

Republic of Ireland region

Annual General Meeting 31st January 2025

Attendance: *Alison Bransfield (AB), *Janice Reeve (JR), *Brendan Byrne (BB), *Paula O’Shea (POS), *Eileen Byrne (EB), *Roshaida Abdul Wahab (RAW), Peadar McGing (PMG), Jennifer Brady (JB), Heloise Tarrant (HT), Graham Lee (GL), Seán Costelloe (SC), Esther Purcell (EP), Caroline Joyce (CJ)

*Committee members

1	Apologies: Karen Heverin, Carl Talbot (CT)
2	Approval of 2024 minutes & matters arising: Minutes for the 2024 AGM (Appendix A) were approved with no matters arising. (Proposed POS, Seconded AB)
3	Declaration of conflict of interest: None
4	Chairperson/Council representative’s report: AB ran through two PowerPoint presentations. The first was information to take back to the region from Council and the second was information from the Region for Council (Appendix B). From Council; AB highlighted The Association strategy encompasses four main themes namely, (1) lack of digital readiness, (2) clinical scientists are not a visible profession, (3) gaps in workload and training and (4) scope of roles and barriers to entry. Draft regional rules have been drawn up and once approved will be discussed by our Committee. Two documents for review ‘Critical and unexpected Pathology results’ and ‘Code of Practice for Clinical Biochemists, Chemical Pathologists and Clinical Biochemistry Services’. LabMed is bidding for EuroMedLab27. From the Region; AB highlighted that we have 61 active LabMed members with 32 also involved in the ACBI; we have challenges filling Committee roles. We hope to have a joint training event with the ACBI later this Spring.
ACTION	AB to share draft regional rules with the Region Committee when they are available.
5	Regional tutor’s report: JR presented her last regional tutor’s report. (Appendix C). JR explained that the Education, Training and Workforce Committee, on which the Regional Tutors sit, has been restructured. The inaugural LabMed Biochemistry Education Group meeting took place on January 28 th 2025. As per the Chairs report, JR highlighted that regional bursaries are available to our members. Congratulations were extended to three members who successfully completed FRCPath exams. Three

	<p>Clinical Biochemists are LabMed and ACBI members and as such are supported in their FRCPath preparation by ACBI-facilitated tutorials, their annual assessments, held in October 2024, were successful.</p> <p>POS highlighted that maintaining an 80% attendance at these tutorials, along with completing the annual assessment, is mandatory to remain in this group. From 2024 this also forms part of the National Society (ACBI) recognition that clinical biochemists meet the (new/updated) EFLM equivalence of standards. Tutorials are intended for Clinical Biochemists in substantive posts.</p>
ACTION	CT to remind tutorial group that 80% attendance at tutorials is mandatory.
6	<p>Trainee representative's report:</p> <p>EB presented the trainee representative's report (Appendix D). A list of educational activities that our regional members participated in throughout 2024 is included.</p>
7	<p>Election of officers:</p> <p>All Committee members were present. CT self-nominated (Appendix E) and was elected as new Regional Tutor (Proposed POS, Seconded JR). This position has a term of 5 years, with an additional 2 years possible.</p>
ACTION	JR to inform LabMed Office of new Regional Tutor, update to website required.
8	<p>JR informed AGM attendees that there is no longer a Regional Treasurer. After the last AGM, funds in the regional bank account were transferred to the Central LabMed office bank account. The regional bank account was closed in May 2024.</p> <p>PMG (co-editor of the ACBI newsletter) reminded attendees that this publication is a joint venture with LabMed and he is keen that more information is provided from the regional Committee and the LabMed meetings they attend. He is disappointed that the numbers in both organisations (LabMed and ACBI) are low. Laboratory healthcare professionals should be reminded of the benefits of LabMed membership. PMG noted it was difficult to navigate the LabMed website to find anything about the Regional Committee and Regional activities. A suggestion was made that this information, alongside the benefits of membership with feedback from this AGM could be printed in the next edition of the newsletter. The Regional Committee are to prepare a report on this morning's scientific meeting ('Digital Strategies at the Clinical Interface') for publication in the next edition of the newsletter.</p> <p>BB presented a short Audit Group report highlighting the National 2024 audit on 'Analytical Conundrums' (Appendix F). He thanked the audit group. It is anticipated that findings will be submitted to a national meeting later in 2025.</p>

