NOCA National Office of Clinical Audit

IMPACT REPORT 2026

FROM AUDIT TO ACTION:
A CULTURE OF IMPROVEMENT

Louise Brent
Head of Audit Management
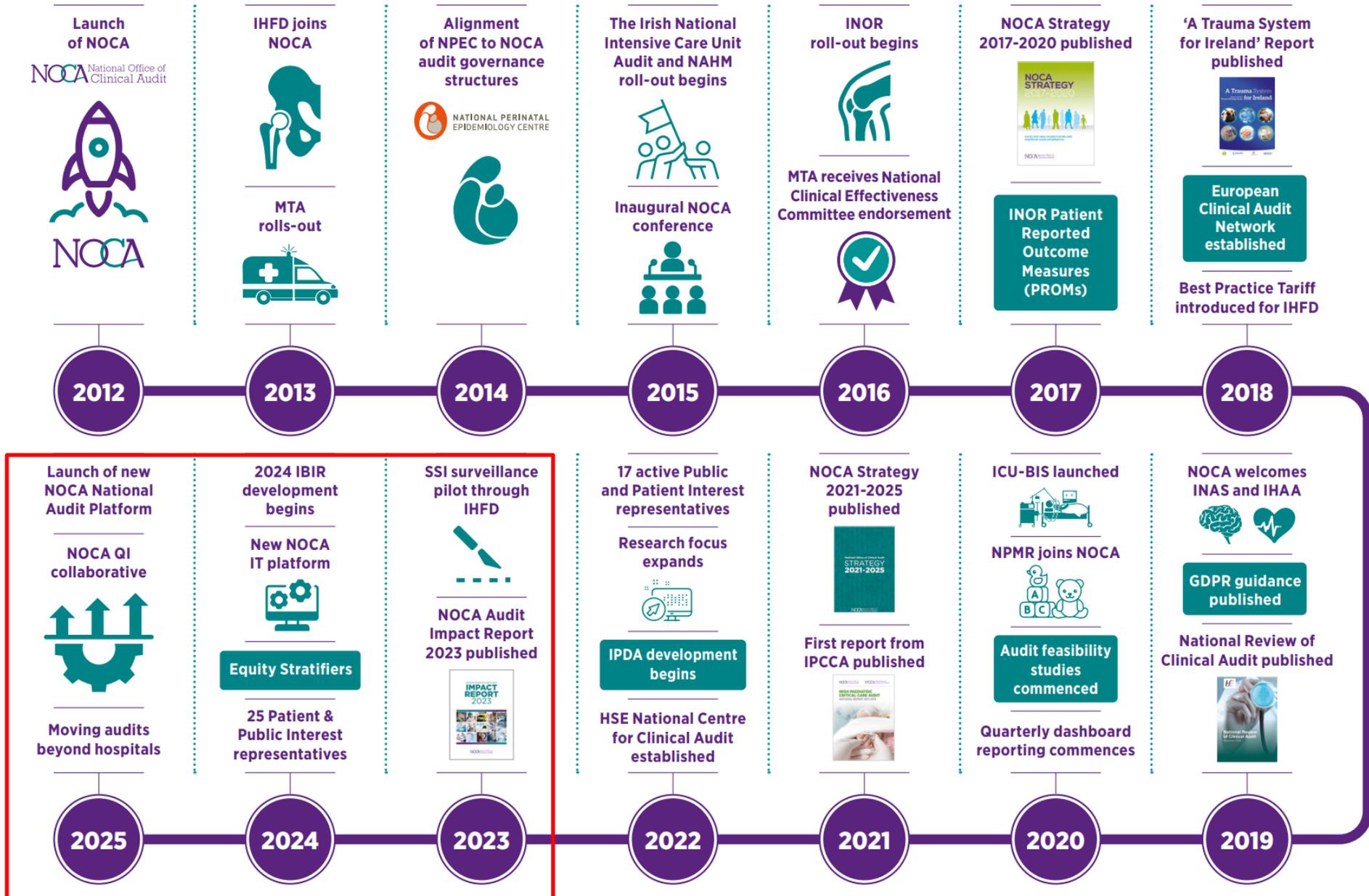NOCA

