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The NTPF Strategic Plan 2023 – 2025

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Foreword

The National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) is an independent public body which undertakes a number of important roles within the health service. In delivering on our remit, we arrange treatments for patients, provide independently assured waiting list information, develop systems and processes which contribute to health system reform, negotiate prices for nursing home care, and provide expert advice to the Minister for Health.

The NTPF's strategic period of 2020-2022 was a challenging time for the organisation, the wider healthcare sector and the nation as a whole, as the COVID- 19 pandemic and Conti cyber attack placed significant strain on our health systems.

Our people worked continuously during this time to deliver on our core remit whilst also supporting the Minister with additional roles and by providing specialist advice when called upon to do so.

Despite these challenges, the NTPF continued to deliver against its Strategic Goals, with key achievements including:

- Developing and administrating the Temporary Assistance Payment Scheme (TAPS) to support nursing homes facing additional cost pressures arising from COVID-19. As at 29th November 2022, a total of €145.7m in respect of 7,900 claims has been notified for payment to the HSE.
- From 2020 to 2022, arranging 480,000 hospital services including:
 - 115,000 surgeries and procedures
 - 365,000 outpatient consultations and diagnostics
- Conducting administrative patient validation of hospital waiting lists, engaging with ~1m patients on national waiting lists to confirm they still require access to care for which they were listed, from 2020 to 2022.
- Through the provision of advice, policy development and technology, the NTPF was a key stakeholder in the management and reporting of patients on waiting lists during COVID-19 and through the HSE Cyber Attack.

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In developing our next Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2025, an extensive consultative process was undertaken, with key input from the NTPF Executive and Board, staff members, external stakeholders in the healthcare system and patient representatives. We appreciate and value the contributions we received throughout this process. This process is outlined in Appendix 2 of this document.

Our new strategy reflects these discussions and remains aligned with our legislative remit. It also recognises that we must continually improve our processes, systems and empower our people to build organisational excellence.

We have ensured that our strategy is aligned with changes occurring across the healthcare system, such as the implementation of Sláintecare and the development of integrated healthcare in Ireland.

By partnering with stakeholders across the sector in a spirit of consultation, collaboration and mutual respect, we are confident we can deliver on our mission to improve access to healthcare services over the coming three-year period.



Don Gallagher, Chairman

About the NTPF

The National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) is a corporate body established by Statutory Instrument S.I. No. 179 of 2004 – The National Treatment Purchase Fund Board (Establishment) Order, 2004, with additional functions set out under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act (2009). The NTPF contributes to the efficiency of the healthcare system by undertaking a variety of functions including the commissioning of treatment for patients and the negotiation of private and voluntary nursing home prices.

What we do

The National Treatment Purchase Fund undertakes a number of roles set out in legislation. Primarily we:

- 1. Purchase treatments for individual patients, through the hospital system, with the explicit target of reducing waiting list numbers.
- 2. Collect, collate, validate and manage data from public hospitals, and are the recognised, authoritative source of waiting list data in Ireland.
- 3. Negotiate with private and voluntary nursing homes to agree the maximum price of longterm residential care service for an individual resident.
- 4. Make ourselves available to the Minister for Health in both an advisory and delivery role to support the wider health service where we have the capacity and capabilities to do so.

What our annual activity looks like

In 2022 we:

- Negotiated pricing agreements with over 200 homes under the Nursing Home Support Scheme. The overall national average price agreed with nursing homes was €1,079 per week.
- Employed 80 people, coming from a wide range of backgrounds including nursing, data analytics and procurement.
- Collected and managed 50 million waiting list records from hospitals.
- Updated and maintained the country's only cross-sector hospital data management system (PAMS).

Governance of the NTPF

The NTPF has adopted a best-practice corporate governance regime to efficiently deliver on its mission.

A nine member Board, including the Chairperson, are appointed by the Minister for Health to provide oversight of the NTPF. This includes agreeing the strategy for the organisation and ensuring that strategic objectives are achieved.

The Board has established a number of committees to assist it in undertaking its role. These include:

- Audit and Risk Committee to review financial reporting issues and judgements made in connection with the NTPF's financial statements and reports, to review and advise on external and internal audit, and to review and advise on internal controls and risk management.
- Patient Care Committee to provide oversight and challenge with regard to the aspects of quality, risk management and safety of patient care as relevant to the NTPF.

