OECD Conference
Rural Proofing for Health Pre-Conference Forum

Prof Liam Glynn, Rural GP and Professor of
General Practice, University of Limerick
Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Officer, Community
Healthcare West, Galway

678 Participants from 44 Countries (1600 Engaging Online)
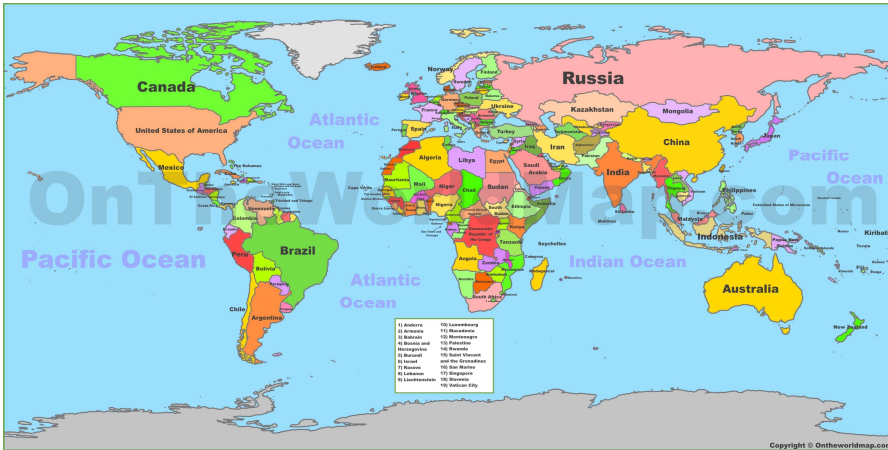
**The Limerick Declaration on Rural Healthcare
2022**

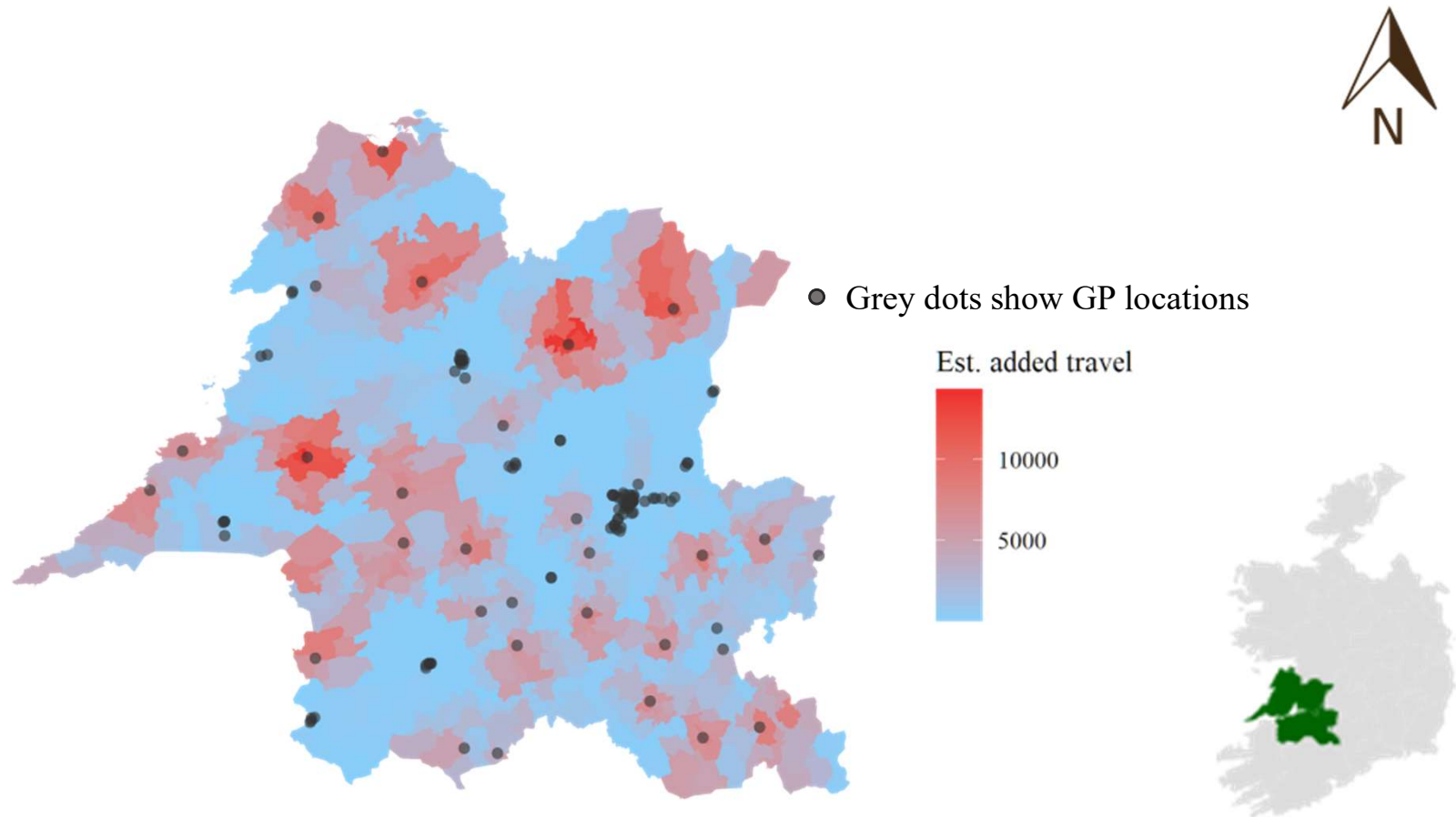https://www.woncarhc2022.com/limerickdeclarationonruralhealthcare