ACTION	<p>JR to coordinate the Regional Committee in the preparation of a Scientific meeting report for publication in the ACBI newsletter.</p> <p>JR to prepare an advertisement of the LabMed Regional Committee and the benefits of LabMed membership for publication in the ACBI newsletter.</p> <p>JR to liaise with the LabMed Office to update the Regional section of the website to include the draft AGM minutes.</p>
---------------	---

Appendix A. 2024 AGM minutes - Appendices removed for brevity

Republic of Ireland region

Annual General Meeting 23rd Feb 2024

Attendance: *Alison Bransfield (AB), *Janice Reeve (JR), *Brendan Byrne (BB), *Paula O'Shea (POS), *Carl Talbot (CT), *Roshaida Abdul Wahab (RAW), Karen Heverin (KH), Jennifer Brady (JB), Barbara MacNamara (BMac), David Green (DG), Eileen Byrne (EB), Peadar McGing (PMG), Graham Lee (GL)

*Committee members

1. **Apologies:** Micheál Ryan, Olwyn Lanigan
2. **Approval of 2023 minutes & matters arising:** Minutes for 2023 AGM (Attached – Appendix A) were approved with no matters arising. (Proposed AB, Seconded JB)
3. **Chairperson/Council representative's report:** AB read the chairperson/council representative's report (Attached – Appendix B). AB discussed the rebranding of the Association. The Republic of Ireland region report will be presented in September 2024. News will be circulated to members on the new National and Regional bursary strategy. (Proposed KH, Seconded PMG)
4. **Treasurer's report:** JR read a short treasurer report and highlighted that this account is to be closed once the name has been transferred to JR and AB. This money €1276.06 is to be moved to the centralised Lab Med account in the UK for ease (Attached - Appendix C). (Proposed KH, Seconded AB). *An error in the amount discussed was noted on compiling these minutes, the balance that should have been referred to was €948.62. This was highlighted to those present at the AGM via email 27.03.2024, apologies for this error (JR).*



5. **Regional tutor's report:** JR presented the regional tutor's report. It was highlighted that only two of the FRCPath ACBI tutorial group participants were Lab Med RoI members (Attached - Appendix D). (Proposed CT, Seconded POS)
6. **Trainee representative's report:** CT presented the trainee representative's report - see attached (Attached - Appendix E). CT highlighted that all trainees have been very successful in their sittings of the FRCPath examinations in 2023. (Proposed PMG, Seconded POS)
7. **Election of officers:** All Committee members were present. EB was elected as new Regional Representative to the Trainees' Committee. This position has a term of 3 years. (Proposed POS, Seconded KH). JR advised that a volunteer for the position of Regional Tutor will need to be sought prior to next year's AGM as this position must be vacated as per regional rules.
8. **AOB**
 - BB presented a short Audit Group report (Attached - Appendix F). BB thanked those members who had already completed the survey, and POS for her advice to date on it. JB suggested that a reminder on the survey be sent to members to inform them that the deadline has been further extended and to clarify that its completion can be done in sections.
 - PMG thanked CT, through his current position as Regional Representative to the Trainees' Committee, for his help organising content for the ACBI newsletter. PMG reminded those present that this newsletter is a joint venture with the Lab Med RoI region. It is produced quarterly with the next edition due in March. PMG encouraged this Committee to use this newsletter to highlight the benefits of Lab Med membership and as a forum for feedback from the wider Association.
 - POS congratulated the Region for organising a great event.


