



Respiratory Nurse Service

Winter Action Plan

Clontarf Hospital

¹Rajalakshmi Girija, ²Ciara Dowling

¹RGN, PgDip Respiratory Nursing (RCSI), Respiratory NS Clontarf Hospital, ²Director of Nursing, Clontarf Hospital¹¹

Background

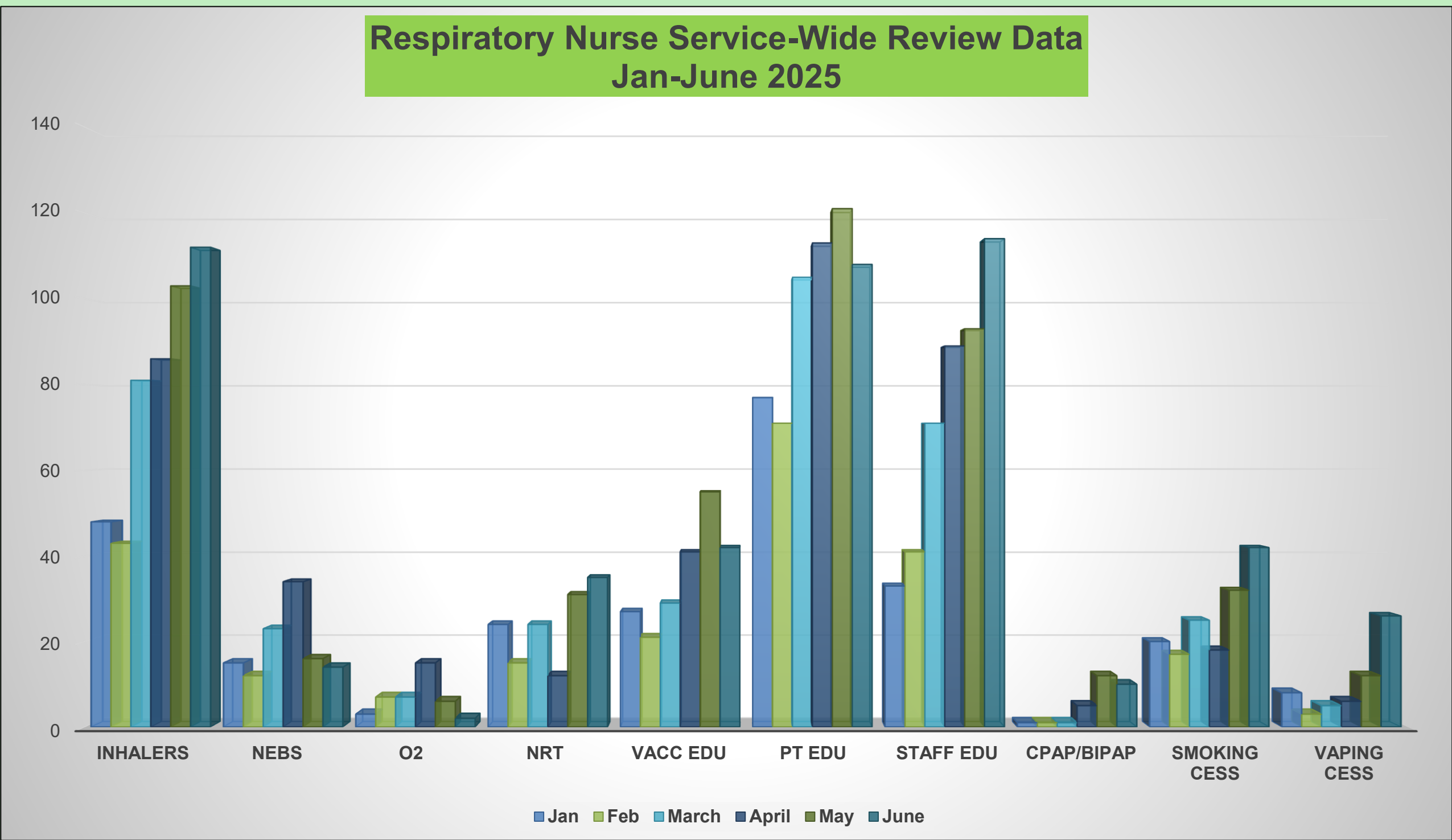
- Clontarf Hospital 160 beds provides post acute adult rehabilitation services to patients transferred from acute hospitals with a variety of conditions and rehabilitation needs.
- The major drive to start the initiative started following an assessment conducted in one ward of Clontarf Hospital from December 2023 for one year on Respiratory patients with Chronic Lung diseases both Obstructive and Restrictive in nature not getting proper disease control, leading to frequent exacerbations and most of the times recurrent chest infections, unable to engage in rehabilitation delaying timely discharge to desired destinations and ultimately requiring readmission to Acute settings for further expert interventions & management!
- 97% of the poor disease control were observed to be owing to non-adherence to **PROPER INHALER TECHNIQUES/ NON-COMPLIANCE & IGNORANCE towards Inhaled medications/ DEXTERITY ISSUES/ DECLINING COGNITION/ NOT PRACTISING DEVICE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION** etc.
- In January 2025, Respiratory Nurse along with the Director of Nursing/ Assistant Directors of Nursing explained the service by arranging meetings with the Hospital Consultants/ Registrars/ Physiotherapy Manager and team/ Ward CNMs/ Dietician Manager/ Pharmacy team and other MDT members.
- Further the Respiratory Nurse Service pathway was developed by creating a dedicated Referral Service email account with a referral criteria to define the inclusion & exclusion areas the service involved.
- Reduce disease progression and help with symptom management on an ongoing basis not only while in-patient at Clontarf Hospital but also post discharge from Clontarf aiming to improve their Health Related Quality of Life (HRQoL) with a chronic Respiratory condition.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Following GOLD/GINA 2025 Guidelines, Respiratory Nurse Service-Winter Action Plan aims to promote the Respiratory health of patients admitted to Clontarf Hospital by improving the compliance & to help alleviate risks of recurrent chest infections by:

