

14th October 2020

IAEM celebrates landmark event for Emergency Nursing

Tomorrow (15th October), a webinar hosted by the national [Emergency Medicine Programme](#) (EMP) will celebrate 50 years since the first post-graduate certificate course in Emergency Nursing took place at Dublin's Mater Misericordiae Hospital*. It is particularly appropriate this event takes place in 2020, the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth, a bicentenary which prompted the World Health Organization (WHO) to designate 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. Since the inaugural course, many hospitals have developed post-registration courses in Emergency Nursing. These courses have evolved to meet the changing needs of patients attending Emergency Departments (EDs) and are now co-ordinated by the Higher Education Institutes. They are at Level 9 (Higher Diploma level) on the National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland (NFQ IE) scale.

Over the ensuing half century, Emergency Nursing has gone from strength to strength and although the COVID-19 pandemic has restricted the kind of celebration possible to mark this very important occasion, the event has been marked by a [letter of appreciation](#) from Uachtarán na hÉireann, Mr. Michael D. Higgins. This letter reflects the high esteem that ED nurses are held in by the Irish public, an esteem which has no doubt been elevated further by the efforts of EDs (and those that staff them) to cope with the worldwide pandemic and yet continue to provide non-COVID emergency care.

Perhaps, above all other branches of medicine and healthcare in general, the relationship between doctors in Emergency Medicine and ED nurses is the closest of all. There is incredibly strong teamwork in EDs which makes the care provided to patients (often at potentially the worst time of their lives) as good as it is, even if this care is often delivered in overcrowded noisy environments with poor infrastructure. The Association applauds the enormous work done by our nursing colleagues who work in Ireland's 29 EDs and 11 Injury Units and notes the many strides that have been taken by Emergency nurses to further professionalise their role and contribute enormously to improvements in patient outcomes from conditions which would previously have been regarded as either unsurvivable or likely to result in long-term disability.

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Many of the ground-breaking developments that EMP has led out on (the Irish Children's Triage System; the Emergency Medicine Early Warning System; Mental Health Triage Tool to name but a few) have had very significant input from ED nurses and are a testament to their commitment to improving patient care. The Association looks forward to Emergency Nursing continuing in our shared quest to provide the best possible emergency care across the whole Irish Emergency Care System.

* Now titled Mater Misericordiae University Hospital