Appendix B. Chairperson/Council representative's report



Association for
**Laboratory
Medicine**

LabMed Republic of Ireland Region Chair Report from Council

Region Chair: Alison Bransfield



Association for
**Laboratory
Medicine**

Association Strategy

- Strategy meeting held in July 2024 which identified four major themes:
 - Theme 1: Lack of digital readiness
 - Theme 2: Clinical scientists are not a visible profession
 - Theme 3: Gaps in workload and training, increasing workload
 - Theme 4: Scope of roles and barriers to entry
- Additional areas:
 - Scientific advances/research
 - Standards/guidance/how we practice
 - Innovation and technology
 - Professional support and networking



Regional rules

- A draft regional rules document has been drawn up for circulation
- Once this has been approved the Republic of Ireland region committee will discuss



FRCPATH SAC Report

- FRCPATH ratification of removal of the project requirement has occurred and a number of trainees have now been awarded full FRCPATH (three members from ROI region)
- 'Critical and Unexpected Pathology Results Document' is being reviewed
- 'Code of Practice for Clinical Biochemists, Chemical Pathologists and Clinical Biochemistry Services' document will be reviewed shortly



Upcoming meetings

- LabMedUK25 will be held on 9th to 11th June in Manchester
- LabMed is bidding for EuroMedLab27

- Reminder that both regional and national bursaries are available for attendance at meetings

DRAFT



LabMed Republic of Ireland Region Report

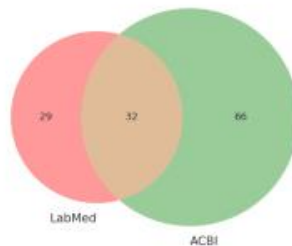
December 2024

Region Chair: Alison Bransfield



Professional Bodies

- ACBI (Association of Clinical Biochemists in Ireland) has 98 active members
- LabMed Republic of Ireland Region has 61 active members





HSE Strategy for Laboratory Services

- Public laboratories are all under the governance of the Health Service Executive (HSE)
 - Some laboratories are fully HSE run, some are 'public voluntary' with HSE funding and an independent board
- GP laboratory testing is free to the GP and the user
 - Poor IT infrastructure means that there is little demand management
- Since mid-2023 there has been an absolute moratorium on recruitment in HSE hospitals
- Recruitment restarting slowly now

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/for/resources/hse-strategy-for-laboratory-services-2025-2029-draft-.pdf>



Chronic Disease Management Programme

- Started in 2023
- Incentive for GPs to identify patients at risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes or both
- Laboratory tests involved are:
 - HbA1c
 - NT-pro BNP **or** BNP
 - Urinary albumin/creatinine ratio
- Patients can be tested annually, then twice a year if they are identified as having CVD and/or diabetes

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/primarycare/chronic-disease-management-programme/annual-chronic-disease-management-prevention-programme.html>



HSCP Framework and CORU Registration

- There is a Health and Social Care Professional (HSCP) framework which includes the 26 professions, clinical biochemists are among the smaller groups
- Additionally there is a state body, CORU, which regulates a number of professions. Clinical biochemists are one of the listed professions but our register has not yet been established
- There are fewer than 100 practicing clinical biochemists in the state, compared to 2000 medical scientists
- A long-running pay dispute was settled in 2024 with basic and senior grade medical scientists now being paid at the same rate as clinical biochemists

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/health-and-social-care-professionals/hscp-strategic-framework/hscp-deliver-a-strategic-guidance-framework-for-hscp-2021-2026.pdf>



Challenges and Triumphs for the Regional Committee

- Challenges:
 - Region tutor is stepping down at the next AGM
 - Region Chair will step down the following year
- Triumphs:
 - Three trainees attained FRCPath
 - Completed an audit to be submitted in 2025
 - Attendance at:
 - EuroMedLab
 - MedLab
 - ADLM
 - ACBI

Please note: new regional tutor from January 2025, new Chair from AGM 2026.



What's on the Horizon?