Michael Madigan
Patient & Public Interest
Representative
NOCA Audit Impact Committee

#NOCA2026

In association
with RCSI Charter
Meeting 2026
RCSI

NOCA National Office of Clinical Audit

2012 — Launch of NOCA

2013 — IHFD joins NOCA / MTA rolls-out

2014 — Alignment of NPEC to NOCA audit governance structures

2015 — The Irish National Intensive Care Unit Audit and NAHM roll-out begins / Inaugural NOCA conference

2016 — INOR roll-out begins / MTA receives National Clinical Effectiveness Committee endorsement

2017 — NOCA Strategy 2017-2020 published / INOR Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs)

2018 — 'A Trauma System for Ireland' Report published / European Clinical Audit Network established / Best Practice Tariff introduced for IHFD

2025 — Launch of new NOCA National Audit Platform / NOCA QI collaborative / Moving audits beyond hospitals

2024 — 2024 IBIR development begins / New NOCA IT platform / Equity Stratifiers / 25 Patient & Public Interest representatives

2023 — SSI surveillance pilot through IHFD / NOCA Audit Impact Report 2023 published

2022 — 17 active Public and Patient Interest representatives / Research focus expands / IPDA development begins / HSE National Centre for Clinical Audit established

2021 — NOCA Strategy 2021-2025 published / First report from IPCCA published

2020 — ICU-BIS launched / NPMR joins NOCA / Audit feasibility studies commenced / Quarterly dashboard reporting commences

2019 — NOCA welcomes INAS and IHAA / GDPR guidance published / National Review of Clinical Audit published

National Office of Clinical Audit

Chapter 2
Patient Partnerships

National Office of Clinical Audit

Patient and Public Interest Activities

- Participation in audit governance committees, NOCA Board and Audit Impact Committee
- PPI co-design of audits
- Input into national reports and summary reports
- Annual PPI celebration event (November)
- Virtual coffee catch-ups bi-monthly
- Supporting audit partners and national services to develop own PPI programme
- Introduction of a Charity Partner for Clinical Audit Awareness Week in 2024
- Attending conferences and engaging with wider stakeholders in the patient advocacy space
- NOCA contributed to the development of a resource to support patient and public membership on Institutional Research Ethics Committees, published by PPI Ignite (2024)

PPI

- 30 PPI representatives
- 17 advocacy agencies
- NOCA charity partnership for Clinical Audit Awareness Week
- Development of a patient information video for hip fracture recovery

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What Our PPI's Experience and Value

Their initial experiences of joining the committees were described as both a privilege and a challenge.

They highlight strong collaboration with advocacy organisations, which enhances the credibility and reach of the audits.

Representatives consistently feel respected, heard, and valued, with their contributions meaningfully influencing committee discussions.

They support the inclusion of patient stories alongside audit data.

The use of jargon and medicalised language at times make discussions difficult to follow.

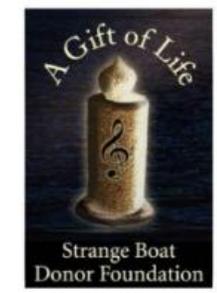Practical challenges such as travel, IT access, and inconsistent expense support were also noted.

