



A Voice for Palliative Care in
Ireland



**Irish Association
for Palliative Care**

March Newsletter 2024

We extend our gratitude for your active participation in recent events. We're pleased to announce the successful launch of our new website, providing an enhanced platform for collaboration and resource access within our community. Please visit iapc.ie for further information.

Looking ahead, we're excited to embark on our upcoming Membership Drive. Current members will receive detailed information about this initiative in the coming months, highlighting opportunities for increased engagement and collaboration within our community.

Thank you for your continued support

March Update

Joint Committee on Assisted Dying publishes final report

On Wednesday March 20th, The Joint Committee on Assisted Dying published their final report. The final report can be found [here](#), however a short summary can be found below.

Key recommendations include advocating for the enactment of legislation that permits assisted dying only under specific conditions. These conditions necessitate a diagnosis of an incurable and irreversible condition causing unbearable suffering and expected to result in death within a

Recommendations from the committee also call for the establishment of oversight mechanisms, including the creation of an independent national body tasked with regulating assisted dying services. This body would ensure compliance with legal requirements, oversee application processes, and provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The report underscores the need for clear and unambiguous terminology within any proposed legislation. Definitions of key terms and procedures are recommended to prevent ambiguity and ensure consistent interpretation and application.

In addition to legislative considerations, the Committee placed emphasis on enhancing palliative care services nationwide. Recommendations include substantial investment in palliative care resources, increased funding, and improved accessibility to high-quality palliative care services for all individuals in need.

IAPC Press Release in Response to the Joint Committee:



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Press Release

IRISH ASSOCIATION FOR PALLIATIVE CARE RESPONSE TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT ON ASSISTED DYING

The Irish Association for Palliative Care (IAPC) is a national membership organisation made up of multi-disciplinary Palliative Care professionals. The IAPC would like to acknowledge the work carried out by Joint Committee on Assisted Dying (JCAD) and thank them for the opportunity given to the IAPC to present to the Joint Committee.

The IAPC is disappointed that the JCAD has recommended introduction of legislation to allow assisted dying. IAPC reiterates its position on Assisted Dying in that we do not support any change in the law to legalise euthanasia or Physician-Assisted Suicide. Palliative care should exclude any action or treatment designed to cause a patient's death. We endorse the right of the competent, informed patient to refuse medical treatment, even if this leads to their death.

We welcome the support within the JCAD for palliative care access and funding. We also welcome a clear wish to safeguard against coercion for those who might request assisted dying. However, evidence in other countries where Assisted Dying has been legalized has proven that these safeguards are adjusted and amended over time, resulting, in some countries, children being offered euthanasia or physician

Palliative care professionals have the responsibility of ensuring each patient dies with dignity. The aim of Palliative Care is to enhance the patient's personal autonomy and sense of self-worth.

Some patients may consider euthanasia or PAS as an expression of this personal autonomy. However, individual autonomy needs to be balanced against the rights of others, and the needs of society as a whole.

The ban on healthcare professionals shortening a person's life protects those who feel they ought to die. It protects vulnerable patients who may be basing their decision to die on things that can be addressed like a sense of being a burden, mental health conditions or disability. People respond to the wishes and feelings of others, especially when they depend on them for care. We welcome the support for informal carers, for the funding of mental health services and for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Palliative care focuses on quality of life, and providing multidisciplinary, holistic care to people with life-limiting conditions, and their families. Palliative care can provide care not just at the end of someone's life but at any stage of a life-limiting illness.

The IAPC would welcome, instead of assisted dying legislation, an emphasis on enabling dignified dying, delivered through the provision of palliative care, to help people live well until they die. The focus should be on making sure that patients have access to resources and information about their end of life and dying. We share the wish of the JCAD that palliative care services be substantially increased, to ensure consistent and accessible services of the highest quality are provided throughout the country.

Tá cúram atruacha sábháilte.

Compassionate care is safe

Irish Cancer Society Cancer Research Networking Award 2024

The Irish Cancer Society Networking Awards provide cancer researchers with the opportunity to foster collaborations and enhance relationships within the cancer research community. Academic researchers and clinical professionals can access funding to develop and host networking initiatives, workshops, conferences, or similar activities aimed at advancing cancer research dissemination and collaboration.

Open to researchers of all backgrounds, including medical doctors and professionals in social sciences, nursing, and allied health, the awards support initiatives that promote networking and collaboration in cancer research. Funding of up to €2,000 per application is available, with initiatives expected to commence after August 6th, 2024, and be completed within 12 months.

Applications are accepted through the Irish Cancer Society Gateway Grant Tracker online system. For further details and eligibility criteria, please refer to the [Application Guidelines document](#) or contact grants@irishcancer.ie.

PCRN Webinar – Technology and Palliative Care

Speakers: Dr Frances Cleary South East Technological University, and Carolyn Blair, Queens University Belfast

Date: 16 April 2024

Time: 11.00-12.00

This webinar will look at the area of Technology and Palliative Care presented by Dr Frances Cleary, South Eastern Technological University, and Dr Carolyn Blair, Queens University Belfast. This webinar will take a look at new and emerging technologies that are relevant to palliative care. It will also look at the impact of the implementation of such technologies and how people can be supported when integrating new technologies into their lives.

Please register [here](#).

ECRF Webinar – Palliative Care in Prisons

Speaker: Prof Audrey Roulston, Queens University Belfast

Date: 26 April 2024

Time: 14.00-15.00

Prof Audrey Roulston, Queens University Belfast and PCRN member, will explore the area of palliative care in prisons. This area has long been identified as an underserved population, and this webinar is a unique opportunity to hear from an established researcher in the area. Audrey will guide participants through how she has conducted her research in this area, the insights she has gained, and the impact that her research has had. There will also be time for participants to ask questions.

Please register [here](#)

Vacancies in the Irish Cancer Society Research Team

Translational & Clinical Research

Coordinator: suitable for someone post-PhD (or 3 months from PhD completion) who is at an early stage in their academic career. The role would be to coordinate our translational and clinical grant funding competitions.

Salary is €43K and the closing date for applications is 9th April 2024.

Research Support Coordinator: suitable for someone who has experience with research administration & support including the coordination of events and research communication activities. Salary is €37K and the closing date for applications is 10th April 2024.

Dates for your Diary:

Bookings are now open for the Irish Hospice Foundations series of workshops on loss and bereavement throughout April, further information can be found [here](#).

25th & 26th April 2024: 6th All Island Children's Palliative Care Conference, Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Ireland. Register [here](#)

16-18 May: In-person, European Association for Palliative Care World Research Congress, Barcelona, Spain. For more information, see [link](#).

Building, Belfast. For additional details, please contact Dr. Esther Beck at e.beck@ulster.ac.uk



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