

**Context**

The establishment of the Hospital Groups in Ireland as part of the necessary reforms to enable Government to deliver ‘whole system’ health reform in 2013, was informed by two reports **The Establishment of Hospital Groups as a Transition to Independent Hospital Trusts** and **The Framework for Development – Securing the Future of Smaller Hospitals**. The aim of the Hospital Group is to deliver care for the population served in a manner that ensures a safe, high quality service for all, maximising and capitalising on the strengths of both larger and smaller hospitals, with better outcome for patients.

The more recent publication of the **Sláintecare Report** in 2017 presents a 10-year vision for health reform in Ireland, covering a number of complex issues across the Health sector. One of the key ambitions of this strategy is to deliver a system that serves the health and social care needs of a population with a significant emphasis on integrated care structures. In this context it is proposed Regional Integrated Care Organisations will be formed to align hospitals and communities into one structure to deliver for a population.

**About the Ireland East Hospital Group**

The Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) is an organisation of 11 hospitals working together to deliver world-class healthcare. It is Ireland’s largest hospital network with a unique profile of local services and focused tertiary specialties. Our academic partner is University College Dublin (UCD).

Our hospitals are among the best in Ireland for quality of care, medical education, healthcare research, safety and clinical performance delivered through a mix of Voluntary, Independent and Statutory hospitals. Our hospitals currently provide a wide variety of specialties on a national, regional and local level to different patient categories which, through collaboration and working closely together, allows integration and improved patient flow across the continuum of care. This collaboration also enables hospital services within the Group to deliver high-quality patient care in the most cost-effective manner.

**Key Facts about IEHG:**

* 11 Hospitals, 6 of which are voluntary
* Work directly with 4 Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) partners
* Largest Hospital Group in Ireland
* UCD is our Academic Partner
* Serve a population of over 1 million people with 11,000+ staff
* Strong engagement with hospital, primary and community partners

**Our Hospitals:**

* Mater Misericordiae University Hospital
* St Vincent’s University Hospital
* Regional Hospital Mullingar
* St Luke’s General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny
* Our Lady’s Hospital, Navan
* Wexford General Hospital
* St Columcille’s Hospital, Loughlinstown
* St Michael’s Hospital, Dun Laoghaire
* Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital
* National Maternity Hospital
* Royal Victoria Eye & Ear Hospital

**Our Services:**

Six of our hospitals operate an Emergency Department, one has a 12-hour urgent care centre and another hospital operates an Acute Medical Assessment / Local Injuries Unit.

We provide a wide range of acute elective inpatient and outpatient services across our 11 hospital sites and provide services on three levels; those serving local catchment areas, specialist/tertiary services delivered to regional populations and quaternary services delivered nationally, as summarised below.

Largest number of **National Specialist Services** which include:

* National Heart/Lung /Liver/Pancreas Transplant Units
* National Spinal Unit
* National Isolation Unit for Infectious Diseases
* National Unit for Cystic Fibrosis
* National Unit for Peritoneal Malignancy
* National Unit for Pulmonary Hypertension
* National Unit for Neuro Endocrine Tumours
* National Unit for Extra Corpeal Life Support

**Our Activity**

During 2018 we provided:

730,138 - Outpatient appointments

317, 311 - Emergency Attendances

329,287 - Inpatient/Day cases

16,000 - Births

Our turnover is in excel of €1billion and we have 11 773 WTE

**Our Mission**

The Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG), together with our academic partner University College Dublin (UCD), aims to be the first Academic Health Science System in Ireland to become the national leader in healthcare delivery, with a strong international reputation, improving the quality of healthcare and patient outcomes through education, training, research and innovation for the over 1 million people we serve.