A five person executive leadership team, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for leading the day-to-day operational aspects of the NTPF and implementing the strategy. The CEO reports to the Board at each of its meetings on the activities and performance of the NTPF.

Our expertise

We have leading expertise in the following:







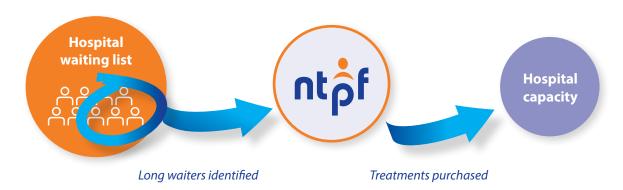




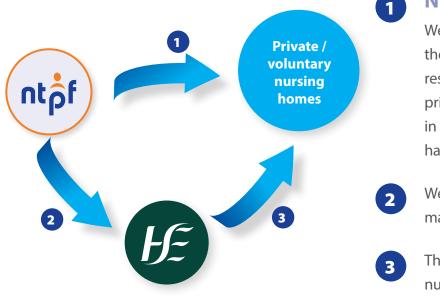
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Our place in the healthcare system

Hospital services



In line with our remit, we work with hospitals to identify long-waiters in the health system. We then identify capacity across hospitals and purchase treatment for those patients. In doing so we not only have a significant impact on individuals, we also help relieve pressure on the system, by reducing the number of people on the waiting list.



Nursing home pricing

We carry out negotiations to set the maximum price of long-term residential care services with each private and voluntary nursing in Ireland. In most cases this happens annually.

- We then confirm the agreed maximum prices with the HSE.
- The HSE makes payments to the nursing home directly at the agreed price.

How we deliver our work

Our roles

- We arrange for the provision of appropriate hospital treatment for certain patient groups, as determined by the Minister for Health.
- 2. We collect, collate, validate and publish information on public hospital waiting lists as well as develop waiting list protocols.
- We agree pricing arrangements with private and voluntary nursing homes under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme.
- 4. We provide expert advice to the Minister of Health on health related issues and consult on other relevant activities that could support the health system at a given time.

How we work

- 1. We collaborate and engage with the wider healthcare system, building relationships across our stakeholder groups as we deliver on our remit.
- 2. We develop nationally leading IT systems for waiting list data management and prioritise continuous development of our capabilities, resourcing and investment as it underpins all our work.
- We nurture a culture of purpose, diversity, ambition and collaboration daily, recognising that having an environment with which people want to engage enables efficiency in our work.
- We communicate effectively, so that we can maximise the positive impact of work.
- 5. We invest in our people through personal development and training opportunities because our knowledge and experience base enables us to support the wider health system.

Mission, Vision & Values

Mission statement

Our **mission** is to improve people's access to healthcare services.

We do this by arranging treatments, providing independently assured waiting list information, developing systems and processes which contribute to health system reform, negotiating prices for nursing home care and providing expert advice to the Minister of Health.

Vision statement

Our **vision** is that people have access to hospital and nursing home services when they need them.

Values statement

1 People first

We put the interests of patients and nursing home residents at the centre of our work.

- 2 Integrity
 We are independent, objective, transparent and accountable.
- Collaboration

 We engage with our stakeholders in a spirit of consultation, collaboration and mutual respect.
- Innovation

 We are innovative, flexible, proactive, and responsive.
- **Expertise**We are experts in our field, and we adopt an objective and evidence-based approach to our work.
- 6 Inclusion
 As an organisation we value diversity, equality and inclusion.

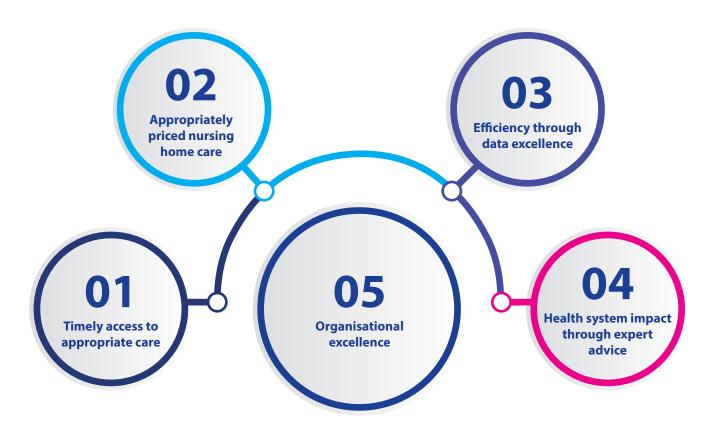
Our Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan is built on **four key organisational goals** which will allow us to deliver on our statutory mandate over the next three years. These goals will be supported by a **fifth enabling goal** focused on creating a strong, resilient and inclusive organisation.

