

EBCOG Fellowship 2026 in Dublin, Ireland

My name is Laura Dussan Molinos, I am currently in my final year of residency training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Germany. I applied for the EBCOG fellowship in order to gain insight into another healthcare system and to complete part of my residency abroad.

I had the privilege of spending three months at The Coombe University Hospital in Dublin, Ireland, from March to June 2026. During this time, I gained valuable clinical experience in a leading centre for women's health, maternity care, and neonatal medicine. I rotated through a wide range of clinics and departments, developed new skills and worked alongside many experienced healthcare professionals.

EBCOG annually offers three fellowships for European Obstetrics & Gynaecology trainees, funding a three-month placement in an accredited foreign training centre to promote mobility and harmonise training standards across Europe. Applicants must still be in training, secure approval from both home and host institutions, and complete the fellowship within the awarded year. To work as a doctor in Ireland, you must apply for registration with the Irish Medical Council (IMC), the regulatory body for medical practitioners. The process takes around four months and involves a fee, which should be considered when planning your stay.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Master of The Coombe, Professor Michael O'Connell, for approving my fellowship. I am also deeply grateful to Dr. Mei Yee Ng for her support, her guidance through all areas of the department, and for ensuring that I was fully integrated into the team and did not miss any learning opportunities. A special mention goes to my mentor, Dr. Günther von Büнау, for his time, guidance, and support throughout my stay. His presence as a mentor, contact person, and now friend made a significant difference and provided a strong sense of belonging in a new environment.

The Coombe University Hospital is one of Ireland's leading centres for women's health, maternity care, and neonatal medicine. It is part of the HSE (Health Service Executive) and provides care for public, semi-private, and private patients. Each year, the hospital manages more than 10 000 pregnancies, cares for over 1000 newborns in its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and performs more than 8000 surgical procedures. It is also the only EBCOG-accredited maternity hospital in Ireland.

The hospital offers comprehensive services in obstetrics, gynaecology, fertility medicine, fetal medicine, and high-risk pregnancy care, as well as specialised outpatient clinics including endometriosis, menopause, urogynaecology, epilepsy, diabetes in pregnancy, and recurrent miscarriage. In addition, extensive multidisciplinary support is provided through physiotherapy, mental health services, bereavement care, dietetics and social work. As a major teaching hospital, The Coombe also plays an important role in postgraduate medical education and clinical training in Ireland.

Given my clinical interests, I spent most of my time in the Feto-Maternal Centre, with a particular focus on the Ultrasound Department. Here, I observed a different but highly efficient model of care compared to Germany. Advanced ultrasound examinations, including Doppler studies, growth scans, anatomy and detailed anomaly scans, are primarily performed by specially trained midwives rather than doctors. To qualify, midwives first complete their midwifery degree and then undertake an additional Master's programme in ultrasound scanning, which lasts around 18 months. This structured training pathway results in a high level of expertise and autonomy in fetal imaging.

I would like to express my special gratitude to all the midwives in the Ultrasound Department for their excellent teaching, their trust, and the many practical tips they shared with me throughout my placement. As ultrasound examinations are mainly performed by doctors in Germany, I was able to gain an incredible amount of knowledge from their expertise and experience in fetal imaging.



Figure 1 Sonographers at The Coomb and me

When comparing Obstetrics and Gynaecology training systems, several differences between Germany and Ireland become evident. In Germany, specialist training usually lasts around five years, and if a hospital holds full training accreditation, the entire residency can be completed within one institution, allowing for continuity and relatively stable working and personal conditions.

In Ireland, training is longer, lasting approximately eight years, and is divided into multiple stages with national application processes. Trainees rotate regularly between different hospitals across the country, usually every 6–12 months depending on training requirements and service needs. While this provides broad clinical exposure across various settings, it also requires frequent relocation, which can present challenges for personal continuity, long-term planning and family life.

During my placement, I was involved in daily clinical work, which allowed me to gain a wide range of practical skills and technical knowledge. The consistently high standard of professionalism and patient care I witnessed was truly inspiring and has had a lasting impact on my clinical approach.

Another highlight of my fellowship was the well-structured postgraduate education and teaching programme at The Coombe University Hospital. Regular teaching sessions were integrated into the weekly routine, creating a strong culture of continuous learning and shared knowledge. The programme included consultant-led teaching sessions on Obstetrics and Gynaecology topics, weekly CTG and perinatal meetings, morbidity and mortality discussions, labour ward skills teaching, and a weekly journal club. These sessions provided an excellent opportunity for trainees, consultants, and multidisciplinary team members to discuss clinical cases, reflect on practice, and learn together in a collaborative environment.

Table 1 Weekly teaching lessons

Day	Time	Teaching
Monday	07:30–08:00	Teaching Session by Consultant (Obstetrics & Gynaecology topics)
Tuesday	07:30–08:00	CTG Meeting
Wednesday	07:30–08:00	Perinatal Meeting
Thursday	08:00-8:30 Once a month	Perinatal Morbidity & Mortality Meeting / Labour Ward Skills Teaching
Friday	07:30–08:00	Journal Club

Beyond my clinical experience, my time in Ireland was also shaped by many valuable personal and cultural experiences. Thanks to several previous exchange opportunities through ENTOG, I already knew some colleagues in Dublin before starting my fellowship.

This made my transition much smoother and allowed existing acquaintances to develop into lasting friendships.

During my stay, I also joined the Irish Hiking Society, which gave me the opportunity to explore the beautiful Irish landscapes every weekend together with people from many different countries and backgrounds. These hikes were a wonderful way to discover Ireland beyond the hospital environment, while learning more about local culture and meeting inspiring people from around the world.

Overall, this fellowship has been a defining experience in both my professional and personal development. It broadened my clinical perspective, strengthened my motivation for my future career in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and showed me the great value of international exchange. I would highly recommend this fellowship to all trainees, as it offers a unique opportunity to grow not only as a doctor but also as a person.

To conclude I would like to thank EBCOG and ENTOG for giving me the opportunity to take part in this European fellowship in 2026. These three months have been extremely valuable and I will carry many of the skills, memories and insights gained into my future clinical practice. I am very grateful for this initiative and hope that this excellent programme will continue to offer similar opportunities to future trainees.

Dr. med Laura Dussan Molinos