Sustainable Rural Communities

- (Employment)?

- Is there a local school for my children?

- **Is there a local facility where I can access healthcare?**

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So what is the effect in terms of access when you close down rural healthcare facilities

Grey dots show GP locations
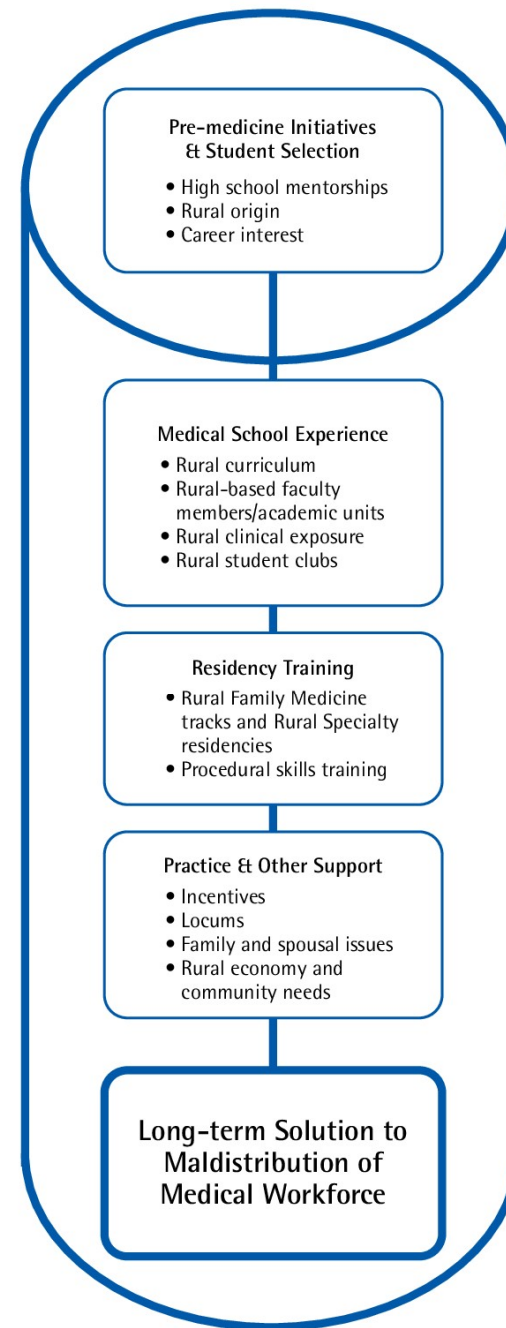
Est. added travel

10000

5000

Red-Blue shows areas by estimate added distance after local GP loss
Vulnerable areas shown in red

Source:- University of Limerick School of Medicine and ICGP/HSE/Sláintecare Research Hub collaboration

The Rural Healthcare Pipeline

- Rural Needs Assessment
- Rural healthcare Infrastructure
- Technology
- Social Accountable Higher Ed.
- Targeted Admissions
- Rural exposure in Training
- Rural Support Framework
- Out of Hours
- Holiday/Maternity Leave cover
- Flexible contracts
- Advocacy and Leadership
- Research

Pre-medicine Initiatives & Student Selection
- High school mentorships
- Rural origin
- Career interest

Medical School Experience
- Rural curriculum
- Rural-based faculty members/academic units
- Rural clinical exposure
- Rural student clubs

Residency Training
- Rural Family Medicine tracks and Rural Specialty residencies
- Procedural skills training

Practice & Other Support
- Incentives
- Locums
- Family and spousal issues
- Rural economy and community needs

Long-term Solution to Maldistribution of Medical Workforce

Reproduced with permission from Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Laurentian University.[13]

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Equitable access to healthcare is a crucial marker of democracy....

