



General data

POPULATION, 2023
5,307,600

PHYSICIANS / 1,000 INH, 2021
4.06

Socioeconomic data

COUNTRY INCOME LEVEL, 2022
High income

GDP PER CAPITA (US\$), 2023
103,887

HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% GDP), 2021
6.71

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE, 2021
83



WHO FRAMEWORK FOR PALLIATIVE CARE DEVELOPMENT

- ④ EMPOWERMENT OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
- ③ POLICIES
- ② RESEARCH
- ① USE OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES
- ⑤ EDUCATION AND TRAINING
- ⑥ PROVISION OF PC

LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT	1	2	3	4
EMERGING				
PROGRESSING				
ESTABLISHED				
ADVANCED				

Consultants: Paula O'Reilly, Karen Ryan and Karen Charnley.

National Association: All Irish Hospice Palliative Care.

Data collected: October 2024–March 2025

Report validated by consultants: Yes

Endorsed by National PC Association: Yes

Edition: Edited by Atlantes Research Team (University of Navarra, Spain).

Ireland

F Provision of PC (Specialised Services)

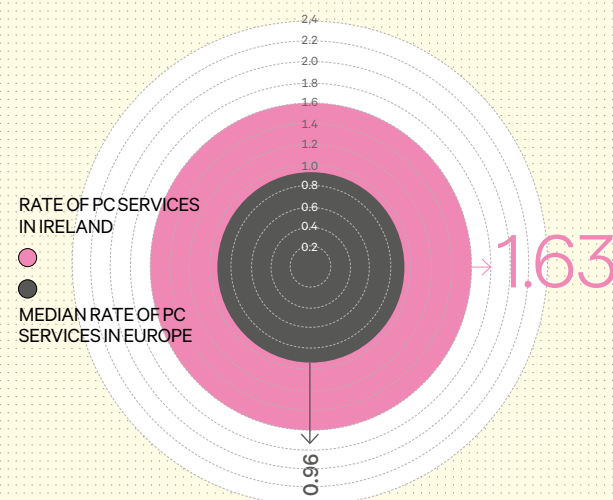
Total number of Specialised PC services

87

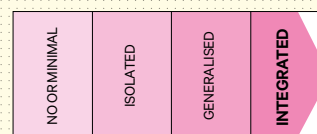
Rate of PC services per 100,000 inhabitants

1.63

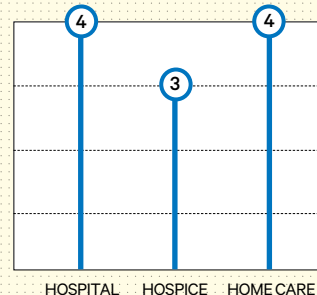
Ireland in the context of European region



Geographic distribution and integration of PC services



Level of development of different types of PC services



Paediatric PC Services

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AND INTEGRATION



TOTAL NUMBER

29



Ireland

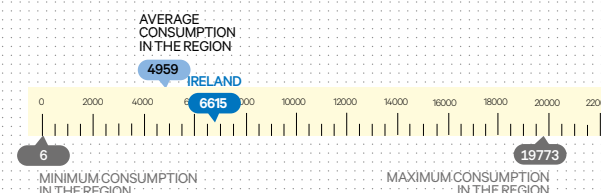
D Use of essential medicines



Opioids consumption (excluding methadone)

6,615
S-DDD/MILL INHABITANTS/DAY

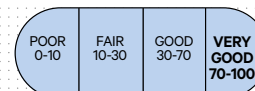
Ireland in the context of European region



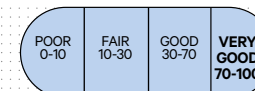
Overall availability of essential medicines for pain and PC at the primary level



