

## MOIC: Latest News and Updates

Happy New Year! As we step into 2025, we reflect on a bustling 2024 at MOIC. Over the past few months we have been actively involved in various conferences and events across Europe strengthening collaborations and forging new connections. We are also thrilled to announce that we have been awarded PEACEPLUS funding, opening up new opportunities in the field of medicines. Here's to looking forward to what the New Year holds for us at MOIC!

## PEACEPLUS: Funding Success

MOIC was delighted to partner in an application for PEACEPLUS.

The application was successful and work is ongoing with the Project Team to commence this initiative.

The project, Innovation in person-centred Medication Prescribing and Review for Optimal Value and Efficacy (iMPROVE), is led by Ulster University with partners from Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland and Scotland.

iMPROVE is focused on medicine management and aims to implement care pathways. It incorporates pharmacogenomics and person-centred medicine reviews in primary care, to optimise the prescribing of medications, improve community accessibility needs and reduce the burden on primary care.

PEACEPLUS is a cross-border funding programme designed to support peace and prosperity across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, building on the work of the previous PEACE and INTERREG programmes. Work with the project team has already commenced, and we are eager to see the positive impacts this initiative will bring to medication management across our regions. Stay tuned for updates as we progress with iMPROVE, aiming for better healthcare and a more efficient healthcare system.



**PEACEPLUS**  
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government

## MOIC at All Ireland Antimicrobial Stewardship Conference: Combating Antimicrobial Resistance

In October 2024, MOIC's Michael Scott and Anita Hogg attended the All Ireland Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) conference in Dublin. The event focused on a multidisciplinary approach to antimicrobial stewardship and was an opportunity to share research and knowledge to tackle antibiotic resistance, emphasising the need for cross-border co-operation.

Anita was on the organising committee and spoke at the pre-event research meeting on MOIC's efforts in this critical area. Experts from The Netherlands, UK and Ireland presented, focusing on multidisciplinary strategies to manage resistant infections. It is anticipated that the 2025 event will be held in Belfast.



## MOIC's Impact at ESCP Symposium in Krakow

In October Michael Scott, Anita Hogg and Joanne Brown attended the European Society of Clinical Pharmacy's Autumn Symposium in Krakow, Poland. The focus was on implementing and scaling sustainable clinical pharmacy practice. Michael Scott, Chair of the Scientific Committee, and Anita Hogg delivered the Plenary presentation, "Evidencing novel clinical pharmacy practices across a health system". Anita Hogg and Joanne Brown also facilitated a workshop focusing on the Patient Voice, from theory to transforming practice.



The symposium was a great opportunity to progress discussions with colleagues from the Polish Society of Clinical Pharmacy and others across Europe. NI was well represented at the event and Cathy Harrison, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer at the Department of Health gave the opening address. MOIC's participation was a significant contribution to the conference, building on its reputation across Europe and fostering professional development in clinical pharmacy.

## MOIC at Cluster SAUD de Galicia (CSG) Event

The #RIES24 International Forum, organised by the Galician Health Cluster, celebrated its ninth edition in Guitiriz, Spain, focusing on the healthcare ecosystem's challenge and opportunities. This year's theme on the future of healthcare was a perfect match for MOIC's goal of promoting private- public partnerships and innovation in the sector.

Michael Scott and Anita Hogg were thrilled to participate in the conference, an event teeming with innovation and thought leadership. Discussion revolved around healthcare's future, providing a platform for networking, sharing insights and exploring the latest trends. A significant moment was the awards ceremony, celebrating excellence in the sector and highlighting the vibrant and progressive community MOIC is part of.

We are excited about our involvement in #REIS24, and continuing to deepen our collaboration with CSG partners to open new avenues for healthcare advancement together.

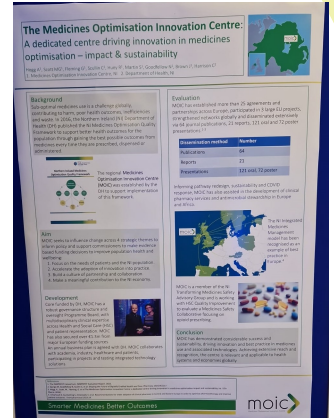


## MOIC at All Island Medication Safety Conference

Dublin Castle hosted the inaugural All Island Medication Safety conference, where over 250 delegates converged to enhance healthcare practices across the island. This landmark event brought together a diverse group of experts, patient advocates, researchers, and policymakers, focusing on medication safety in both the Republic and Northern Ireland.