- Annual Scientific Meeting on January 31st 2025
 - Topics:
 - Implementation of national LIS
 - Implementation of national maternity system
 - Implementation of GP order comms system (pilot)
 - Joint spring meeting with ACBI:
 - Training day
 - Management topics
 - Professional development

Appendix C. Regional Tutor's report

Association for Laboratory Medicine Republic of Ireland (RoI) Regional Tutor's report for AGM January 2025

The LabMed Education, Training and Workforce Committee met virtually once this year on 9th May 2024. This Committee has since been restructured as it was felt that its remit had become too broad.

The inaugural LabMed Biochemistry Education Group meeting was held virtually on 28th January 2025, here, the group's terms of reference, the Regional Tutor role specification and definition of what a "trainee" is were discussed, amongst other things. Future meetings have already been timetabled for May and November 2025. I will be handing over to a new Regional tutor at this AGM. I am happy to support the new tutor in this role and as they settle in.

Information pertinent to the training and education of LabMed RoI region members, taken from these meetings, is considered as follows:

- Regional financial restructure should ensure equity of access to bursaries across The Association. Regional bursaries are available and increased interest and uptake by members is welcome. Members are reminded to apply through their local Committee.
- All members now have access to the Laboratory Medicine Learning Academy through the "Our Resources" page on the website. LabMed are keen for feedback on how it is working and how it can be more relevant for our members. Educational content is always welcomed.
- UKMedLab 2025 will be held in Manchester from 9th – 11th June and there is currently a call out for abstract submission. The Biochemistry training day takes place on

Monday 9th with sessions on effective research design & getting published as well as interpretation of specialist test results (CSF Xanthochromia, specialist proteins, ALP isoenzyme and lipoprotein electrophoresis). The programme is available online at the LabMed website.

- At this stage, we hope members are aware that the Part 2 Module 3 component (*i.e.* written project) was removed from the FRCPath Clinical Biochemistry exam.

In the region:

1. Update on “Trainee” progression

The Republic of Ireland (RoI) does not have Clinical Scientist training posts. Any Clinical Biochemist preparing for FRCPath examinations in this region will be in a substantive post (Basic, Senior or Principal Grade). LabMed RoI members who are Clinical Biochemists are supported in their exam preparation by the Association of Clinical Biochemists in Ireland (ACBI) of which they will also be members. The Chemical Pathology trainee programme is separate and facilitated by the Faculty of Pathology, Royal College of Physicians in Ireland (RCPI).

Three Clinical Biochemists are LabMed and ACBI members in the region and, as such, are officially involved in the ACBI led FRCPath tutorial group. Two are Senior Clinical Biochemists and one is a Principal Clinical Biochemist. Of these, one is preparing for FRCPath Part 1 exams and two are preparing for Part 2 exams. One of the Specialist Registrars is a LabMed member preparing for Part 1 of the exam.

Annual assessments of the Clinical Biochemists participating in the ACBI FRCPath tutorial group were held via MS Teams on 10th October 2024. Assessors were made up of myself (Principal Clinical Biochemist, Lab Med RoI regional tutor), Mr Carl Talbot (Principal Clinical Biochemist, ACBI representative) and as extern, Dr Jenny Hamilton (Consultant Clinical Scientist at Southern Health and Social Care Trust, Craigavon, Northern Ireland). All participants demonstrated dedication to sitting the exams and appropriate progression. Their status as members of the ACBI tutorial group was retained.

Three LabMed members in our region obtained FRCPath status since the last AGM; namely, Alison Bransfield, Carl Talbot and Karen Heverin and I would like to congratulate them on this success.

2. Continuing Professional Development opportunities

LabMed Republic of Ireland region members availed of the following meetings and educational events, both online and in person, amongst others, since the last AGM:

- ACBI supported tutorials for career grade Biochemists preparing for FRCPath examinations. The tutorials are arranged internally by the group and facilitated online due to the geographical spread of participants.
- RCPI supported tutorials and trainee days for Specialist Registrars in Chemical Pathology preparing for FRCPath examinations.
- LabMed Republic of Ireland Region Scientific Meeting on Calculated tests, Virtual event, January 2024.