- Ongoing assessment of Inhaler techniques.
- Providing education on the importance of Reliever inhalers prior to activities requiring greater oxygen demand than usual to enhance lung expansion and better exercise tolerance.
- Provision of Quit Services in terms of Smoking & Vaping Cessation as part of **HSE's MECC (Making Every Contact Count)**.
- Standardisation of Air-driven nebuliser machines for COPD patients to prevent the risks of Hypercapnia and further Type 2 Respiratory Failure
- Vaccination Education- Flu, COVID, Pneumococcal etc.
- To review patients on new Long Term Oxygen Therapy (Home Oxygen) prior to discharge from Clontarf Hospital.
- To arrange LTOT to another care setting for continuity of end-of-life care where comfort care is the only aim of patient care.
- Patients on CPAP/BiPAP machines- their care, comfort and compatibility.
- Signposting to community services e.g., HSE's Quit.ie, COPD & Asthma Adviceline & Action Plan etc. thereby reducing frequent hospitalizations and readmissions, supporting **"HSE's Living Well" program for Adults with long-term health conditions & Sláintecare initiative.**

Intervention

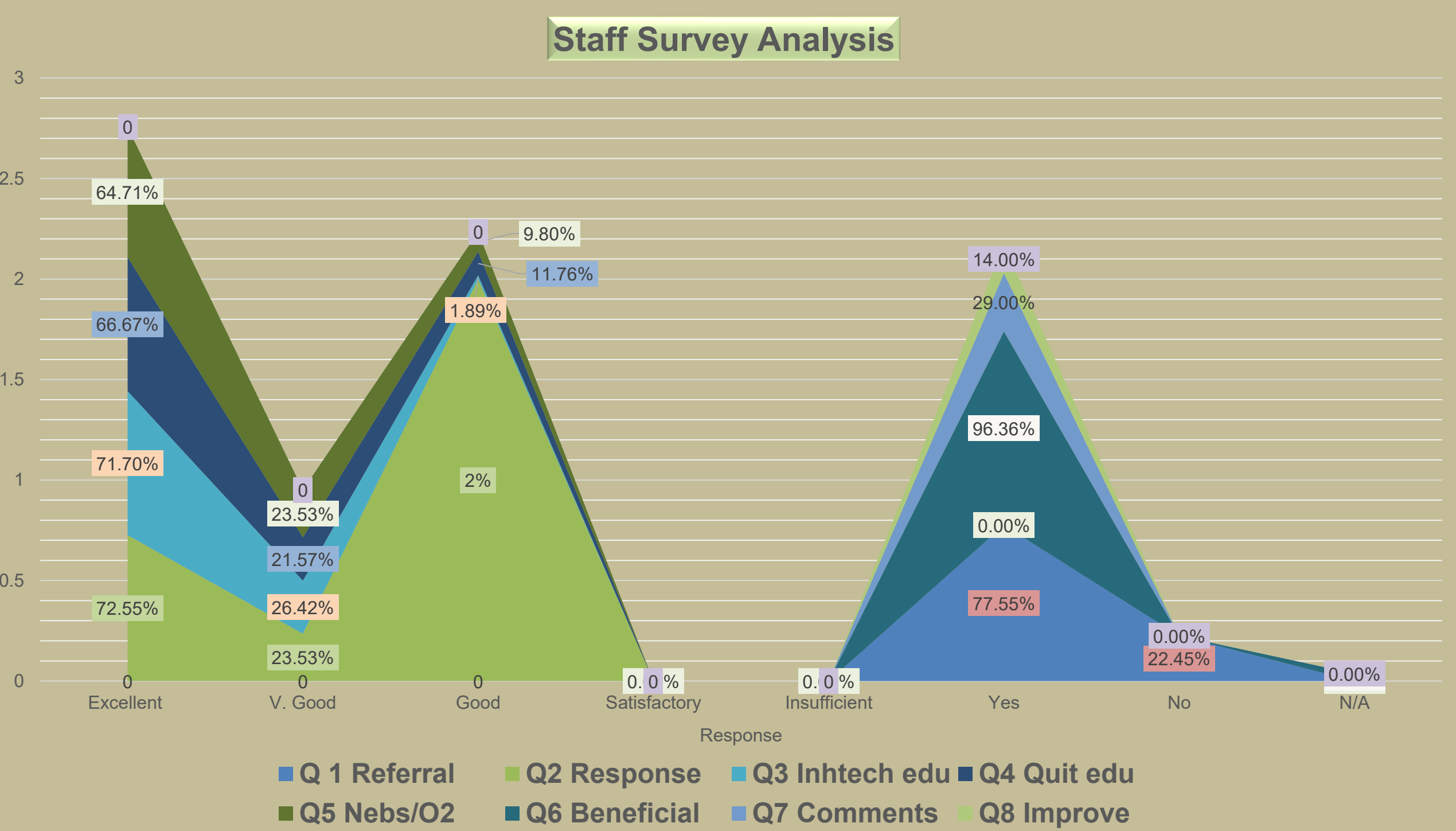
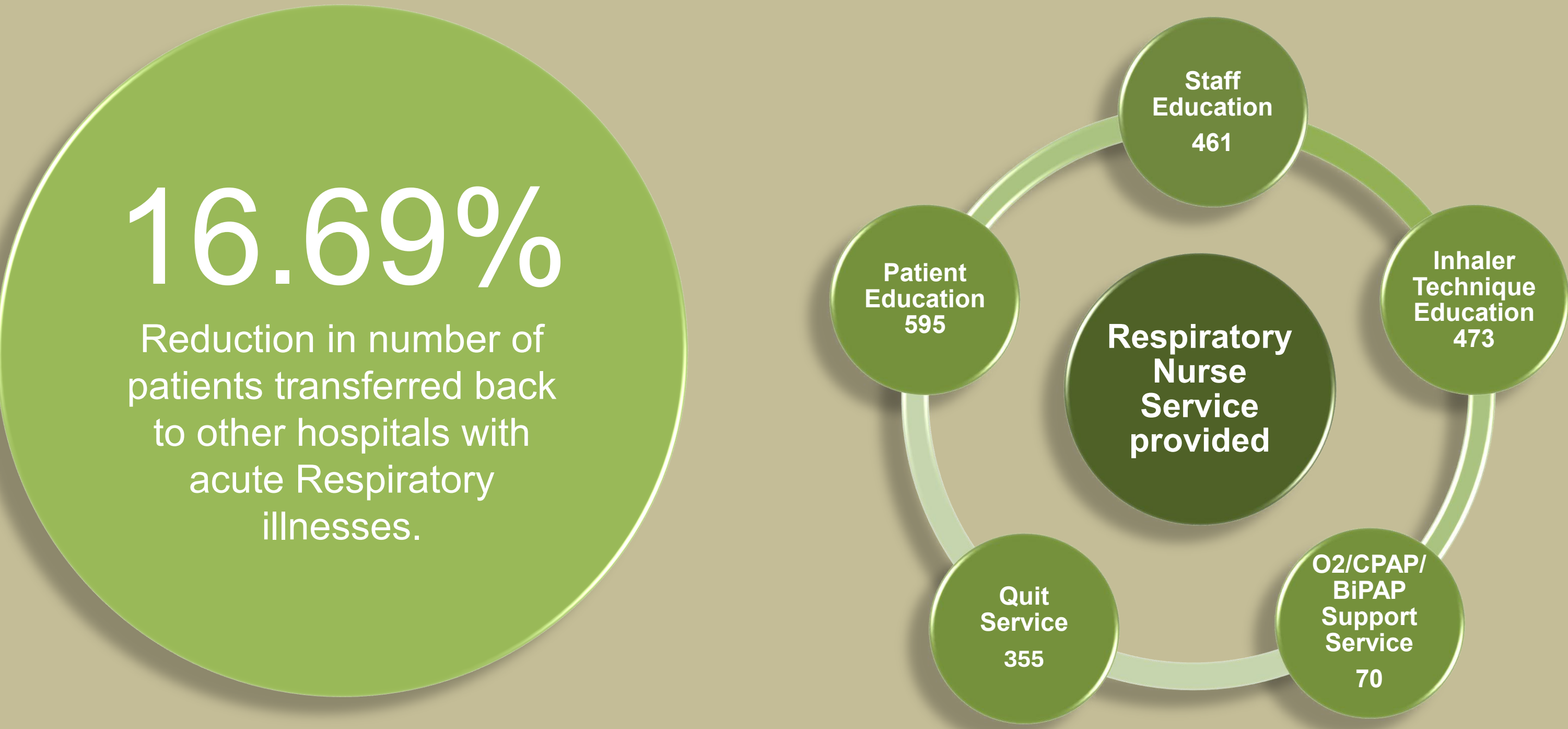


