



2024 Annual Report



Innovation Programme



NATIONAL
DOCTORS
TRAINING
& PLANNING



Health &
Social Care
Professions



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Seirbhísí
Altranaís & Cnáimhseachais

Office of the Nursing &
Midwifery Services Director



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FOREWORDS

Each year, the HSE Spark Innovation Programme shines a light on the energy, ingenuity, and commitment of staff across the Irish health service who are driving innovation at the frontline. This report once again provides a welcome reflection of the creative and impactful work taking place across our hospitals, community services, and clinical teams. Since Spark was first established within the National Doctors Training and Planning Unit, it has steadily cultivated a strong culture of frontline innovation in Ireland. It has supported hundreds of clinicians to turn good ideas into meaningful improvements—whether through new tools that enhance clinical investigation, re-designed services that better meet the needs of patients, or streamlined processes that boost efficiency and reduce delays. These innovations matter: they save time, enhance experiences, and deliver better care.



This year, more than ever, we recognise the importance of improving productivity across our services. We must continue to optimise how we work to ensure we meet increasing demands while still delivering the high-quality, person-centred care that patients rightly expect. Spark's support for innovation aligns perfectly with this dual ambition—enabling staff to innovate in ways that reduce inefficiency, maximise resources, and improve outcomes for patients.

An exciting recent development is the introduction of the Consultant Innovation Fund associated with the Public Only Consultant Contract. This fund enables consultants to access up to €20,000 annually to support continued learning, innovation and research projects aimed at improving patient care. It represents a significant investment in clinician-led innovation and is an important step toward embedding innovation as a core part of clinical leadership and practice. The fund also highlights a wider recognition that those closest to care are often best placed to design the solutions that make the biggest difference.

We are also entering a new era with the continued rollout of Health Regions. The ambition of these structures to deliver on Sláintecare principles—integrated care, access closer to home, and improved outcomes—requires a system that can respond with flexibility, creativity, and a strong appetite for change. Spark plays a vital role in enabling this, by supporting clinicians and frontline teams to take forward innovative approaches that meet the needs of their local populations.

As we look ahead, the opportunity is clear. Spark has the potential to further expand its impact by continuing to connect innovators, share learning, and embed design-led, evidence-informed, and user-focused approaches across the health service. I look forward to seeing where this journey takes us next.

My thanks to all the Spark team and to all health and social care colleagues who have gone beyond their core workday duties to help imagine new ideas on how we can make things better for our patients, wherever they are seen, and to translate their ideas into reality.

Dr. Colm Henry

CCO HSE

As we present the 2024 HSE Spark Annual Report, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the extraordinary work of our frontline innovators, partners and the broader change and innovation community. This year has been a testament to the power of collaboration, creativity and unwavering commitment to improving health and social care delivery across Ireland.



Since its inception, HSE Spark has been driven by a simple yet profound belief: those closest to the challenges are best placed to design the solutions. In 2024, this belief was brought to life through the remarkable efforts of doctors, nurses, midwives, health and social care professionals and public sector partners who embraced design and innovation to address pressing health and social care needs. From streamlining services to pioneering new technologies, their projects have not only enhanced patient outcomes but also strengthened the resilience and efficiency of our health and social care system.

This year, we have witnessed substantial growth and transformation within Spark, with significant advancements across our strategic pillars. I believe our initiatives have not only expanded in scope but also deepened in impact, bringing tangible improvements to clinical practice, patient outcomes and staff experiences. From the grassroots innovations supported through Spark Seed, to the ambitious, system-wide solutions developed under Spark Impact, and the cross-sectoral partnerships nurtured by Spark Fusion, the breadth and depth of our collective achievements are cause for much optimism.

A standout success this year has been the enthusiastic response to our Productivity Boost initiative, highlighting the untapped potential of frontline insights to deliver substantial improvements in efficiency and quality. Similarly, the introduction of the Consultant Innovation Fund enshrined in the new Public Only Consultant Contract, represents an important step toward integrating innovation as a fundamental aspect of clinical leadership and everyday practice. This fund has already begun to unlock the potential of clinician-led innovation, with projects spanning AI diagnostics, advanced care pathways and community-based interventions. It underscores our shared ambition to embed innovation as a cornerstone of clinical practice and leadership.

We remain deeply committed to the principle of Human-Centred Design, embedding this approach into everything we do. In 2024, our collaboration with the National College of Art and Design and the establishment of the Health Design Lab have allowed us to push the boundaries of health and social care innovation even further. By bringing together clinicians, designers, and researchers we are not only addressing immediate healthcare challenges but are also reimagining the future of public service delivery in Ireland.

As we look to 2025, the transition to Health Regions presents an exciting opportunity to deepen innovation at a local level while fostering system-wide learning. We will continue to champion research, scale proven solutions, and nurture the next generation of health and social care innovators. The challenges ahead are significant, but so too is the ingenuity and resolve of the clinical community.

I want to thank our dedicated Spark team, our valued partners in NDTP, ONMSD, HSCP, and all collaborators who continue to support and enrich our innovation ecosystem. Special thanks to our National Clinical Innovation Fellows, whose expertise and passion have been instrumental in guiding and amplifying frontline efforts.

To every individual who contributed to Spark's journey this year—thank you. Your work is reshaping health and social care for the better, one idea at a time. Together, we are proving that innovation isn't just about change; it's about progress with purpose.

Jared Gormly

Head of HSE Spark





I am delighted to highlight the ongoing collaboration between the Spark Innovation Programme and the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) throughout 2024. This milestone marks three years of ONMSD's continued support for the Nursing and Midwifery National Fellowship in Innovation, a developmental opportunity designed to empower clinical nurses and midwives to enhance their leadership and innovation skills while shaping the evolution of the Spark Programme.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the ONMSD Nursing and Midwifery Fellow, Catherine Marsh. Her leadership within the programme has significantly strengthened engagement and awareness of Spark among nurses and midwives. Catherine's contributions have been instrumental in fostering a culture of innovation and frontline support, culminating in her and her Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) colleagues in the Rotunda Hospital Dublin receiving an Irish Healthcare Award for Best Nursing Project of the Year. Her dedication and impact in this role have been truly commendable.

The Spark Innovation Programme continues to serve as a vital space for nurses and midwives to share their insights, drive meaningful change, and develop innovative approaches to delivering high-quality, person-centred care. Our commitment to collaboration with Spark remains strong as we strive to expand opportunities for nurses, midwives, and interdisciplinary teams to apply their expertise, creativity, and passion to healthcare innovation.

As reflected in this report, this collaboration has resulted in tangible improvements in both staff and patient experiences, enhanced health outcomes, and the introduction of pioneering nursing and midwifery practices. This report showcases outstanding examples of innovation, enthusiasm, and excellence in implementing project ideas that make a real and lasting impact on healthcare delivery.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who has contributed to these achievements.

Dr. Geraldine Shaw

Nursing and Midwifery Services Director and Nursing and Midwifery Advisor (Interim) to the HSE CEO
Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD)
Office of the Chief Clinical Officer



I am delighted to introduce the 2024 HSE Spark Innovation Programme Annual Report that highlights the continued collaboration between the National Health and Social Care Professions (HSCP) Office and the HSE Spark Innovation Programme in advancing health and social care innovation. This partnership closely aligns with the HSCP Deliver strategic framework, emphasising our commitment to promoting innovative practices that transform service delivery and enhance patient outcomes.

The ongoing synergy between The HSCPO and the HSE Spark Innovation Programme has facilitated the exchange of ideas and best practices, providing health and social care professionals with platforms to actively engage in co-design processes, ensuring that the solutions developed are both innovative and user-centred. Throughout the past year, our collaboration has been instrumental in fostering a culture of innovation within the health and social care system.

The theme for HSCP Day 2024, "Health and Social Care Professionals—Working in Partnership" resonates deeply with our collaborative endeavours. This theme underscores the significant value of partnership and collective effort in driving forward our shared mission of fostering innovation within the health and social care system.

This has been a year of expansion for the HSE Spark Innovation Programme, now with three National HSCP Innovation Fellows on the team. I would like to express sincere thanks to this year's fellows for their ongoing commitment to supporting frontline health and social care professionals, and indeed others, in frontline innovation. The growing numbers of National HSCP Fellows in the Spark Programme has facilitated increased engagement with their HSCP colleagues right around the country.

Innovation is key to progress in every industry, and health and social care is no exception. In an era where challenges such as increasing patient numbers, resource constraints, and evolving medical technologies shape the landscape, the need for frontline-driven innovation has never been greater. I look forward to continued collaboration and partnership with the HSE Spark Innovation Programme so that together we can drive innovative approaches to today's most pressing health and social care challenges.

Jackie Reed

National Lead for the National Health and Social Care Professions Office



As we embark on another year of progress and innovation, I am once again delighted to express my support for the Spark Innovation Programme. Within the pages of this year's annual report, we see powerful examples of how healthcare professionals are rising to the challenges of our time—driving forward ideas that improve patient care, boost productivity, and enhance the experience of those who use and deliver our services.

Over the past year, the HSE Spark Innovation Programme has continued to empower frontline staff to lead change from within, creating space for creativity, collaboration, and practical problem-solving across the system. In a time of increasing complexity and demand, the ability to generate and implement meaningful solutions has never been more important.

I commend the programme's ongoing commitment to supporting innovation that is rooted in the realities of clinical care and shaped by the needs of patients and staff. By equipping our clinicians with the tools, networks, and support to innovate, Spark continues to unlock transformative ideas—ranging from small, local improvements to system-wide change.

This is the first full year of the consultant's innovation fund, introduced in the Public Only Consultant Contract (POCC), a new and important development that provides consultants with dedicated support to pursue innovative and research-based improvements in patient care. This fund signals a growing recognition of the value of clinician-led innovation and offers a significant opportunity to deepen the culture of innovation across our health service.

At the core of our shared mission lies a commitment to excellence, efficiency and person-centred care. I extend my sincere appreciation to all those who have contributed to the continued success of the Spark Innovation Programme—from the teams behind each project to the mentors, Fellows and leaders who support them. Your work is shaping a health service that is not only responsive and resilient but also ambitious and forward-looking.

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, I look ahead with optimism. The innovations featured in this report are a testament to what is possible when creativity is supported, and potential is unlocked. Let us continue to build on this momentum and drive clinical innovation that delivers lasting impact for patients, staff and the health system as a whole.

Prof. Anthony O'Regan

Medical Director NDTP
Consultant Physician GUH



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS





The HSE Spark Innovation Programme was established by the National Doctors Training and Planning office (NDTP) in 2017 to encourage and support innovation among doctors working at the frontline of health and social care in Ireland. Through the support of our colleagues at the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Service Division (ONMSD) and the National Health & Social Care Professions Office (NHSCPO), the programme has grown to extend that support to all clinical staff right across the health service.

The Spark Innovation Programme seeks to support, promote and recognise innovation amongst health and social care staff within the HSE. The programme recognises the unique insights and perspectives of all frontline health and social care workers and trusts in their ability to generate creative and novel solutions to the challenges that exist in their individual settings and right across the health service.

HSE Spark believes that the best way to become active agents of change and to learn more about innovation is to engage in innovation activity through projects. To that end we offer a number of initiatives every year that allow frontline staff to engage in innovation activity in a meaningful and impactful manner. Through engagement with the programme and our multiple initiatives, frontline health and social care workers can access funding, mentorship and professional development opportunities through Fellowships and innovation training.

SPARK TEAM 2024



Jared Gormly
Head of HSE Spark



Caitriona Heffernan
National Clinical Innovation Lead



Dermot Burke
Programme Operations Manager



Dr. Michelle Howard
Clinical Research Lead



Catherine Marsh
National Nursing & Midwifery Innovation Fellow



Claire McElvanna
National HSCP Innovation Fellow



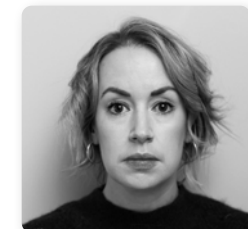
Muthu Thangaramanujam
National HSCP Innovation Fellow



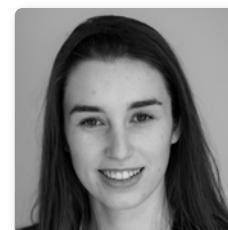
Dr. Eve Stanley
National NDTP Innovation Fellow



Dr. Alanna Allen
National NDTP Innovation Fellow



Siobhan Power
National HSCP Innovation Fellow



Dr. Emily Wallace
National NDTP Innovation Fellow



Dr. Bobby Tang
National NDTP Innovation Fellow

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the HSE Spark Innovation Programme align closely with the HSE Corporate Plan 2021-2024, ensuring that activity receives strong support from the centre of the organisation.

1. ENGAGE & EMPOWER FRONTLINE STAFF

We seek to empower staff to deliver change, identify barriers and implement improvements for patients and service- users.*

- Promote and celebrate initiative, creativity and collaboration
- Create funding streams for staff-generated solutions to identified problems and opportunities
- Enable access to training in design and innovation methodologies
- Provide mentoring
- Share success stories

*HSE Corporate Plan 2021-24

2. CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ECOSYSTEM FOR HEALTH INNOVATORS

With a shared vision of improving patient and service-user experience, we will work together more effectively and overcome barriers that have made change more difficult in the past.*

- Create an innovation-friendly workplace
- Promote collaborative work practices
- Normalise innovation practices
- Promote the role of human-centred thinking in the health system
- Promote early engagement with emerging technology

3. DEVELOP SYSTEMATIC CAPABILITY

To create an 'innovation ready' environment, we will focus on creating education and training programmes. We will also provide opportunities for teamwork and collaboration across local and national networks.*

- Create an innovation-friendly workplace
- Promote collaborative work practices
- Normalise innovation practices
- Promote the role of human-centred thinking in the health system
- Promote early engagement with emerging technology

PILLARS OF THE SPARK PROGRAMME

In pursuit of our organisational aims and objectives, we have established a strategic framework built upon seven core pillars of activity. These pillars provide the solid foundation for our operations, guiding our efforts to maximise engagement, innovation and impact.



