

5th March 2018

IAEM lauds exceptional efforts made by Emergency Department staff during recent extreme weather

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine recognises the enormous efforts made by staff working in Ireland's 29 Emergency Departments (EDs) to ensure that they continued to provide emergency services to the public during the recent severe weather. The combination of *the Beast from the East* and Storm Emma brought with it weather not seen for a generation and made any kind of travel, particularly in the East and South of the country, very dangerous. It is remarkable therefore that the EDs serving the parts of the country hardest hit managed to continue to function in spite of the near impossibility of travel. The Association thanks the staff concerned for their herculean efforts. This feat was achieved by a variety of means including shift swapping, staff sleeping in hospitals and local hotels and some walking long distances to make it to work in spite of treacherous conditions underfoot. The contribution made by members of the local community as well as county and national services in assisting staff to get to work cannot be underestimated and the Irish public should be extremely grateful to the many people who so willingly went the extra mile. At a time when EDs are crowded with admitted hospital inpatients and are often criticised for the service they offer as a consequence (in spite of the fact that the presence of admitted inpatients on trolleys is due to circumstances outside of EDs' control) it is important to recognise the commitment and professionalism of the nursing, medical and other staff that work in EDs which came to the fore during this very difficult period.

It seems likely that many patients in the worst affected areas will have injuries or illnesses which they have been unable to receive treatment for during the recent severe weather. It is likely therefore that this coming week will be particularly busy with patients attending EDs as a result. We can anticipate therefore that EDs will be very busy and there will be delays for patients in receiving treatment, particularly for those with a lower clinical priority.

The Association also acknowledges the sterling efforts of our pre-hospital care colleagues in continuing to provide an excellent service during such difficult time at not-insignificant risks to themselves.

President:

Dr. C. Emily O'Connor
MRCP, FRCEM
Consultant in Emergency Medicine.
Connolly Hospital,
Blanchardstown, Dublin
D15 X40D Ireland.
Tel: +353 1 646 6250
Fax: +353 1 646 6286

Secretary:

Mr. M. Ashraf Butt
FRCSI, Dip IMC (RCSEd), FRCSEd (A&E), EMDM
Consultant in Emergency Medicine.
Cavan General Hospital,
Lisdarn, Cavan
H12 Y7W1 Ireland.
Tel: +353 49 437 6401
Fax: +353 49 437 6468

Treasurer:

Dr. Sinead O'Gorman
MMedSci, DCH, FRCSI, FACEM, FRCEM
Consultant in Emergency Medicine.
Letterkenny University Hospital,
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
F91 AE82 Ireland.
Tel: +353 74 912 3744
Fax: +353 74 912 3797