



**An Roinn Sláinte**  
Department of Health

**Annual Report 2018**

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## INTRODUCTION BY THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH SIMON HARRIS

I welcome the publication of the Department's Annual Report for 2018.

2018 saw the commencement of great change to how health services are delivered in this country. Our population is changing rapidly, bringing with it changing healthcare needs. Like other countries, the Irish health system needs to radically change if it is to properly meet the health needs of the population. There is overwhelming consensus that a transformation is needed in the way we deliver care and that this must be planned, managed and delivered within a coherent system wide reform programme.

Built on political consensus, Sláintecare is a ten-year programme to transform our health and social care services. The Sláintecare Report set out a vision for the future of healthcare over a ten-year period, and in 2018 the Government made substantial progress in turning this vision into reality with the publication of the Sláintecare Implementation Strategy. The HSE will also assist in the implementation of Sláintecare and an important step was the appointment of Mr Ciarán Devane as the designated Chair of the HSE Board in September 2018.

The quality of the services provided to our citizens is important and it is essential that trust is placed in the services provided. The second National Patient Experience Survey took place in May and saw a response rate of 50% of hospital in-patients sharing their views. Over 80% of respondents reported that they had either a good or very good experience of the services provided. Additionally, a contract for the new independent Patient Safety Advocacy Service was awarded before the end of the year. This service will assist those wishing to access support in their engagement with the public health service.

In 2018 we invested significantly in our primary care infrastructure providing modern well-equipped Primary Care Centres, which support the delivery of a wider range of integrated primary care services. At the end of 2018, 126 Primary Care Centres were operational with a further eight expected to become operational throughout 2019.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Department's officials and my colleagues, Finian McGrath TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Disabilities, Catherine Byrne TD, Minister of State for Health Promotion and the National Drugs Strategy, and Jim Daly TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Mental Health and Older People, all of whom contributed greatly to the achievements of the Department during 2018.



Simon Harris TD  
Minister for Health

## FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

2018 was another busy year for the Department of Health in our role serving the citizens of Ireland, the Minister and Ministers of State of the Department and the Government.

Alongside a significant programme of policy development, the Department prepared 49 Statutory Instruments and dealt with almost 11,500 Parliamentary Questions and 480 Freedom of Information requests. Our growing legislative output saw 8 new pieces of primary legislation enacted and 9 bills published. This included the drafting and enactment of the Thirty-sixth Amendment to the Constitution Act 2018 and following the Constitutional Referendum, the drafting and enactment of the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018.

The Sláintecare Implementation Strategy was published in August 2018 and provides the framework for a system-wide reform programme. Sláintecare sets out the direction of health services for the next ten years and the actions necessary in the first three years of the Sláintecare implementation process. This system-wide reform process commenced in 2018 with the appointment of an Executive Director in September 2018 to lead the newly established Sláintecare Programme Implementation Office which is tasked with leading and driving health and social care reform. Ensuring that Brexit causes minimum disruption to health services and that essential services are maintained on a cross-border, all-island and Ireland-UK basis was a key priority of the Department of Health and the health sector throughout 2018. Extensive Brexit planning was undertaken to ensure that the health sector is prepared, to the greatest extent possible, for any adverse impacts as a result of Brexit.

In addition to this workload, a very significant change occurred in the Department of Health; the move of our headquarters from Hawkins House to the new location of Miesian Plaza on Baggot Street. The transition to our new location happened without interruption to our work output and I commend all involved.

The Department was also faced with many challenges over the course of the year, not least the response to issues arising under the HSE's CervicalCheck Programme, budgetary issues within the HSE and the escalation in the costs of the new Children's Hospital, upon each of which considerable work is continuing into the current year.

The Department worked closely with the Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and other Government departments to address the many challenges arising from Brexit.

I would like to thank all the staff of the Department for their hard work and professionalism over the course of a very busy and a very challenging 2018.



**Jim Breslin**  
Secretary General

This annual report for the Department of Health 2018 outlines achievements and areas where significant progress was made against the objectives outlined in the Statement of Strategy 2016 - 2019.

## THE DEPARTMENT'S MISSION

The mission of the Department of Health is to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Ireland by:

- keeping people healthy;
- providing the healthcare people need;
- delivering high quality services; and
- getting the best value from health system resources.

## ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT

The role of the Department of Health is to provide strategic leadership for the health service and to ensure that Government policies are translated into actions and implemented effectively. We support the Minister and Ministers of State in the implementation of Government policy and in discharging their governmental, parliamentary and Departmental duties.

This includes:

- providing leadership and policy direction for the health sector to improve health outcomes
- strengthening the functions surrounding governance and performance oversight of the HSE and agencies ensuring accountable and high-quality services
- developing a focus on collaboration to achieve health priorities and contribute to wider social and economic goals
- providing an organisational environment where high performance is achieved, collaborative working is valued and the knowledge and skills of staff are developed.

## STATEMENT OF STRATEGY

### Strategic Objectives:

The 5 strategic objectives set out in the Statement of Strategy 2016-2019 are:

1. Support people to lead healthy and independent lives
2. Ensure the delivery of high quality and safe health and social care
3. Create a more responsive, integrated and people-centred health and social care service
4. Promote effective and efficient management of the health services
5. Develop a high-performing Department to lead and oversee the health and social care sector.

In the following sections we give details of our achievements and the progress made in 2018 measured against each of our strategic objectives.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: SUPPORT PEOPLE TO LEAD HEALTHY AND INDEPENDENT LIVES

The Department of Health is committed to promoting awareness of the benefits of healthy living and supporting healthy lifestyle changes. The Healthy Ireland Initiative has cross Government support to encourage people to make healthy choices.

The Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework, which will provide a basis for measuring progress on improving the health and wellbeing of the population, was published. The Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework contains an initial set of indicators which includes measures showing the health status of the population, such as smoking and obesity rates, health protection measures such as screening and vaccination, social factors such as educational attainment and poverty, environmental factors such as air quality, and measures of wellbeing. All of these measures taken together give a comprehensive picture of overall societal health and wellbeing, and provide a mechanism by which the impact on population health of relevant policy areas can be assessed in the future. The set of indicators was agreed through collaborative work across Government and with stakeholders and an annual report on progress will be published from 2019.

In September, *Healthy Ireland* sponsored and supported the roll out of a *Get Ireland Walking* Community day in partnership with libraries across the country. As part of *European Week of Sport*, *Healthy Ireland* continued to sponsor the *Great Dublin Bike Ride* supporting it across its social media channels. In November, phase 2 of the *Healthy Ireland At Your Library* initiative was launched in partnership with the Department of Rural Communities and Development, the Local Government Management Agency and 330 libraries.

The 2018 Healthy Ireland Survey report launched in October provides important data on smoking, alcohol, diet and nutrition, baseline attitudes to the new standardised packaging of tobacco, oral health and health service utilisation. The 2018 report shows a continued and welcome downward trend in smoking prevalence (20% are now smokers compared to 23% in 2015). A special additional chapter in the 2018 report has a focus on key health behaviours and inequalities, showing significant differences between those living in the most and the least deprived areas in Ireland.

In 2018, the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine uptake rate was 65%, a significant improvement on 51% in the previous year. In December, the Minister for Health received the evaluation by the Health Information and Quality Authority that the proposed extension of the HPV vaccination programme to boys will be both clinically effective and cost effective and preparation commenced for the extension.

On 1 May 2018, the sugar sweetened drinks tax came into effect.

New voluntary Codes of Practice for the advertising and marketing of food and non-alcoholic drinks were launched in February. The purpose of the Codes, which have been agreed with the food industry, is to ensure that foods high in fat, salt and sugar are marketed in a responsible way. In particular the Codes seek to ensure that children are not exposed to inappropriate marketing, advertising or sponsorship associated with these kinds of food and drink products, and that healthier food choices are actively promoted.

Since September 2018, all cigarettes and all other tobacco products must be sold in plain or standardised packaging in accordance with the Public Health (Standardised Packaging of Tobacco) Act 2015. Dublin was awarded the host city for the 2021 World Conference on Tobacco or Health following a successful campaign led by the Department. It is the premier conference on tobacco related issues and attracts an international audience of approximately 2,500 delegates. The conference has not been held in a European city since 2003.

The Public Health (Alcohol) Bill was signed into law and 23 of the 31 sections of the Act were commenced in November 2018.

Additional funding for drug and alcohol services and social inclusion initiatives allowed for the initiation of enhanced availability and range of drug and alcohol services and improved access to health services for people who are homeless, refugees and asylum seekers.

In May 2018 a public consultation was launched on the possession of illegal drugs for personal use. The consultation sought the views of the public on the effectiveness of the current law and on what alternatives could be considered. The purpose of this public consultation was to inform the deliberations of a Government Working Group set up to examine alternative approaches for personal possession of illegal drugs.

In November 2018, the Department of Health and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government jointly hosted an expert conference, bringing together a variety of stakeholders, on the kind of housing and supports required in the future to further support people to age with dignity in their community. The conference, and the public consultation process that followed, helped to inform a policy framework being jointly developed by the two Departments on housing options for our ageing population.

By the end of December 2018, 155 additional people with disabilities had moved from congregated settings into new purpose-built homes in the community.

### **Capital Investment 2018**

The Department was involved in an extensive negotiation process in order to position the health sector's capital needs within the strategic planning approach underpinning Project Ireland 2040. Project Ireland 2040 comprises two parts, the National Planning Framework which shapes future growth and development in Ireland and the ten-year National Development Plan, which underpins the planning framework with capital investment. The National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan 2018 – 2027 were published in February 2018 and includes an unprecedented capital investment for the public health sector of €10.9 billion over the next ten years.

This €10.9 billion capital funding will provide the support to modernise our health services' infrastructure and will enable reform in the public Health sector, in line with health policies/strategies and the implementation of Sláintecare.

Achievements during 2018 include completion of the mental health unit at University Hospital Galway and also completion of primary care centres in Grangegorman in Dublin and Kilcock, Co. Kildare

Construction work also continued on key health projects and programmes including

- the new Children's Hospital
- the National Programme for Radiation Oncology at Cork, Galway and Dublin
- the new National Forensic Mental Health Service Hospital at Portrane, Co. Dublin
- redeveloping the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
- the Primary Care Centre construction development programme
- the replacement and refurbishment of community nursing units for older people and long-term residential care units and housing in the community for people with disabilities
- the ongoing need for the public health sector to maintain and update buildings and healthcare equipment and ambulances in response to critical clinical risks.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: ENSURE THE DELIVERY OF HIGH QUALITY AND SAFE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

When a person requires health or social services, these services must be of high quality. Some of the developments towards achieving this objective which took place in 2018 are outlined below.

In July, Government approved a General Scheme of a Patient Safety Bill which provides for the mandatory open disclosure of serious reportable patient safety incidents, clinical audit and extension of HIQA's powers to the private sector. The Bill underwent pre-legislative scrutiny at the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Health in September 2018. Drafting of the Bill commenced at the end of 2018.

September 2018 also saw the commencement of Part 4 of the Civil Liability (Amendment) Act and associated Regulations, to provide a framework to support open disclosure in our health services.

The Patient Safety (Licensing) Bill, which will introduce for the first time a regulatory regime for all hospitals in the State, public and private, and certain designated activities that take place outside a hospital setting, was approved by Government in December 2017. The Bill underwent pre-legislative scrutiny at the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Health on 13 June 2018.

Work continued during 2018 to implement *Ireland's National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2017-2020* which was jointly published by the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine in October 2017, adopting a *One Health* whole of Government approach to tackling antimicrobial resistance. Throughout 2018 the Department convened the National Public Health Emergency Team process in relation to the Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE) 'superbug', oversaw the rollout of enhanced CPE screening and surveillance, as well as monitoring the investment of €2m expanding health service capacity to improve antimicrobial use and stewardship.