IN URBAN AREAS %

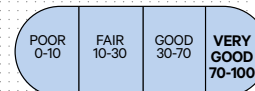


IN RURAL AREAS %

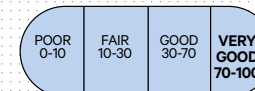


General availability of immediate-release oral morphine at the primary level

IN URBAN AREAS %

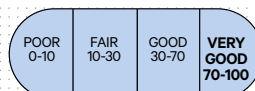


IN RURAL AREAS %

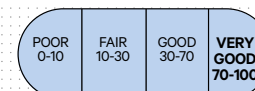


General availability of different opioids and in different formulations at the primary level

IN URBAN AREAS %



IN RURAL AREAS %



C Research

PC-related research articles



Inclusion of PC topics in National Research Calls



Existence of PC congresses or scientific meetings



E Education & Training

Medical schools with mandatory PC teaching



6/6

Nursing schools with mandatory PC teaching



13/13

PC Full Professors



1

Recognition of PC specialty



B Policies

National PC plan or strategy



Responsible authority for PC in the Ministry of Health



Inclusion of PC in the basic health package at the primary care level



A Empowerment of people and communities







Groups promoting the rights of PC patients







Advanced care planning-related policies



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Ind1 Existence of groups dedicated to promoting the rights of patients in need of PC, their care-givers, and disease survivors.	 Strong national and sub-national presence of palliative care advocacy and promoting patient rights (as a professional association of Palliative Care, i.e.).	There are several groups: the Irish Association for Palliative Care (IAPC), a Collective and Expert Voice for Palliative Care in Ireland; the Irish Hospice Foundation is the national organisation for dying, death and bereavement who work towards the best end-of-life and bereavement care. Initiatives such as Nurses for Night Care in collaboration with the Irish Cancer society and its Bereavement Support Line helps those navigating end of life and bereavement matters. The All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care (AIHPC) is a leading organisation with national and international influence promoting excellence in palliative care. AIHPC is a collaborative of hospices, health and social care organisations, charities and universities on the island of Ireland. In addition, disease-specific organisations such as the Irish Cancer Society, Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association and the Irish Lung Fibrosis Association Promote PC.
Ind2 Is there a national policy or guideline on advance directives or advance care planning?	 There is/are national policies or guidelines on living wills and/or on advanced directives.	The Decision Support Service (DSS) was established in 2023 under the Assisted Decision-Making Act 2015, providing legal framework for supported decision making and for the appointment of decision makers if the person lacks capacity. The DSS provides a portal for the registration of enduring power of attorney and co- decision makers and decision-making assistant, and produced a list of codes which provide guidance to the public and professionals on decision support arrangements. The DSS also provides information on how to make an advance health-care directive. The Act also provides for the establishment of an AHD register, however this is not implemented. The Irish Hospice Foundation developed a planning ahead pack called Think Ahead (a tool to initiate conversations on ACP).
Ind3 3.1. There is a current national PC plan, programme, policy, or strategy. 3.2. The national palliative care plan (or programme or strategy or legislation) is a standalone.	 Actualized in last 5 years, and actively evaluated or audited.  Yes, there is a stand-alone national palliative care plan AND there is national palliative care law/legislation/ government decrees on PC.	National Adult Palliative Care Policy 2024 offers an opportunity to develop the governance, coordination, and delivery of services in line with existing structures such as the HSE Health Regions as well as the Enhanced Community Care, National Cancer Control Programme, and National Traveller Health Action Plan. The policy includes an implementation plan including 25 recommendations, a timeline and 105 associated actions. The policy is structured against the overall health strategy - Sláintecare. The Irish government announced recurring funding in the 2025 service plan. This policy outlines specific actions on Adolescence and Young Adults and also deals with areas where adult PC services intersects with community PC provision. Children's PC policy is otherwise out of scope of the National Adult Palliative Care policy- it is guided by the Children's PC policy 2010. The Programme for Government commits to updating the 2010 Children's Policy in the lifetime of the