The conference was a resounding success, featuring 100 posters and an impressive array of presentations. Glenda Fleming was on the organising committee for the event and MOIC was proud to actively contribute by presenting our work through both poster and oral presentation.

We were particularly delighted that Michael Scott was invited to present, sharing valuable insights on the innovative iSIMPATHY project with Ciara Kirke from the Health Service Executive, Ireland. This was an excellent opportunity to highlight our work on a national stage and foster collaborations that will drive improvements in healthcare across Ireland.



## Successes and Insights from the Opioid Improvement Collaborative Programme

The Opioid Improvement Collaborative Programme (OICP) was launched to contribute to the Transforming Medication Safety in Northern Ireland (TMSNI) strategy. This improvement programme was a joint partnership between the Health and Social Care Quality Improvement (HSCQI) Hub and Network and the TMSNI programme team. The Medicines Optimisation Innovation Centre (MOIC) conducted a thorough evaluation of the programme.

OICP aimed to foster collaboration between primary and secondary care teams, focusing on improving opioid prescribing for non-malignant pain. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to explore healthcare practitioners' views on engaging with the programme, practice with regards to opioid use in non-malignant pain and the impact of their QI projects.

With 40 participants across 9 project teams, including GPs, hospitals and cross-sector teams, 30 participants successfully completed the programme and attained their Level 2 QI Training.

Each team designed and conducted an improvement project within their scope of practice.

Feedback from programme participants, HSCQI programme delivery teams and HSCQI mentors confirmed:

- Collaboration was achieved: OICP successfully created an environment for learning and improvement in prescribing practices.
- Short to medium term benefits were achieved: projects were completed with positive outcomes, indicating better opioid management.

While long-term effects are yet to be fully established, the programme has laid a strong foundation. Continuing efforts in scaling these innovations are necessary for lasting change in Northern Ireland's health landscape. It is essential to leverage established networks, programme momentum and policy motivation for long term improvements in opioid prescribing across Northern Ireland to enhance population health.

## Pharmacy Pilot Proves Effective for Sore Throats in NI

From November 2023 to March 2024, 43 community pharmacies in Northern Ireland provided a sore throat service for patients aged 5 and above. This pilot saw 6,768 consultations, with subsequent evaluation based on consultation data, patient experiences, and stakeholder feedback.

### Service Aims and Objectives

- Enhance access to care for sore throat symptoms.
- Leverage pharmacist's clinical skills for better patient outcomes.
- Reduce unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions.

## Assessment

Pharmacists employed a combination of the FeverPain score, patient examination, and Rapid Antigen Detection Testing (RADT) to assess the need for antibiotic treatments, focusing on the likelihood of streptococcal infection.

## Antibiotic Prescribing

Given Northern Ireland's higher antibiotic prescribing rates compared to other UK regions, this service aimed for precision. Only 25% (1,721) of patients received antibiotics, aligning with a similar service in Wales. For those not requiring antibiotics, self-care advice and analgesics like paracetamol and ibuprofen were provided. Notably, 93% of antibiotic prescriptions adhered to NI antimicrobial guidelines by using penicillin.

## Stakeholder Feedback

- Patients: Overwhelmingly positive, with 96% likely, or very likely to recommend the service. 93% finding the advice from pharmacists helpful, and 81% feeling confident in future self-management.
- GPs: Recognised benefits included quicker access to treatment, point-of-care-testing, reduced inappropriate antibiotic use, and patient education on self-care.

The pilot has demonstrated the potential for a community-based sore throat service to improve patient access, utilise pharmacist's expertise, and possibly reduce unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions. The evaluation outcomes will guide the potential expansion into a comprehensive "Pharmacy First Sore Throat Service" across Northern Ireland, aiming for a more accessible, efficient and high-quality clinical pathway.

## MOIC Partners in Three Research Bids

We are excited to announce that MOIC has recently partnered in three significant funding proposals, each aimed at transforming health care practices across various global contexts. Below is a brief overview of each bid:

1. **COST Action:** Improving health care practices for eco-directed use of human medicines across Europe.  
Lead: University of Highlands and Islands in Scotland  
Partners: 18 countries across Europe
2. **Horizon Europe:** The proposal is Global iSIMPATY which aims to look at the use of structured medication review in low to middle income countries and in socially deprived populations in high income countries  
Lead: Scottish Government  
Partners: 8 countries across Europe
3. **US - Ireland Partnership Programme:** This project will focus research simultaneously on the different healthcare contexts of the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the United States of America to produce more widely applicable and generalisable implementation strategies for transitions of care interventions where significant medication related problems can occur.  
Partners: The University of Arkansas, University College Limerick, Trinity College Dublin and Queens University, Belfast.