Our mission is to deliver improved healthcare outcomes through:

* Provision of patient-centred care
* Access to world-class education, training, research and innovation through the development of an Academic Health Science System leading to the delivery of innovative, evidence-based healthcare
* Application of a Lean management system in order to build a strategic and management model for operational excellence and continuous improvement
* Deliver an integrated model of healthcare with our primary care and community care partners

IEHG’s strategic plan and direction are built around **three distinct pillars**:

1. **Delivery** - Operational Excellence underpinned by a Lean management framework
2. **Direction** – Integrated Health System underpinned by a Population Health approach
3. **Development** - Academic Health Science System

The delivery of these three pillars will enable the Group to achieve the quadruple aim of healthcare delivery:

* **Better care:** Improving the health of populations
* **Better outcomes:** Improving the individual experience of care
* **Reducing cost:** Reducing the per capita cost of care
* **Retaining staff:** Improving the experience of providing care and increasing joy and meaning for the workforce

**Adopting Lean for Healthcare Transformation**

The Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) recognises the need for the development of a healthcare system that is sustainable and capable of delivering consistently high-quality services. The Group is committed to this ambition through the delivery of sustainable improvement utilising Lean in healthcare transformation. Our strategy commits to using Lean to foster a culture of continuous improvement, aligning business structures, staff and patient engagement, organisational processes and incentives to ensure that IEHG is well positioned in the fast-changing healthcare environment. To achieve this, it is necessary to change the way we organise our services and the way in which they are delivered. Accordingly, a key strategic priority for IEHG is to maximise value for our patients by achieving the best outcomes at the lowest cost using Lean principles and methodologies.

The IEHG Lean transformation programme aims to standardise the delivery of healthcare across the Group and ensure that every patient treated receives the right care, in the right place at the right time, every time by:

1. Improving patient and staff experience and patient outcomes
2. Enhancing capability of our hospitals to deliver operational excellence
3. Developing and enhancing continuous improvement capabilities
4. Optimising patient flow and resource utilisation

The vision of the IEHG transformation plan of care is aligned with the vision of the Future of Healthcare Sláintecare report which seeks to ensure ‘patient needs come first in driving safety, quality and the coordination of care’.

The IEHG Lean transformation plan of care has identified many specialty focus areas for improvement in the next 5 years. These include how we care for the **frail and elderly**, the delivery of care at the front door **(Acute Floor)** and the development of **ambulatory models** of care delivery.
To date we are proud to have engaged more than **3,000 IEHG staff** in Service Improvement initiatives across hospitals in the Group.

**Integrated Models of Care**

The IEHG Director of Integration, is leading the development of **Population Health Mapping** across our Group. This work is based on the premise that we must first know our population in order to know how to develop and deliver services to meet their needs. It is our belief that the data we gather will inform and drive integrated care provision and identify investment and service development needs, thereby enhancing our ability to develop on the quadruple aim of better care, better outcomes, lower cost and improved satisfaction for patients and staff.

The Sláintecare report recommends a ‘decisive shift of the health service to primary care with the delivery of enhanced primary care in every community.’ In order to reduce demand on our acute hospital system, a real shift in the delivery of healthcare through an integrated healthcare system is required. Our aim is to work toward a person-centred, integrated model of care, delivered in the most appropriate setting while drawing on research and best practice from across the world.

A number of integration projects are currently being progressed across the Group including: **Local Integrated Care Committees (LICCs), Frailty Pathways, Community Ophthalmology, Virtual Clinics for Heart Failure, a Hepatitis C Community Programme**, along with further integration efforts between our hospitals to reduce waiting lists, relieve the pressure on theatre space in our larger hospitals and utilise our resources effectively and efficiently.

**Development of an Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC)**

In a fundamental reshaping of the hospital-university model, the Ireland East Hospital Group and our academic partner UCD, are developing into an Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC). This strategic shift reflects significant international experience that demonstrates that the integration of education and research in an Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC) model improves both patient care and drives the knowledge economy.

Internationally, such centres have scored well ahead of non-academic centres for patient outcomes and safety. Academic Health Science Centres also attract leading healthcare professionals and offer excellent training, adopt new technologies and health systems improvements rapidly, and participate in a global effort to advance healthcare.

In the initial work to develop our Academic Health Science System we have identified four key service themes which reflect our combined national and international strengths and ambitions in research, clinical practice and education.

The themes are:

* **Cancer**
* **Genomics**
* **Cardiovascular**
* **Women’s Health/Paediatrics/Adolescents**

These service areas are being reorganised into Clinical Academic Directorate (CADs). The Directorates are charged with delivering high-quality care, educating and training healthcare professionals, embedding research into the system and translating those research benefits into patient benefits.

Our vision to become an AHSC is about laying the foundations of a healthcare system fit for the 21st century, one that paves the way for provision of constantly improving services, a higher level of research and innovation, and ultimately a more responsive service that meets the needs of the population we serve.