PPI representatives contribute significantly to ensuring patient-centred national reporting. Their perspectives help shape recommendations during committee meetings.
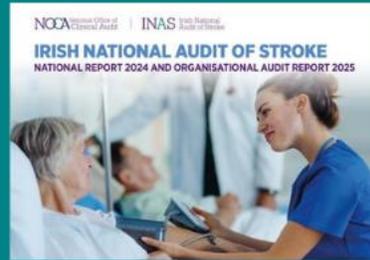
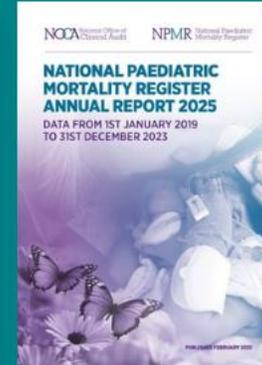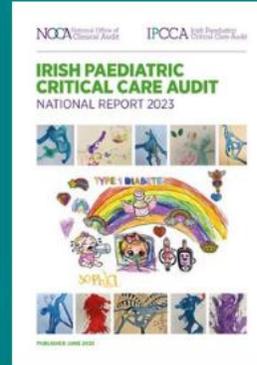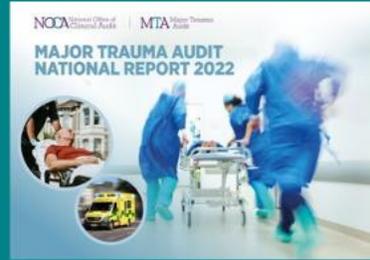![NOCA — National Office of Clinical Audit]

PPI Important partnerships

Currently, there are 17 advocacy agencies participating in NOCA governance committees, providing oversight to national audits and registries.
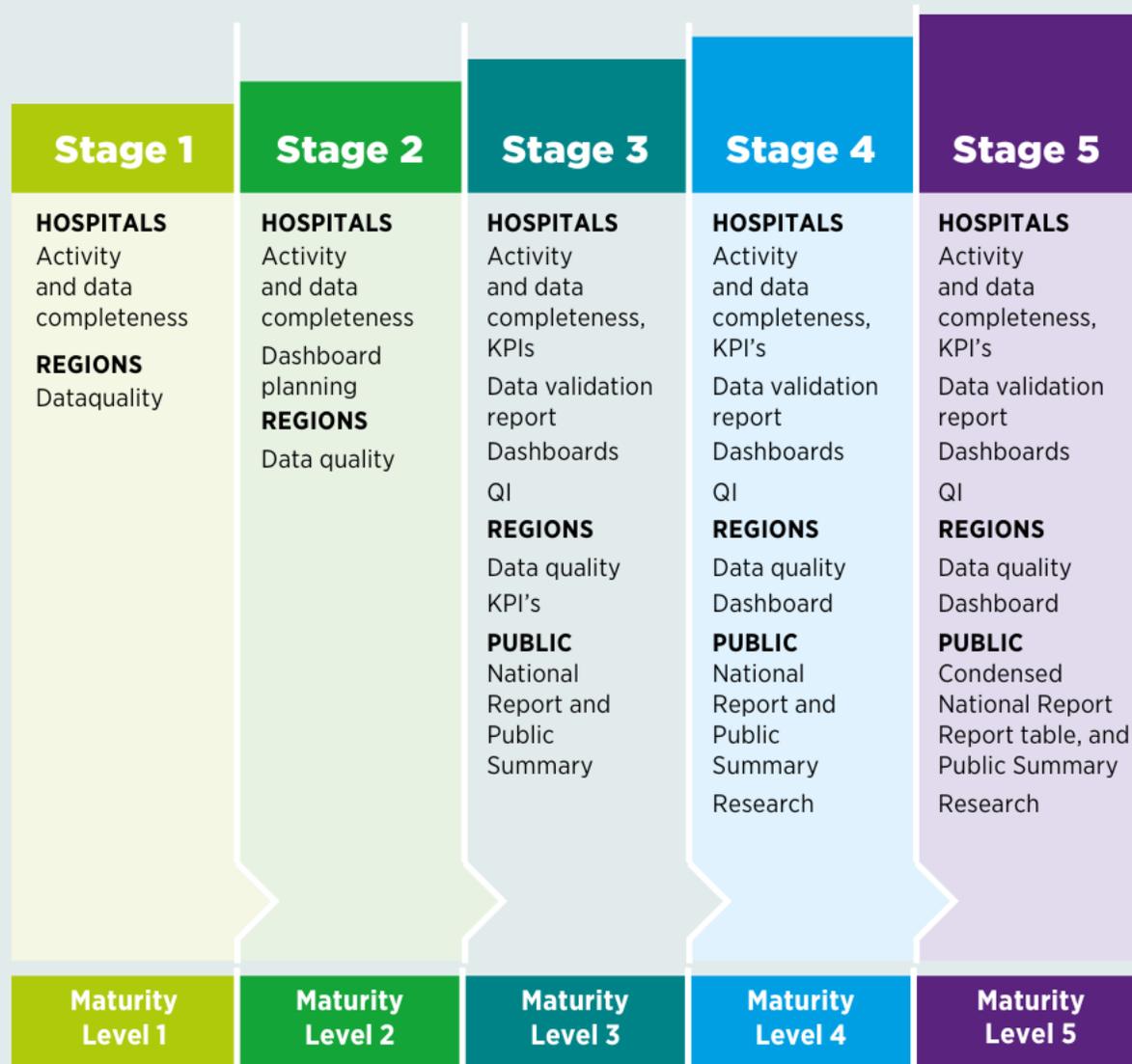
Patients for Patient Safety Ireland

