

Pre-Budget Submission 2026

JULY 2025

TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE, **TOGETHER**

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WELCOME

Dear Honourable Members of the Irish Government

On behalf of HealthTech Ireland, I proudly present this pre-budget submission, highlighting our collaborative efforts and unwavering commitment to advancing healthcare in Ireland and supporting Ireland's economy.

For over 40 years, we have fostered ethical and trusted industry engagement, collaborative leadership and strategic cross sector alignment to enhance patient care and system efficiency while strengthening the healthcare ecosystem.

HealthTech Ireland has a track record in driving impact through leadership and collaboration, in both industry and health, with over 120 member companies including start-ups, SMEs, distributors and global manufacturers, many headquartered in Ireland, delivering innovative medical and digital health solutions to Irish patients.

Ireland leads Europe in MedTech employment per capita, with €1bn in annual R&D investment from FDI companies, reflecting a thriving talent pool and culture of innovation. HealthTech Ireland plays a key role in cross-sector collaboration, exemplified by the creation of the National Health Collaboration Council, with governance from industry and HSE leaders, strategically partnered to tackle major healthcare challenges. Through strategic engagement, we prioritise initiatives that transform healthcare and enhance patient outcomes.

Following our 2025 pre-budget call for a Life Science strategy, we welcomed its inclusion in the programme for Government and offer the opportunity to support its success and seek to build on this here with a Life Science council. The second part of the submission is an ask around creating the capability for the Health Service Executive (HSE) to adopt a fit-for-purpose procurement model that allows for either Operational Expenditure (OpEx) or Capital Expenditure (CapEx), depending on the nature of the need, allowing smarter allocation of existing health budgets, maximising outcomes, value, and sustainability.

This submission again reflects **our collective ambition to invest in unlocking potential through collaboration** and learnings from best international practice. By supporting these initiatives, we can build a stronger, more resilient healthcare system for all and a healthier, wealthier nation.

Sincerely,

Susan Treacy
CEO, HealthTech Ireland

Ireland leads Europe in MedTech employment per capita, with €1bn in annual R&D investment from FDI companies, reflecting a thriving talent pool and culture of innovation

ABOUT US

HealthTech Ireland is an independent trade association for manufacturers, developers and distributors of health technology products, solutions and services to the health system in Ireland.

HealthTech Ireland provides a forum for the development and advocacy of policies that support innovation in health technology to address patients' healthcare needs.

HealthTech Ireland member companies include the full spectrum of health technology supply and service companies from Small/Medium Enterprises to Multi-National Companies, many of whom have Research and Innovation and/or manufacturing facilities in Ireland. Members of HealthTech Ireland provide safe, effective and innovative health technologies that save and enhance lives, benefiting people and society. If a health product is proven to be safe, clinically efficacious and cost-effective patients should have access to it, no question.

HealthTech Ireland is a member of MedTech Europe and of Global Medical Technology Alliance connecting the industry and the health system through collaboration, education and advocacy.

HealthTech Ireland is proud to partner with the HSE on the National Health Collaboration Council (NHCC). The purpose of the NHCC is to foster strategic collaboration between the public sector and industry to drive impactful healthcare initiatives.

OUR VISION, MISSION AND PURPOSE

VISION

To support our members to make a positive contribution to the Irish economy and healthcare system

MISSION

To advance understanding, collaboration and meaningful engagement between the Irish health system and our members.

PURPOSE

To enhance the health and wellbeing of all people in Ireland through the deployment of innovative health tech.

REQUIREMENT ONE

Operational Expenditure Procurement Capability for the HSE

We urge the Government to enable the Health Service Executive (HSE) to adopt a fit-for-purpose procurement model that allows for either Operational Expenditure (OpEx) or Capital Expenditure (CapEx), depending on the nature of the need. This is not a call for increased spending, but for smarter allocation of existing health budgets to maximise outcomes, value, and sustainability.

Ireland's current capital-heavy procurement model limits the HSE's ability to respond flexibly to evolving patient needs and advances in medical technology. It favours one-off capital projects, often without mechanisms to support long-term innovation adoption. An OpEx-enabled model would allow for predictable, multi-year investments, making it easier to trial, adopt, and scale digital, diagnostic, and service-based innovations that align with frontline care delivery.

This approach is supported by the National Health Collaboration Council (NHCC) 2025 Innovation Framework White Paper, which advocates moving away from rigid CapEx cycles in favour of sustainable, service-aligned innovation funding, including ring-fenced resources and incentives tied to value-based healthcare outcomes. It also complements the ambitions of the National Productivity and Savings Taskforce, which aims to deliver more care to more people through better use of available funds.