## MOIC recognised for commitment to employee health and wellbeing

We're delighted to announce that MOIC has been awarded Level 3 in the Take 5 Accreditation for workplace health and wellbeing! MOIC is the first Northern Health and Social Care Trust team to be accredited with this award. This achievement recognises our commitment to creating a positive and supportive work environment. By focusing on the 5 Steps to Wellbeing - Give, Be Active, Connect, Keep Learning, and Take Notice - we've implemented a range of initiatives to enhance the overall wellbeing of our team.

A big thank you to our health, wellbeing, and inclusion champions Anita Hogg and Elizabeth Hauxwell for their dedication and hard work in making this possible.



## Dr Joanne Brown Honoured with Inaugural Barnett Award

We're also thrilled to share the news that our esteemed colleague, Joanne Brown, has been awarded the inaugural Barnett Award at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Annual Conference. This prestigious honour recognises her exceptional commitment to mentoring and professional development within the pharmacy profession.

As the Senior Research and Innovation Programme Manager at the Medicines Optimisation Innovation Centre, Joanne's dedication to fostering growth in pharmacy is unparalleled. Her previous role as Clinical Education Lead at the Northern Health and Social Care Trust saw her support pharmacy professionals at all career stages. Joanne's influence extends beyond her formal duties. She has mentored over 50 individuals, offering personalised guidance and creating a supportive environment for professional growth. Her contributions to improving systems across Northern Ireland have significantly impacted pharmacy education.

The Barnett Award, established by the RPS in memory of esteemed RPS Fellow Nina Barnett, honours individuals who have dedicated their careers to supporting, mentoring, and advancing others within the pharmacy profession. This well-deserved recognition highlights Joanne's significant contribution to the pharmacy profession. We extend our warmest congratulations to her on this outstanding achievement.



## MOIC Supports Cash for Kids Mission Christmas

We're delighted to share that we successfully raised £376 for Cash for Kids Mission Christmas, thanks to a fantastic bake sale organised by Elizabeth. The turnout was fantastic, with everyone showing great generosity for this worthy cause. A huge thank you to everyone who supported the event and a special shout-out to Elizabeth for her incredible organisation and baking skills. Your contributions helped make Christmas brighter for many children.



## 2024: An Outstanding Year for MOIC in Leading Healthcare Publications

In 2024, MOIC was thrilled to have several of our research papers published in leading healthcare journals. Below is a list of these publications with corresponding links:

**Recommendations for wider adoption of clinical pharmacy in Central and Eastern Europe in order to optimise pharmacotherapy and improve patient outcomes.** *Frontiers in pharmacology*, 14, p.1244151.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fphar.2023.1244151>

**European Society of Clinical Pharmacy: Implementing and scaling sustainable clinical pharmacy.** *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* 46(2) pp 355-356.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11096-024-01718-w>

**Evaluation of medication safety assessment tools for pharmacist-led medication reviews; the Eastern European pilot project.** *Frontiers in Pharmacology* v15.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fphar.2024.1348400>

**Patient UK impact on medication adherence in Czech pilot study for chronically ill - behavioural sciences** 14(6) 489  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14060489>

**Service development project to pilot a digital technology innovation for video direct observation of therapy in adult patients with asthma** 2024. *BMJ Open Quality* 13(3):e002626  
<https://bmjopenquality.bmj.com/content/bmjqr/13/3/e002626.full.pdf>

**The Medicine Optimisation Innovation Centre: a dedicated centre driving innovation in medicine optimisation - impact and sustainability.** *International journal of clinical Pharmacy* 96 (10080)  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11096-024-01775-1>

**Association between clinical frailty scale and mortality 24 months after hospitalization in adult patients with Covid-19.** *Heliyon* 10(3): e40456  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39688505/>

**Clinical decision support system in adults with chronic respiratory disease. A systematic review.** June 2024. *Current reviews in respiratory medicine*.  
<https://www.eurekaselect.com/article/141184>