The second *National Patient Experience Survey* took place with 26,752 patients invited to participate in May 2018. 13,404 people took part resulting in a participation rate of over 50%. The survey gave patients a direct say in improving the quality and the safety of our health services. 84% of respondents indicate that their experience of their hospital stay was good or very good.

In response to patients reporting that emotional support from staff was needed, as time in hospital is often a challenging period for patients, the *National Healthcare Communication Programme* was developed by the HSE. A national report, a report for each of the six hospital groups and a report for 39 acute hospitals across the country were produced.

The fourth annual *National Healthcare Quality Reporting System* (NHQRS) was published in July 2018. It included eight new indicators, bringing the total number to 35. Seven of the new indicators were derived from the *National Patient Experience Survey*, in addition to one concerning screening uptake rates for colorectal cancer.

Two new *National Clinical Effectiveness Committee National Clinical Guidelines* (NCGs) were published in 2018 - Adult type 1 diabetes mellitus (NCG No. 17) and Emergency Medicine Early Warning System (EMEWS) (NCG No. 18). In October, the annual National Patient Safety Office Conference, *Communication for Patient Safety* was held.

Following a competitive tendering process, the contract to operate the new independent *Patient Safety Advocacy Service* was awarded in December 2018. This service will support those wishing to make a complaint about their experience of the public health service and provide support to patients who may have been affected by a patient safety incident. Advocates will undergo accredited training in accordance with the defined competency framework. The new service was awarded to the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities. It is anticipated that the service will become operational in the second half of 2019. This work is part of the wider review of complaints and advocacy policy underway. Related to this, in July 2018 the Report of the *Consultation for the Patient Safety Complaints and Advocacy Policy* was published. This report incorporated feedback from 174 individual submissions that were received, as well as a comprehensive stakeholder engagement exercise.

In November the Chief Medical Officer's report on "The Use of Uro-Gynaecological Mesh in Surgical Procedures" was published. The report sets out a number of recommendations in order to provide assurance that the use of mesh implants, and the care of women requiring aftercare in Irish hospitals, is in line with emerging evidence and best practice internationally.

The Children's Health Act 2018 was enacted providing for the historic establishment of a single statutory entity, Children's Health Ireland, to provide paediatric services and take over responsibility for the services previously provided by the existing three Dublin children's hospitals, Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin; Temple Street Children's University Hospital; and the paediatric services at Tallaght University Hospital. Children's Health Ireland was established on 4 December 2018.

The Government approved the investment required to enable the National Paediatric Hospital Development Board to instruct the current contractor for Phase B of the works to complete the building of the new children's hospital on the St James's Hospital campus and the two Paediatric Outpatients and Urgent Care Centres on the Tallaght and Connolly Hospitals campuses.

In December 2018, the Government also approved the commissioning of an independent review of the escalation in cost of the new children's hospital, including the contributory factors and associated responsibilities, so that any potential weaknesses could be identified and comprehensively and speedily resolved in the interests of the successful completion of the project and the effective management of public funds.

A public consultation on the Geographical Alignment of Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) and Hospital Groups was launched in March. The consultation, part of the implementation of the Sláintecare Report, sought views on the organisational arrangements necessary to support a model of integrated and patient-centred care.

In May 2018, the Department of Health launched a public consultation on behalf of the National Review of Specialist Cardiac Services. Responses to the consultation will inform the Steering Group in making appropriate recommendations for the national configuration of specialist cardiac services.

An additional €10m was allocated in 2018 to enhance respite services to support people with disabilities and their families. Ten new respite facilities were opened and new innovative respite solutions developed. These include home respite, Saturday and evening clubs, summer camps and many other flexible, family and child centred respite options.

The first cycle of HIQA registration of designated residential centres for adults and children with disabilities successfully concluded on 31 October 2018.

A report on the prevalence of autism in Ireland and a review of the services for people with autism were published. The first report: "Estimating prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the Irish Population: A review of data sources and epidemiological studies" is a research report produced by the Department of Health.

The mid-term review of the National Dementia Strategy was launched ahead of a meeting of the Strategy's Monitoring Group in May.

In line with the Government Decision in December 2017 to approve the development of a national policy on adult safeguarding in the health sector, the Department progressed the formulation of this sectoral policy during 2018, including undertaking detailed project planning work and consulting key stakeholders on the themes to be covered in the policy. In December 2018, the detailed drafting phase commenced with the establishment of a steering group to assist the Department in its development of the policy.

In May, the Cabinet agreed to establish a Scoping Inquiry into issues in relation to the CervicalCheck Screening Programme. Dr Gabriel Scally was appointed to carry out the Scoping Inquiry. The Final Report of the Scoping Inquiry was published in September 2018. The Government accepted all 50 recommendations set out in the report.

In December 2018, the Implementation Plan for the recommendations set out in Dr Gabriel Scally's Report of the Scoping Inquiry into the CervicalCheck Programme was published. The Implementation Plan set out 126 actions addressing Dr Scally's recommendations, across the areas of women and women's health, organisation and governance, laboratory services and procurement, open disclosure, cancer registration, other screening programmes and resolution. The development of the Plan was overseen by the CervicalCheck Steering Committee, established by the Minister in June to provide oversight and assurance in relation to managing the response to the CervicalCheck issues, and ensure the implementation of the key decisions taken by Government. The Committee includes patient advocates and representatives, clinicians and senior officials of the Department of Health and the HSE.

The Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 was enacted permitting termination of pregnancy to be carried out where there is a risk to the life or of serious harm to the health of the pregnant woman, in an emergency situation where such a risk is immediate, where there is a condition present which is likely to lead to the death of the foetus either before or within 28 days of birth, and without restriction up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. The drafting and enactment of this legislation and preparation for the introduction of services was completed against a very exacting timetable, following the Referendum on the Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution.