Crucially, this proposed reform aligns with the objectives of Sláintecare and Ireland's Digital Health Strategy, enabling the HSE to support integrated, community-based care and scale patient-centred, digital-first services. Operational procurement models, including optional bundled service agreements, are particularly important for the rollout of AI, diagnostics, and cloud-based tools where value is realised over time, not just through upfront purchase.

Procurement reform would enable optional bundled procurement models, where technologies, services, and support are combined in outcome-aligned agreements. Where appropriate, bundling can support continuity of care, simplify contract management, and enhance long-term value, particularly in innovation-rich areas such as digital health and diagnostics. Crucially, these models must remain transparent, inclusive, and competitively structured, allowing diverse providers to participate while ensuring that procurement objectives and public value are upheld.

While this submission focuses on public procurement reform, it's important to recognise that other countries are evolving broader health system funding models to support similar aims. For example, France's PECAN model introduces a reimbursement pathway for digital medical technologies that links OpEx-style payments to evidence of clinical or operational benefit. Such models reinforce the principle that flexible, outcome-linked funding is essential for enabling innovation access and delivering long-term system value.

Mechanisms, such as this, are already in use across several EU member states, the UK and Northern Ireland, enabling subscription-based, managed service, and performance-linked agreements funded through OpEx. They also promote faster access to innovation while ensuring system-wide efficiency and accountability.

This recommendation is especially timely: the Department of Health has more than doubled its Capital Expenditure since 2019, yet without an operational funding route, many transformative solutions remain out of reach. Unlocking OpEx capabilities and introducing flexible procurement frameworks ensures that this investment translates into faster, more equitable, and more impactful care.

An OpEx-enabled model would allow for predictable, multi-year investments, making it easier to trial, adopt, and scale digital, diagnostic, and service-based innovations that align with frontline care delivery.

Challenges and Opportunities

The current procurement model that relies solely on CapEx presents several challenges.

Challenges

- Upfront Financial Burden
- Inflexibility in Technology Adoption
- Long Approval Cycles
- Maintenance and Lifecycle Costs
- Limited Access to Emerging Technologies

Vision

The vision for an OpEx procurement model in healthcare is to create a more agile, sustainable, and value-based system that prioritises patient access to cutting-edge medical technologies.

Key Benefits of an OpEx Model:

- Flexible Access to Innovation
- Access to Upgrades
- Delivery of Value Based Healthcare
- Confidence in budgetary planning across multi-year horizons
- Simplified contract management
- Enhanced long-term value

The impact on the health workforce is equally important. By enabling faster access to solutions that improve workflow, diagnostic accuracy, and clinical efficiency, this reform contributes directly to workforce sustainability, helping reduce burnout and enabling staff to focus on patient care.

Priorities

To successfully implement an OpEx procurement model for medical technologies within the Irish healthcare system, several immediate priorities need to be addressed:

1. Policy and Regulatory amendments
2. Budgetary and Financial Structuring
3. Procurement Process Redesign
4. Stakeholder Engagement
5. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

A strategic rollout with collaboration across government, healthcare institutions, and industry stakeholders will be key to ensuring a successful transition.

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REQUIREMENT ONE

Summary of Asks

As Budget 2026 approaches, we strongly advocate for procurement reform that allows OpEx capability within the HSE. This approach, incorporating flexible, outcome-aligned procurement frameworks will drive a renewed focus on value, adaptability, and long-term impact.

To transition to an OpEx procurement model, we propose a €10 million allocation over three years to support administration requirements for policy changes, infrastructure upgrades and ongoing evaluation.

Budget Breakdown

- Policy & Regulatory Adjustments: €2M
- Staffing & Training: €2.5M
- IT & Procurement Systems Development: €2.5M
- Stakeholder Engagement: €1M
- Monitoring & Improvement: €2M

Conclusion

This investment will allow Ireland to build a more innovative, sustainable, and patient-focused procurement system that improves healthcare outcomes while maximising financial efficiency.

We urge the government to allocate funding to enable adoption of this reform in the upcoming budget, to ensure long-term value-driven healthcare delivery. By taking these steps, Ireland can ensure that every euro invested works harder, for patients, for providers, and for the sustainability of the health system.

With an evolving digital landscape globally in healthcare delivery, now is the ideal moment to move from funding intention to measurable, outcome-based delivery.



