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A Voice for Palliative Care in  
Ireland



February Newsletter





On February 11, 2025, the Irish Association for Palliative Care (IAPC) hosted its highly successful 24th Education & Research Seminar, bringing together clinicians, researchers and healthcare professionals from across Ireland. Themed “Integration and Innovation Across the Lifespan,” the seminar provided an invaluable platform to discuss groundbreaking research, clinical advancements, and best practices in palliative care. The event began with a warm welcome from Dr. Esther Beck, Chairperson of the IAPC, and Dr. Thomas Cahill, Vice Chair of the Education and Research Forum. They emphasised the importance of collaboration, research, and education in shaping the future of palliative care, especially in light of new policy developments and the increasing need for innovative, patient-centred care across Ireland.



*‘Great seminar! It really was a fantastic day – everything ran so smoothly, and the sessions were genuinely useful.*



# Platform Presentations

The seminar featured eleven platform presentations, each offering valuable insights into emerging trends and challenges in palliative care. Research topics ranged from clinical treatments and symptom management to the experiences of healthcare professionals and interdisciplinary collaboration.



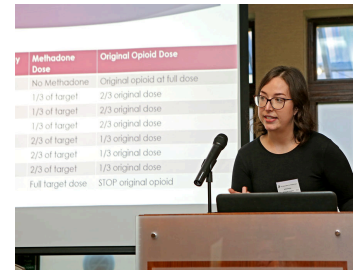
The latest research presentations in palliative care showcased a diverse range of studies aimed at enhancing symptom management, improving healthcare practices, and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. Researchers explored innovative approaches to patient comfort, including the use of High-Flow Nasal Therapy to manage breathlessness, highlighting its potential to improve respiratory symptoms and overall well-being. Financial aspects of end-of-life care were also examined, shedding light on the costs associated with both formal and informal caregiving. The importance of non-pharmacological interventions was emphasised through an Occupational Therapy-led breathlessness management program, demonstrating how structured interventions can positively impact patients' quality of life. Additionally, the role of prophylactic antibiotics for patients receiving corticosteroids was assessed, investigating their potential to reduce infection risks in palliative care settings.

Interdisciplinary collaboration emerged as a central theme across multiple presentations, showcasing the benefits of cross-specialty teamwork in palliative care. A case study demonstrated how partnerships between Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists supported a young adult with a rare neurodegenerative disorder, illustrating the role of tailored interventions in improving communication and daily function. A Quality Improvement initiative focused on refining PRN medication prescribing for oncology patients, aiming to reduce prescription errors and enhance patient safety. Global trends in the treatment of



Chronic Kidney Disease-associated Pruritus were also explored, identifying key preferences and emerging second-line therapy options.

The evolving role of palliative care key workers was another important discussion point, with a study calling for greater clarity and standardisation in their responsibilities and coordination efforts. As palliative care continues to adapt to the complex needs of patients and their families, these research findings underscore the necessity of a holistic, patient-centered approach that integrates medical, psychological, and social support. The presentations reinforced the importance of innovation, collaboration, and ongoing education in ensuring that palliative care services continue to evolve and meet the needs of those at the end of life.



Each presentation was followed by interactive Q&A sessions, fostering discussions that highlighted the real-world impact of this research on patient care and healthcare policy.





*"It was a great day full of learning, and always wonderful to catch up with colleagues."*



## Plenary Speaker



A major highlight of the day was the plenary lecture by Dr. Feargal Twomey, titled "The Most Dangerous Phrase in the Language." Dr. Twomey challenged attendees to question assumptions and traditional practices in palliative care, advocating for innovation, adaptability, and evidence-based decision-making. His compelling talk resonated with the audience, sparking meaningful discussions on how the field can continue evolving to meet the needs of patients and families.



## Poster Presentations

Alongside the platform presentations, the poster exhibition featured over 60 research projects, covering a broad spectrum of case studies, audits, quality improvement initiatives, and clinical research. Topics included medication safety, symptom management, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovations in palliative care delivery.

Some notable posters examined diabetes management at the end of life, deprescribing practices, and the impact of blood transfusions on fatigue and breathlessness. Others focused on improving communication between palliative care teams and general practitioners, enhancing transitions of care, and exploring the experience of family caregivers supporting loved ones with Motor Neurone Disease. Quality improvement initiatives also played a prominent role, with studies evaluating the effectiveness of hospital discharge processes, specialist palliative care resources, and strategies for reducing emergency hospital admissions for palliative patients.

The poster session provided attendees with an opportunity to engage directly with researchers, exchange ideas, and discuss potential applications of these findings in clinical practice.



## Poster Catalogue

The IAPC is delighted to share a catalogue of this year's poster presentations from the Education and Research Seminar 2025. These presentations showcase valuable research and insights in palliative care. To explore and download the catalogue, [click here](#)

**Download Here**

## Winners



Congratulations to Dr. Nessa Keane on winning the Best Platform Presentation Award for her research on "Improving Prescribing Accuracy of PRN Medications for Haematology/Oncology Patients to Improve Safety and Efficacy." Her work highlights a critical area of palliative care, ensuring safer and more effective medication management for patients.

Congratulations to Dr. Geena Kelly on her poster presentation, "Exploring Associations Between Transfusion of Red Cell Concentrate and Changes in the Symptoms of Fatigue and Breathlessness in the Palliative Care Setting." Her valuable research provides important insights into symptom management for palliative care patients, contributing to the ongoing advancement of evidence-based practice.



