

31st March 2011

IAEM welcomes new Minister's commitment to address the ongoing travesty of Emergency Department overcrowding

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine warmly welcomes the unambiguous commitment given by the new Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly TD that the national travesty of ongoing Emergency Department (ED) overcrowding with admitted inpatients (inpatient boarders) will finally be addressed. His commitment that in the future we will not have to endure the sight of large numbers of admitted inpatients waiting for a hospital bed, as currently occurs, is to be welcomed by patients, their relatives and the ED staff caring for them, both medical and nursing.

Given the incontrovertible evidence of harm that results from ED overcrowding, the earlier that progress is made the better for all, so that avoidable morbidity and mortality does not continue.

While the Association recognises that there have been previous unfulfilled commitments to address this problem, it is confident that the direct intervention and oversight of the Minister can bear fruit in dealing with what has been an intractable problem in the Irish Health Service but manifested in the country's EDs. It, more than any other issue, continues to limit the capacity of EDs to provide the high standard of care that all our patients deserve.

The IAEM will continue to advocate that **no** patient should have to wait more than 6 hours to be admitted to an in-patient bed from arrival to an ED when an admission to hospital is indicated. The IAEM 10 point plan for any potential government launched during the recent General Election Campaign is available at http://www.iaem.ie/images/stories/iaem/press_releases/2011/iaem_general_election_campaign_2011-ten_point_plan_090211.pdf

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