- Scientific Writing, ACBI training day. The Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin, February 2024.
- Transgender Laboratory Results lunchtime seminar. St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, February 2024.
- Bone Study Day. Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin, March 2024.
- Inherited Metabolic Disorders through the life cycle. Annual ISIMD Hybrid Conference, Dublin, April 2024.
- LabMed Northern Ireland Region, Virtual event, March 2024.
- ADLM Chicago, USA, July/August 2024.
- Irish External Quality Assessment Scheme (IEQAS) Conference, Dublin, October 2024.
- Joint Irish-UK Endocrine Society Meeting, Belfast, October 2024
- 46th Annual ACBI Conference, Athlone, November 2024
- LabMed North West Region, Ian Ward Scientific meeting, Virtual event, January 2025.
- UKNEQAS educational online webinars.
- EFLM live and on-demand webinars.

Prepared by Dr Janice Reeve, LabMed Republic of Ireland Regional Tutor 30/01/2025

Appendix D. Trainee representative's report

LabMed ROI Regional Trainee Representative Report January 2025

Eileen Byrne, Principal Clinical Biochemist, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital Ireland, Republic of Ireland Region LabMed Trainee Representative.

31st January 2025

Alert

N/A

Advise

The Republic of Ireland (RoI) does not have Clinical Scientist training posts. Any Clinical Biochemist preparing for FRCPath examinations in the region will be in a substantive post (Basic, Senior or Principal Grade). LabMed RoI members who are Clinical Biochemists are supported in their exam preparation by the Association of Clinical Biochemists in Ireland (ACBI) of which they will also be members. The Chemical Pathology trainee programme is separate and facilitated by the Faculty of Pathology, Royal College of Physicians in Ireland. Currently one Specialist Registrar is known to have recently joined LabMed.

Three Clinical Biochemists are LabMed and ACBI members in the region and, as such, are officially involved in the ACBI led FRCPath tutorial group. Three are Senior Clinical Biochemists and one is a Principal Clinical Biochemist. All are preparing for different parts the FRCPath exams.

Assure

The following regional events in 2024 have been attended by Clinical Biochemists in, preparing for FRCPath examinations:-

- ACBI supported tutorials for career grade Biochemists preparing for FRCPath examinations. The tutorials are arranged internally by the group and facilitated online due to the geographical spread of participants.
- Scientific Writing, ACBI training day. The Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin, 02/02/2024.
- Transgender Laboratory Results lunchtime seminar. St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, 12/02/2024.
- Bone Study Day. Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin, 08/03/2024.
- Standardisation of Calculated Tests. LabMed Republic of Ireland Region, Virtual event, 23/03/2024.
- Inherited Metabolic Disorders through the life cycle. Annual ISIMD Hybrid Conference, Dublin, 19/04/2024.
- LabMed Northern Ireland Regional Meeting, Belfast, 27/09/2024
- Irish External Quality Assessment Scheme (IEQAS) Conference, 03/10/2024.
- 46th Annual ACBI Conference 8-9 November 2024

Appendix E. Audit group report

Republic of Ireland Audit Group Report Jan 2025

Early in 2024 the Analytical Conundrums Survey was distributed to the UK Lab. Med. (RoI) members and members of the ACBI. The survey comprised 6 sections, namely Pseudohyponatraemia, HIL indices, Ammonia analysis, Macroprolactin & other Macroanalytes, Sample Contamination issues and Thyroglobulin analysis. We asked for one representative from each lab to complete each section, and the survey remained open for 3 months. Depending on the section, we have had up to 20 laboratory responses. These responses have since been reviewed and distributed to the members of the Audit group. Each member has been assigned a section and asked to summarise the findings from it. Once all these summaries are complete, they will be reviewed by the group collectively. We plan to submit the findings to a national meeting later this year.

Thanks to all the members of the Audit group; Carl Talbot, James Kelly, Alison Bransfield, Heloise Tarrant and Micheál Ryan. Thanks also to all those who took the time to complete the survey.



Brendan Byrne

On Behalf of The Association of Laboratory Medicine (RoI Region) Audit Group