For each of our goals we have outlined our **strategic objectives** and how we will measure success in achieving them. Our annual service plan will underpin our strategic intent, with our success measured using internal key performance indicators and reported in our annual report.

In our implementation activities, we will apply a **standard delivery framework** to ensure a consistent and effective approach to meeting our objectives. The framework will address risk and governance, communications and targets, and appropriate project management, all as drivers to achieve our mission and vision, supported throughout by our values which we live daily.

Our strategic goals



Arrange quality assured treatment for patients in an efficient manner.

"Timely access to appropriate care"

The commissioning of treatment for patients is a key role which the NTPF performs to deliver on our mission of improving access to healthcare, thereby enabling positive health outcomes. We do this by sourcing capacity in the public and private healthcare systems for specific groups of patients on waiting lists, which have been identified by the Minister.

During the previous strategic period, commissioning activities significantly increased in both volume and budget. The NTPF quickly adapted to this expansion, demonstrating resilience in our approach to achieving our goals. Over the next three years, our goal is to deliver this service in an impactful and efficient manner to ensure those who need it obtain timely access to care. In doing so, we will also be supporting the broader health service as a continually reliable and effective contributor to the system.

Objectives

1. Participate in the development of the Waiting List Action Plan and deliver the relevant actions, as agreed with the Department of Health and the HSE

How we will measure success

- 1. Through the number of patients we provide access to care for
- 2. Through the strengthening of our relationships with health system stakeholders
- 3. Through the efficiency of our technical and operational processes
- 4. Through the increase in experience and capabilities of our people
- 2. Maintain and administer an appropriate quality assurance framework for the arrangement of treatment
- 1. Through the impact of our internal framework, which ensures patients get access to quality assured care in a timely manner
- 2. Through our prioritisation of patient outcomes in this work
- 3. Through the changes we make to our internal processes which further build quality assurance into our processes
- 3. Monitor and improve performance in the arrangement of treatments
- 1. Through the efficiency of our review systems
- 2. Through the adaptability of our teams when implementing improvement opportunities
- 3. Through our innovative thinking in creating solutions to deliver further efficiency and growth

Achieve appropriate pricing for long-term residential care, enabling value for money and sufficient capacity, through negotiation with private and voluntary nursing homes.

"Appropriately priced nursing home care"

The NTPF is responsible for negotiating pricing arrangements with private and voluntary nursing homes under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme (Fair Deal Scheme), to agree the price at which long-term residential care services will be provided. Following a successful negotiation process, we provide the HSE with the details of pricing agreements to be included in the Fair Deal Scheme.

Our aim is to achieve value for money for long-term residential care services through an efficient, respectful and collaborative negotiation process with nursing home owners and managers. While our role in the long-term care sector is limited in terms of scope, price negotiations have a profound impact on the resident. They also influence the incentives and mechanics of the longterm care system as a whole, and can have an effect on overall capacity. This responsibility is something we take very seriously, as demonstrated by the objectives we have set for ourselves below.

Objectives

How we will measure success

Through the strengthening of our relationships with individual nursing 1. Negotiate pricing arrangements for longterm care in residential 2. Through an increase in experience and capabilities for our people nursing home settings 3. Through the delivery of appropriate prices which enable capacity in the system, and deliver value for money 1. Through our own clarity of what the systems should achieve, and clear 2. Develop long-term care alignment with the Minister of Health pricing systems analysis 2. Through the value of information collected to inform these systems 3. Through the efficient roll-out and adoption of said systems 3. Monitor and report on 1. Through the collection and verification of market-wide data agreed nursing home 2. Through the analysis of said data pricing arrangements 3. Through our communication and engagement with stakeholders that use

this data, ensuring that it brings value

Collate, validate and publish waiting list information to improve health service planning.

"Efficiency through data excellence"

The NTPF is responsible for the collection, collation, validation and reporting of hospital inpatient, day case and outpatient waiting list data. We generate detailed reports which are utilised by stakeholders across the health service to enable efficient waiting list management as well as capacity and demand planning in each of the hospitals. We also publish our reports on the NTPF website for public access.