AnamCara — Supporting Parents After Bereavement

VOICES 4 CARE — Improving the Palliative Care Experience

ICU steps Dublin

Cairde — Challenging ethnic minority health inequalities

A Gift of Life — Strange Boat Donor Foundation

CROÍ — Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

Heart Children

Arthritis Ireland

Sage Advocacy

Spinal Injuries Ireland

Irish Cancer Society

LauraLynn — Ireland's Children's Hospice

Irish Neonatal Health Alliance

Irish Heart Foundation

THE Alzheimer SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Diabetes Ireland

Clinical Leadership

AUDIT	CLINICAL LEAD
ICU Irish National ICU Audit	**Professor Rory Dwyer**
Irish Hip Fracture Database IHFD	**Professor Tara Coughlan, Mr Terence Murphy Dr. Emer Ahern and Associate Professor Conor Hurson (tenure completed in 2024)**
MTA Major Trauma Audit	**Professor Conor Deasy**
IHAA Irish Heart Attack Audit	**Professor Ronan Margey**
INAS Irish National Audit of Stroke	**Professor Joe Harbison**
IPODA Irish Potential Organ Donor Audit	**Dr Catherine Motherway Dr Alan Gaffney (resigned in 2025)**
INOR Irish National Orthopaedic Register	**Professor John Quinlan (Mr James Cashman resigned in 2024)**
IPCCA Irish Paediatric Critical Care Audit	**Associate Professor Martina Healy**

AUDIT	CLINICAL LEAD
NPMR National Paediatric Mortality Register	**Associate Professor Martina Healy**
NAHM National Audit of Hospital Mortality	**Vacant (Dr Anne Dee tenure completed in 2025)**
IBIR Irish Breast Implant Registry	**Ms Éilís Fitzgerald (Mr Brian Kneafsey resigned in 2024)**
IAPD Irish Audit of Paediatric Diabetes	**Professor Nuala Murphy**
ICU Bed Information System (ICU BIS)	**Professor Rory Dwyer**
PCOCI Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration Ireland	**Dr Michael Lucey**
IDR Irish Dementia Registry	**Professor Antoinette O' Connor**
EMARI Emergency Medicine Airway Registry Ireland	**Professor Fergal Cummins**

FIGURE 3: NOCA AUDIT MATURITY MODEL

NOCA National Office of Clinical Audit

IMPACT AT A NATIONAL/ SYSTEM LEVEL
How NOCA audits/ data collections enable national improvements and health system development and changes