The Department introduced and the Oireachtas enacted the Mental Health (Renewal Orders) Act 2018 which is an emergency piece of legislation required as a result of a Court of Appeal finding of unconstitutionality of part of the Mental Health Act 2001. The legislation further enhanced the rights of individuals to appeal against involuntary detention.

Throughout 2018 Brexit operations and preparedness meetings were held, with representation from across the Department and agencies to address the challenges associated with Brexit.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: CREATE A MORE RESPONSIVE, INTEGRATED AND PEOPLE-CENTRED HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICE

It is important that people have access to the health services that they need when they need them. The *Sláintecare* report has identified the importance of further development of integrated care, advances in primary care delivery, additional home care, increases of transition and long stay beds.

Increasing capacity in the health service is vital but this must be evidence-based. The Health Service Capacity Review was published in 2018 and outlines projections of demand and capacity requirements for a range of health services to 2031. The findings of this review informed the capacity commitments outlined in the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

The *Sláintecare* Implementation Strategy, published in August 2018, provides the framework within which a system-wide reform programme will be advanced. It is a further step in the detailed implementation process for this programme and sets out four over-arching goals and ten high-level strategic actions which will be the key focus for the first three years of the reform programme. The Executive Director of the *Sláintecare* Programme Office was appointed in September 2018

Twenty three members were appointed to the *Sláintecare* Implementation Advisory Council for a 3-year period which commenced on 24 October 2018. Members of the Advisory Council are from a range of backgrounds, including a number of medical professionals, experts and patient advocates. They provide advice and support to the *Sláintecare* Programme Office on the delivery of the *Sláintecare* Implementation Strategy.

€30 million was provided for winter preparedness and to manage the expected surge in demand for hospital care in an integrated way across Primary, Acute and Social Care. The HSE's Winter Plan was developed to ensure that the health system was as prepared as possible for the increase in demand on services, within existing capacity and financial parameters. This came into effect on 1 December 2018 and continued until 31 March 2019. The focus was on reducing delayed patient discharges and transfers of care. Roll out of the focused home support and transitional care commenced in quarter four 2018.

An Independent Expert Review of Delayed Discharges was published in November 2018. The review recognised that delayed discharges or transfers of care are caused by a multitude of factors and it made nine recommendations which include the development of a national policy to provide for a more consistent approach to recording delayed discharges, strengthening data collection, standardising definitions and ensuring consistent discharge guidelines. The report underlines the importance of hospitals and community services working together to improve patient flow. This is in line with the overall direction of an integrated care approach, expanding community-based care to bring care closer to home, as outlined in *Sláintecare*.

In July 2018, the Government approved a proposal to change the treatment of farms and businesses under the Nursing Home Support Scheme, also known as Fair Deal. People using the scheme contribute up to 80% of their income and up to 7.5% of the value of any assets held towards their cost of care. The value of a person's home is only included in the financial assessment for the first three years of their time in a care. The change will extend the three-year cap to farms and businesses where a family successor continues to operate the farm or business for six years.

The Report of the Task Force on Personalised Budgets *Towards Personalised Budgets for People with a Disability in Ireland* was published in July. The report sets out how personalised budgets could work as a funding mechanism for people with a disability, providing them with greater choice and control over the services and supports they receive. A Personalised Budgets Demonstration Projects Oversight Group was established to review and oversee the design of demonstration projects to ensure alignment with the recommendations of the Task Force Report. Membership of the Group consists of the Department of Health, the HSE and the National Disability Authority. The roll out of the demonstration projects will commence in mid-2019.

Eighteen Primary Care Centres became operational in 2018, bringing the total number of Primary Care Centres to 126 at the end of the year.

Following the passing of the Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2018 14,000 additional Carers are now eligible to receive Free GP Care.

From 1 December 2018, the medical card earnings disregard for persons in receipt of Disability Allowance was significantly increased from €120 to €427 per week and applies to the assessment process for both single persons and to family assessments. This increase of more than 250% means that the earnings of someone in receipt of Disability Allowance that can be disregarded under the medical card assessment process increased from €6,240 a year to €22,204.

Ireland joined the BenNeLuxa International Collaboration. The objectives of the initiative are to enhance patients' access to high quality and affordable treatments, improve the Government's position in the market through joint negotiations, increase transparency on pricing between the collaborating countries, share policy expertise and enable collaboration on horizon scanning.

The report of the Trauma Steering Group, *A Trauma System for Ireland* was published in February 2018. The report aims to reduce the incidence and the burden of trauma and to significantly improve the survival rate of major trauma patients, by ensuring that every patient receives the best possible standard of care in the most appropriate facility. It addresses the entire care pathway from prevention through to rehabilitation and recommends the establishment of an inclusive trauma system with two hub-and-spoke trauma networks and up to 13 trauma receiving hospitals, each of which will have one designated Major Trauma Centre for the treatment of major trauma. An interim implementation group was established by the HSE, with Departmental representation to progress the immediate actions recommended in the report.

The National Ambulance Service reform programme continued with the launch, in March, of the Clinical Hub in the National Emergency Operations Centre. The Hub facilitates a new “Hear and Treat” model of care which provides an alternative care pathway for some low acuity patients, obviating the need to dispatch an emergency resource.

A Cancer Patient Advisory Committee was established and members were appointed to the Committee in November. The establishment of the Cancer Patient Advisory Committee is in line with recommendation 39 of the National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026 and marks a further step in the implementation of the Strategy.

In September, the Minister for Health and Minister for Mental Health opened the ‘Changing Direction’ Conference. Augmenting mental health solutions through digital technology is a main priority for the Department. Tele-health providers from the United States, Canada and Ireland invited mental health experts from all over Ireland to consider how best to utilise digital technology to deliver tele-counselling and tele-psychiatry interventions nationally. As a result of the conference, several pilot projects were commissioned by the HSE that will enhance service provision and offer wider reach to all individuals requiring mental health interventions.

