

# INVEST IN HEALTH CURRENT FUNDING - LESS IS BEING DONE WITH LESS

- Health Budget has been cut by **€4 Billion** since 2008 and in real terms that means
  - Staffing levels down **12,200**
  - **900** fewer Hospital Beds
  - **Increased** waiting lists across all specialties
  - **Reduced** services to patients
  - **Lowest** public health spending in the EU 15
  - **Out of pocket** payments up €450m
- **Patient Safety** is now seriously at risk

The Government **MUST** protect our Public Health System and **STOP** putting the health and safety of our citizens at risk.

## Immediate Steps

- **Increase funding and staffing levels** to stabilise system across all sectors - Hospitals, General Practice and Community Services
- Ensure funding is sufficient to allow **patients to be treated safely**
- Real commitment that any cost containment measures will be rigorously assessed against **risk to patient safety** and long term effects before commencement
- Introduce **GP Care which is free at the point of access** in a sustainable and equitable manner based on income levels and medical need with introduction of chronic disease care packages
- Immediately **abandon all co-payment models** such as prescription charges which are proven to be detrimental to long term health and disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in society

# PLANNING AND RESOURCING GP CARE FOR TOTAL POPULATION

General Practice delivers 24 million clinical consultations each year, with 95% of all such consultations requiring no onward referral, BUT our GP service has been cut by over €160m in recent years while at the same time there are 500,000 extra medical card and GP visit card patients.

Ireland's GPs have the potential to do more for patients but currently there is neither the capacity nor resources to deliver more services.

Resources to GPs do not take into account the true cost of running General Practice.

The IMO is committed to a GP Service which is free at the point of access to all patients but such a development requires:

- o **Significant investment** in general practice to stabilise a service that has been cut by over €160m in recent years
  - o Introduction of GP Care in a planned manner with **ring fenced budgets** year on year
  - o Introduction of GP Care in an equitable way that targets those patients most in need –
    - Lower Income Groups – **raise income limit for GP Care** incrementally over successive years
- Introduction of **Chronic Disease Care Packages** for patients incrementally over successive years
- o Any extension of GP Care to the population must be done on the basis of medical evidence and NOT political expediency – there is **NO MEDICAL EVIDENCE** to support the continued roll out of GP care based on age cohorts.
- o Urgent increase in funding to support
  - Greater capacity to **treat more patients**
  - **Address funding deficits** of recent years
  - A new GP Contract to support the delivery of **Modern General Practice**

# STOP THE EXODUS OF IRISH TRAINED DOCTORS

Ireland's healthcare system does not support doctors and the HSE is not an employer of choice. Irish trained doctors are being actively recruited across the world to work in systems that are **properly resourced and allow doctors to treat their patients in a safe and effective manner.**

- Irish doctors traditionally went abroad to undertake further training but now they are **not coming back**
- The problem is not just in the younger medical professionals but extends across the specialties with established consultants and GPs leaving the system – doctors are not being encouraged to stay in Ireland
- We are propping up our health services with **expensive agency costs** and fewer posts are being filled on a permanent basis. In many cases there are **no applicants for Consultant or GP Posts**
- Ensure equity of treatment for all doctors across the public service

**Urgent steps must be taken to ensure Ireland is the place where our trained doctors**

**CAN PRACTICE SAFELY IN A SYSTEM THAT IS RESOURCED**

**CAN DELIVER QUALITY SERVICES TO PATIENTS**

**ARE VALUED AND SUPPORTED IN DEVELOPING OUR HEALTH SERVICES**

# BUILDING A HEALTHY NATION



As a society we face serious problems that are directly impacting on the health and well being of the population. Government must be much **more proactive in promoting a healthier Ireland** and support people to make the right choices.



**Minimum Unit Pricing on Alcohol:** Government must cease to listen to the lobbying of the drinks industry. Apart from the clear and evidence based ill health effects of excessive alcohol consumption in Ireland, there are untold adverse consequences for families and society as a whole. We must now move to introduce **Minimum Unit Pricing on Alcohol** and apply a Health Levy to the drinks industry which will be specifically used for the treatment of alcohol related harm.

**Tobacco Products:** The cost to our health services of smoking related illnesses and deaths is enormous. Government need to take brave decisions and increase a packet of 20 cigarettes by €1. The tobacco industry should also be charged a **health levy** which will be used to fund health promotion and tobacco control initiatives.



**High Sugar, Fat and Salt Foods:** Government must develop a **pricing structure** to discourage the consumption of food with high sugar, high fat and high salt content and **actively encourage the consumption of healthier foods and drinks.**





# UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE NOT

# UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE

The IMO is committed to **Universal Healthcare** where patients receive quality healthcare when they need it and at an affordable cost - **this is not Universal Health Insurance**.

Universal Health Insurance is merely a **funding model that cannot deliver for Ireland** in terms of Affordability, Equity of Access, Choice, Timely Access to Care, Quality of Care.

It will not offer **Value for Money** but will deliver significant profits to the **Private Insurance Industry**.

Regulatory administration and marketing costs will further **drain resources** from patient care.

There are other healthcare funding models and the IMO calls for an open, transparent debate and analysis of the most appropriate funding model for Ireland which may be the taxation model or a social insurance model.

# HELP DOCTORS DO MORE FOR PATIENTS

The IMO represents doctors in Hospitals, General Practice, Public and Community Health - Doctors who work together to **deliver safe, effective and quality care** to the people of Ireland.

## WE CAN DO MORE FOR PATIENTS IF GOVERNMENT:

- Provide sufficient funds to support our public health services
- Increase the number of doctors and support frontline staff to cope with the increasing demand
- Make health decisions based on medical evidence not political expediency



**STOP THE CUTBACKS**  
**STOP PUTTING PATIENTS AT RISK**  
**STOP DOCTORS LEAVING**

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