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3.3. There are indicators in the national plan to monitor and evaluate progress, with measurable targets.	 The indicators to monitor and evaluate progress are currently implemented.	Government. There is also the National Clinical Programme for PC, run by the HSE, and overseeing engagement with providers. The HSE collects data on service delivery from the specialist PC service providers on an ongoing basis (Report Adult Specialist Palliative Care Services in the Republic Of Ireland, 2012-2015). The 'Minimum Data Set' is a national survey of demographic and patient activity data for specialist PC services.
Ind4 PC services are included in the list of priority services for Universal Health Coverage at the primary care level in the national health system.	 Included in the essential list of services recognised by a government decree or law but not in the General Health Law.	Sláintecare is the Health Service Executive and department of health's overall improvement strategy for reforming Ireland's health and social care system. PC is referenced within the Sláintecare plans in several areas including the needs for universal PC. Social care expansion will start with delivering universal palliative and homecare services. Other areas of social care require additional work to cost and examine staffing implications of reforms and the best way to provide services. These include, for example, the redesign of services for people with disabilities. Health system is publicly funded, run by the Health Service Executive, and a private system that operates alongside. Take-up of private health insurance is supported by public subsidies. An OECD report highlighted that healthcare was largely funded by the State (78.3%) but that a prominent role remains funded by household out-of-pocket payments and voluntary private insurance schemes.
Ind5 5.1. Is there a national authority for palliative care within the government or the Ministry of Health? 5.2. The national authority has concrete functions, budget and staff.	 There is a coordinating entity but has an incomplete structure (lack of scientific or technical section).  There are concrete functions, staff and budget.	In the Department of Health, Siobhan McCardle, Assistant Secretary, Social Care, Mental Health, Drugs Policy and Unscheduled Care role includes PC. A subdivision of the Assistant Secretary's office deals specifically with Older Persons Strategy and PC and is led by a Principle Officer. The team oversaw the National Adult PC policy (2024) and the interdisciplinarity of PC was reflected in the composition of the policy Steering Group. The principal Officer manages a small team including PC within their remit. Within the Health Service Executive, there is the National Clinical Programme for PC which includes a Clinical Lead and a Programme Manager. There is also a National Office, National Lead for PC, Access & Integration and two Programme Managers. A budget has been granted within 2024 to support the role out of the National Adult PC Policy. Funding for specialist services are currently provided by Community Health Organisations (HSE) which will move to Regional Health Authorities due to reorganisation of health services.

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Ind6 Existence of congresses or scientific meetings at the national level specifically related to PC.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div> At least one national conference specifically dedicated to palliative care every year.	Within 2024 there have been a number of National Conferences including: a) the Irish Association for Palliative Care Education and Research Seminar 2024; b) The National Palliative Care Conference 2024 – North West Hospice Explorations; c) Eventbrite Annual Palliative Care Research Network Symposium (AIIHPC); d) Palliative Care Research Network Symposium; and e) the Compassionate Communities in Palliative and End of Life Care Conference (AIIHPC). For 2025, there are some planned conferences such as the 17th Kaleidoscope International Palliative Care Conference <i>The Evolution of Palliative Care – Where to next?</i> , or <i>Explorations</i> The National Palliative Care Conference 2025–North West Hospice.
Ind7.1 Estimation of the level of peer-reviewed articles focusing on PC research published in any language in the past 5 years with at least one author from the country.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div> Denotes an extensive number of articles published on this subject.	AIIHPC as part of our support for the Palliative Care Research Network Palliative Care Research Network-The Palliative Hub Professional compiles a listing of the publication published by PCRN members, please see Publications-The Palliative Hub Professional.
Ind7.2 Inclusion of PC topics in national research calls.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div> There is a palliative care-specific national research call.	In 2024 the Health Research Board issued a call for Collaborative Research Networks 2024: Dementia and Palliative care, where palliative care researchers can submit research proposals to a range of funders on the island including the Health Research Board, Irish Research Council and Higher Education Authority, but the calls are for research grants and are not palliative care specific.
Ind8 Reported annual opioid consumption –excluding methadone– in S-DDD per million inhabitants per day.	<div>6,615</div> <div>S-DDD PER MILLION INHAB /DAY</div> <div>COUNTRY VS REGION</div> <div><div>AVERAGE CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION</div><div>4959</div><div>IRELAND</div><div>6615</div><div>0</div><div>2000</div><div>4000</div><div>6000</div><div>8000</div><div>10000</div><div>12000</div><div>14000</div><div>16000</div><div>18000</div><div>20000</div><div>22000</div><div>6</div><div>19773</div><div>MINIMUM CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION</div><div>MAXIMUM CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION</div></div>	Average consumption of opioids, in defined daily doses (S-DDD) for statistical purposes 2020–2022.

