.* 2025 Dec 9;43(1):cmf103. doi: 10.1093/fampra/cmf103.
 [Read Full Text](#)
- 5. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) notifications and trends in the transmission cycles from infants and young children to older adults in Ireland.**
Philip et al., *BMJ Open.* 2026 Jan 13;16(1):e107050. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2025-107050.
 [Read Full Text](#)

Spotlight on Research Articles

- 1. Prenatal paracetamol exposure and child neurodevelopment: a systematic review and meta-analysis**
D'Antonio, Francesco et al., *The Lancet Obstetrics, Gynaecology, & Women's Health, Volume 0, Issue 0.*
 [Read Full Text](#)
- 2. Factors Associated With Hormone Replacement Therapy Use: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.**
Mtika et al., *BJOG.* 2026 Jan 22. doi: 10.1111/1471-0528.70160.
 [Read Full Text](#)
- 3. From consensus to action: Implementing cardiovascular prevention guidelines in primary healthcare.**
Kurpas et al., *Adv Clin Exp Med.* 2026 Jan;35(1):5-10. doi: 10.17219/acem/213742.

 [Read Full-Text](#)

4. Continuity of primary care and end-of-life care costs in dementia.

Leniz et al., *Br J Gen Pract.* 2026 Jan 30;76(763):e116-e123. doi: 10.3399/BJGP.2025.0218.

 [Read Full-Text](#)

 **Top Tip from the Library – BMJ’s 10-Minute Consultation**

- ✓ *BMJ’s 10-minute consultation* series are education articles orientated chiefly at primary care and explicitly aim to outline what a GP should cover in a time-limited consultation.
- ✓ While guidelines describe the recommended management of a limited number of specific diseases, *10-minute consultation* articles are generally themed around a presenting sign, symptom or concern that prompts a patient to seek medical assessment.
- ✓ Typically authored by GPs alongside specialists and spanning a broad range of topics, *10-minute consultations* constitute a valuable corpus of contemporaneously recommended practice by clinical peers.

Recommended by one of the MintFM trainees Malaysia C2025

Click here to access: [BMJ 10-Minute Consultation](#)

This newsletter has been provided for informational use only. Every effort has been made to ensure that this information is correct and is prepared from the best available resources at our disposal at the time of issue. However, the College Library and Information Service cannot assume liability for any inaccuracies in the sources used or cited. It is the responsibility of the reader to determine the accuracy, validity and interpretation of the material listed.