The Implementation Plan for *Connecting for Life* (Ireland’s National Suicide Prevention Strategy 2015-2020) was published in January 2018. The Plan sets out the milestones for each of the 69 actions from 2017-2020. It describes the strategic and operational agenda that will be needed to further drive the implementation of *Connecting for Life*. The Implementation Plan is co-ordinated by the HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention across a range of bodies and agencies, under the aegis of a Steering Group chaired by the Department.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: PROMOTE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF THE HEALTH SERVICES

To effectively deliver health services for the population of Ireland, there must be an effective and efficient workforce delivering these services, supported by appropriate systems of governance.

The Department provides oversight of the performance of the HSE in relation to the delivery of the services set out in the National Service Plan. In this context, the Department holds the HSE to account for the delivery of high-quality services across the four equally important domains of:

- i. access to services,
- ii. the quality and safety of those services,
- iii. doing this within the financial resources available and
- iv. effectively harnessing the efforts of the workforce.

The main vehicle to achieve this aim is through an on-going monthly performance management process where the HSE reports against the targets set out in the Service Plan. Monthly high-level meetings between management in both organisations are held to discuss on-going or emerging performance issues and to determine actions to resolve and improve areas of concern.

The HSE National Service Plan 2019 was agreed and approved by the Minister for Health and published by the HSE.

The Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2018 providing the legislative basis for a Board and CEO governance structure for the HSE was passed by the Oireachtas in 2018. Under the Act, the Board will be the governing body of the HSE and will be accountable to the Minister for the performance of its functions. The CEO will be accountable to the Board. Following a Public Appointment Service (PAS) campaign, the Minister appointed a Chairperson of the Board who is responsible for leadership of the HSE Board and plays a key role in establishing the Board governance structures and ensuring their effective and cohesive operation.

The Minister for Health signed Regulations to designate counsellor and psychotherapist as professions to be regulated under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005. These Regulations establish one registration board for the professions and create two new professional positions on the Health and Social Care Professionals Council.

In April, the Final Report and Recommendations by the Taskforce on Staffing and Skill Mix for Nursing on a Framework for Safe Nurse Staffing and Skill Mix was adopted as Government Policy and national rollout commenced on a phased basis.

A major national consultation process took place to inform the work of the national mental health successor policy, Vision for Change 2. Over 1,000 service users, carers, mental health professionals and healthcare managers attended various consultations in Cork, Offaly, Sligo and Dublin to provide input and discuss priorities for the new policy.

2018 saw the start of the recruitment of 114 Assistant Psychologist posts and 20 Psychologist posts in Primary Care delivering on the Government's commitment to develop early intervention mental health services for those under 18. The majority of the posts were filled at the end of 2018.

The Minister for Mental Health approved 10 new posts for Advanced Nurse Practitioners that will be specifically directed to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) nationally.

The project to redevelop the National Maternity Hospital on the St Vincent's University Hospital Campus progressed as the Minister for Health approved the award of the pharmacy and car park contracts. The development of the pharmacy and car park will represent the first phase of the new National Maternity Hospital.

The Department of Health launched a consultation on behalf of the Independent Review Group established to examine the role of voluntary organisations in publicly funded health and personal social services. Responses to the consultation formed an important component of the Independent Review Group's examination of how the relationship between the State and voluntary organisations in the area of health and social care should evolve in the future.

The Health Insurance Act 2018, enacted in December, included annual provisions on risk equalisation credits and stamp duty levies, and also strengthened governance by expanding the membership of the Health Insurance Authority (HIA) Board and broadening the composition of the VHI Board.

In 2018, a new online repository of information on medical cannabis was published on the Department's website. The repository provides detailed information for doctors and patients on the existing Ministerial medical cannabis licence scheme, the Medical Cannabis Access Programme currently under development, and relevant legal and policy overviews on wider medical cannabis issues. Pending full operation of the Access Programme, doctors are utilising the Ministerial licencing route to prescribe medical cannabis for their patients. Licences for sixteen individual patients in 2018 were granted.

The Department published the Report on the *Role, Training and Career Structures of Public Health Physicians in Ireland*. Review and reform of the specialty of Public Health Medicine is a key part of ensuring continuous improvement of the health system. A reformed and strengthened specialty should contribute to implementation of Sláintecare, the continued development of Healthy Ireland and maintenance of ongoing focus on strengthening clinical governance, ensuring patient safety and achieving integrated care at national and regional levels.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: DEVELOP A HIGH-PERFORMING DEPARTMENT TO LEAD AND OVERSEE THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SECTOR

In 2018, the Department of Health continued its programme of organisational development in order to deliver on its strategic priorities. In 2018 the Department employed 475 staff in whole time equivalent terms. There were 105 new recruits and 59 people left the Department during the year, mostly through retirement or in some cases moving to different employment or taking a career break.

In line with the Government's policy framework for renewal outlined in *Our Public Service 2020*<sup>1</sup> the Department is fully committed to an ongoing programme of change through implementation of the Working Better Together Change Programme. Achievements in 2018 included:

- The relocation of the Department of Health headquarters from Hawkins House to Miesian Plaza was managed successfully
- The Organisation Development Action Plan was developed and implementation is well underway overseen by the Organisation Development sub-committee of the Management Board. This sub-committee has representation from staff of the Department across all grades
- There were 1,750 training days held across all grades, comprising 74 programmes and courses
- A Risk Committee (Sub-Committee of the Management Board) oversaw the Department's Risk Register and Risk management training was rolled out.

### **Data Protection**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018. The EU regulation enhances individual's privacy rights and imposes significant additional obligations on all organisations that process data.