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Ind9 9.1. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in Urban areas that have pain and PC medications as defined in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines. 9.2. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in rural areas that have pain and PC medications as defined in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div>	Several documents evidence the wide availability of essential medicines for pain and palliative care in the country at the primary level in Ireland: 1) Palliative Medicine Services Palliative Meds Info, 2) National Clinical Guidelines Clinical Guidelines - HSE.ie, 3) National Model of Care including symptom management Model of Care - HSE.ie, 4) -Needs Assessment Guidelines including e-Learning Programme Needs Assessment Guidance - HSE.ie; and 5) Access to Essential Medicines for Palliative Care in the Community (October 2024).
Ind10.1 10.1.1. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in urban areas that have immediate-release oral morphine (liquid or tablet). 10.1.2. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in rural areas that have immediate-release oral morphine (liquid or tablet).	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div>	Several documents evidence the wide availability of immediate-release oral morphine at the primary level in Ireland: 1) Primary Care Reimbursement Service data, 2) Palliative Medicine Services Palliative Meds Info, 3) National Clinical Guidelines Clinical Guidelines - HSE.ie, 4) National Model of Care including symptom management Model of Care - HSE.ie, 5) Access to Essential Medicines for Palliative Care in the Community (October 2024).
Ind10.2 10.2.1. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in urban areas that have different opioids and in different formulations. 10.2.2 Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in rural areas that have different opioids and in different formulations.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>4</div></div>	Various documents highlight the extensive availability of diverse opioid medications in multiple formulations within Ireland's primary care framework. These include data from the Primary Care Reimbursement Service, information from Palliative Medicine Services, National Clinical Guidelines published by HSE.ie, the National Model of Care for symptom management, and the report <i>Access to Essential Medicines for Palliative Care in the Community</i> (October 2024).

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<p>Ind11</p> <p>11.1. The proportion of medical schools with COMPULSORY teaching in PC (with or without other optional teaching)</p> <p>11.2. The proportion of medical schools with OPTIONAL teaching in PC.</p> <p>11.3. The proportion of nursing schools with COMPULSORY teaching in PC (with or without other optional teaching).</p> <p>11.4. The proportion of nursing schools with OPTIONAL teaching in PC.</p> <p>11.5. PC Full Professors</p> <p>11.6. Legislation/regulations concerning PC education</p>	<p>6/6</p> <p>0/6</p> <p>13/13</p> <p>0/13</p> <p>1</p> <p>No</p>	<p></p> <p>All medical and nursing schools teach mandatory palliative care to undergraduate students; and there is one full professor in palliative medicine, Professor Andrew Davies - Trinity College Dublin. In 2014 the HSE's Palliative Care Competence Framework was published for health and social care professionals working in various health care settings. The framework provided core competencies in palliative care whilst also detailing individual competences for each health and social care discipline. It is envisioned that the framework will inform academic curricula and professional development programmes. The Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies endorsed the report and outlined that it was to be used when reviewing the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula for medicals. The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland also endorsed the report and outlined that it was to be used when reviewing the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula for nurses. In nursing the current requirements and standards indicate that some instruction in palliative and end-of-life care be included but there is no specific amount of time indicated. It is up to each School of Nursing to decide the level and amount of content they wish to provide. The current requirements and standards are due to be replaced with each School of Nursing, developing a new curriculum based on the new requirements and standards. Furthermore, one of the actions in the new National Adult Palliative Care Policy 2024 is to undertake a review of undergraduate programmes (15.2).</p>
<p>Ind12</p> <p>Existence of an official specialisation process in palliative medicine for physicians, recognised by the competent authority in the country.</p>	<p></p> <p>Palliative medicine is a speciality or subspeciality (another denomination equivalent) recognised by competent national authorities.</p>	<p>Palliative Medicine is a speciality in the Republic of Ireland (higher specialist training in palliative medicine outcome-based education-obe curriculum).</p>