RESEARCH

Contributing to the body of research in the frontline innovation space both nationally and internationally.



INITIATIVES

Creating opportunities to develop skills, secure micro funding, access mentorship and embed innovation.



PIONEERING

Leading the way with new products, services and ways of working through pilots and validation studies.



ENGAGEMENT

Providing multimodal engagement opportunities for our innovation collective across the health service.



DESIGN

Implementing user informed change and innovation.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing our staff for agency and impact.



NETWORK

Gathering and connecting our internal and external partners.

The Spark Seed initiative continued to provide frontline health and social care professionals with access to micro-funding, design support, and innovation resources throughout 2024. The initiative empowers clinical staff to develop and implement small-scale but high-impact projects that enhance patient care, streamline operations, improve service delivery and generate cost savings. The initiative focuses on supporting frontline innovators from the 'grass roots' up, supporting them to innovate and make a real difference to patients, staff and the health service at large.

The response to Spark Seed in 2024 has been exceptional, with a substantial increase in both applications and funded projects. The initiative continues to attract a diverse range of submissions from across the HSE, reflecting the commitment of health and social care professionals to delivering patient-centred solutions.

Through Spark Seed, frontline staff are given the tools, funding, and support needed to bring their innovative ideas to life. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and creative problem-solving, the initiative ensures that the health service remains dynamic, responsive, and forward-thinking.

KEY FEATURES OF SPARK SEED

Design Thinking Workshops: All applicants now have the opportunity to participate in design thinking workshops, equipping them with practical tools to refine their ideas using human-centred design methodologies.

Pitching skills development: Applicants to Spark Seed have the opportunity to learn valuable pitching skills which enable them to describe their innovation problem space and solution concisely and in a compelling manner. This is an essential skill for gaining support and endorsement for new ideas inside the system.

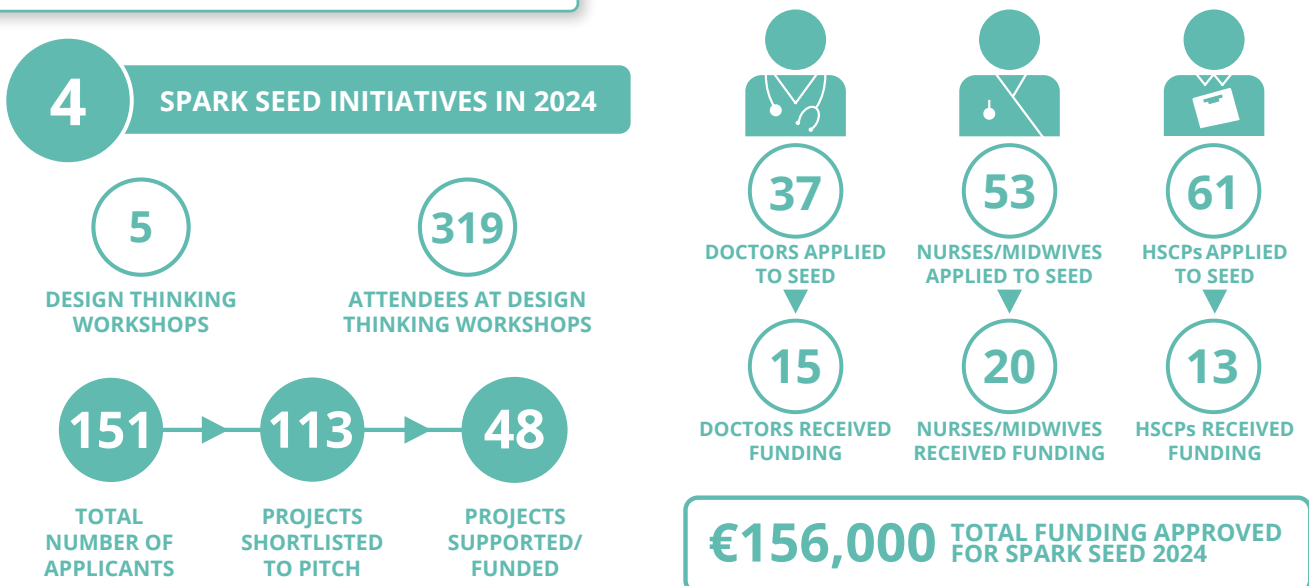
Digital Application Portal: A newly enhanced digital application platform ensures that Spark Seed remains open to applicants throughout the year, closing only

for shortlisting periods. This provides greater flexibility for health social care professionals to apply when it best suits their schedules.

Four National Pitching Events: Shortlisted applicants now present their projects at four dedicated pitching events spread across the year, allowing for structured, transparent, and planned application cycles. Clear deadlines enable innovators to prepare in advance, ensuring accessibility for all staff.

Individualised Feedback: All applicants receive individual feedback about their proposed innovative ideas. This includes sign-posting to alternative resources within the HSE and any networking opportunities where projects have similar themes or ambitions.

SPARK SEED DATA 2024



'Melanoma: Boost patient knowledge to empower positive change' Dr. Daniel Lyons, Dermatology Registrar, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin

The Problem: Skin cancer is one of most common cancers affecting Irish people on a yearly basis. The worldwide incidence of melanoma has been increasing with age-standardised incidence increasing by an average 1.13% per year from 1990-2019. This is despite well-established public health campaigns, including the 'ABCDE' tool. Increasing melanoma rates can have negative patient, societal and healthcare related costs.



The Solution: Our initial co-design study found that some patients found the current tool difficult to understand and to use to monitor their skin. Our solution was to create a prototype 'simulation skin' model depicting the evolution of a 'normal' mole to a melanoma. This tactile pictorial representation may be more impactful than the current 'ABCDE' tool.

The Benefits: Our successful Spark Seed Funding pitch and grant award had allowed for further graphic design input to further develop the 'simulation skin' changing mole model. Our research has shown positive attitudes amongst our patients for this new education tool. Boosting patient's knowledge of melanoma may lead to improved photoprotection amongst the general public with the potential to ameliorate the current increasing melanoma rates.

RespLink Fridge Magnets - Hermi Lo, Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialist, St. James's Hospital Respiratory Assessment Unit

The Problem: Patients with chronic respiratory conditions often struggle to access reliable health information, especially older individuals. Critical details about their medical condition, medications, self-management strategies are scattered across multiple sources, (i.e., internet, booklets, pamphlets, etc.) making it difficult to find and retain essential guidance. As a result, many patients rely on incomplete, or inaccurate information, impacting their ability to manage their health effectively.



The Solution: The RespLink Fridge magnet provides a simple, accessible solution by featuring a QR code that links directly to a curated online resource hub. Placed in a visible household location, it ensures that patients and their families can quickly and easily access trustworthy, up-to-date information about their lung condition (Asthma, COPD, ILD, etc.), oxygen therapy, inhaler techniques and more. This eliminates the need for searching multiple sources, holding on to easily-lost printed materials and the risk of misinformation.

The Benefits: By integrating digital health education into patient's daily environments, RespLink Fridge Magnets empowers them to take an active role in managing their condition. Improved access to reliable information enhances adherence to treatment, reduces unnecessary hospital visits and supports better health outcomes. For health and social care providers, it serves as an efficient tool to reinforce patient education beyond clinical interactions.

'QR Care' Longford Primary Care Team - Fiona Flynn (OT), Linda Kelly (Senior SLT), Éilís Conroy (Clinical Psychologist in Training), Síle Carney (Clinical Psychologist), Marie Brady (Senior Physiotherapist) & Fiona Curley (Senior Dietitian)

The Problem: The reconfiguration of Children's Services under Progressing Disability Services (PDS), resulted in a change to referral criteria for Primary Care Services. Referrers and parents subsequently reported challenges in understanding the remit of Primary Care Services and identifying where to direct referrals. In addition, challenges with completing the new referral forms were also noted. Referrers reported increased admin time required to explain services to families and to complete referral forms. An audit found that Primary Care clinicians were spending up to 1000 extra hours completing admin related to processing these referrals.



The Solution: QR Care brought accessible information in multiple languages about services and referral forms directly to families and referrers. A QR Code on an engaging poster was circulated to referrers. The QR Code brought users to discipline specific videos outlining the role and remit of each discipline. In addition, informational videos on how to complete the referral forms were developed. The videos were translated into multiple languages based on demographical information available.

The Benefits: Benefits of this project include reduction in referrer time explaining services to families and completing referrals, reduction in administration time by Primary Care services and easier access to services for families.



2024 saw the launch of the HSE Spark Innovation Programme’s ‘Spark Impact’ Initiative. Spark Impact is a funding call designed to support health and social care professionals deliver innovative solutions to today’s most pressing health and social care challenges. Spark Impact was developed as an amalgamation of previous Spark initiatives—the Hospital Innovation Fund and the Community Innovation Fund. This streamlining of initiatives reflects the ongoing transition of the broader health service to more integrated models of care.

Spark Impact 2024 focused on projects that aligned with critical health and social care priorities including, but not limited to; Preventative and Screening Services, Mental Health, Children’s Health, Integrated Urgent and Emergency Care, Access to Care, Climate Change and Disability Services.

This funding call sought applications that proposed a novel solution to a clear unmet need in our health service. In addition, projects needed to demonstrate their potential to scale, spread, and deliver a return on investment. As part of Spark’s support framework, successful projects received structured mentorship from our National Spark Innovation Fellows. These follow-up calls served as a platform to track progress, assess milestones, and address challenges in project implementation.

SPARK IMPACT DATA 2024

98

TOTAL APPLICATIONS

PROFESSION OF LEAD APPLICANT



CONSULTANT (20.4%)

20



NCHD (12.3%)

12



NURSE/MIDWIFE (26.5%)

26



HSCP (40.8%)

40

FUNDED PROJECTS

27

PROFESSION OF LEAD APPLICANT

12

DOCTORS (44.4%)

6

NURSE/MIDWIFE (22.3%)

9

HSCP (33.3%)

“Virtually Pain Free.” Using Mobile Phone based Virtual Reality for Community Based Chronic Pain. Anna Marie Kiernan, RANP Pain Management. Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, Limerick



The Problem: The prevalence of chronic pain in Ireland ranges from 20 to 40%. The experience of chronic pain imposes a significant emotional, psychological and financial burden on sufferers and their families; and constitutes a huge financial burden on resources in the public health sector. The area of self-management has helped in addressing the impact of pain on patient’s multidimensional experiences and supports achieving the best from treatments provided.

The Solution: Anna Marie’s innovative idea involved the introduction of virtual reality as a treatment enhancement for patients prior to interventional injection to continue to 6 months post procedure. Patients access the Shine VR platform, a virtual reality platform which supports mindfulness and guided imagery, on a VR headset in hospital. On discharge, patients can access an adapted version of the platform for 6 months on their mobile phone using a mobile phone mountable headset to give the exact same virtual reality experience.

The Impact:

- Cost-saving in comparison with common over the counter analgesia
- Uses gaze technology with single button touch for access
- Fully GDPR compliant
- Supports the development of self-management skills for independent management of pain symptoms
- Potential to diffuse and scale project to other areas and fields of speciality.



Occupational Therapy Led Reablement. Megan Walsh, Senior Occupational Therapist, University Hospital Waterford

The Problem: There is increasing demand placed on the acute and subacute sectors of our health service and prolonged hospital admissions are associated with increased mortality and poorer patient outcomes.

The Solution: An innovative collaboration between the acute Occupational Therapy (OT) Department at UHW and the local HSE Home Support Office. Reablement, a short-term, goal-orientated service is empowering patients discharged from hospital to regain independence in activities of daily living in their own environments. The service is providing targeted home-based rehabilitation that is

led by a Senior OT and facilitated by healthcare assistants (HCAs) trained in a reablement approach. This reablement service is closing the gap between hospital and home.

The Impact: At 6 months, the pilot phase has demonstrated the following impacts:

- 41 patients enrolled in new pathway.
- Reduced length of stay - average reduction in LOS of 4 days
- Capacity created in sub-acute sectors - decreased dependency on inpatient rehabilitation and convalescence beds (Total savings to date estimated to be 500 ancillary bed days)
- Timely access to care in the patient’s own home - 95% seen day 0 or day 1 post discharge
- Improved patient satisfactio
- Enhanced provider experience - increased job satisfaction for OTs and HCAs

(contd.)

- Improvement in functional independence for all patients as measured using Barthel Index Scores
- Correct use of home support services—95% of patients did not require an increase or new home support service post reablement

Rapid Pharmacogenetics and Platelet Reactivity Profiling to Facilitate Personalised Antiplatelet Therapy in Patients with Transient Ischaemic Attack or Ischaemic Stroke. Professor Dominick McCabe, Tallaght University Hospital

The Problem: Stroke is the leading cause of acquired physical disability, the 2nd commonest cause of death in adults, and a major risk factor for dementia in middle-higher income countries. Approximately 6,461 people are admitted to Irish hospitals per year with stroke (INASC 2025). All transient ischaemic attacks (TIAs) and about 80% of strokes are ischaemic in origin. Most TIAs/ischaemic strokes originate from outside the heart and warrant treatment with antiplatelet therapy. However, the majority of TIA/ischaemic stroke patients are not protected from recurrent vascular events with commonly-prescribed 'non-monitored' antiplatelet regimens. This may partly relate to the phenomenon of High on-Treatment Platelet Reactivity ('sticky platelets'). Physicians do not routinely assess HTPR status, or perform 'pharmacogenetics' tests which might influence HTPR status to prescribe 'individualised treatment' to suit TIA/ischaemic stroke patients in routine practice in the absence of definitive studies in this field.



