Heart Failure

What is Heart Failure? It is a problem when the efficiency of the heart is impaired causing symptoms of breathlessness and fatigue. With the correct supports, Heart Failure can be largely managed in the community.

90,000
People in Ireland Living with Heart Failure

€660m
Estimated cost of Heart Failure in Ireland

20,000
Heart-failure related admissions to Irish Hospitals

Virtual Clinics

The Heartbeat Trust with the HSE & St Vincent’s Healthcare Group in collaboration with GPs, developed the Heart Failure Virtual Clinics (HFVC) in order to communicate specialist advice to the community more efficiently to safely maintain patients health and well-being in their home environment. This provides ready access to specialist opinion & connects primary & secondary/tertiary care systems through technology-driven integrative care.

Online - Real Time - Dynamic
Virtual Consultations
Solution to OPD Waiting Lists

Cost Efficient
Alternative Pathway for GPs to seek expert advice related to their patients

Knowledge Exchange
allows dissemination of expert opinion & knowledge

The HFVC Care pathway is efficient & creates a Dynamic Communication Environment compared to traditional referral letter care pathway

VC Delivers Improved Patient Outcomes

Dynamic Expert Advice

Reduced need for patient travel

Reduced family inconvenience

Reduced need for OPD patient referral

Speedier Review

Shorter Waiting Times

Frees up hospital OPD slots for those in need of standard clinic

Reduced costs

Improved satisfaction

Improved knowledge among GPs with less referral

HFVCs provide – online, real-time, dynamic consultations between GP and specialist – allowing speedy, focused interactions
Heart Failure Virtual Clinic

Provides GPs with:

- **Dynamic** Learning Environment
- Necessary **Supports** to maintain & treat HF patients in primary care setting
- **HF Education**
- Improved **Knowledge** Base
- **Confidence** in Treating/Managing HF Patients
- Reduced need to refer patients onto secondary/tertiary care
- Peer to peer support
- Learning from GP Case Studies
- HF Advice

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Heart Failure VC Facts

- Service running for over 24 months
- HFVC runs twice weekly
- Consists of CME topic followed by up to 6 cases
- Intense hour of **Knowledge Impartation**
- **150 GP’s signed up to date**

“*It is through investing in technology and through putting in place these building blocks in terms of eHealth that I really do believe that we can absolutely revolutionise the way we deliver health care and the way we improve patient care.*”

*Minister for Health - Simon Harris TD*

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GPs agreed the HVFC improved their ability to care for patients & discussions enhanced their knowledge of HF

GPs agreed that the HVFC improved their confidence in identifying HF

GPs strongly agreed that the HVFC advice was useful when treating patients in their surgery and that patients benefited as a result of their participation in HFVC

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Patients were happy to have their condition discussed with experts and groups of GPs and relieved to not be referred to the outpatient department

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“This is the future”  
GP 1

“I have learned more about the more appropriate treatments and I have been able to use that on other patients. My own personal knowledge of heart failure has improved....”  
GP 2

“I mean I literally got, not only an instant answer verbally, but I also got confirmation of that in written form for the chart. So from a clinical management perspective it’s fantastic”  
GP 3

“The old pathway was seeing the specialists, then getting the test and then back to the specialist. This pathway reduces that first visit so yes they need the test and I will see them after, [which] makes the pathway more efficient”  
GP 4