



RCSI

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND

COLÁISTE RÍOGA NA MÁINLEÁ IN ÉIRINN

Ethicon Grant/Fellowship Report Form

Grant Holder Name	Dr Niamh Collins
Brief biography, including qualification and year of graduation (no more than 100 words)	<p>Dr Niamh Collins Ophthalmic Surgeon MB, BCh, BAO, FRCSI(Ophthal), PhD</p> <p>I graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 2004 with an honours degree in medicine. I undertook a three year period of full time research at Trinity College and St James' Hospital Dublin, culminating in the award of a PhD from Trinity College for my completed thesis in 2013. I completed basic and higher surgical training on RCSI's ophthalmic Higher Surgical Training scheme. I was awarded FRCSI(Ophthalmology) in 2016.</p>
Title of Project/Fellowship	Fellowship in Glaucoma Surgery
Year of Award: Commencement Date: Conclusion Date:	<p>2017 February 2017 February 2018</p>

Summary (no more than 250 words)

The Fellowship was in glaucoma surgery at an international high-volume centre for glaucoma care, with high standards of patient care and a world-renowned research centre, in Melbourne Australia. I acquired techniques of glaucoma surgery, including emerging techniques in minimally invasive glaucoma surgery; gained experience in managing complex glaucoma cases; was mentored in leadership and training by 14 subspecialty trained glaucoma surgeons. I was also involved in translational research at the Centre for Eye Research Australia and participated in research and audit under the supervision of leading academics in the field of glaucoma including Professor Jonathan Crowston, Managing Director of the Centre for Eye Research Australia. The fellowship further advanced my training in ophthalmic and glaucoma surgery and built on the experience I gained within the Irish training system in clinical leadership, academic research, and facilitated my transition from trainee to trainer. I found the fellowship experience highly rewarding and would like to thank RCSI and Ethicon for their support.

Grant Report (in the region of but no more than 500 words)

Objectives of Project/Fellowship:

1. Surgical & Clinical: To become a technically skillful ophthalmic microsurgeon, including acquisition of emerging techniques in minimally invasive glaucoma surgery; to gain experience in managing complex glaucoma cases; and to be mentored in leadership and training by 14 glaucoma surgeons in a leading international centre
2. Research: To undertake translational research and audit at this world renowned institute for eye research: the Centre for Eye Research Australia
3. Education and Training: To become an active member of the academic program of the department and improve my skills as a surgical educator
4. General: To develop a valuable skillset and body of knowledge that I can bring back to Ireland, foremost to benefit the Irish patient population, but also to pass on to other Irish surgeons and surgical trainees

Did you achieve these objectives?

Yes, I achieved all of the above objectives:

1. I experienced a broad case load of complex medical and surgical glaucoma cases allowing me to perfect my microsurgery skills as well as clinical management of complex cases. Working directly alongside 14 subspecialty glaucoma surgeons was an invaluable experience. I have made strong international connections and friendships with surgical colleagues at the unit.
2. I was a co-investigator on a clinical trial introducing micro-incision glaucoma surgical devices to the unit and was an active member of the Centre for Eye Research glaucoma unit research meetings. I undertook research into fellowship surgical training which was presented at the international RANZCO conference in Perth 2017. I audited the use of on glaucoma drainage devices at Melbourne.
3. I supervised the training of ophthalmology residents in surgical and ophthalmic laser techniques. I conducted tutorials for emergency department doctors. I regularly presented complex cases at inter-departmental grand rounds meetings and participated in the glaucoma unit journal club.
4. Overall I gained a surgical skillset and body of clinical knowledge that surpasses my expectations of a fellowship. I look forward to using these new skills in the development of ophthalmic services for patients in Ireland.

In your opinion, what is the value of your award to:

1. Yourself

This award from Ethicon allowed me to travel to Australia to complete this fellowship: a fantastic experience to be immersed in a unit dedicated to the management of glaucoma. This experience taught me a range of new clinical, surgical, management and leadership skills which can improve the outcomes for patients with ophthalmic disease.

2. The institution in which you worked

The Eye and Ear Hospital in Melbourne has a long-standing link with Ireland - a number of leading Irish ophthalmic surgeons have undertaken fellowships there. During my fellowship I was involved in clinical and surgical management of the full spectrum of glaucoma patients attending the Melbourne

glaucoma unit, including complex and advanced cases. The extensive experience in ophthalmic surgery I acquired on the RCSI ophthalmic training program, particularly complex cataract surgery, was highly valuable to the hospital and the unit in performing and supervising complex cases.

3. In the future for Irish patients

Through this fellowship I gained valuable insight into the management of a successful glaucoma practice. The experience I gained in Australia will allow me to offer Irish patients greater choice of surgical approaches to manage glaucoma, including micro-incisional glaucoma procedures where appropriate, and ultimately better quality of life and lower rates of blindness from glaucoma. For example, I was involved in the peri-operative management of many of the new generation micro-incision glaucoma devices (I successfully performed the surgical insertion procedures as well as the often more nuanced and complex postoperative management), and techniques not currently employed in Ireland such as endoscopic cyclophotocoagulation.

In summary, this fellowship has allowed me to develop a vital skillset, of benefit to Irish patients, but also to pass on to other Irish ophthalmic surgeons and surgical trainees.