The Solution: The Optimal Antiplatelet Therapy in TIA and Ischaemic Stroke-International (OATS-I) observational study is assessing HTPR status with user-friendly, reliable laboratory tests in TIA/ischaemic stroke patients on antiplatelet monotherapy or combination therapy (aspirin, clopidogrel, ticagrelor). It is also assessing the reliability, accuracy, tolerability and additional value of performing 'Rapid Pharmacogenetics assays' (Genomadix Inc), and centralised pharmacogenetics assays to look for genetic variants which might potentially reduce or increase the conversion of clopidogrel from its inactive 'pro-drug' to its active metabolite in TIA/ischaemic stroke patients in Ireland.

The Impact:

- Feasible in Clinical Practice: Data confirm that standardised assessment of platelet reactivity and pharmacogenetics status can be performed in patients with TIA or ischaemic stroke in a Hospital setting.
- Reliable: Interim data validate the technical feasibility, accuracy and tolerability of 'near-patient' rapid pharmacogenetics assays.
- Enhanced Risk Stratification: Combined data from platelet reactivity and pharmacogenetics assays have the potential to improve our ability to identify TIA or ischaemic stroke patients at higher risk of recurrent vascular events.
- Guide Future Trials and Service Planning: Data will inform innovative clinical trial design and future service planning in individual TIA or ischaemic stroke patients.
- Opportunities for Personalised Therapy: Potential for 'precision-based' antiplatelet strategies to enhance secondary prevention following TIA/ischaemic stroke.

INTERVIEWS WITH INNOVATORS

DR. CAOIMHE GLANCY, PSYCHIATRY REGISTRAR. INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES, SAINT JOHN OF GOD COMMUNITY SERVICES

Caoimhe didn't think for a moment that she would go into psychiatry. Her interest in medicine was piqued by her mother who is a nurse and is evidenced by photos of Caoimhe playing with a toy stethoscope as a toddler. She studied Human Health and Disease for her undergraduate degree, which was later followed by postgraduate medical training. However, during an intern placement, Caoimhe fell in love with psychiatry and went on to practice the specialty in Australia before moving back to Ireland.



"I worked in various psychiatry placements in different specialities, then in one of my roles I was given an HSE email address and started receiving the Spark emails. That's how I saw the open call for a bursary to study a Professional Diploma in Service Design with NCAD. I sent in the 500-word application and was accepted. I've been involved in Spark initiatives ever since."

The course has had a big impact on Caoimhe's way of working. Audits and quality improvement projects are a matter of course in the health and social care system, but she now sees them as much more than box-ticking exercises. Applying her learning to the challenges she encounters, she now spends much more time defining the problem—drilling down until she has a clearly defined, one-sentence statement. Design thinking teaches us that you can go down rabbit holes if you don't correctly define the problem in the first instance.

"I've picked up a variety of skills and my way of viewing things is through a much wider scope now. Carrying the patient voice in my head has become so important to my projects. In principle, everything we do is patient centred. In reality, however, we clinicians can have a tendency to go off and complete a project without any patient input. That's something I really notice now. It's not about doing things for the patient but with the patient."

Caoimhe is currently involved in a hospital-wide project around delirium. Rather than simply taking statistics from single moments in time, they are reviewing the person's whole experience from admission to referral to psychiatry.

"Spark is a great place to start a project. Reach out to the fellows and attend the workshops. Putting yourself out there and speaking to like-minded people can give you the confidence to bring ideas to your colleagues and also help you to best present those ideas so they are taken onboard. In service design, where you're working with a lot of creative people, it's easy to think you don't have skills to get stuck in. But be open and you'll be surprised by what progress you can make."

Caoimhe had already worked on innovation projects before she applied for the bursary, but many of the projects that Spark supports are brought forward by people new to innovation and design. The Spark team offers lots of support to anyone interested in one of their initiatives. If you submit a project idea, you will receive feedback from the team to help you refine your application or adapt your approach if you weren't successful.

"I think there's an idea out there that people don't like change. But I haven't experienced any friction when putting forward innovation projects. If you have a well-defined problem, and a potential solution to that problem, people are open to that. There is a real culture of innovation in clinical practice - if you don't keep up with the changes you'll stagnate. It's exciting to see all the innovations other people have come up with!"



The Spark Fusion Initiative unites health and social care professionals and public sector staff, encouraging them to look beyond the traditional boundaries of their institutions to foster genuine, cross-sectoral collaboration for better population health. The initiative required HSE employees and other public sector bodies to come together in addressing health needs that can be more effectively or more efficiently addressed in community or citizen centric settings. Spark Fusion built upon the groundwork established by the Healthy Ireland Framework 2013–2025, intended to enhance health and wellbeing while mitigating future risks to public health.

The launch in 2023 received an enthusiastic response, with thirty-eight collaborative teams submitting innovative project proposals aimed at improving public health. Seven projects were shortlisted, addressing a diverse range of public health challenges.

Throughout 2024, the Spark Fusion initiative saw many of the funded projects delivered to the wider population and the formation of impactful and lasting partnerships with other public sector colleagues. The implementation of these projects represents a significant step towards addressing key public health issues using a citizen centric approach and strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration.

SPARK FUSION SUPPORTED PROJECTS 2024

**BabyTalk Initiative : Promoting Parent child Interaction to increase Speech Exposure in the Neonatal Unit - A Quality Improvement Initiative'.
Deirdre Bradley - Senior Speech & Language Therapist.**

The Problem: A baseline audit of babies admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda found exposure to reading, speaking and singing remarkably low with limited opportunities for infants in the unit. A need was identified to establish a project focused on encouraging parental speaking, reading and singing in NICU and 'BabyTalk' was established.

The Solution: The BabyTalk Initiative is a cross-site, collaborative, project aimed at enhancing early language and communication development for high-risk infants in the NICU. The program encourages parents to actively engage with their babies through reading, singing and speaking, thereby increasing the quantity and quality of speech exposure. Partnering with Louth and Meath County Libraries allowed each baby gifted their first Library card and invitation to baby friendly events, allowing for lifelong language and literacy development opportunities for both babies and their families long after their NICU stay.

The Benefit: Active engagement with newborns is crucial for fostering bonds between parents and their babies, improving mental health in the postnatal period and beyond.

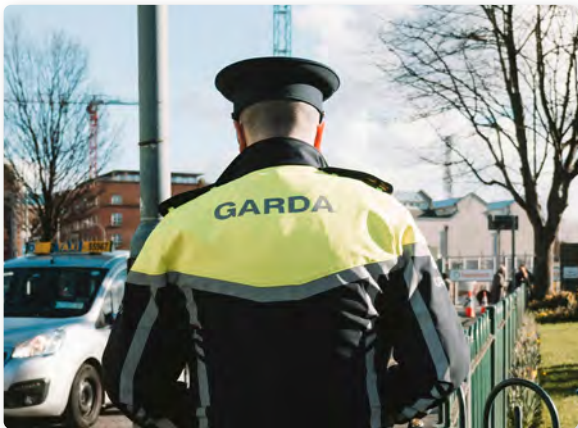
The outcome: A post-project audit found significant gains in reading, speaking and singing and an acknowledgement by parents of the benefits of the programme through better communication. BabyTalk continues to scale up nationally to allow opportunities for all neonatal units to harness these benefits.



Dementia Training for An Garda Síochána Deirdre Mc Nally – Senior Social worker

The Problem: An Garda Síochána frequently encounter people living with dementia, often in crisis situations involving disorientation, purposeful walking, or distress. Despite this, Gardaí currently receive no formal dementia-specific training as part of their professional development. While existing resources like the Dementia Elevator course exist in Ireland, none are tailored to the unique role and responsibilities of police services. International training resources sourced online, primarily from the U.S., did not translate well into the Irish context, highlighting differences in policing approaches and cultural norms. This identified gap, coupled with expressed interest from Gardaí, underlined the need for bespoke dementia awareness training.

The Solution: The Integrated Care Programme for Older People (ICPOP) Tallaght Community Specialist Team collaborated with local Gardaí to design and deliver a bespoke half-day dementia awareness training session. Developed by a multidisciplinary team (social worker, clinical nurse manager, and occupational therapist), the course includes content on dementia, delirium, effective communication, safer walking strategies, assistive technologies, and community supports.



The Benefit: Improved dementia awareness training for Gardaí will result in more positive, compassionate interactions with vulnerable older adults. Enhanced knowledge of dementia-specific communication techniques and crisis management strategies reduces stress for both the person with dementia and the responding Garda. Strengthening referral pathways to ICPPOP teams will also help identify at-risk individuals who may otherwise not engage with health services, particularly those experiencing self-neglect, addiction, or mental health difficulties.

The Outcome: Following this initiative, bespoke dementia training videos have been produced, featuring Irish Gardaí and older person actors in realistic scenarios. These videos reflect the cultural and legal context of Ireland and serve as engaging learning tools for discussion and skill-building. The ICPPOP Tallaght CST team continues to deliver face-to-face dementia awareness training sessions using these new materials. CPD modules are being prepared for the Garda's internal training platform, enabling continuous professional development and ensuring every Garda has access to dementia education across Ireland.

Lifeguards Stay Smart under the Sun Dr. Aileen Reddan- Senior Medical Officer



The Problem: Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Ireland, with cases projected to rise significantly over the next 20 years. Lifeguards, by nature of their work, are highly exposed to ultraviolet radiation (UVR), placing them at elevated risk. Despite national campaigns like Be SunSmart, there is currently no tailored sun safety education included in lifeguard orientation programmes. Younger lifeguards, often repeatedly employed over several summers, are particularly vulnerable to cumulative UV damage. County councils as employers have a duty to provide information, training, and equipment to protect their staff. Without targeted intervention, preventable skin cancer rates will continue to climb.

The Solution: This project, a collaboration between the HSE and Galway County Council, proposes the inclusion of a dedicated sun safety education module in the orientation programme for lifeguards, guided by the Healthy Ireland Be Sun Smart campaign. The training will be supported by educational resources, pre- and post-training surveys, and additional practical measures such as providing sunglasses (EN172), high-factor sunscreen, suitable hats, and personal UVR monitors.

The Benefit: Educating lifeguards on sun safety will foster lifelong protective habits, reducing their personal risk of skin cancer and promoting visible leadership for beachgoers and the public. The provision of protective equipment and UVR monitoring will reinforce key messages and inform future practice. Annual delivery of this training will ensure each new cohort of lifeguards is equipped with the knowledge and tools to protect themselves. The project also provides a unique opportunity to gather data on sun safety behaviours and UV exposure, supporting evidence-based recommendations. Long-term, this initiative could be extended to all counties recruiting lifeguards, amplifying national impact.

The Outcome: The campaign is expected to raise awareness among lifeguards about the critical importance of sun safety, encouraging lasting changes in behaviour. By providing tailored education and essential sun protection tools such as sunscreen, sunglasses, and UV monitors, lifeguards will be better prepared to safeguard themselves against harmful UV radiation. It is anticipated that this initiative will inspire lifeguards to adopt long-term sun protection habits, which will not only protect their health but also position them as role models for the public. The success of this campaign could pave the way for its expansion, creating a national movement for sun safety at the seaside.



HSE Spark is committed to providing frontline staff across the country with the resources, tools, and expertise required for innovation. Spark Connect fosters and supports the sense of shared purpose that exists inside the health service to connect with colleagues and deliver meaningful change, improvement and innovation to our patients and service users. Through Spark Connect, we strive to empower and inspire individuals or teams to cultivate their own innovation ecosystem within their clinical environments by offering tools and resources that facilitate connection and knowledge-sharing. Throughout 2024, Spark offered a number of opportunities for members of staff from across the health and social care system to connect with Spark and with their like-minded colleagues inside their own clinical settings.

CONNECTING FOR PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSFORMATION WEEK 2024

During Public Service Transformation Week 2024, frontline clinicians were invited to register for a Spark Connect Toolkit. Informed by feedback from 2023 Spark Connect participants and in response to high demand, 100 copies of the enhanced 2024 Spark Connect toolkit, designed to support innovation workshops, were distributed nationwide.

Throughout Public Service Transformation Week, the Spark inbox and social media channels were filled with posts by innovators sharing photos and details of their events, which ranged from hospital-wide gatherings and cross-team collaborations in community settings, to focused in-house team workshops.

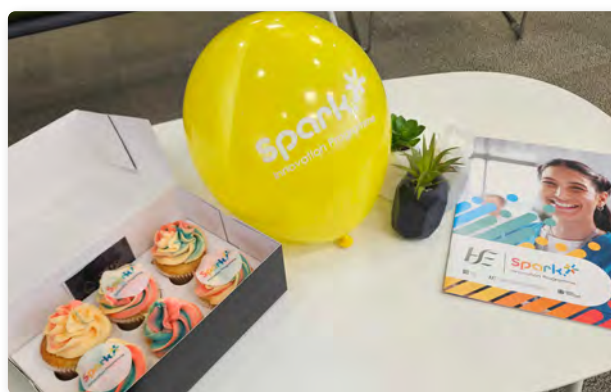


The keen interest in Spark Connect Toolkits during Public Service Transformation Week and beyond highlights the ongoing demand among frontline clinicians for continuous access to practical tools, resources and expertise to support their innovation efforts. Responding to this need we look forward to introducing Spark Connect Facilitated Workshops together with easily accessible Spark Connect printable resources in 2025.



COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FOR CONNECTION

A key objective of Spark Connect is to cultivate an environment that brings together health and social care professionals and innovators to share knowledge, ideas, and resources. Aligned with this goal, 2024 saw the launch of a new initiative developed in collaboration with a cohort of dedicated innovators from across the North West region to co-design a 'Healthcare Innovation Community of Practice'. The co-design process was intended to support the developing of practical skills, insight exchange, and defining a shared approach to driving positive change in health and social care. Through active engagement, with participants from Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim, the group worked together to create a model of action that will support both their ongoing activity and will serve as a prototype model for future groups.



After several engaging online workshops, to facilitate the co-design of an effective and meaningful format to support frontline innovators, the Community of Practice in the North West held its first local event in 2024 at Sligo University Hospital. Over 100 doctors, nurses, midwives and HSCPs attended engaging presentations throughout the day and learned about the support and training they could avail of to drive healthcare innovation.

New connections were formed on the day and valuable insights were gathered from the attendees to inform the development of the Community of Practice. A second Community of Practice event is being planned for Donegal in 2025.

The success of the early efforts to develop a community of practice model for innovators has resulted in a further commitment from HSE Spark to consider how we can facilitate the development of further

self-identifying communities across the country going forward. We look forward to working with our colleagues across the newly established regions to understand and respond to their unique needs for fostering innovation efforts in their region.

If you are interested in developing an 'Innovation Community of Practice' in your setting or region, contact spark@hse

MEET THE INNOVATORS CONNECT SERIES 2024

In the spirit of connecting, informing and inspiring frontline health and social care workers from across the system, the 'Interviews with Innovators' online event took place again this year in October 2024. This micro-symposium gave us the opportunity to reach some of our engaged population who are unable to attend in-person showcase events run by HSE Spark during the year and served as an additional touch point for our frequent event attendees to reinvigorate their 'spark' for innovation across the system. The online event saw clinicians from across the HSE sharing their experiences of driving innovation on the frontline.

The Longford Primary Care Team is an innovative, multi-disciplinary group of professionals collaborating on a range of projects aimed at improving services for children and families. The team was represented at the event by **Fiona Flynn**, an Occupational Therapist, passionate about innovation in the healthcare sector, and **Linda Kelly**, a Senior Speech and Language Therapist, who has consistently sought to bring innovation to her role throughout her career.



The Longford Primary Care Team has engaged in several innovative projects, including 'QR Care' and the CH08 Children's Services Project. The QR Care project, supported by Spark Seed funding, aims to make healthcare information more accessible to all members of the community. In May 2024, they received the CHO8 Staff Innovation Award.

Dr. Karen Espey and **Leanne Brennan** joined us from Donegal Primary Care Psychology Services. Dr. Espey, Acting Principal Psychology Manager has a strong interest in utilising service design and innovation to enhance psychology services for those who need them. Leanne Brennan, a Psychologist Assistant is particularly passionate about Neurodiversity and is committed to driving innovation to meet the needs of this population.



After completing the Spark Connect 2023 Innovation Opportunity Canvas, Karen and Leanne successfully submitted a Spark Seed application for their "Nothing For Us Without Us" project, which aims to apply design to better understand the needs of autistic young people and their families in psychology services.

Una Rogers is a Clinical Midwife Manager 2 who has vast experience working across multiple maternity hospitals. In October 2023, Una took the lead on a Translation App pilot project as part of her role as CMM2 in Maternity OPD. With Spark Seed funding, she successfully completed the pilot in September 2024. After transferring back to Galway University Hospital to lead the Community Midwifery team, Una has continued to provide guidance to the QI team on the rollout and expansion of the app for use within interpretation services.



Dr. Caoimhe Glancy is a final-year Psychiatry Registrar on the Basic Specialist Training Scheme, with a strong passion for service design and quality improvement projects. She completed a Professional Diploma in Service Design with NCAD in 2023, further enhancing her ability to innovate and improve healthcare services. Throughout her training, she has been actively involved in initiatives aimed at enhancing patient care and optimizing healthcare delivery, driven by her commitment to improving

The Spark Ignite competition continues to be a vital support to frontline health and social care staff with innovative, commercially viable ideas that have the potential to improve patient care, enhance health and social care delivery, and drive meaningful change within the health service.

In 2024, Spark Ignite maintained its commitment to nurturing entrepreneurial ambition by empowering staff from all disciplines and departments within the HSE. The initiative offers participants the opportunity to validate clinical need, assess market potential, and receive expert guidance in advancing their solutions towards impactful implementation.

This year, we were proud to collaborate once again with our valued partners at Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) and the Guinness Enterprise Centre (GEC), combining expertise in health and social care innovation with practical entrepreneurial support.

The 2024 competition saw an impressive response, with **29** applications received from motivated teams and individuals across the HSE. Following a rigorous selection process, **8** promising projects were shortlisted to participate in a two-day healthcare entrepreneurship workshop delivered in collaboration with Health Innovation Hub Ireland and Guinness Enterprise Centre innovation and commercialisation experts.

During the workshop, participants gained valuable insights into:

- Identifying and validating clinical need
- Assessing the commercial potential of their ideas
- Developing effective product and service design strategies
- Understanding key steps in the entrepreneurial journey

Participants also benefited from mentorship delivered by established entrepreneurs from the GEC’s healthcare cluster. These experts brought extensive experience in successfully navigating the complexities of healthcare product development and market entry, ensuring participants were well-equipped to refine their concepts.

Building on the workshop, participants engaged in dedicated ‘pitch training’ sessions, where they learned how to craft compelling presentations and effectively communicate the value of their innovations. Equipped with these enhanced skills, participants competed for the top prize of **€5,000** towards the development of their projects.

The Spark Ignite competition remains a testament to the power of frontline health and social care staff to develop practical, effective solutions that improve outcomes for patients and care providers alike.



SPARK IGNITE WINNING PROJECTS

OVERALL WINNING PROJECT: Ms Tamara Gall

ROLE: Consultant HPB Surgeon

ORGANISATION: The Mater Misericordiae Hospital

INNOVATION: Biodegradable Anastomotic Stent

COUNTY: Dublin

A Consultant Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Surgeon at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital, Ms Tamara Gall proposed the development of a novel biodegradable stent for pancreaticojejunostomy anastomosis, tackling a long-standing challenge in complex gastrointestinal surgeries.

The innovation promises to significantly reduce post-operative complications such as leaks and fistulas, which currently result in substantial morbidity and prolonged hospital stays. This stent simplifies an intricate surgical step and offers a reliable, resorbable solution, increasing patient safety while streamlining theatre time.

With no comparable product on the market, this idea stands out for its originality, practical impact, and strong potential for commercialisation within surgical innovation.



OVERALL WINNING PROJECT: Dr. Brendan Kelly

ROLE: Non-Consultant Hospital Doctor

ORGANISATION: St Vincent's University Hospital

INNOVATION: AI Triage Tool for MRI in Multiple Sclerosis

COUNTY: Dublin

Dr. Brendan Kelly has led the development of an artificial intelligence-based triage system for MRI brain scans in patients with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), addressing critical delays in scan interpretation.

This pioneering solution uses a Siamese U-Transformer model to prioritise scans intelligently, reducing the burden of “scanxiety”—the anxiety patients feel while awaiting results—and enabling earlier clinical interventions. Grounded in patient involvement and collaborative innovation with MS Ireland and UCD, the project exemplifies a deeply patient-centric approach.

Already validated retrospectively, the tool is now being trialled prospectively. It harnesses AI innovation to bring about improved access to care—marking it as a standout example of meaningful, scalable impact in chronic disease management.

PRODUCTIVITY BOOST

In August 2024, prompted by the call from central leadership within the HSE, Spark launched a brand-new funding call - The “Productivity Boost” initiative. Productivity Boost was designed to empower frontline health and social care workers to bring their ideas for improving efficiency, productivity, and innovation to life.

It provided a valuable opportunity for staff to lead meaningful change from within, building on their unique insights into the everyday workings of health and social care services. Though we recognised that most of the innovative ideas put forward by health and social care staff already yielded many benefits that could be linked to improved productivity, Spark welcomed the opportunity to once again showcase the ingenuity of the frontline in responding intelligently and impactfully to a call from leadership.

Through this initiative, staff across the HSE and Section 38 organisations were supported to design and implement projects that made real differences in how care was delivered—whether by introducing new ways of working, automating processes, testing advance practice models of care or streamlining services to better meet patient needs.

At the heart of the initiative was the Quadruple Aim framework, which shaped and guided the programme’s impact. This framework focuses on four essential goals:

- Enhancing the experience of patients
- Achieving better health outcomes
- Reducing the cost of care
- Supporting and improving the experience of health and social care providers

By aligning with these goals, applicants were able to propose initiatives that not only boosted productivity but also delivered meaningful, system-wide improvements. The Productivity Boost initiative created a space for innovation to thrive, placing frontline staff at the centre of change. It celebrated creativity, encouraged collaboration, and delivered real value for both patients and health and social care providers—laying the groundwork for a more effective, efficient, and responsive health service.

270

APPLICANTS TO
PRODUCTIVITY BOOST

PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH
PRODUCTIVITY BOOST

47



TITLE: Development of a Single Visit Clinic for Assessment and Management of Metabolic Associated Fatty Liver Disease

NAME: Dr. Mairead McNally

LOCATION: Midlands Regional hospital, Tullamore

Problem Space: Metabolic dysfunction-associated fatty liver disease (MAFLD) accounts for 30% of referrals, with rising rates contributing to outpatient wait times exceeding one year. Patients endure significant anxiety, multiple appointments, and unnecessary travel for investigations like fibroscan. Only 10% require ongoing specialist care, yet all undergo a prolonged assessment process, overloading hepatology services and reducing efficiency.

Proposed Solution: The project proposes a “one-stop shop” clinic model. Identified MAFLD patients will be pre-triaged, have bloods drawn before their appointment, and undergo a bedside fibroscan during a single clinic visit. A senior clinician will assess the patient, explain results, provide supportive literature, and share a management plan with the GP.

Intended Impact: This streamlined pathway will improve patient experience, reduce costs and carbon footprint, enhance clinician morale, shorten wait times, and increase capacity to detect serious liver disease earlier.

TITLE: Introduce a pre-operative assessment echo clinic and an ICU echo service

NAME: Dr. Aoife Doolan

LOCATION: Tallaght University Hospital

Problem Space: Pre-operative delays due to limited echocardiography (echo) availability are contributing to surgical cancellations, with only 50% of echo requests from the pre-op clinic fulfilled monthly. In ICU, increased bed capacity and patient complexity have led to 10–12 weekly echo requests, overburdening cardiology services. Out-of-hours echo access is inconsistent, potentially impacting critically ill patients’ outcomes.

Proposed Solution: Establish a pre-operative

echo clinic and ICU echo service run by anaesthesiology/ICU consultants accredited in advanced transthoracic echocardiography. This new service would reduce reliance on cardiology, provide rapid access to imaging, and integrate with existing perioperative and critical care pathways. Required resources include ISCV licenses, workstations, machine upgrades, and clerical support.

Intended Impact: This innovation will shorten surgical waiting lists, enhance ICU diagnostics (especially out-of-hours), improve outcomes, reduce cardiology workload, support fellow training, and maintain professional accreditation—positioning the hospital as a national leader in perioperative echo care.

TITLE: Electronic Portering System in the Acute Setting

NAME: Jacqui McGovern

LOCATION: Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda

Problem Space: Portering in the Emergency and Radiology departments relies on paper slips placed on whiteboards, leading to inefficiencies, duplication, missed cancellations, and GDPR risks. A five-day audit revealed 16 duplicate tasks, 6 unnecessary transfers post-cancellation, and 5 instances of wasted journeys after patient discharge—negatively impacting patient flow and safety.

Proposed Solution: Introduce MyPorter, a digital task management system, to replace the outdated paper-based system. Requests will be made via touchscreen, enabling real-time porter/patient visibility and faster, more accurate task assignment. This system will initially be piloted in Radiology and ED, with future scalability to hospital-wide patient transfers.

Intended Impact: Improved patient flow, faster response times, enhanced safety, reduced administrative burden, and more efficient use of resources. It will also support trend analysis, operational planning, and continuous quality improvement. TUH would be the first HSE statutory site in Ireland to implement this technology.

SPARK SUMMIT

HSE Spark Summit 2024 welcomed hundreds of innovation enthusiasts from across the country to the historic setting of the Mansion House Dublin. The Opening Address from Mr. Bernard Gloster, CEO of the HSE, set a powerful tone for the day. In addition to presenting his annual 'CEO's Choice Innovation Award', Mr. Gloster announced a new bursary award to recognise individuals and teams creating impactful change and innovation in the health service using existing resources. We were delighted to welcome Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General at the Department of Health, who spoke candidly about the challenges of scaling innovation across the health service and the transformative potential of achieving change at scale for all patients.

The programme also featured a fireside chat with Ms. Libby Keck head of Q-Labs Network in the UK, who shared insights on the use of Human-Centred Design and the development of Human Centred Design labs within health services both in the UK and internationally. Her experience offered inspiration and practical learning for Ireland's own Human Centred Design ambitions.

Among our distinguished speakers was Mr. Andy Philips, newly appointed Regional Executive Officer for the South/South West, who outlined his vision for the new health regions and emphasised innovation as central to regional transformation. We were also joined by Mr. Malcolm Beatty, former Head of the Northern Ireland Public Sector Innovation Lab, who brought an international perspective on innovation-oriented workforces and how organisations can activate existing workforce assets to deliver innovation in partnership with service users.

