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**IAEM issues Commentary on Mental Health Act 2001 and its
implications for Emergency Departments**

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine (IAEM) has today issued a detailed commentary on the implications of the recent enactment of the Mental Health Act 2001 that came into force on 1st November 2006. The Association is concerned that in spite of the long lead-in time from the date that this legislation was passed by the Dail to its implementation, the opportunity to significantly improve the infrastructure for Psychiatric healthcare has not been taken. In particular there are significant deficiencies in the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services which have been the focus of this week's *Prime Time Investigates* programme.

IAEM is very concerned that unless the HSE acts immediately to address these deficiencies, emergency Psychiatric healthcare provision for this group is going to be seriously substandard, notwithstanding the intentions of the Act. Furthermore the lack of appropriate supporting infrastructure is going to mean additional difficulties for already overstretched Emergency Departments as well as sub-optimal treatment of this vulnerable group. The Association calls on the HSE to urgently address these glaring deficiencies.

A copy of the commentary is available on the Statements section of the IAEM website.