The data which is received from hospitals also populates our Patient Access Management System (PAMS), which drives our Commissioning function when arranging treatments. Over the next three years, our goal is to further enhance the resilience and efficiency of our data collection processes to enable enhanced productivity in health service planning. Strong IT infrastructure underpins all that we do and allows us to deliver on our remit. The independent nature of our role also provides assurances to the public that waiting list data has been verified and reviewed and so continuously building on these systems is of key importance.

Objectives

How we will measure success

- Maintain and further develop our validation processes for the collection and management of waiting list data
- 1. Through the monthly publication of validated waiting list data
- 2. Through the level of integration we achieve across our systems
- 3. Through the ways we challenge ourselves to seek improvement in how we validate data
- 4. Through the strengthening of our relationships with health system stakeholders, to support the flow of data
- Undertake administrative validation of waiting lists
- 1. Through the successful delivery of our validation processes ensuring the data we produce is an accurate reflection of current healthcare waiting lists
- 2. Through our ability to accurately monitor and report on our administrative validation activities
- 3. Through the level of engagement we receive from patients as we communicate with them on their current care status
- Develop and deliver waiting list audit and data quality programmes
- 1. Through the quality of information achieved through the audit programmes, and responsiveness of participants
- 2. Through the clarity of our communication on data quality standards with hospital stakeholders
- 3. Through the strengthening of our relationships with hospitals, to improve the quality of data we collect

Objectives (ctd.)

How we will measure success (ctd.)

4.	Ensure our data
	collection systems
	remain secure and fit
	for purpose

- Through the level of integration of our systems
- 2. Through the robustness of our systems from a security perspective
- 3. Through the successful use of our systems by stakeholders in hospitals who input data
- 5. Improve the systems we use for waiting list data management
- 1. Through clear prioritisation of improvement opportunities
- 2. Through the level of integration of our systems
- 3. Through the robustness of our systems from a security perspective
- 4. Through the open dialogue we maintain with data users and policy makers
- 6. Identify and action opportunities for reform of waiting list processes and systems
- 1. Through the development of national waiting list management protocols to guide and support health service stakeholders
- 2. Through the creation of systems and toolkits for the administration of patients on hospital waiting lists
- 3. Through the promotion of these tools with health system stakeholders to further encourage their deployment



To be an independent, trusted and expert voice within the health service which advises and supports the Minister.

"Health system impact through expert advice"

The NTPF is an expert voice on the commissioning of healthcare services, waiting list data capture, publication and protocol development as well as pricing of long-term care. We leverage our expertise to advise and support the Minister for Health to deliver impact for the entire health service.

Over the next three years, our goal is to continue our track record of success, and collaborate with others in the health service as a trusted leader in areas within our remit. We are aware of the health benefits to be had through collaboration and knowledge- sharing so are willing to play that role for the good of patients.

Objectives

1. Support the Minister where appropriate with expert advice on improving patient access, waiting list reporting, management and reform, pricing of long-term residential care and other appropriate requests

How we will measure success

- 1. Through the value of information and guidance we can provide
- 2. Through our participation in national forums as an expert voice on patient treatment and a leader in waiting list data management
- 3. Through the impact we bring in identifying and leveraging opportunities for reform of waiting list processes and systems
- 4. Through the strengthening of our relationships with the Minister and policy makers
- 5. Through an expansion of our collaborative relationships with the university sector and research partners to advance the scheduled care improvement agenda
- 6. Through our collaboration with key stakeholders to develop systems for capacity and demand planning
- 7. Through further improvement to our reputation as a leader in our areas of expertise
- 8. Through our ability to reach out to the Minister proactively, when we believe we can bring value to discussions and system planning

Create a strong, resilient and inclusive organisation where our people are empowered and our capabilities continually improved.

"Organisational excellence"

The NTPF enables efficiency in the wider health service through delivery of its various roles. During our next strategic period our goal is to deliver on our mandate and improve positive outcomes for patients and long-term care residents by being the best organisation we could possibly be. We will seek to maintain and further enhance our patient first, high performance culture to attract talent, remain agile, innovate and continually seek improvement. Our governance structure will facilitate responsive and accountable decision-making. We will also work to enhance how we communicate, both internally and externally, so that our people are informed and empowered, and our key stakeholders are aware of how we deliver impact.

