A national eHealth Library for all –
how can we meet the needs of a nation?

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Background & Context

- National eHealth Library Steering Group set up April 2025 Prof. Helen Whelton (Chair) to implement Chad Report recommendation.

- Steering Group objective is 2 fold:

    1. Business plan (Aoife chairing)

    2. Roadmap (Louise chairing)

- The objective of the National eHealth Library is to provide a central website for free and equal open access to a range of online library resources for all healthcare professionals working in the Irish health system, both public and private providers.

Why a national eHealth Library for Ireland?

Demand for key resources persists

Gaps to key resources remain

Deliver value for money

Enhance patient care and safety through evidence based practice

Remove barriers of access, provide greater equity

Support patient health literacy

PROGRESS SO FAR..

CHAD report (2021-)

- HSE Library Deficit addressed for 2022-5 (Recommendation 1)
- Address unmet needs e.g. SSO (Recommendation 2)
- Expand access to a core set of resources for all publicly funded healthcare professionals in Ireland not yet realised (Recommendation 3)

Roadblocks

- Understaffed in key roles
- Funding

Business Case Working Group Timeline

At-a-glance

INITIATION

Defining the terms of reference, securing membership, project scope, objectives, and deliverables.

2025

26 Sept

PLANNING

Detailed project plan created, including development of work breakdown structure.

2025

7 Nov

EXECUTION

Project tasks are the project plan is put into action. E.g. Pilot website, eSurvey; interviews as case studies, desk research

2025-2026

Dec-June

CONTROL

Progress is monitored, by the Steering Group

2026

March - June

CLOSURE

Documenting deliverables, submission of business plan.

2026

September

1. Pilot website www.ehealthlibrary.ie

www.ehealthlibrary.ie demonstrates access to already freely available resources.

Thanks to HSLG & HRB

Hello,

Welcome to the eHealth Library

The eHealth Library provides a central access point to available electronic resources for Irish health and social care professionals.

BMJ Best Practice
Cochrane Library
HRB National Drugs Library
HSE National Central Repository
Lenus: Research Repository

- To support the business case, a survey was developed to identify the current demand for such resources, what gaps exist, the impact of those gaps and if national access provides a viable solution.

- The group disseminated a Smart Survey via email to a wide range of healthcare professional groups both inside and outside of the HSE, through their professional network contacts.

- The survey was open between 05/12/2025 and 05/02/2026 and there was a total of 813 completed responses.

- The survey is currently being analysed, but following are some preliminary findings…

Survey preliminary results

The survey identified those employed directly and indirectly by the HSE.

Directly employed categories were:

Acute Hospital	Ambulance Service	Primary Care & Community Services	Corporate	Public Health	Other (please specify):

Indirectly employed categories were:

Acute Hospital (section 38)	Private Hospital	Community / other hospital	GP Practice	Community Pharmacist	Dentist	HSCPs (e.g. physio, SLT, psychologist)	Private medical practice	Nursing home	Hospice	Section 38	Section 39	Other (please specify):

Of 813 total responses, the top 3 respondents per job category were:

1. Health and Social Care Professionals
2. Medical and Dental
3. Nursing and Midwifery

The survey asked healthcare professionals why they require routine access to online Library resources, respondents were provided with 9 options and could tick as many boxes as were relevant. The top 3 reasons were;

4. Personal or professional development
5. Teaching, presentations or publication
6. Audit or research

- To understand the preferences and priorities for online library resources, respondents were asked to rank their preferences from a defined list of resources in order from 1-6, with number 1 being the most preferred. The top 3 preferred resources were:

  1. CINAHL Complete
  2. BMJ Best Practice
  3. UpToDate

- The same above 3 were also identified as the top resources which were regularly or frequently used.

- Of note, 45% of all respondents were **_not aware_** if their employer / organisation / professional body or union subscribe to any online library resources. Awareness of what resources were being subscribed to were predictably higher among those directly employed by the HSE.

3. Interviews/Case Studies

- Interviews being conducted with a sample of individuals from user categories:
  - ✔ Medical/Surgical/Dental
  - ✔ Nursing/Midwifery
  - ✔ Health & Social Care Professional
  - ✔ Technical/Scientific
  - ✔ Admin/Management
  - ✔ Patient Representative

National e-Health Library Project

Thank you for your attention.

Acknowledgements – Working Group members

Any questions?