A Data Protection Unit was established in May 2018 with responsibility for ensuring that the Department meets the requirements of the GDPR. The Department also appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO). The DPO is responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of GDPR and data protection legislation, raising awareness, training staff, conducting audits and being the point of contact with the Data Protection Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ops2020.gov.ie/resources/Our-Public-Service-2020-PRINT.pdf>

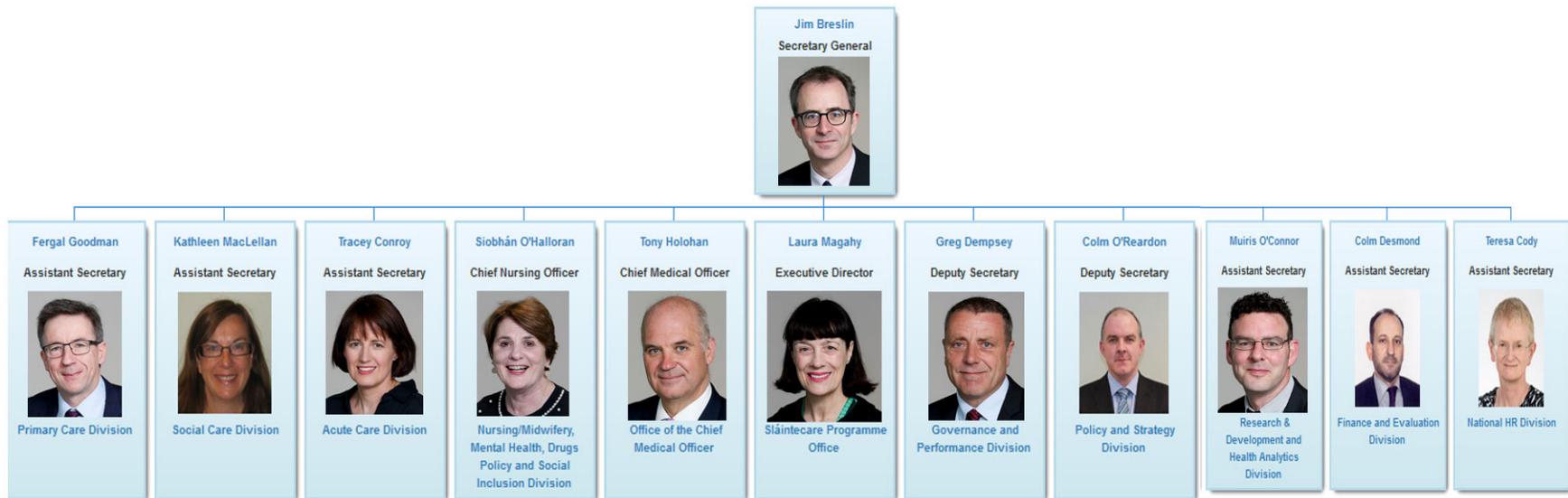
The Data Protection Unit led implementation of a GDPR compliance programme for the Department. This project included a gap analysis, the development of a compliance strategy and data protection training.

A record of processing activities (ROPA) for the Department was completed from September to December 2018. A Privacy Statement and Subject Access Request Form were developed for the Department's website. New resources and tools were made available for staff to assist with data protection compliance. Data Protection Coordinators were nominated in each business unit operating within the Department to provide advice to colleagues on data protection queries.

A service provider was selected to develop an eLearning module on data protection/GDPR, this course will be compulsory for all staff and there will be ongoing access for new entrants to the Department.

## APPENDIX 1 CORPORATE INFORMATION

### Department of Health Management Board

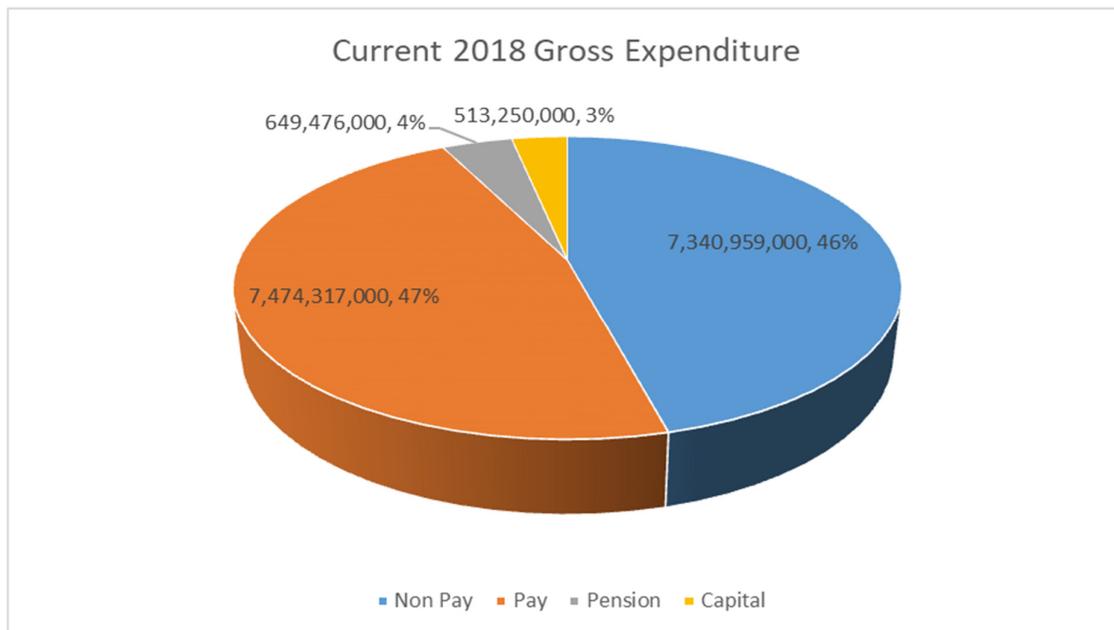


## Corporate Profile

At the end of December 2018, there were 475 whole time equivalent (WTE) staff in the Department of Health. In addition to supporting the Minister for Health, Simon Harris T.D., the staff of the Department also supported Ministers of State Finian McGrath T.D., Minister of State Catherine Byrne T.D., and Minister of State Jim Daly T.D.

The Department of Health has responsibility for implementation of 139 (18%) of the 776 commitments in the Programme for a Partnership Government.