Our people and systems were tested during the pandemic and Conti cyber attack, but delivered continuous positive impact throughout. These characteristics must be fostered daily to not only maintain, but further improve our performance and provide a workplace and purpose that our employees are proud to contribute to.

Objectives

1. Maintain and further develop an attractive, inclusive and supportive organisation for our staff

How we will measure success

- 1. Through reflection on and prioritisation of a change accommodating culture, which motivates our people to deliver their best work, as much for their benefit as for the wider organisation
- 2. Through the attractiveness of our organisation both for current employees and future talent
- 3. Through our commitment to nurturing a motivated, valued workforce
- 4. Through our ongoing performance management process and development systems (PDMS)
- 5. Through our proactive support for our employees to develop via the provision of learning opportunities both internally and externally
- 6. Through the changes we make to ensure we are an inclusive organisation, where individuals can be themselves
- 2. Develop a leading and strategic approach to internal communications which is grounded in best practice
- 1. Through a focus on improved internal communications in a post-COVID era and the achievement of communal clarity of purpose
- 2. Through more regular formal and informal engagement with our people on the mission, vision, values and progress of the organisation

- 3. Develop a leading and strategic approach to **external** communications which is grounded in best practice and appropriate to our remit within the health service
- 1. Through identification of who our key stakeholders are and how we communicate with them
- 2. Through internal agreement of the key messages we want to deliver to each stakeholder
- 3. Through successful engagement and interactions with our external stakeholders such as the Department of Health
- 4. Further strive to create a fit for purpose organisation which is capable of delivering on our mission
- 1. Through continual improvement of our organisational structure to determine if it is appropriate for our next strategic period. Where needed, we will implement change required to deliver on our mission
- Through our appropriate and regular workforce planning to ensure we have the right skillsets, but also that our teams are appropriately challenged on their capabilities, not on the extent to which they can stretch their capacity
- Through continued prioritisation of our IT systems, cyber security, processes and training, and active improvements when identified
- Maintain the highest standards of corporate governance and compliance with appropriate national standards
- 1. Through our appropriate responses to FOI, data protection access and protected disclosure requests as well as PQ's received by the organisation. We will actively monitor and report on the number of these requests we receive both to inform the Minster but also our internal planning
- 2. Through our strategic reporting on the organisation in a transparent manner
- 3. Through our determined compliance with all corporate governance requirements
- 4. Through our ability to achieve value for money in the creating a resilient organisation

Implementation

Our strategy will be implemented over the next three years, from January 2023-December 2025

As we reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges it brought to the health service, the NTPF recognises the need to remain agile in our approach to improving access to healthcare and to keep our systems and processes under continuous review.

Our Strategic Plan sets out a framework for delivery against our roles within the health service. The Strategy represents an integrated three-year plan, with some strategic objectives being implemented over more than a single year. Each year, our Annual Service Plan will define the specific objectives and actions to be progressed within that year.

We will monitor progress against our clearly defined measures of success which accompany each of our Strategic Goals, supported by internal Key Performance Indicators. Each year, our progress against the strategy will be published in our Annual Report.

Implementing our strategy

01

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2025

Sets out Mission, Vision and Values, which drive strategic goals



02

Annual Service Plan

Identifies specific, time-bound KPIs and actions to deliver on strategic goals.



03

Annual Report

Reports on performance and delivery against targets.

Appendix 1 – Previous strategy lookback

Progress made against our organisational strategy 2020 – 2022

The NTPF's Organisational Strategy 2020 – 2022 set out a number of strategic goals and objectives for the organisation during the period. Having reached the end of this three year period, it is important to examine the progress made in achieving our objectives and reflect on learnings which can be carried forward to the next strategy. While the COVID- 19 pandemic impacted on the work of the NTPF during the period, it continued to deliver on its strategic goals and made substantial progress in advancing its mission of supporting timely access to appropriate treatments. Our key achievements for the 2020 - 2022 period are summarised below:

1 To efficiently arrange quality assured treatment for patients

- The NTPF arranged ~480,000 hospital services for the period 2020 to 2022. This included surgeries and procedures, outpatient consultations and diagnostics.
- Supported the HSE and Department of Health on Acute Hospital preparedness for COVID-19 and assisted with determining potential Critical Care and Acute Care surge capacity.