As always, the highlight of the summit was hearing directly from inspirational health and social care staff from across the service, who presented their clinically driven innovation projects. Each one was a testament to the power of frontline innovation to improve care at the point of delivery. It was our pleasure to honour them on the day through our annual awards ceremony making their significant contribution to improvement in the health service.





HSE DESIGN SYMPOSIUM

In October 2024, HSE Spark, in collaboration with our colleagues in the Public Services Transformation Team, hosted a vibrant and inspiring event celebrating the power of Human-Centred Design in healthcare. Attended by patients and service users, leaders, designers, innovators, and change-makers from across the public sector, the day showcased how healthcare services across Ireland are embracing Human Centred Design to transform patient and staff experiences.

We were honoured to be joined by Mr. Damien McCallion, HSE Chief Technology and Transformation Officer and Deputy CEO, who spoke passionately about his commitment to delivering healthcare services that are meaningful and impactful for all. His remarks set the tone for a day focused on innovation, inclusion, and positive transformation.



We also welcomed Trevor Vaughn and Dr. Sarah Gibney from the Department of Public Services, NDP Delivery and Reform, who praised HSE Spark's leadership in responding to the government's call to deliver better public services through Human-Centred Design. Their support underscored the growing

national momentum behind people-first innovation and transformation. A particular highlight was the presence of a large cohort of colleagues from non-healthcare public sector bodies across the country. Their participation reflected a shared belief in the value of cross-sectoral learning and collaboration. Spark was proud to open its doors and create a space for mutual learning, idea exchange, and partnership building.



Throughout the day, attendees heard compelling presentations from healthcare services nationwide that have adopted a Human-Centred Design mind-set and methodology for engaging in innovative practice. These projects, many of which were co-designed with patients and service users, illustrated the real-world impact of design-led approaches in healthcare delivery. The day concluded with two dynamic panel discussions featuring frontline staff, senior leaders, designers, policymakers, and patient representatives. These conversations explored both the opportunities and the challenges of embedding Human-Centred Design into our healthcare system.



We were delighted to launch an exhibition on the day, showcasing the exciting work that has been undertaken by designers and clinicians in Ireland over the past number of years. It is a wonderful record of efforts to date and serves as an inspirational artefact that reminds us of the potential to deliver innovative, creative and truly patient centred solutions into the Irish healthcare space through design.

The energy, insight, and openness of all involved made for an exceptional event—one that not only celebrated achievements but also laid the foundation for new partnerships and future collaboration.

Note: You can visit a digital version of our Design Exhibition using the QR code



DESIGN PROJECTS

HSE Spark is delighted to continue our support for Human Centred Design led and informed solutions to be delivered in clinical settings across the country. With input from our growing community of Professional Designers in Residence and Professional Design Company partnerships we have been inspired by the ambitious and pragmatic projects that have evolved this year.

The willingness of staff to embrace a new way of seeing and tackling challenges is a testimony not only to their tenacity and dedication to their patients but is also a testament to their bravery for trusting in new partnerships, new inter-professional experiences and new ways of working in an already busy environment. We remain in awe of their capacity for challenge and innovation.

EXAMPLES OF HUMAN CENTRED DESIGN PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY HSE SPARK 2024

CH08 Children's Services Project – IHA Midlands/IHA Louth Meath (Formerly CH08)

Problem: HSE services continuously evolve to meet changing population needs. However, recent changes in Children's Services have led to challenges for children, families and services, including unclear pathways, extensive waiting lists and services delivered in siloes.

Aim: To take a design approach to redesigning and developing children's services in the CHO 8 region.

Output to date: A team of 371 stakeholders from the Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation (MLM CHO) including Service Users and HSE Staff (IHA Manager (formerly Chief Officer), Administrative Staff, Digital Team, Frontline Clinicians, Heads of Service, Project Management Office, Service Managers, Service User Engagement Lead) worked with a Service Design company to

conduct a deep dive of the challenges and opportunities facing Children's Services and to co-design solutions to test and iterate.

Service users and HSE Staff were engaged through interviews and design workshops to (1) elicit key insights into the challenges and opportunities facing Children's Services and (2) co-design testable prototypes that address key challenges. Following the initial 10-week deep dive discovery research phase, the team worked collaboratively across a 10 week period to address 6 key challenges, which included redesigning the referral process, co-designing an innovative streamlined Autism diagnostic pathway and developing a range of communication resources. The solutions resulted in an increase in cross care group collaboration, enhanced service user satisfaction, development of a streamlined assessment pathway, reduction in staff time required for processing referrals (reduction by 40% during testing phase), and a reduction in referral decision turnaround time (10 weeks down to 4 weeks).



Enhancing Wayfinding through Collaborative Design: Cork University Hospital

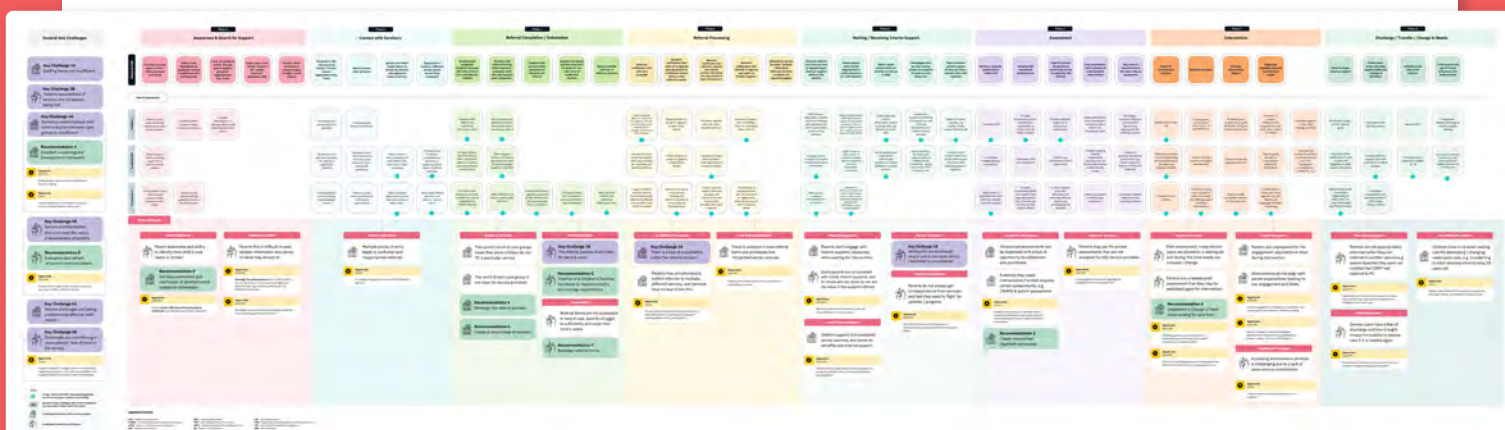
Problem: Poor Wayfinding systems causing appointment delays and negatively affecting the service user experience. Additionally, frequent requests for directions disrupt staff workflow, leading to further delays.

Aim: To improve the experience of all service users attending services within CUH

Output to date: Through comprehensive design research, stakeholder engagement, and surveys, the Radiotherapy department within CUH was chosen to pilot innovative wayfinding solutions and evaluate their

effectiveness. Stakeholders, including service users and staff within the department were engaged internally, and surveys were conducted with both groups to understand their wayfinding issues within the Unit.

Signage, directions to the unit and an informal reference of the unit as the “Old Radiotherapy Unit” were identified as some of the issues affecting wayfinding. By consultations, agreement was reached with the stakeholders to name the unit as the “Bluebell Suite” and new signage was designed. Images of bluebells were incorporated into the unit design to enhance visual cues for service users. The installations have been successfully completed.



The Four Pillars Project - Longford Children's Disability Network Team

The Problem: The Four Pillars project addresses inefficiencies in how the Longford Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) supports special schools and classes in their area. Repeatedly delivering the same information strained relationships between the schools and CDNT, which limited time for individual interventions. Due to a history of lack of communication, there was a misunderstanding of the roles and remits of the CDNT service, leading to frustration from both sides.

Aim: Using a design approach the project seeks to bring staff from both CDNT and

schools to examine the pitfalls of the current service and collaborate to co-develop an improved service which will benefit children and enhance school-CDNT partnerships.

The Output to Date: In a series of workshops, the current service was mapped out from the perspectives of both CDNT and school staff. This gave both parties the opportunity to voice concerns and queries about the current model of care. The final workshop brought the two groups together to co-design a new service model. Two large scale service redesigns such as the development of training plans for teachers and the adoption of a key worker for each school were also recommended following this initial discovery phase.

DESIGN ON THE FRONTLINE 20 24

The annual 'Design on the Frontline' initiative serves as a call to action for students of Design from across the country to tackle unmet needs in health and social care. Held in partnership with academic institutions across the country, Design on the Frontline reflects HSE Spark's commitment to nurturing emerging designers and exposing them to health and social care as a highly desirable and rewarding environment in which they can apply their skills and talents.

In 2024, the initiative saw remarkable participation, with a total of 12 scholarships offered. Each winner received a scholarship of €1,000 to support their ongoing work. The Grand Final, held at the 2024 National Showcase, showcased the exceptional creativity and problem-solving skills of these young designers.

DESIGN ON THE FRONTLINE AWARD 2024 - EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS



Curo by Andrew Meehan from Maynooth University

This project provides active physiotherapy during fracture recovery with an inbuilt Electro Magnetic Stimulation (EMS) system. Curo aims to reduce muscle atrophy in targeted limbs, enhancing the recovery process and improving patient outcomes.



TidyTray by Siobhán Daly from ATU Sligo

TidyTray is designed to organise patients' personal items, making their hospital stay more convenient and comfortable. By reducing the additional workload on staff, TidyTray aims to contribute to a more efficient and patient-friendly healthcare environment.



NaloxGuard by Christopher Kenny from TU Dublin

NaloxGuard is a concept for a device aimed at preventing fatal opioid overdoses. This innovative idea is designed to intervene during an overdose, ensuring that such incidents do not result in fatalities, thereby saving lives and providing critical support in the fight against the opioid crisis.

COLLABORATION AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

The Design on the Frontline initiative not only provides a platform for young designers to contribute to health and social care innovation but also promotes collaboration across disciplines. This year, partnerships with medical professionals and technology experts were instrumental in bringing these projects to life.

INTERVIEWS WITH INNOVATORS

DR. KAREN ESPEY, INTERIM PRINCIPAL PSYCHOLOGIST MANAGER, PRIMARY CARE PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES, DONEGAL

With a 15-year career in children's services, Karen's background includes everything from disability to primary care. Her current role also covers a broad remit and patient base, delivering a wide range of services such as primary care psychology for children and adults, adult intellectual disability, community neuro rehab, and older person services.

Karen first heard of Spark through a colleague who was involved in an innovation project. It was because of this that she came across the Spark Connect initiative on social media. Spark Connect empowers innovators to host events in their local health and social care settings, sharing knowledge, fostering creativity, and building a network in which innovation can prosper. She decided to host a Spark Connect event with the primary care child psychology team.



"I chose the child team because there has been huge shift in how these services are delivered since the introduction of the HSE's National Access Policy. For example, we now see children with non-complex disabilities, which would not have been the case before. It was a chance to stop and think about service delivery, because up to then we had been reacting to the changes rather than designing for them."

The toolkit that innovators receive includes materials for hosting an event, information about all the Spark initiatives, plus innovation resources such as an 'innovation canvas' and videos to help complete each section of the canvas. This helps guide the problem-solution process, taking participants through a design using principles like 'What next?'. As they worked through the canvas, the team was coming up with ideas to improve their service but hadn't spoken to its users.

"We are very accustomed to taking a top-down approach, deciding ourselves what the best solutions might be. The canvas helped us see that we needed to rewind and consult and co-design with our service users. That brought us back to Spark, and an application to Spark Seed, which seemed the best fit because we needed support from a designer and didn't have that capability internally. The seed funding would also cover the cost of implementation or additional design consultation."

Karen found the Spark Seed process very efficient. After her application was approved, she moved onto the pitch stage. Daunted, she spoke to a colleague who had already gone through the process, who reassured her. There was plenty of time to prepare the pitch and send it in (prerecorded) before the pitch day. They quickly heard that they were successful and were then teamed up with a designer. The project team is composed of Karen, a senior psychologist, a staff psychologist, and a psychology assistant. The designer introduced them to activities like journey or stakeholder mapping and service blueprints, as well as concepts like pain points and the Double Diamond, which helped them think more clearly about their problem space. They also had to be strict about what was within the scope of the project versus outside the scope, to keep the project on track.

"Working with the designer was a fundamental and essential experience. They helped us - as evidence-based practitioners who are traditional and academically minded - jump into a creative process and get inspired by the design lens. They put our service under a microscope. I was surprised by time spent on the problem space, because we wanted to jump into the solution. But coming through the process is so beneficial. Stick with it, it's worth it!"

It can be hard to sustain momentum on an innovation project, but Karen found that simple strategies like regular meetings with the designer kept them on track. An online collaboration board helped everyone keep on top of things. Spark also introduced Karen to a graphic designer, who worked on promotional materials and creative activities for patients that are visually inviting and easy to use.

"As this project nears completion, I'm hoping the impact will be more meaningful and more applicable because we have included the perspectives and lived experience of our users. We now have a template and a sense of the design principles we can use in problem-solving. If we needed to solve a new problem area, we could transfer everything we've learned. In fact, we're developing a protocol that any service can adopt to work with neurodivergent young people in a proactive and neuro-affirmative way."

There is a community of practice in the west and northwest of Ireland that Karen finds very useful for linking in with other colleagues who are also engaged with Spark initiatives. They connect regularly to consult and network with each other.