The Department managed a budget of over €16bn in 2018, 28% of total Government spending. This allocation was disbursed as €39m to the Department, €15.7bn to the HSE, €170.9m to other agencies and €51.9m to grants/research.



The Department of Health answered almost a quarter (22%) of all the Parliamentary Questions posed in 2018. A total of 53,173 PQs passed through the Oireachtas and the Department of Health processed 11,881 of these questions

### 2018 Parliamentary Responses at a Glance

<b>Parliamentary Questions (including withdrawn/disallowed)</b>	<b>11,881</b>
Of which referred to the HSE for Direct Reply	7,690
<b>Notes for Leaders Questions prepared</b>	<b>350</b>
<b>Representations Received</b>	<b>10,420</b>
Topical Issues Prepared	571
<b>Topical Issues Selected</b>	<b>124</b>
Seanad Commencement Prepared	161
<b>Seanad Commencement Selected</b>	<b>61</b>

The Department also processed 480 FOI requests in 2018, 347 of which were from the media.

### Prompt Payment

An analysis of the Department's Prompt Payments obligations during 2018 is as follows:

Details	Number	Value (€)	Percentage (%) of <u>total number</u> of payments made
Number of payments made within 15 days	3,157	8,786,459.22	82.6%
Number of payments made within 16 days to 30 days	325	1,633,658.96	15.3%
Number of payments made in excess of 30 days	50	221,250.46	2.1%
Total payments made in 2018	3,532	10,641,368.64	

The total prompt payment compensation and interest paid by the Department in 2018 was €4,463.46, comprising €1,353.46 in interest payments and €3,010.00 in compensation payments.

## **Energy usage in 2018**

The Department of Health moved offices from Hawkins Street to Baggot Street in July 2018. As a consequence the Department is working closely with the SEAI to re-establish benchmarks and targets for energy reduction in their new premises at Miesian Plaza. The building incorporates a wide range of energy efficient technologies and measures, to minimise the energy footprint of the building. These measures significantly reduce the buildings' operational costs by comparison with most office buildings in the Dublin market with an energy consumption of less than 150 KW hours/m<sup>2</sup>/per annum. Based on an emphasis on sustainability in the building design and underwritten by a platinum LEED accreditation, our new building offers the Department significant savings on annual energy consumption bills compared to market equivalents.

The technologies utilised to achieve this exacting energy target include low energy fan coil units, high efficiency air-conditioning cooling systems including thermal storage and low energy ventilation systems.

Environmentally, the benefits of the building design include:

- Less harmful emissions/pollutants to the environment
- Reclaimed energy for heating otherwise lost through waste exhaust
- Reclaimed water for re-use
- Minimised electricity consumption through energy-efficient lighting fixtures and controls

## APPENDIX 2 AGENCIES UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE DEPARTMENT

### **Non-Commercial State Bodies**

Dental Council  
Food Safety Authority of Ireland  
Food Safety Promotion Board - Safefood  
Health Information and Quality Authority  
Health Insurance Authority  
Health Products Regulatory Authority  
Health Research Board  
Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU)  
Health Service Executive  
Irish Blood Transfusion Service  
Medical Council  
Mental Health Commission  
National Cancer Registry Board  
National Paediatric Hospital Development Board  
National Treatment Purchase Fund  
Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland  
Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland  
Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council

### **Commercial State Bodies**

Voluntary Health Insurance (VHI)

## APPENDIX 3 LEGISLATION

All legislation prepared during 2018 is available on our website at <https://health.gov.ie/publications-research/legislation/>

### **Bills published**

9 Bills were published in 2018:

1. Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2018
2. Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2018
3. Children and Family Relationships (Amendment) Bill 2018
4. Children's Health Bill 2018
5. Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2018
6. Mental Health (Renewal Orders) Bill 2018
7. Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Bill 2018
8. Health and Social Care Professionals (Amendment) Bill 2018
9. Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2018

### **Legislation enacted**

8 Acts were enacted during 2018:

1. Health (General Practitioner Service) Act 2018
2. Children and Family Relationships (Amendment) Act 2018
3. Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Act 2018
4. Mental Health (Renewal Orders) Act 2018
5. Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018
6. Children's Health Act 2018
7. Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018
8. Health Insurance (Amendment) Act 2018

### **Statutory Instruments**

The Department prepared and processed 49 Statutory Instruments during 2018:

1. European Communities (Official Controls on the Import of Food of Non-Animal Origin) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 3 of 2018
2. European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 82 of 2018
3. Health (Residential Support Services Maintenance and Accommodation Contributions) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 94 of 2018
4. European Union (Manufacture, Presentation and Sale of Tobacco and Related Products) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 132 of 2018
5. Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 (Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 166 of 2018
6. Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (Section 4(2) (Designation of Professions Counsellors and Psychotherapists and Establishment of Registration Board) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 170 of 2018
7. European Union (Nutrition and Health Claims made on Foods) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 176 of 2018