AUDIT	IMPACT		IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITY
Irish Hip Fracture Database (IHFD)	In the 2024 report, additional data on surgical site infection and longer term outcomes were presented in the **IHFD National Report 2024** The IHFD helped inform the development of national guidelines: • **for older adults with trauma** • **framework for surgical site infection** data collection through the IHFD	CLICK TO VIEW CLICK TO VIEW CLICK TO VIEW	• Long term data coverage • Pressure ulcer prevention • Nutrition and delirium screening • Occupational therapy engagement.
Irish National Audit of Stroke (INAS)	INAS findings and recommendations support and monitor the implementation of the **HSE National Stroke Strategy 2022 – 2027** (HSE 2022). The **INAS National Report 2024 and Organisational Audit Report 2025 report** shows a sustained increase in the number of patients with a stroke admitted to acute hospitals annually. Organisational change has led to meaningful improvements in many of the time critical metrics in stroke care, however, deficits in stroke unit beds and human resourcing is evident, limiting the ability of the stroke service nationally to meet its key performance indicator targets. Spotlight audits facilitate an in-depth look at specific areas within stroke care. In 2023, a focus was put on the delivery of thrombolysis and on the care provided to those who have a stroke while already an inpatient with another condition.	CLICK TO VIEW CLICK TO VIEW CLICK TO VIEW	• Improvement in access to stroke unit care • Introduction of a best practice tariff • Improved patient outcomes.

IMPACT AT A LOCAL LEVEL
How NOCA supports local healthcare providers to make local improvements

AUDIT	IMPACT		IMPROVEMENT
National Audit of Hospital Mortality (NAHM)	All hospitals can access data locally on all conditions their patients presented with, not just those 6 key conditions focused on in the National Reports. Quality improvement measures were identified and described by Beaumont Hospital and Connolly Hospital to address data quality and clinical reviews.	CLICK TO VIEW	• Encourage further hospitals to undertake QI initiatives.
Major Trauma Audit (MTA)	During 2023 & 2024, a cyberattack in the University of Manchester occurred, impacting access for the hospitals in the Republic of Ireland to collect data and report. During this challenging period the hospitals all reverted back to paper data collection but continued their engagement locally and with NOCA ensuring the focus on the care of these patients was not forgotten.	CLICK TO VIEW	• Improvement in local hospital governance establishment for MTA • Embed use of dashboard reporting into local governance.
Irish Heart Attack Audit (IHAA)	The IHAA dashboard allows the PCI centres to monitor the care provided to their patients. The IHAA supports the establishment of PCI networks in order to ensure that PCI centres and other referring non-PCI capable hospitals utilise the information from the IHAA to identify QI projects that will enable timely treatment. All local QI projects published within the national reports annually and presented at report launch webinars.	CLICK TO VIEW	• Build a culture of QI between hospitals within PCI networks.

Maturity Level 1	Maturity Level 2	Maturity Level 3	Maturity Level 4	Maturity Level 5

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IMPACT AT A PUBLIC LEVEL

How data from NOCA audits have been used for public health messaging and/or advocacy

AUDIT	IMPACT		IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITY
Major Trauma Audit (MTA)	In 2024, the report on older adults focused key messages on injury prevention, in particular, in the home.	**CLICK TO VIEW**	• Work with the HSE, Public Health and Population Health specialists to share awareness of falls prevention.
Irish Heart Attack Audit (IHAA)	The findings and recommendations of the IHAA will support the design, messaging, and goals of a proposed public awareness campaign on heart attack.	**CLICK TO VIEW**	• Improvement in public awareness of heart attack and the need to call 112/999 urgently in order to access care in the right place at the right time.
	Publication of the cardiovascular risk factors in patients with STEMI compared to the general population can inform public health messaging e.g., smokers have a heart attack 11 years younger than those who never smoked.		
Irish National ICU Audit (INICUA)	The quality of care is excellent for patients admitted to ICU. Almost one third (32%) of patients admitted to ICU had sepsis. Common reasons for admission to ICU were respiratory failure, sepsis, malignancy, trauma, cardiac arrest and for post-operative care.		• Improve public awareness about symptoms of sepsis.
Irish National Orthopaedic Register (INOR)	INOR provides the public with assurance that in the event of an implant issue or recall that patients from the register can be identified and notified easily.		• Harness the information about patient reported outcomes.
Irish Potential Organ Donor Audit (IPODA)	The IPODA creates awareness about organ donation rates in Ireland and potential areas for improvement.		• Support the public to understand the importance of organ donation and the new opt-out legislation.

