

15th December 2009

IAEM welcomes Budget decision not to increase “A&E” Statutory Charge

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine welcomes the decision of the Minister for Finance, Mr Brian Lenihan TD, not to raise the mis-titled “Accident and Emergency” Statutory Charge in last Wednesday’s budget. The Association has previously argued that the Department of Health and Children’s policy of levying patients an increasing charge to attend Ireland’s Emergency Departments is not only bad policy, it is also clinically inappropriate.

The Association noted with considerable concern the recommendation in the *Report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes* (‘*An Bord Snip Nua*’ / the McCarthy Report) that the charge be further increased. Hopefully the voice of reason will be listened to and the recommendation to increase the charge based on naïve economic rather than medical considerations will be rejected.

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