

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Developing a National Model of Care for Paediatric and Neonatal Healthcare Services

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Introduction: The National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics and Neonatology, a joint clinical initiative between the Faculty of Paediatrics, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and the Health Service Executive, has developed a national model of care for paediatric and neonatal healthcare services in Ireland.

Methods: Extensive consultation took place with healthcare professionals and management working in the child health sector in Ireland when developing the model of care. It was recognised from the onset that in order to ensure success and widespread acceptance of the model, there would need to be a 'ground up' approach, where staff were heard, acknowledged and encouraged to contribute to the shared national vision for the specialty. In addition, the Programme recognised the importance of engaging with parents, children and young people, and this took place throughout the development of the model of care to ensure that their views were incorporated.

Achievements: The model of care addresses the changing healthcare needs in Ireland and describes a vision for high quality, accessible healthcare services for children in Ireland, from birth to adulthood. It spans a range of care settings from community services to tertiary and quaternary care. It sets out requirements in a range of paediatric subspecialties for infrastructure, staffing and processes, and the expected outcomes for children accessing each service. The model of care is a blueprint for the development of paediatrics and neonatology over the next 10 years in Ireland.

Next steps: The model of care has been approved by the relevant authorities and it must now be implemented through the service delivery functions. An implementation structure is being developed which will require stakeholders to work in an innovative integrated way. Implementation teams will require membership from each of the relevant HSE divisions; health and wellbeing, primary care, social care, acute hospitals and mental health services.

Keywords: children; model of care; integration; paediatrics; neonatology