Community Healthcare West

- **9 Islands in our Region**

- **In Galway:**
- **Inis Mór, Inis Meain, Inis Oírr & Inishbofin**

  covering a population of 1,411 people

- **In Mayo:**

  Clare Island, Inisturk, Inis Bigil Inishlyre &Collanmore

  covering a population of 263 people

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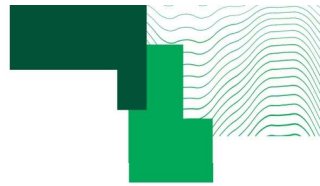
Clare Island eHealth Initiatives

About Clare Island

- Located 5.5km off west coast of County Mayo, Ireland
- Ferry crossing from Roonagh Pier approx. 25 minutes
- Population 168
- 2 x Public Health Nurses based in health centre on Island

Aim(s)

To allow people to live healthier and longer in their own communities through the use of digital technologies.

Dependencies

Improved network connectivity to the island

Challenges

Poor cellular (mobile phone/data) coverage and broadband (3Mb/s)

Progress to date

- Efforts underway to engage with telecommunication operators to improve coverage
- Funding for a number of projects by multiple collaborators secured to pilot wearables as a method to inform citizens of their health and to securely alert health teams should there health deteriorate
- 'Pod' commissions as a space to conduct telemedicine consultations with health teams on mainland
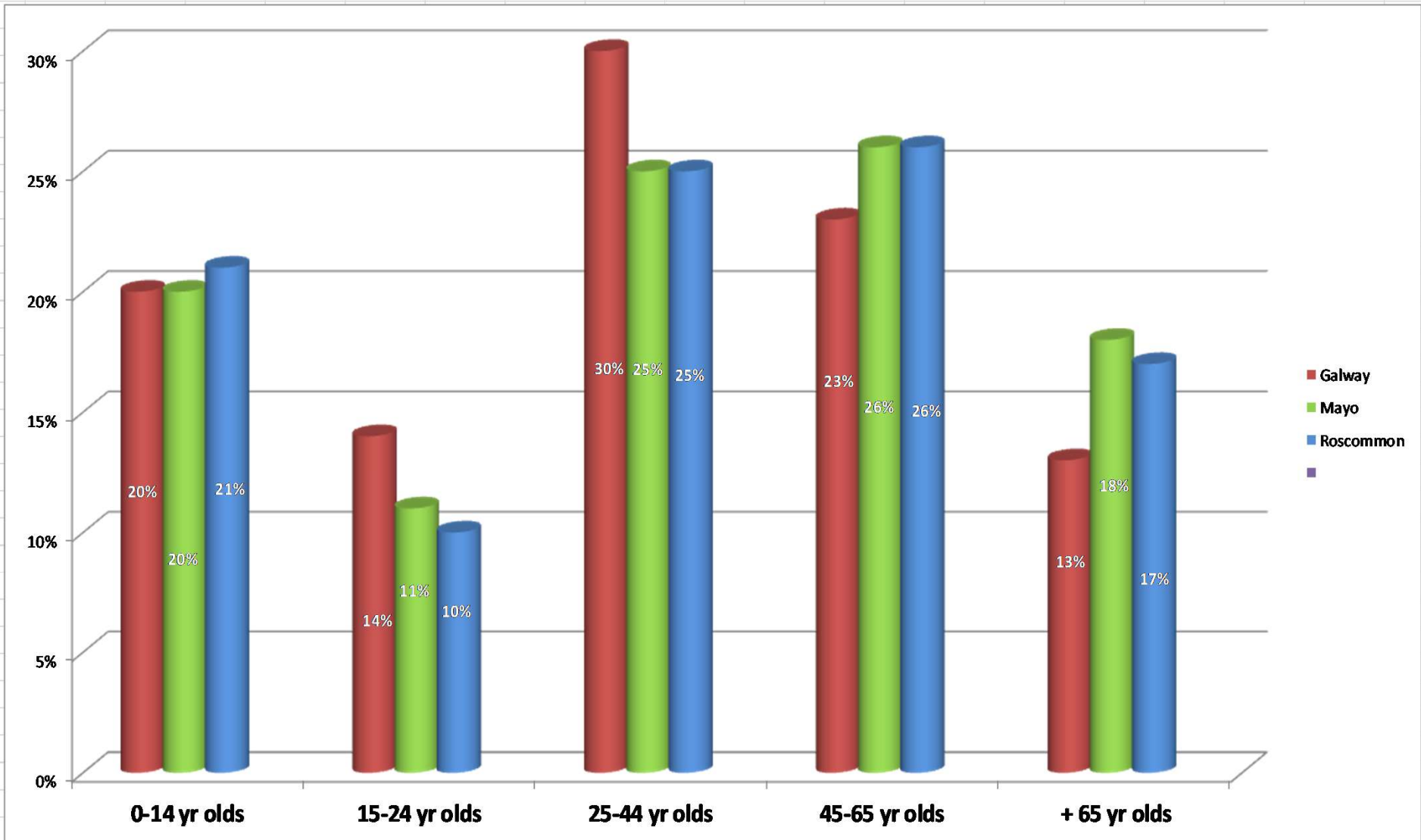- broadband connection point (BCP) to community centre installed