8. European Communities (Quality System for Blood Establishments) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 180 of 2018
9. European Communities (Extraction Solvents used in the Production of Foodstuffs and Food Ingredients) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 190 of 2018
10. Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005(Section 95(3)) (Variation of Title: Speech Therapist) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 192 of 2018
11. Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (Section 95(3)) (Variation of Title: Dietician) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 196 of 2018
12. Health Products Regulatory Authority (Fees) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 208 of 2018
13. Nurses and Midwives Act 2011(Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 213 of 2018
14. Health Insurance Act 1994 (Determination of Relevant Increase under Section 7A and Provision of Information under section 7B) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 224 of 2018
15. European Communities (Food Supplements) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 225 of 2018
16. European Union (Addition of Vitamins and Minerals and of Certain other Substances to Foods) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 226 of 2018
17. Civil Liability (Amendment) Act 2017 (Part 4) (Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 231 of 2018
18. Civil Liability (Open Disclosure) (Prescribed Statements) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 237 of 2018
19. Podiatrists Registration Board (Establishment Day) Order 2018 S.I. No. 239 of 2018
20. European Union (Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Dangers Arising from Medical Exposure to Ionising Radiation) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 256 of 2018
21. Data Protection Act 2018 (section 36(2)) (Health Research) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 314 of 2018
22. Health (General Practitioner Service) Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 320 of 2018
23. European Communities (Official Controls on the Import of Food of Non-animal Origin) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 327 of 2018
24. European Union (Temporary Suspension of Imports from Bangladesh of Foodstuffs Containing or Consisting of betel Leaes)(Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 328 of 2018
25. European Union (Manufacture, Presentation and Sale of Tobacco) and Related Products)(Amendment)(No. 2) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 365 of 2018
26. Mental Health (Renewal Orders) Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 397 of 2018
27. European Union (Food Additives) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 413 of 2018
28. Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 448 of 2018
29. Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (Section 95(3)) (Variation of Title: Physical Therapist) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 479 of 2018
30. Counsellors and Psychotherapists Registration Board (Establishment Day) Order 2018 S.I. No. 500 of 2018
31. European Union (Manufacture, Presentation and Sale of Tobacco and Related Products) (Amendment) (NO. 3) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 504 of 2018
32. Children's Health Act 2018 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) Order 2018 S.I. No. 505 of 2018

33. Children's Health Act 2018 (Establishment Day) Order 2018 S.I. No. 506 of 2018
34. Health Act 2004 (Complaints) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 519 of 2018
35. Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) Order 2018 S.I. No. 527 of 2018
36. Medicinal Products (Control of Placing on the Market) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 529 of 2018
37. Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 530 of 2018
38. Health Products Regulatory Authority (Fees) (No.2) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 531 of 2018
39. European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 553 of 2018
40. Health Act 1970 (Fifth Schedule) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 554 of 2018
41. Infectious Diseases (Amendment) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 567 of 2018
42. Food Safety authority of Ireland Act 1998 (Amendment of First Schedule) Order 2018 S.I. No. 568 of 2018
43. Children's Health Act 2018 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) (No.2) Order 2018 S.I. No. 592 of 2018
44. Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2018 S.I. No. 594 of 2018
45. Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 (Application for Review of Relevant Decision) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 595 of 2018
46. Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 (Certification) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 596 of 2018
47. Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 (Notifications) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 597 of 2018
48. Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017 (Payments in Respect of Certain Services Under Section 62A of the Health Act 1970) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 598 of 2018
49. Health Services (Prescription Charges) (Over 70s) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 639 of 2018

## APPENDIX 4 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PUBLICATIONS

In 2018 the Department produced 47 publications all of which are available for download on our website at <https://health.gov.ie/publications-research/publications/2018/>.

1. Department of Health Consolidated Salary Scales with effect from 1/1/2018
2. Health Service Capacity Review 2018
3. Information note on legal advice received on options for a Referendum on Article 40.3.3 of the Constitution
4. A Trauma System for Ireland: Report of the Trauma Steering Group
5. Non-Broadcast Media Advertising and Marketing of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages, including Sponsorship and Retail Product Placement: Voluntary Codes of Practice
6. Policy Paper on Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy
7. General Scheme of a Bill to Regulate Termination of Pregnancy
8. Department of Health Consolidated Salary Scales with effect from 1st April 2018
9. Inpatient/ Day Case Action Plan 2018
10. Framework for Safe Nurse Staffing and Skill Mix in General and Specialist Medical and Surgical Care Settings in Ireland 2018
11. Interim Report of the Farrelly Commission of Investigation
12. CervicalCheck Departmental Documents
13. General Scheme Health (Amendment) Bill – HSE Board Bill
14. National Dementia Strategy Mid-Term Review
15. Scoping Inquiry into the CervicalCheck Screening Programme
16. Report on the findings of the public consultation on home-care services
17. Notifications in accordance with Section 20 of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 Annual Report 2017
18. Expert Group to review the law of torts and the current systems for the management of clinical negligence claims – Terms of Reference
19. Updated General Scheme of the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy Bill) 2018
20. Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structure – Seventh Progress Report
21. Task Force on Personalised Budgets
22. Tobacco Free Ireland Annual Report 2017
23. Regulatory Impact Analysis – Children’s Health Bill 2018
24. Regulatory Impact Analysis – Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2018
25. Sláintecare Implementation Strategy
26. The National Carers’ Strategy – Fifth Progress Report 2017
27. Interim update report on the Inpatient Day Case Action Plan 2018
28. Dr Gabriel Scally’s Scoping Inquiry into CervicalCheck
29. Department of Health Consolidated Salary Scales with effect from 1 October 2018
30. Third Interim Report of the Farrelly Commission of Investigation
31. Judge Meenan Report on an alternative system for dealing with claims arising from CervicalCheck
32. Department of Health Annual Report 2017

33. The Use of Uro-Gynaecological Mesh in Surgical Procedures – Report to the Minister for Health
34. Report on the Public Consultation Process on a Draft Health Information Policy Framework
35. Reports on the prevalence of autism in Ireland and a review of the services for people with autism
36. Implementation Plan for Report of the Scoping Inquiry into CervicalCheck Issues
37. Strategic Review of Medical Training and Career Structure – Eighth Progress Report
38. Report to the Minister for Health on an Evaluation and Analysis of Returns for 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 including advice on Risk Equalisation Credits (Redacted)
39. Crowe Horwath Report on the Role, Training and Career Structures of Public Health Physicians in Ireland
40. Independent Expert Review of Delayed Discharges
41. Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework – The national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in Ireland
42. Health in Ireland: Key Trends 2018
43. National Healthcare Quality Reporting System – Annual Report (2018)
44. NCEC Framework for Public Involvement in Clinical Effectiveness Process
45. NCEC Implementation Guide and Toolkit for National Clinical Guidelines
46. NCEC Competency Framework for Clinical Effectiveness Education
47. NCEC National Clinical Guidelines relating to Adult type 1 diabetes mellitus