"If you have an idea, put in an application to Spark. You don't have to have it all solved before you start, that's what the process is for. You'll get the guidance and support you need to bring you through. If you're not successful the first time, try again. Spark isn't only for massive service overhauls; it can be really influential and useful for smaller projects."

BRIGHTSPARK AWARDS 2024

As we reflect on the activity of 2024, we celebrate the remarkable individuals from across our health service who have made significant contributions to their patients, their care settings and the organisation at large. The Brightspark Awards 2024 once again highlighted the extraordinary talent and dedication within our health and social care workforce in Ireland.

The annual Brightspark awards celebrate the innovative spirit and unwavering commitment of our staff, who continually strive to improve and transform our services. Each year, these awards recognise and honour the exceptional projects and individuals who have gone above and beyond to enhance patient care and service delivery. The awards not only celebrate the achievements of our staff but also inspire others to pursue excellence and innovation in their respective fields.

The 2024 Brightspark Awards have brought to light a diverse range of projects that address critical challenges in health and social care. From improving postnatal care and reducing hospital admissions for chronic conditions to enhancing patient safety and streamlining administrative processes, these projects demonstrate the profound impact of innovation on patient outcomes and health and social care efficiency.

Our award winners have shown that with determination, creativity, and a patient-centred approach, it is possible to make significant strides in health and social care. Their work exemplifies the core values of our organisation: human centeredness, clinical excellence, and innovation. By recognising their achievements, we aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement and encourage all staff members to think creatively and collaboratively.

The Brightspark Awards also provide an opportunity to share best practices and successful initiatives across our organisation. By highlighting these exemplary projects, we hope to inspire others to adopt similar approaches and drive positive change in their own areas of work. The stories of our award winners serve as powerful reminders of what can be achieved when we work together towards a common goal.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the winners and express our deepest appreciation for their contributions.

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BRIGHTSPARK 2025
NOMINATIONS

17

SHORTLISTED FOR
BRIGHTSPARK

11

BRIGHTSPARK
WINNERS

Nursing and Midwifery Award: Muma Postnatal Hub. Amy Carroll, ADOM - St Luke's General Hospital

The Muma Postnatal Hub aims to tackle the high levels of physical and mental postpartum morbidity through a structured, multidisciplinary support service for mothers, their babies, and partners. Developed using human-centred design, the hub incorporates user feedback to evolve continuously. It offers midwifery services seven days a week, providing early intervention for post-birth challenges via phone, social media, and physical contact such as assessments, feeding sessions, or coffee groups. The core hub in St Luke's General Hospital and its outreach clinics saw 110 mothers and provided 274 touchpoints in March 2023, significantly improving physical recovery outcomes through direct access to specialist women's health physiotherapists.



Best Digital Project Award: CARE - Community and Acute Respiratory Excellence for COPD Patients in Donegal. Antoinette Doherty, ANP - CHO 1

The CARE project introduced a 20-bed Community Virtual Ward (CVW) with continuous respiratory rate monitoring, allowing COPD patients to self-manage their condition at home while receiving optimised care through a digital platform. This innovative solution integrates real-time monitoring, treatments, and patient education, leading to a 100% hospital avoidance rate and a significant reduction in costs per patient. Key improvements include a 29.1% increase in self-management, a 35.3% increase in understanding of COPD, and a 36% reduction in readmission rates.



NDTP Doctors Award: H-BOP - Home-Based Ocular Perfusion Pressure Monitoring. Dr. Brian Woods, NCHD - Ophthalmology Department, Galway University Hospital

The H-BOP monitoring system combines home IOP tonometry and wrist-based blood pressure monitoring, allowing for longitudinal monitoring of both IOP and BP to provide more accurate estimates of ocular perfusion pressure (OPP). Initial results show promising outcomes in optimising medication timing and identifying glaucoma progression, potentially reducing the risk of glaucoma progression and differentiating between patients with ocular hypertension and early glaucoma.



BRIGHTSPARK AWARD WINNERS 2024

Best Service Improvement Award: Fast-Track Process for Maternity Registrations. Esmé Denvir, Head of Patient Services - The Coombe Hospital

The introduction of a web-based maternity registration form has streamlined the registration process, reducing manual tasks for staff and improving efficiency. In 2023, 98.8% of patients opted for the web-based form, leading to a marked reduction in turnaround time for appointments and improved patient data accuracy. This initiative has enhanced patient experience and operational efficiency within the hospital.

Best Use of Innovative Technology: Care Companion. Jackie Bryan & John Sheridan - Milford Care Centre

The Care Companion is a novel call bell system featuring a wide surface paddle sensitive to minimal contact by the patient, designed for patients with complex neurological disorders. Implementing the Care Companion in the palliative care setting has significantly improved patients' quality of life, providing a reliable means of calling for assistance and enhancing patient autonomy.

Best Productivity Award: Redesigning the Nurse Assessment Form to Release Time to Care. Julie Grennell, Project Manager - Mater Misericordiae University Hospital

The redesign of the nursing assessment form has streamlined the documentation process, saving time and improving patient care. The new form is shorter, more intuitive, and easier to digitise, enhancing workflow and sustainability.

Best Employee Focused Award: Great Minds Don't Think Alike. Pauline Chapman, Clinical Placement Coordinators - CHO 3

This project developed training resources for preceptors to support neurodiverse nursing students during clinical placements. The initiative includes educational videos and aims to create neuroinclusive clinical environments.



Best Design Led: Augmenting the Reach of National Patient Safety Alerts. Rachel McNamara, Public Health SPR - CHO 3

This project improved the dissemination and implementation of National Patient Safety Alerts, ensuring they reach all areas of the health system effectively. The new format alert and Digital Communications Toolkit have enhanced the reach and impact of patient safety alerts.

Best Patient Access Award: Breathe Easy, Beat Strong - A Unified Approach to Cardiopulmonary Disorders. Dr. Lavanya Saiva, Consultant Cardiologist and Dr. Abirami Subramaniam, Consultant Respiratory Physician - Connolly Hospital and Dublin Northwest Integrated Centre, CHO9

This project established a joint clinic model integrating cardiology and respiratory teams to provide proactive care in a community setting. The clinic has reduced waiting times from 18 months to 3 months and the number of appointment visits per patient, leading to significant savings and improved patient outcomes. Early diagnosis and effective intervention have resulted in fewer ED presentations and hospital admissions.



HSCP Award: Advanced Practice Occupational Therapy - APOT-Led Integrated Hand and Wrist Clinic. Michelle O'Donnell and Olga Hill, Clinical Specialists OT - St James's Hospital

The clinic provides GP-referred patients with direct access to specialist occupational health care for hand and wrist pathologies, reducing waiting times and improving overall outcomes. Since its inception, the clinic has seen 255 new patients, with high patient satisfaction and efficient management of hand and wrist conditions.



Best Hospital Avoidance Award: Avoiding ED - ANP Chest Pain Assessment in the Community. Shirley Ingram, ANP - Tallaght University Hospital, Cardiology Nursing Department

The community chest pain clinic provides an alternative to ED visits for non-acute chest pain, reducing hospital strain and providing timely, specialist care. Over three years, the clinic has significantly reduced GP chest pain referrals to the ED.

NETWORK & RESEARCH

Since its inception in 2022, the HSE Innovation Practitioners Network, which includes representatives from health and social care sites that have dedicated funding for innovation staffing and initiatives, has been growing steady in its reach and role. The Network's diverse range of skills offer a wealth of expertise and experience, creating valuable opportunities for learning and peer support.

Additionally, the HSE Spark Programme greatly benefits from the Network's input, with its members acting as expert users to the programme and helping to validate new

initiative concepts and strategic directions. Across 2024, the Network worked together to strengthen strategic partnerships, ensuring that innovation activity both contribute to and align with organisational priorities.

The Network maintained regular meetings throughout the year with the largest Network event to date held in October 2024. Almost 100 attendees joined to contribute to and be inspired by 30 presentations detailing innovative projects at a local and national level. On the day new connections were formed and existing relationships were strengthened to continue to drive health and social care innovation.

THE HSE INNOVATION PRACTITIONERS NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

- Children's Health Ireland
- Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate
- Mater Hospital, Dublin
- St James's Hospital, Dublin
- Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin
- University of Limerick Hospitals Group

EXTERNAL PARTNER NETWORK

HSE Spark's ongoing relationships and collaborations with its network of external partners are critical for aligning its activities with national and international priorities across government, industry, academia, and business. In 2024, HSE Spark maintained strong partnerships, with the following groups:

Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI): HIHI collaborates with Irish businesses to creatively address challenges and enhance patient care within the health sector. By working across academia, industry, and health and social care providers, HIHI fosters the development of innovative solutions aimed at transforming the health and social care landscape.

Academic Partners: Aligned with its dedication to research and professional development, HSE Spark continued to expand its network of Academic partners throughout 2024. This network facilitates the bringing together of academia, research and the health service to maximise the impact of knowledge generation and knowledge translation on innovation.



RESEARCH

HSE Spark is dedicated to promoting research as a key tool for understanding, measuring, informing, demonstrating, and advocating for innovation within the health and social care system. Throughout 2024, HSE Spark concentrated on empowering frontline innovators to integrate data collection into every innovation process by using creative, accessible tools that engaged all stakeholders, gathered feedback, and provided valuable insights.

DATA PHYSICALISATION BOARD

In June 2024, we were pleased to collaborate with IDEate (Inclusive Design for Digital Public Services) at the Spark Summit to showcase the latest version of the Data Physicalisation Board. This initiative aimed to collect real-time data in a sustainable and accessible manner. Using affordable, sustainable, and practical tools, the Data Physicalisation Board allowed attendees to share insights based on two key questions. Additionally, participants were encouraged to use this tool to gather immediate data from their own health and social care environments, which could inform and assess innovative projects.

SHARED EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP

The Shared Experience Workshop was introduced in 2024 as an innovative technique to collect qualitative data through design-based techniques. A number of workshops were held throughout the year, with frontline innovators invited to request templates for running workshops in their own areas.

RESEARCH ON PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INNOVATORS: ENABLERS AND BARRIERS

HSE Spark partnered with Dr. Threase Kessie, Associate Professor at Maynooth University, to conduct research on the enablers and barriers affecting the professional engagement of health and social care innovators in research. The results of this study will help shape future research support strategies for 2025 and beyond.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

We were delighted to have HSE Spark research presented at a number of international conferences in 2024. The focus of the research presented centred on learnings derived from introducing a Design-Led approach to driving innovation in health and social care settings.

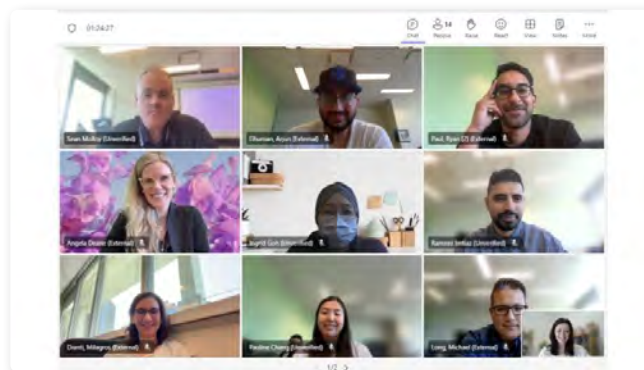
- Dr. Therese Kessie presented on **'Bridging Disciplines: A Deep Dive into Cross-Disciplinary Human-Centred Design Teams in Healthcare Innovation'** at the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, in Hawaii in May 2024
- Máire Kane and Alexander Fives attended the Design4Health Conference in Sheffield Hallam, where they presented their research: **'Navigating Narratives: Autoethnography in Shaping Healthcare Innovation'** in June 2024.
- Finally, in November 2024, Dr. Kessie's keynote address at the Irish Human Computer Interaction Conference, **'Design and Public Service Innovation: Reflections from the Irish Higher Education and Healthcare Experiences'** included a focus on the learnings arising from Design-Led projects supported by HSE Spark.



KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Knowledge sharing is central to the HSE Spark Innovation Programme's mission. We believe that innovation thrives when insights are shared openly across boundaries, between disciplines, across the health and social care system, and beyond national borders. In recent years, we have continued to deepen our commitment to sharing what we've learned, contributing to an ever-growing conversation around health and social care innovation and design-led transformation.

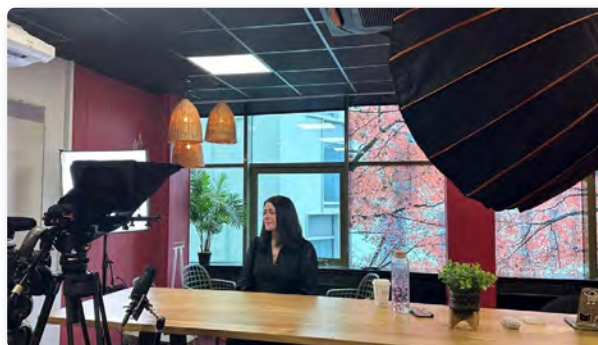
Throughout 2024, Spark has been fortunate to engage with a wide range of audiences through guest lectures, professional development programmes, and collaborative learning initiatives. Whether speaking to international audiences at the University of Toronto, delivering sessions for leaders on the Professional Diploma in Strategic and Transformational Leadership at the Irish Management Institute, or co-developing learning content with EIT Health for HSE staff through their academy platform, we have seen growing interest in the Irish approach to innovation—particularly our emphasis on human-centred design and frontline empowerment.



Our work is increasingly recognised as a meaningful contribution to the wider innovation community, both in academia and clinical practice. This is not only a reflection of the programme's strength but of the rich experiences and expertise shared by health and social care professionals across Ireland who contribute to and shape our learning content and events.