REQUIREMENT TWO

Establishing a Life Science Council: A Strategic Imperative for Ireland

HealthTech Ireland welcomes the inclusion of the creation of the National Life Science Strategy in the new programme for government. The sector employs over 102,000 people across pharma and medical technologies, with exports worth €116 billion annually. Ireland has the highest concentration of medtech employment per capita in Europe and over €1 billion in-house R&D spend from FDI (foreign direct investment) companies annually. This speaks directly to the rich talent pool and innovative culture upon which the industry thrives.

This strategy is a huge opportunity to align the whole sector for patients and for the economy.

Taking learnings from international best practice, two stages will be required for the strategy to achieve its full potential. Firstly, leveraging cross sector insights and learnings in creation of the strategy through inclusion of stakeholders across critical sectors, including health tech, pharma, research, education, health and wellbeing. Secondly, creating the capability for seamless collaboration between key government departments – the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, the Department of Health, and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

To accelerate Ireland's success in delivering the strategy, as demonstrated in other jurisdictions on second and third strategy iterations, is it crucial to align with the latest global developments using a structured mechanism to guide consultation and implementation. This will avoid the risk of a costly fragmented, non-strategic approach.

The Case for a Life Science Council

To ensure this structured, coordinated and effective approach, we urge the government to establish a dedicated Life Science Council to oversee the strategic development and execution of the National Life Science Strategy. Drawing on best practices internationally – where public-private fora have played pivotal roles in shaping and implementing successful life sciences strategies—the council would provide essential factors for success including aligned leadership, strategic direction and evidence-based policy recommendations.

With key stakeholders invested in the council's success, we propose an initial budget allocation of €200,000 to cover secretariat costs and analytical support to scope and deliver this initiative. This investment would provide the capability to ensure that council recommendations are grounded in solid evidence, driving meaningful impact for the economy, patients, the healthcare system, and society at large.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Ireland boasts an exceptional life sciences ecosystem, comprising world-leading health tech and pharmaceutical companies, a thriving start-up sector, and a strong academic research community.

These stakeholders actively engage in collaborative research, innovation and groundbreaking health tech contributing significantly to Ireland's economic and societal growth. Ireland's Life Sciences Strategy has the potential to unlock new opportunities for indigenous breakthrough technologies while ensuring that innovation translates into real-world healthcare improvements for patients.

- **Omitting Industry Expertise and tacit global insights at the creation stage**

Life sciences application requires deep technical, on the ground expertise and firsthand industry knowledge. Ireland has the capability to access an abundance of this knowledge for the benefit of the strategy. By utilising direct input from sector leaders, the strategy will align with patient needs, enhancing its effectiveness in driving innovation, investment, and real-world applications.

- **Aligning across Government Departments**

Life sciences, like all best-in-class strategies, intersect multiple ministries – Enterprise, Health, Education, and Research – each with different priorities, lenses and value. A centralised coordinating body ensures alignment, realises opportunities and accelerates execution while reducing the potential for unintended consequences, such as inefficiencies due to competing agendas.

- **Providing a strategy for all for adoption**

An ambitious national strategy will be more effective when there is transparency, input and inclusivity in the development process with stakeholders such as patient advocacy groups, industry (both health tech and pharma), academia, research and healthcare professionals. Inclusion will support the strategy to be embraced more readily, accelerating its implementation while reducing bureaucratic bottle necks.

A Life Science Council would be pivotal in ensuring the success and sustainability of Ireland's National Life Science Strategy.

REQUIREMENT TWO

Vision and Benefits

A Life Science Council would be pivotal in ensuring the success and sustainability of Ireland's National Life Science Strategy. By fostering collaboration across sectors, the council would drive innovation, policy alignment, and strategic prioritisation.

Key benefits include:

- **Policy cohesion** between government departments and investment.
- **Strengthening collaboration** among industry, government, research, and education sectors to co-create a strategy that advances public health goals while generating further economic growth and innovation
- **Accelerated innovation**, creating an environment conducive to life sciences advancements and innovation adoption.
- **Global competitiveness**, positioning Ireland as a leader in life sciences and attracting investment.

Priorities

To successfully deliver the National Life Science Strategy for Ireland the Council would need to focus on several immediate priorities.