2 To collect and provide validated waiting list information and intelligence supported by appropriate processes and audit

- Completed Outpatient Audit Programmes for 2019 and 2020.
- Conducted administrative patient validation of hospital waiting lists, engaging with ~1m patients on national waiting lists to confirm they still require access to care for which they were listed from 2020 to 2022.

3 To negotiate sustainable prices for long-term care in line with our remit

- Entered into pricing agreements with over 200 nursing homes under the Nursing Home Support Scheme.
- In direct response to the impact of COVID-19 on the nursing home sector, administered
 a Temporary Assistance Payment Scheme (TAPS) in conjunction with the HSE and
 Department of Health to support nursing homes with respect to additional cost
 pressures.

4 To provide the Minister with expert advice and related support regarding improved patient access, waiting list reporting and management and pricing of long-term care

- Designed and deployed the Patient Access Management Systems (PAMS) which manages the organisations Outpatient Commissioning function and facilitates the management of public patients in private hospitals.
- Developed a Patient Online Automated Response (POLAR) option for patients responding to validation correspondence.
- Developed an online Inpatient, Day Case and Planned Procedure (IDPP) Waiting
 List Management training programme in HSeLanD in conjunction with the HSE and
 Hospital groups.
- Worked with the HSE and the Department of Health on Acute Hospital preparedness for COVID-19 and provided assistance with respect to determining potential Critical Care and Acute Care surge capacity and key dependencies.

To empower our people, strengthen our systems and develop our culture to achieve organisational excellence and maximise our impact

- Delivered 391 training courses and supported 32 staff in further education.
- Increased staff numbers to 80.

Appendix 2 – Strategic plan development

Developing our Organisational Strategy 2023 - 2025

The NTPF's Organisational Strategy 2023-2025 has been developed as the Irish economy recovers from the COVID-19 global pandemic and the significant strain it placed on the healthcare system. While COVID-19 impacted on the work of the NTPF, it continues to set an ambitious target for itself over its next strategic period to enhance timely access to appropriate care.

In developing this strategy, the Board and Executive teams, supported by KPMG, considered its performance against the previous strategy 2020-2022, the results of an extensive internal and external consultation process and the changing healthcare system in Ireland. Tools such as a PESTLE analysis, SWOT assessment and horizon scanning were utilised to capture the emerging strategic priorities for the NTPF which were robustly discussed through internal workshops. Finally, a number of similar international peer organisations' were reviewed to determine best practices and key learnings from peer operating models. The activities undertaken in developing this strategy are summarised below:

Strategy inputs



Review of the NTPF Strategic Plan 2020-2022

KPMG applied its proprietary 9 Levers of Value framework to structure current state assessment of the NTPF's Organisational Strategy 2020 – 2022. This framework assessed the previous strategy across its financial model, its operating model and its business model. These are the three key levers which management can pull when designing, testing and implementing new organisational strategies. In addition, KPMG determined progress made against the previous strategic plan. Outputs and recommendations from this assessment were considered by the Board and Executive teams and informed the development of the current strategy, covering the period of 2023-2025.

International peer analysis

The NTPF's complex and specific remit does not appear to be replicated on a like- for-like basis amongst international peer organisations. Following a global search, KPMG identified four peer organisations which replicated one or more of the NTPF's roles within their own jurisdiction. The organisational strategies of these peers were reviewed to capture insights and international best-practice for the NTPF. These lessons were used to inform the development of the current strategy.

Consultative process

An extensive consultative process was conducted as part of the strategy development to capture perspectives and insights on the potential future strategic direction of the NTPF. Internally, this included both one-on-one consultations and group workshops with members of the Board, the Executive Team and NTPF staff members. Externally, stakeholders from across the healthcare system were consulted on the future strategic direction of the NTPF and the opportunities and challenges facing the organisation. This included valuable input from patient representative groups, facilitated via the HSE's "People who use Health Services Programme". The outputs from this consultative process were analysed by KPMG and robustly discussed by both the Board and Executive team to inform the future strategic direction of the organisation.

Strategic situational review

KPMG conducted an extensive strategic situational review of the NTPF to inform its next strategic plan. This included a SWOT analysis to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the organisation; an assessment of the external environment using the PESTLE methodology to analyse political, economic, sociological, technological, legal and environmental impacts on the organisation and horizon scanning, which sought to identify short, medium and long-term strategic trends for consideration. This exercise was used to inform the strategic priorities for the NTPF into the 2023-2025 period.