Claire Island, Co. Mayo. ©
PJ Rankin

Clare Island

Community Healthcare West

Population breakdown by age cohorts by county

Community Healthcare Networks

Benefits of Community Healthcare Networks
CHNs will improve the experience for people using our services by:

- supporting people to live more independently in the community
- coordinating and integrating services to meet our changing health needs
- supporting collaborative working to provide person-centred care
- ensuring timely access to services nationwide
- Access to diagnostics

Benefits for people who use our services

- more locally accessible services
- efficient movement from community to acute services and back
- more care at home than in hospitals
- prioritisation of service-based on needs
- early intervention and prevention

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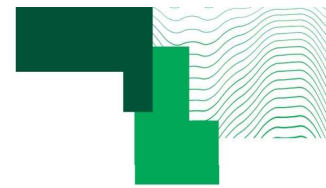
Community Health Network

Community Healthcare West is a diverse large geographical area ranging from large urbans sites to remote rural areas and 6 offshore island inhabited

- Service delivery is being reoriented towards general practice, primary care and community-based services where teams will work in an integrated way with the National Ambulance Service (NAS) and acute services to deliver end-to-end care, keeping people out of hospital and embracing a 'home first' approach. Key developments of the Enhanced Community Care Programme within Community Healthcare West include:

- 367 WTE new staff to support ECC

- Roll out 9 Community Healthcare Networks

- Development of 3 Community Specialist Teams for Chronic Disease

- Establishment of Mayo Community Intervention Teams –

- Community Diagnostics – Ongoing development of community based services to support GP access to Diagnostics

- Development of Health and Well being supports to enable people living within Community Healthcare West to lead healthier lifestyles.

Area Based Teams - 19
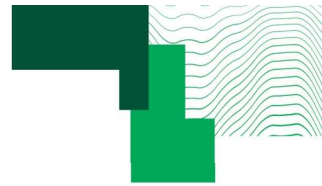
To ensure local areas of disadvantage have access to the full enhanced Health and Wellbeing Programme, a core group of services will be established to support people and families within the community. These initiatives include:

Area Based Team	
Service	**Description**
Stop Smoking Services	A dedicated stop smoking resource to support smokers within the community with quit attempts, including the provision of NRT and Stop Smoking medication
We Can Quit	We Can Quit is an additional free, friendly and supportive 12-week programme to help attendees quit smoking and stay quit for good
Social Prescribing	Implementation of community based social prescribing services. A social prescribing link worker will provide interventions and also provide referrals to community-based services
Parenting Programmes	Parenting Programmes providing families of greater need access to evidence based parenting programmes for vulnerable families
Healthy Food Made Easy	The Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) Programme will provide a basic nutrition and cookery course that helps people to change to a healthy diet, plan meals on a budget and make easy to cook meals
MECC	Making Every Contact Count programme will work with local health professionals to ensure they have the capability to deliver brief interventions and advice for all patients regarding healthy behaviours (Smoking, Alcohol Use, Physical Activity, Diet and Nutrition)
Programmes supported by a Healthy Communities	

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