We are proud to offer a comprehensive and evolving programme of innovation education, including webinars, workshops, and facilitated sessions that are accessible to staff across the HSE. These offerings are featured in the National Quality and Patient Safety Education Prospectus and continue to support learners at every stage of their innovation journey.

Ultimately, Spark's approach to knowledge sharing is grounded in curiosity, openness, and a desire to co-create meaningful change. By continuing to listen, share, and learn with others, we help ensure innovation in health and social care remains collaborative, grounded, and impactful.



INTERVIEWS WITH INNOVATORS

UNA ROGERS, CLINICAL MIDWIFE MANAGER. COMMUNITY MIDWIFE TEAM, GALWAY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Una always knew she wanted to work in healthcare and had a strong interest in childbirth and women's health. Her love of labour and delivery surfaced as soon as she started her training at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, where she spent most of her time on the labour ward. Five years after qualifying as a midwife, a management opportunity came up in Co. Galway. Encouraged by her higher management team, Una applied for and was offered the role of Labour Ward Manager.



"It was a natural progression from midwife to management; it felt right. I've always been someone who rose to a challenge and took on leadership positions."

A happy coincidence brought Una to the Spark Innovation Programme, during a meeting where she was discussing some of the challenges faced in outpatient services. A colleague who had experience of the programme mentioned Spark. With a potential solution in mind—but not knowing what steps to take to deliver it—Una researched Spark and felt it was a good fit. After her application was successful, Una joined other innovators for a design thinking workshop.

"The workshop was great. It taught me how to be more forensic about the details. As clinical people, it's in our nature to see the end goal first, whereas working through the programme I learned to spend more time on the planning and design phases. Pacing yourself means you will have fewer problems along the way, also."

With our evolving demographic and multicultural patient cohort, Una found challenges with communication in the clinical setting with the maternity services. This included many women from countries like Syria or Ukraine who were at a vulnerable time in their lives and spoke little or no English. Translation services were slow to respond or simply unavailable, meaning staff could not communicate adequately with the patients.

Una found a translation app that could be used instantly instead of needing a third person. The Spark workshop teaches innovators to think about all the possible outcomes, get other people involved in the solution, and find innovation champions to help keep the momentum going. Design thinking helped Una demonstrate the value of this innovation to her higher management team and get the green light. The result? Transformational.

"Overnight, we were able to communicate with a large cohort of women where previously we weren't. Everyone got behind the idea, which I'm so grateful for. You can't underestimate it, it was transformational."

An early direct experience of Una's solution in action came when a Syrian woman arrived by ambulance, alone, in the middle of the night. Her baby was on the way, and she was very afraid. Historically, Una would have had to wait an hour for an interpreter to arrive. But this time she conducted the entire birth using the app. After a safe delivery, the patient used the app to thank Una for having found this easy channel of communication.

"Without the design thinking training, I would have tackled this issue alone. As clinicians, we know that innovation is the key to moving forward with healthcare. It's how we'll overcome the challenges. We can't stay where we are, so we have to come together and look for solutions."

If you have an idea, take a chance with Spark! Before this project, Una felt she was at a crossroads in her career. She wasn't sure if she wanted to keep moving up the line management route or do something different. But after the programme, she knows she wants to focus on service design and development.

"As the one on the ground, you're the best person to put ideas into action. Talk to your line manager, or the management above. Keep pushing, someone out there will listen and will help you bring your idea on. As an innovator, as a midwife, this experience has been so liberating for me. I'm so excited and I have a new passion for midwifery! As a manager, I'm now less obsessed with metrics and KPIs and more focused on listening to people's ideas and showing them optimism and support."

PIONEERING



Consultant
Innovation
Fund

The Public Only Consultant Contract (POCC) 2023 represents a pivotal advancement in Ireland's healthcare landscape, aligning with the Sláintecare vision of equitable, patient-centred care.

A cornerstone of this contract is the Consultant Innovation Fund, designed to empower consultants to spearhead innovative projects that enhance patient outcomes and service delivery.

In 2024, HSE Spark became the administrators of the Consultant Innovation Fund. Drawing on its long history in supporting doctors to engage in innovation activity, HSE Spark assists holders of the POCC contract in accessing, utilising and reporting on the use of the fund. Though the Consultant Innovation Fund is in its infancy within the organisation, the appetite and early access indicates the potential for this fund to have a significant impact on unleashing the vast innovation potential inside clinical teams.

THE CONSULTANT INNOVATION FUND: A DEDICATED FUNDING STREAM

Under the POCC 2023, consultants are entitled to an annual allocation of up to €8,000 to support initiatives in translational research and innovation. This funding encompasses a broad spectrum of projects, from academic research to the development of novel clinical practices, all aimed at improving patient care. Notably, unspent CME funds can be reallocated to the Innovation Fund, allowing consultants to access up to €20,000 annually for their projects.



COLLABORATIVE FUNDING: AMPLIFYING IMPACT

To encourage collaborative efforts, the fund permits the pooling of resources among consultants. This mechanism enables the accumulation of up to €50,000 for a single innovation or translational research project, fostering multidisciplinary, cross-setting approaches and the sharing of expertise.

DRIVING INNOVATION: A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

The Consultant Innovation Fund exemplifies the HSE's commitment to fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within the healthcare system. By providing dedicated financial support and a structured framework, the fund empowers consultants to translate their ideas into tangible improvements and innovations, ultimately enhancing the quality of care provided to patients across Ireland.

For more detailed information, comprehensive guidance documents and access to application materials, consultants are encouraged to visit the HSE Spark Innovation Programme website.

'Enhancing Fracture Detection with AI Assistance in the Emergency Department' Dr. Michael Quirke and Professor Nuala Healy, Beaumont Hospital & RCSI

Problem: Missed fractures in the Emergency Department (ED) are a significant patient safety concern. At Beaumont Hospital ED, approximately 4.7% of fractures go undetected—equating to 120–130 missed cases per year. This presents serious risks, including delayed diagnosis, avoidable pain, disability, and loss of trust in healthcare services, especially in high-volume, high-pressure clinical environments.



Solution: This project introduces a CE-marked artificial intelligence tool for fracture detection, integrated with the NIMIS radiology system to support real-time clinical decision-making. As the first ED-based study of its kind in Ireland, it provides real-world validation of AI-assisted diagnostics. The research has a dual focus: evaluating both diagnostic accuracy and the acceptability of AI among clinicians and patients.

Intended Impact: The AI tool is expected to improve diagnostic accuracy, reduce ED wait times, and streamline patient flow. It will enhance clinician decision-making and patient outcomes while generating insights into how AI is perceived and used in emergency care. The initiative lays the foundation for broader adoption of AI tools in Irish hospitals, setting a precedent for safe, effective clinical integration.

'One-Stop Bedside Ultrasound – Reducing Admissions Through Rapid Diagnostics' Mairéad McNally, Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore

Problem: Patients presenting with suspected ascites or pleural effusion frequently face delayed diagnosis due to limited access to

formal radiology appointments. These delays often lead to unnecessary hospital admissions and extended inpatient stays while awaiting diagnostic imaging. This not only strains hospital resources but impacts patient outcomes and experience.

Solution: This project introduces a one-stop, bedside ultrasound assessment pathway within the Acute Medical Assessment Unit. Led by an experienced clinician, patients are triaged directly for bedside imaging during their initial assessment. The portable ultrasound allows rapid confirmation of fluid presence, guiding timely clinical decisions—whether to proceed with therapeutic drainage or to safely discharge.

Intended Impact: The new pathway significantly reduces avoidable admissions and inpatient length of stay, optimises bed utilisation, and enhances patient satisfaction by providing faster answers at the point of care. It also reduces dependency on radiology departments and empowers medical teams through upskilling in bedside ultrasound techniques. By shifting diagnostics closer to the patient, the model reflects a scalable, cost-effective improvement aligned with national goals for integrated, responsive unscheduled care.

'Advance Healthcare Directives for Mental Health – From Law to Practice Speciality Conference' Nuala Kane, Dublin Southeast Mental Health Service

Problem: Despite the legal recognition of Advance Healthcare Directives (AHDs) under the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015, their use in mental health services remains minimal. This underutilisation limits service users' ability to participate in future care planning, particularly in times of crisis when they may be unable to advocate for themselves. The gap between policy and practice reduces patient autonomy, leads to more involuntary admissions, and weakens therapeutic relationships.

Solution: This expert-led innovative initiative seeks to bridge the policy-practice divide by advancing the implementation of AHDs within Irish mental health services. Through a national conference and collaboration between clinicians, service users, researchers,

CONSULTANT INNOVATION FUND PROJECTS

and policymakers, the project promotes understanding, addresses practical barriers, and highlights emerging research. The initiative includes a showcase of real-world implementation, lived experience, and insights from international and national leaders. CPD accreditation and interdisciplinary engagement reinforce its relevance and credibility.

Intended Impact: The project aims to embed AHDs into routine mental health practice, reducing involuntary admissions by up to 25%, empowering service users, and strengthening therapeutic alliances. It also sets the foundation for a larger implementation programme and supports a rights-based, person-centred approach to mental healthcare aligned with national reform goals.

'Bench to Bedside – Deploying the SKY92 Gene Signature Nationwide' **Professor Siobhan Glavey and Professor John Quinn, Beaumont Hospital, RCSI, and partner institutions across Ireland**

Problem: Multiple Myeloma (MM) is a high-cost, incurable blood cancer. Prognostic precision is vital, yet current diagnostic standards in Ireland rely on FISH testing, which is outsourced, slow (6+ week turnaround), and frequently fails—up to 50% of patients do not receive results. Critically, FISH misses 10–15% of high-risk patients, delaying life-saving interventions and leading to less effective treatment pathways.

Solution: This project implements the SKY92 Gene Expression Signature—an advanced, faster, and more accurate prognostic test. SKY92 identifies high-risk patients that FISH often misses, delivering results in ≤ 4 days. The team has piloted SKY92 in a research setting with national reach and now aims to fully integrate it into hospital-based diagnostics. This includes clinician training, stakeholder engagement, and national scalability planning.

Intended Impact: SKY92 empowers clinicians with timely, actionable prognostic data to personalise treatment. High-risk patients

benefit from early intervention; standard-risk patients may avoid unnecessary toxicity. The localised testing model reduces cost, outsourcing, and wait times. With national and international validation, this initiative positions Ireland at the forefront of precision haematology.

Reimagining Pre-Operative Assessment at Sligo University Hospital (PAC@SUH) **Dr. Georgina Duignan, Sligo University Hospital**

Problem: The existing Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic (PAC) at Sligo University Hospital is hindered by a fragmented structure, inconsistent consultant oversight, and inefficient patient flow. Patients often face long delays, requiring multiple visits for surgical clearance. A lack of digital integration, telehealth capability, and limited consultant availability further constrain the system, impacting patient safety and elective surgery throughput. Current processes do not align with the 2024 Model of Care, limiting the PAC's capacity to support scheduled care effectively.

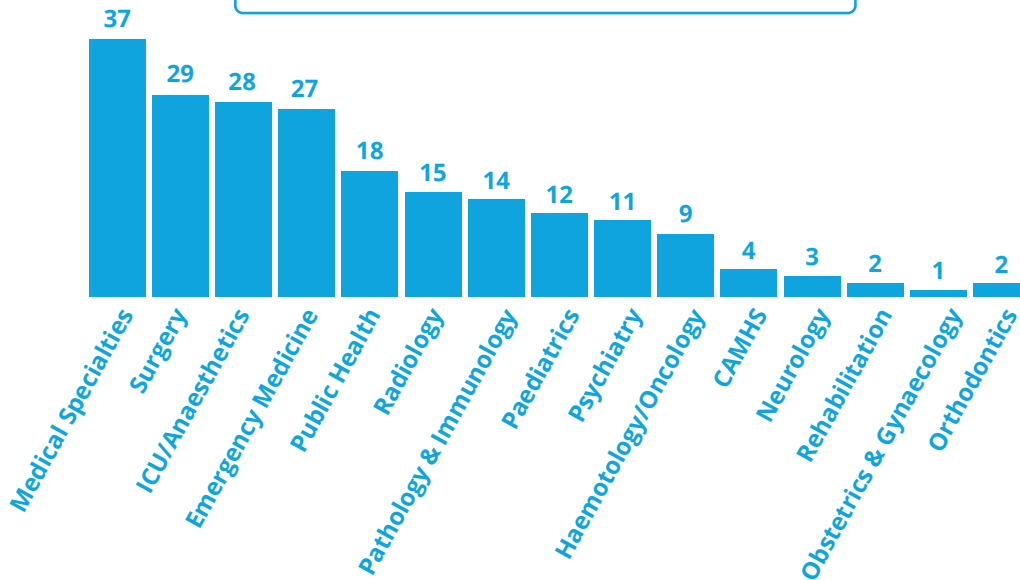
Solution: This project applies a systems-level, user-centred redesign using a design thinking approach. External design experts and stakeholders across the surgical pathway have co-developed a new PAC model. The redesign includes single-visit, consultant-led pathways, drop-in appointments, digital record integration (e.g. My Pre-Op), streamlined governance, and optimised room usage by rotating clinicians instead of patients. The model supports daily consultant availability and facilitates real-time multidisciplinary decision-making.

Intended Impact: The new PAC model is expected to reduce waiting times, fully utilise theatre capacity, and streamline elective surgical care. It will foster improved patient satisfaction, better communication structures, and a positive team culture. Key metrics include theatre throughput, appointment access, governance improvements, and enhanced patient safety—positioning PAC@SUH as a blueprint for scalable surgical pathway reform.