1. **Define vision** for the strategy.
2. **Establish** governance structure.
3. **Establish KPI's** and timelines.
4. **Conduct stakeholder mapping**, ensuring broad and inclusive representation and engagement on the council.
5. **Initiate evidence-based policy** analysis to guide strategy formulation.
6. **Develop action plans** for policy implementation.
7. **Facilitate sector-wide collaboration**, ensuring alignment across research, industry, and healthcare.

A council, dedicated to strategically creating this national strategy will result in strengthened participation, more agile decision making and enhanced policy adoption.

Summary of Asks

As budget 2026 is prepared we urge the government to establish a dedicated Life Science Council to guide the National Life Science Strategy. This approach will ensure seamless collaboration between government departments and life sciences sectors.

To facilitate the support of this council we propose €200,000 in funding to cover secretariat costs and analytical support.

Budget Breakdown

- Secretariat costs and analytical support €0.2M

Conclusion

Developing a Life Sciences Strategy with a collaborative council provides a valuable opportunity to harness the extensive knowledge, insights, and data available from a broader range of stakeholders and to align stakeholders, ultimately strengthening the strategy's effectiveness, industry alignment and buy in.

We urge the Government to take note of learnings from other regions, and accelerate the success of the National Life Science Strategy, through the establishment of a Life Science Council.

Establishing a Life Science Council in Ireland presents an excellent opportunity to foster collaboration and drive forward a strategy that positions the country as a world leader in life sciences.

MEMBERS LIST

A Abbott Diagnostics (D4)

Aerogen
AGFA
Air Liquide Healthcare Ireland
Alliance Medical
Amazon Web Services
Arjo (Ireland) Ltd

B Baxter Healthcare Ltd

Beckman Coulter
Becton Dickinson
BioMerieux UK Ltd
BNVM Consultants
Boston Scientific Ltd
Braun Medical
Brennan & Company

C Cardiogenics Ltd

Caretua
Change Healthcare
Cirdan
Clonallon Laboratories Ltd
Coloplast (UK) Ltd
Cruinn Diagnostics Ltd

D DAVY

Dexcom
Diasorin Ltd (UK)
Digicare
DMF
Doccla
DTP Solutions

E Edward Lifesciences Ltd

EIT Health Ireland
Enfer Medical
Ernest & Young
Eurofins Biomnis
EY

F Fannin Healthcare Ltd

Fleetwood Healthcare Ltd
(merging with HSL)
Full Health Medical

G GEMS Ireland Ltd

Genseq
Getinge Ireland
Glaukos Ireland
Graseby Medical Ireland Ltd
GS Medical Ltd

H Halocare Group

Head Diagnostics
Healthcare 21 (Cork)
Health Care Informed
Hollister Ireland Ltd
Home Healthcare
Hospital Services Ltd
Howden
HTS Labs

I Infocare Healthcare Systems Ireland

Intersurgical
Intersystems Corp
Iqvia Solutions
Irish Hospital Supplies

J John Bannon Ltd

Johnson & Johnson (Ireland) Ltd

K Keaney Medical Ltd

Kids Speech Labs

L Lifescan Healthcare

Lyncare Ltd
Lynch Medical

M Manepa Ltd

Manitex
Marketing Inputs
MedEarly Healthcare
Medica
Medicare Health & Living Ltd
Medihive
Medilex
Medtronic Ireland Ltd (NL)
MedModus
Microsoft Ireland
Miele Ireland
Murray Surgical Ltd
MyPatientSpace

N Norso Medical

Novartis Ireland Ltd
Novocure
Novus Diagnostics

O Olympus Ireland

OM Hayland Ireland Ltd.
O'Neill Healthcare
Open Medical
Organ Care Group / Cliffmun Media
Oxygen Care Ltd

P Pagero

patientMpower
Paul Hartmann Ltd
PEI Surgical Ltd
Philip Lee LLP
Philips Healthcare
Predicate
Prosource Medical
PWC

R Recruitment Plus Ltd

Respicare Ltd
Roche Diagnostics
Rockford Healthcare

S Salaso Health Solutions Ltd

Salts Healthcare
Santegic
SGS Ireland Ltd
Siemens Healthcare
SilverCloud Heath
Smith & Nephew (RI)
Solventum
Stryker
Swiftqueue Technologies Ltd
Synprophi Systems Ltd

T T G Eakin Ltd

TCP Homecare
Technopath Distribution Ltd

U Uniphar Medtech

United States Embassy

W Wassenburg Ireland Ltd

Whelehan Surgical Ltd

X xWave Technology

Y Yellow Schedule

Z Zatori

Zehnecker
Zendra Health
Zimmer Biomet



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