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<p>Ind13</p> <p>13.1. There is a system of specialised PC services or teams in the country that has a GEOGRAPHIC reach and is delivered through different service delivery platforms.</p> <p>13.2. Are available in HOSPITALS (public or private), such as hospital PC teams (consultation teams), and PC units (with beds), to name a few examples.</p> <p>13.3. Free-standing HOSPICES (including hospices with inpatient beds).</p> <p>13.4. HOME CARE teams (specialised in PC) are available in the community (or at the primary Healthcare level), as independent services or linked with hospitals or hospices.</p> <p>13.5. Total number of specialised PC services or teams in the country.</p>	<p></p> <p>Integrated provision: Specialised palliative care services or teams are systematically provided.</p> <p></p> <p>Are part of most/all hospitals in some form.</p> <p></p> <p>Found in many parts of the country.</p> <p></p> <p>Strong presence of home care teams in all parts of the country.</p>	<p>According to the IAPC directory of specialised services, there are 87 services (1,79 services per 100,000 inhabitants). There are 14 hospices (one under planning); a hospice available in each key region. These hospices have outreach community teams (separate community Specialist palliative care teams) and have 174 level-3 specialised beds. There are 32 community specialist palliative care teams covering all 26 counties. The community specialist palliative care teams work in close partnership with GPs and primary care teams and provide expert palliative care to both adults and children in all community settings, including nursing homes. In 2023, community palliative care teams provided care to an average of 3,900 patients each month in their own homes. Furthermore, there are approximately 180 level-2 palliative care support beds (not specialist beds but intermediate level PC in local regions). There are also support palliative care services available in 37 acute hospitals across model 2, 3 and 4 hospitals (support PC team consultants in palliative medicine input and CNS input varies depending on size of hospital).</p> <p>RATE OF SPECIALISED PC SERVICES/100,000 INH</p> <p>MEDIAN RATE IN THE REGION</p> <p>0.96</p> <p>IRELAND</p> <p>1.63</p> <p>MINIMUM RATE IN THE REGION</p> <p>3.68</p> <p>MAXIMUM RATE IN THE REGION</p> <p>87</p> <p>← SPECIALISED PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES</p>
<p>Ind14</p> <p>14.1. There is a system of specialised PC services or teams for children in the country that has geographic reach and is delivered through different service delivery platforms.</p> <p>14.2. Number of pediatric specialised PC services or teams in the country.</p>	<p></p> <p>Integrated provision: specialised palliative care services or teams for children are systematically provided.</p> <p>29</p> <p>PPC TEAMS</p>	<p>Laura Lynn Ireland's Children's Hospice provides an Inpatient Unit in Dublin and home care services to certain areas. There are three Children's Palliative Medicine consultants located in Children's Health Ireland PC. Adult PC services also support the care of children and young people in need. All community support PC teams provide care to adults and children and are linked locally to a paediatrician and centrally with Children's Hospital Ireland. The HSE is recruiting four paediatricians which a special interest in PC to operate in hospitals outside of Dublin. There is a National Steering Committee for Children's PC which is attended by the network of Clinical Nurse Coordinator for Children with Life Limiting Conditions.</p>