AUDIT	IMPACT	IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITY
Irish Paediatric Critical Care Audit (IPCCA)	Encouraged the uptake of the RSV vaccine for small babies to prevent admissions to PICU.	• Continue to promote public health messaging about vaccinations
National Paediatric Mortality Register (NPMR)	Highlight the preventable child deaths from trauma and safe practice for the prevention of SIDS.	• Explore areas where child deaths could be prevented including water safety and farm safety.
Intensive Care Unit - Bed Information System (ICU-BIS)*	ICU-BIS strengthens transparency, trust, and public health responsiveness. By providing national visibility into ICU capacity, patient acuity, and infection trends (COVID-19, RSV, influenza), it supports informed public health messaging and policy decisions.	• This visibility helps reassure the public during health crises, strengthens trust in the healthcare system, and promotes informed engagement with health services.
	• Brought greater understanding to the public on the role of ICUs and ICU Teams in the provision of care within the Health Service during the COVID Pandemic.	

* Intensive Care Unit- Bed Information System (ICU-BIS) data is reported within INICUA

Maturity Level 1	Maturity Level 2	Maturity Level 3	Maturity Level 4	Maturity Level 5

Maturity Level 1	Maturity Level 2	Maturity Level 3	Maturity Level 4	Maturity Level 5

National Office of Clinical Audit

COLLECT · MEASURE · ANALYSE · IMPLEMENT CHANGE · SUSTAIN IMPROVEMENT

AUDIT

11 audits producing annual reports

Expansion of long term data collection (IHFD)

National surveillance programme built into an audit

Public awareness campaign for stroke 'Stroke: Every Second Counts' (INAS)

In-hospital mortality improving (NAHM) and child deaths deceasing (NPMR)

National guidance for older adults with trauma (MTA)

Collaboration with Euroheart (IHAA)

Daily ICU occupancy and acuity available ICU-BIS

ICU bed capacity needs expansion but standard of care is excellent (INICUA/ IPCCA)

>43,000 patients on the INOR register

Organ donation audit driving awareness of organ donation and transplant services

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Chapter 4
NOCA Impact

NOCA National Office of Clinical Audit

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1
NATIONAL CLINICAL AUDIT EXCELLENCE

Collaborations
HSE: National Centre for Clinical Audit, Quality and Patient Safety Directorate, Irish Clinical Audit Network
RCSI: School of Population Health, Healthcare Outcome Research Centre
International: Dutch Institute of Clinical Audit, European Clinical Audit Network

Membership on national/international committees/groups
Membership on over 25 national/international committees

Operational Excellence and Quality Assurance
HIQA information standards, and NOCA's internal governance documentation. In parallel, a rolling programme of internal audit was implemented using NOCA's internal audit tool, with findings documented through a standardised audit report template to support consistency, transparency, and learning.

![NOCA - National Office of Clinical Audit]

STRATEGIC PILLAR 2
AUDIT DEVELOPMENT

Audit / Registry development framework and expertise

NOCA Audit Platform- Launched in 2025

Quality improvement- QI training embedded across NOCA. Q coaching

Health equity- incorporated health equity stratifiers in NOCA Core Dataset for Clinical Audits/ Registries

Research > 80 publications
Multiple HRB grants awarded

Data science/ interoperability- minimise burden of data collection & maximising the use of data

Health economics e.g. SSI

Awards

![NOCA National Office of Clinical Audit]

STRATEGIC PILLAR 3
PROMOTION OF NATIONAL CLINICAL AUDIT

NOCA Annual Conferences

Quarterly e-Newsletter

Website

Social Media

Audit Report Launches / Webinars

Clinical Audit Awareness Week

NOCA attendances at conferences and events

Education

It takes a village

![National Office of Clinical Audit logo] NOCA — National Office of Clinical Audit

Thank you for listening

"OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, NOCA HAS STRENGTHENED ITS ROLE AS A CORNERSTONE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE, IMPROVEMENT, AND TRANSPARENCY ACROSS THE IRISH HEALTH SYSTEM."

Scan the QR to read the report

#NOCA2026