



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Clinical Officer  
Dr Steevens' Hospital|Steevens' Lane|D08 W2A8  
email: [cco@hse.ie](mailto:cco@hse.ie)

Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Cliniciúil  
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens|Baile Átha Cliath 8|D08 W2A8

By Email Only

30/03/2021

**To:** Bernadette Jackson, President Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine ACSLM,  
Helen Barry, Chief Executive Officer ACSLM [helenbarry@acslm.ie](mailto:helenbarry@acslm.ie)

Sean Costello, President ACBI [Sean.Costelloe@hse.ie](mailto:Sean.Costelloe@hse.ie); [secretary@acbi.ie](mailto:secretary@acbi.ie)  
Locum Consultant Biochemist, CUH  
Association of Clinical Biochemists of Ireland

Cathal O'Brien, President  
Brendan Mullaney, Vice President  
Irish Association of Clinical Scientists [info@iacs.ie](mailto:info@iacs.ie); [clinicalscientistireland@gmail.com](mailto:clinicalscientistireland@gmail.com)

**Re: National Review of Medical Laboratory Workforce**

Dear Colleague

Laboratory medicine underpins most medical diagnosis and management of acute and chronic disease, across all care settings. As healthcare changes, it is essential that laboratory medicine develops in parallel in order to support evolving models of care. As we progress with the delivery of Sláintecare, the configuration of laboratory medicine will change. It is likely that there will be increasing need for near patient testing and this will require advanced scientific input to be delivered in a high quality, accredited manner outside of the traditional laboratory.

Advances in technology have facilitated significant increases in automation, reducing the manual tasks within the laboratory. There is also an increasing use of molecular diagnostics and genetics / genomics in pathology. The increasing complexity of clinical care and associated laboratory medicine has significantly increased the need for detailed analytical and interpretive skills.

There are several laboratory medicine disciplines and subspecialties, which are highly vulnerable from a human resources perspective. There are significant recruitment and retention challenges, against a backdrop of a global skills shortage affecting both scientific and medical staff.

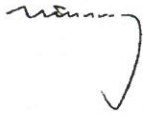
In this context, I am writing to advise that I plan to establish a National Review of Medical Laboratory Workforce and am in the process of identifying an independent chair. The purpose of this review will be to develop a strategic, integrated approach to developing and sustaining the future medical and scientific workforce that will see these staff maximise their skills and training in the interests of high quality and safe patient care.

The aim is to identify and understand the workforce challenges currently facing the service and identify actions that, when implemented, will ensure a sustainable workforce for the future of this essential service.

I will be inviting you to nominate a representative to join a group to work with the Chair in conducting this national review.

I will be in further contact but in the meantime, if you have any queries in relation to this matter please feel free to contact **Dr Siobhan Ni Bhriain, Integrated Care Lead** at [lead.integratedcare@hse.ie](mailto:lead.integratedcare@hse.ie) or **Jackie Reed, National Lead, National HSCP Office** at [jackie.reed@hse.ie](mailto:jackie.reed@hse.ie)

Yours sincerely



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Dr Colm Henry  
Chief Clinical Officer