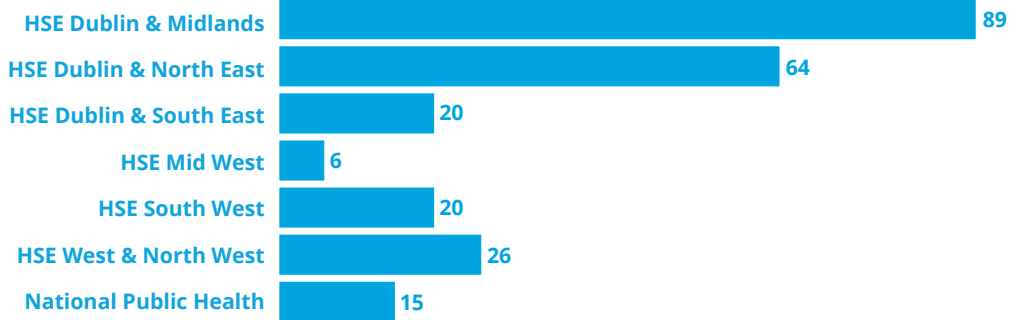
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APPLICATIONS

BREAKDOWN OF APPROVED PROJECTS BY REFINED SPECIALTY GROUP



TOTAL APPLICATIONS BREAKDOWN BY REGION



178

ACUTE (HOSPITAL) CARE PROJECTS

32

COMMUNITY (CHO) CARE PROJECTS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HSE Spark's professional development offerings have evolved significantly over time, growing in both breadth and accessibility to meet the diverse needs of health and social care staff across the system.

From focused 'bootcamps' to online Design Thinking workshops and from education bursaries to immersive professional fellowships, Spark now offers a wide-ranging suite of skill development opportunities. These opportunities are designed to equip frontline staff at all levels with the knowledge, confidence, and tools to lead change—ensuring that innovation is not only encouraged but truly accessible to all.

NATIONAL INNOVATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

Each year, the HSE Spark Innovation Programme identifies and supports talented individuals from across the clinical disciplines represented by NDTP, ONMSD, and HSCP who share our commitment to advancing innovation at the frontline of health and social care in Ireland. The HSE Spark National Innovation Fellowship provides clinical staff already working within the health and social system with a unique opportunity to take part in an immersive, 'action learning' environment. Fellows gain hands-on experience in healthcare innovation while delivering a dynamic programme that empowers clinicians across the system to explore and engage in innovative practice.

The Fellowship Programme stands out in its delivery model, offering a structured yet flexible approach to professional development. Fellows follow a dedicated pathway that builds their capabilities in both health and social care innovation and leadership, equipping them with the tools to design and implement effective innovation programmes within the system.

This supportive and adaptive learning environment allows Fellows to align the programme with their own clinical interests and individual skillsets, ensuring that their contributions continue to shape and evolve the Fellowship year on year. Through this approach, Spark fosters a culture of continuous learning and innovation, driven by those who know the system best—its frontline staff.

EDUCATION BURSARIES

In 2024, HSE Spark Innovation Programme offered a number of bursaries to frontline health and social care professionals seeking to expand their skills in areas related to innovation. We experience huge interest in the bursary call, with over 130 applications. Twenty bursaries were awarded to frontline clinicians to undertake the micro-credential in Healthcare Innovation at the Royal College of Surgeons. Additionally, six bursaries were awarded to frontline health and social care professionals to undertake the professional diploma in Service design in National College of Art and Design.

We were proud to support this year's cohort, empowering professionals to deepen their understanding of this pivotal discipline. This investment not only strengthens individual professional development, but also contributes to improving the quality, accessibility, and patient experience of care across the system. Spark recognises the transformative potential of innovation and Human-Centred Design and remains committed to enabling access for dedicated health and social care staff to learn, grow, and lead meaningful change.

“Reflecting on my year as a Fellow, I’m incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work alongside passionate, driven colleagues committed to improving healthcare from the ground up. This year has deepened my understanding of how innovation happens, not just through great ideas, but through collaboration, persistence, and a willingness to challenge the status quo. I’ve learned so much from the people I’ve met and the projects I’ve been part of, especially around implementation and scaling. It’s been a privilege to support others in bringing their ideas to life, and this experience will undoubtedly shape how I’ll approach change in the future.”



—Catherine Marsh, National Nursing & Midwifery Innovation Fellow



“During my fellowship year, I’ve had the incredible opportunity to witness first-hand the power of innovation across our health service. Partaking in further education during the fellowship also has deepened my appreciation for the value of user-centred design and its role in shaping services that meet the evolving needs of our diverse population. From collaborating with inspiring innovators on the ground to supporting impactful projects, I’ve seen the creativity, compassion and commitment of our staff shine through. There is no shortage of brilliant initiatives on the ground, designing with intent and making impactful change the outstanding work happening across the HSE.”

—Claire McElvanna, National HSCP Innovation Fellow

“This year has been nothing short of transformative. I’ve had the privilege of working across both national initiatives and frontline innovation projects—each one pushing boundaries and offering real potential to change how healthcare is delivered. Being part of this work has deepened my understanding of what it takes to move from idea to impact. It’s shown me the power of collaboration, the importance of persistence, and the value of staying curious and open to new ways of thinking. This year, I’ve been able to combine my knowledge in human-centred design with quality improvement to help shape services that are efficient, user-focused, and genuinely enjoyable to be part of. It’s been incredibly rewarding to create solutions that work well in practice and truly reflect the needs of those who use and deliver them. This experience has fundamentally shaped how I’ll approach complex challenges in healthcare from here on.”



—Dr. Eve Stanley, National NCHD Innovation Fellow

EXTERNAL AWARDS & RECOGNITION 2024

2024 proved to be another successful year for health and social care workers and Designers engaged with the HSE Spark Programme. We are always delighted to see the hard work of our engaged community being recognised inside and outside of the health and social care organisation. We are privileged to support Clinicians, Designers and Healthcare Innovation Leaders to undertake complex challenges in their day to day work. Their far reaching acknowledgement and recognition is a testament to the impact they are having on patients and staff across the health service in Ireland. This year the HSE Spark Programme was also acknowledged for the contribution it makes to engagement and education of frontline health and social care workers with our shortlisting for a prestigious award at the HSE Healthcare Awards.

IRISH HEALTHCARE AWARDS 2024

The HSE Spark Innovation Programme was honoured to be shortlisted for three prestigious awards at the Irish Healthcare Awards 2024:



Best Nursing & Midwifery Project of the Year (Winner): Nurse-Led Integrating Forensic Photography into SATU Services to Enhance Patient Care, Sexual Assault Treatment Unit, Rotunda Hospital & HSE Spark Innovation Programme

We are thrilled to announce that the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) at the Rotunda Hospital, in collaboration with the HSE Spark Innovation Programme, won the award for Best Nursing & Midwifery Project of the Year. The project, led by Spark National Nursing/Midwifery Innovation Fellow Catherine Marsh, integrates forensic photography into SATU services to reduce patient stress, shorten visit lengths, and provide trauma-informed care. This innovation aims to minimise interactions during a crisis and lessen the burden on

other agencies. Catherine's dedication has significantly advanced healthcare practices, earning her well-deserved recognition.

Innovation in Healthcare and Medicine (shortlisted): Muma Postnatal Hub, St. Luke's General Hospital, Kilkenny & HSE Spark Innovation Programme

Commenced in November 2023, the Muma Postnatal Hub is a groundbreaking multidisciplinary support service for new mothers and their partners. Using a human-centred design approach, the hub aims to tackle physical and mental morbidity through early intervention and access to specialists in midwifery and women's health physiotherapy. The hub provides access to midwives via mobile phone and social media, as well as in-person support such as clinical assessments, listening sessions, feeding support, and peer support. Key features include the Muma Menu booklet, Instagram page, drop-in appointments, peer support groups, and weekend services. The initiative has shown significant improvements in patient care and service efficiency, with high engagement and positive feedback from users.

Educational Meeting of the Year (shortlisted): Spark Summit 2024

The Spark Summit - National Innovation Conference 2024 continued its legacy as Ireland's leading platform for health and social care innovation. Held on 20 June 2024, the event brought together over 425 healthcare professionals, designers, innovators, and key decision-makers to collaborate on solutions to pressing health and social care challenges. The summit emphasised the

convergence of design thinking and clinical expertise, supported by endorsements from the HSE, Department of Health, and various partners. Key objectives included advancing health and social care innovation, fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration, promoting system-wide adoption, and empowering health and social care professionals. The event featured award-winning projects, high-level engagement, and interactive sessions. Post-summit initiatives ensured continued momentum in driving health and social care innovation across Ireland.

HIHI CLINICAL INNOVATOR AWARDS 2024

In September, we were delighted to hear that Dr. Brendan Kelly, Paediatric Radiologist, winner of the HSE Spark Ignite competition 2024 had been announced as a winner of the Enterprise Ireland/Health Innovation Hub Ireland Clinical Innovation Awards for 2024. The HIHI Clinical Innovation Award is designed to support all healthcare professionals in Ireland to explore the commercial feasibility of their innovative ideas with the potential to transform the way medical care is delivered in Ireland and abroad.



Dr. Kelly completed his PhD in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Change Detection in Longitudinal Imaging Data at the Insight Centre for Data Analytics in University College Dublin (UCD) Ireland in 2024. In 2020 he was a HRB HealthImpact Fulbright Scholar to Stanford University, California, USA.

Dr. Kelly has developed 'NeUFormer' which harnesses the power of AI to provide faster and more accurate diagnoses for people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). NeUFormer uses vision transformers in a new way to

increase detection of small lesions and achieve superior generalisability compared to alternative models. Dr. Kelly's award is further recognition of the 'high potential' nature of his solution and also highlights the valuable innovation pipeline that exists between HSE Spark, Health Innovation Hub Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.

HSE SPARK SPONSORED "DESIGN ON THE FRONTLINE" DESIGNER WINS THE JAMES DYSON INNOVATION AWARD, 2024



Athena, developed by design student Olivia Humphreys, is a portable and affordable scalp-cooling device designed to prevent hair loss in chemotherapy patients. Inspired by her mother's painful battle with cancer, Olivia created Athena to provide a practical solution for patients undergoing chemotherapy.

Athena uses thermoelectric components to cool a tank of water, which circulates around the head via a wearable headpiece. The device is battery-powered, making it convenient for patients to use at home or while commuting. This innovation is 1/20th the price of existing technologies and allows patients to use it outside of hospital settings, reducing the time they need to spend on wards.

Olivia was a Design on the Frontline bursary winner, and her invention won the prestigious James Dyson Award in the medical category for 2024. HSE Spark was honoured to support Olivia on her Medical Device Design project this year. As lifelong users of the health service, we eagerly anticipate the benefits of the many medical devices that Olivia will undoubtedly develop throughout her career.

ENGAGEMENT

In 2024, the Spark Innovation Programme continued to prioritise connection, collaboration, and listening by attending workshops, conferences, national and regional meetings, professional group gatherings, symposiums, and sector-wide events.

Our attendance at such a varied selection of events allows us to meet a broad cross-section of staff, patients and service users from across the country and stay closely attuned to the evolving needs of our healthcare system. These events are not just opportunities to showcase our work, they are essential spaces where we meet with our engaged collaborators, grow our community, and hear directly from colleagues, leaders, and patients about the challenges they face and the innovations they seek. Close connection to our community is critical to the success of the programme as we adapt our offering each year to meet current and emerging needs.

In 2023, this commitment and a nationally distributed team brought us to many in-person and online events across the country, including the National HSCP Conference, the National Lean Healthcare Symposium, the CHO8 Older Person's Design Workshop, the NDTP National Medical Workforce Conference, and the Better Public Services conference, among many others. These moments of exchange are where ideas are sparked, partnerships are born, and the future of healthcare innovation is co-created.

2024 has proven to be another stellar year of outreach and engagement, reinforcing our belief that meaningful innovation begins with listening, collaboration, and a shared ambition to improve care.





THE YEAR AHEAD

As we conclude our activity for 2024, we do so with a renewed sense of momentum and purpose. This year saw a marked increase in engagement, impact, research activity, and knowledge sharing across the Spark Innovation Programme. This clearly demonstrates a growing appetite for innovation at all levels of the health service. We are proud to continue supporting frontline-led innovation as a key driver of improved healthcare delivery for patients, staff, and our wider health and social care system.



Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited by what's to come. The introduction of the Consultant Innovation Fund via the Public Only Consultant Contract (POCC) presents an opportunity for enabling frontline clinical innovation in a way that is internationally unique. It represents a significant investment in the innovation potential of our clinical teams with their Consultant colleagues and opens new possibilities for advancing clinician-led research, improving care pathways, and generating scalable impact.

We will continue to deepen our focus on research in the year ahead, building a stronger understanding of the value of innovation projects and the value that HSE Spark brings to the broader health service. Our ongoing activity in developing our "Value Inventory Framework" will support clinicians, HSE Spark, and the broader organisation in assessing and articulating the value of innovation initiatives. This will help to secure sustainable funding, promote the diffusion of proven solutions, and inform decisions around adoption and scaling.

2025 will also bring opportunities to explore how innovation will be best supported through the regional model of service delivery. As the Health Regions continue to take shape, we are preparing to support regionally embedded innovation efforts with tools, partnerships, and design-led approaches that promote integrated, end-to-end care for patients.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration with partners in academia, practice, and policy as we expand our CPD offerings, launch new education and learning programmes, and embed research and evaluation supports that empower clinicians to lead meaningful change.

The future of health and social care innovation is collaborative, evidence-informed, and frontline-driven. HSE Spark is ready to meet that future head-on.

Caitriona Heffernan

National Clinical Innovation Lead

HSE Spark







Innovation Programme



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Seirbhísí
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