KEY LEARNING

- Funding for 0.5 WTE for Respiratory CNS service in Clontarf Hospital.
- To build formal working relationship with Respiratory CNS both in Acute and Community settings for Respiratory health service improvement in Clontarf Hospital. To formalise governance with Respiratory clinical leads in the department to extend the service provision.
- Achieve 100% staff training in terms of device-specific Inhaler Techniques.
- Air-driven Nebuliser machine use solely for COPD patients (already achieved).
- Collaboration with Medical Reps for more inhaler training device supplies (**successful so far with GSK Ireland limited**).
- To conduct device-specific inhaler technique small group training sessions for patients and staff alike.
- To increase training for staff to support patients on CPAP/BiPAP machines for OSA (Obstructive Sleep Apnoea).
- AirVO machine training by collaborating with Air Liquide Ireland for enhancing staff knowledge and better patient care.



Results



References

- Usmani, O.S. et al. (2018) 'Critical inhaler errors in asthma and COPD: a systematic review of impact on health outcomes', Respiratory Research, 19(1), p. 10.
- Zhong, J. et al. (2025) 'Pulmonary Rehabilitation in Patients with Operable Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer', Journal of Clinical Medicine, 14(3), p. 770.
- Singh, D. et al. (2025) 'GOLD Science Committee recommendations for the use of pre- and post-bronchodilator spirometry for the diagnosis of COPD', The European Respiratory Journal, 65(2), p. 2401603.