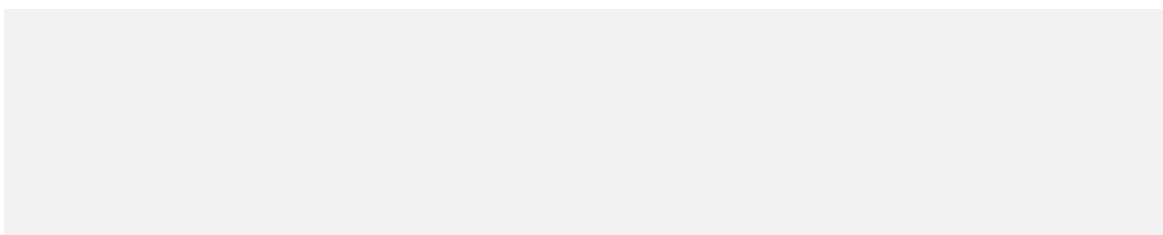
Claire Kruger accepting the award on behalf of Dr. Geena Kelly

## *Thank you*

The IAPC would like to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this event a success. We are especially grateful to our speakers and presenters for sharing their invaluable research and expertise, as well as to all attendees who contributed to the thought-provoking conversations throughout the seminar.

A special thank you to our sponsors, **Nutricia**, for their generous support, and to **Siel Bleu**, whose work in promoting physical well-being continues to make a meaningful impact. Your contributions help us continue our mission of improving palliative care through education, research, and collaboration.

We look forward to seeing you all again next year!





**Highlights from the Day:** Take a look at a snippet of **Siel Bleu's** activities, demonstrating the importance of movement and well-being

## IAPC Education and Research Virtual Workshops

Our first two **IAPC Virtual Workshops** were a great success, bringing together healthcare professionals from various fields to explore key challenges in palliative care. The first workshop, *"Death and Dying at the Margins – A View from the Ground,"* provided invaluable insights into caring for vulnerable populations, emphasising the importance of cross-sector collaboration. The second workshop, *"Paediatric to Young Adult Palliative Care Challenges,"* sparked meaningful discussions on the complexities of transitioning care for young patients and the need for tailored, multidisciplinary support. The engagement, thoughtful contributions, and shared expertise from participants made these sessions both insightful and impactful, reinforcing the importance of continued learning and collaboration in palliative care.

If you haven't registered yet, there's still time to join our remaining workshop as part of the Education and Research Seminar 2025. These sessions will explore critical topics in palliative care, featuring expert speakers and interactive discussions. Don't miss "Prisoners and Palliative Care" on March 6th. Secure your place now to gain valuable insights and contribute to these important conversations.

**Email [admin@iapc.ie](mailto:admin@iapc.ie) today to register your place**

The IAPC logo, consisting of the letters "IAPC" in a bold, dark blue font, is centered on a dark blue and green wavy banner at the bottom of the page.

**IAPC**



## Prisoners and Palliative Care

### Virtual Workshop

6th March 2025

16:00pm - 17:00pm

**Chaired by**

Dr. Thomas Cahill

**Presented by**

Professor Audrey Roulston

To Register Please Complete the form on our X:

[@palliativeire](#)

For further enquiries please email [admin@iapc.ie](mailto:admin@iapc.ie)



**Irish Association  
for Palliative Care**

## **The Power of Compassion in Palliative Care**

Palliative care nurse Bee O'Grady shares a powerful account of caring for two terminally ill men on the same night, highlighting the profound impact of end-of-life care. Despite their different backgrounds, both men received the dignity and compassion they deserved in their final moments. Her story underscores the importance of palliative care in ensuring comfort and support for patients and their families.

[Read the Article Here](#)

## **Upcoming ECRF Webinar: Palliative Care for People with Intellectual Disabilities**

Join Dr. Kumaresan Cithambaram (Technological University Shannon) on March 6, 2025, from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM for an insightful ECRF webinar exploring palliative care needs for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Dr. Cithambaram will share his research journey, followed by a facilitated Q&A session.

[Register Here](#)

## **Upcoming Webinar: Improving Palliative and End-of-Life Care**

Public Policy Exchange will be hosting a webinar on Improving Palliative and End-of-Life

Care: Transforming Services in the Wake of Parliament's Vote on Assisted Dying on Thursday, April 3rd, 2025, from 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM GMT. For further details, feel free to reach out to [jdoorgunah@parlistudies.org](mailto:jdoorgunah@parlistudies.org)

[Download Form Here](#)

## LGBT Ireland's Champions Programme

### Further Information

Ensure safe, inclusive care for LGBTQI+ older people with LGBT Ireland's Champions Programme, offering expert training for health and social care professionals. Upcoming online training dates: March 26, April 29, and May 21 (1:00–5:00 PM)



### **Dates for your Diary:**

**27th February:** IAPC Virtual Workshop 2: 'Paediatric to Young Adult Palliative Care Challenges', registration forms can be found on our website or X.

**4th March:** In person: SPHeRE Network 11th Annual Conference 2025 "Translating research to health policy and system change", RCSI Dublin. Click on link to view further information and to register [here](#)

**6th March:** IAPC Virtual Workshop 3: 'Prisoners and Palliative Care', registration forms can be found on our website or X.

**14th March:** In person, Death Cafe, Enniskillen Castle Café, Wellington Road. Register [here](#)

**26th March:** In person, All Ireland Conference on integrated Care "Building a Better Future: Workforce Innovations for Person-centred Integrated Care", UCD O'Reilly Hall.

register [here](#).



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