



Fresh HSE cuts hit headlines

The INMO made a submission to the Oireachtas Health Committee on new HSE proposals for more health cuts. **Ann Keating** reports

THE *Irish Daily Mail* (June 18) reported on a submission made by the INMO to the Oireachtas Health Committee in June on the latest proposals from the HSE under the Haddington Road Agreement in an article – **Nurses’ bosses told to cut spending or else, says INMO.**

“Nursing directors in healthcare units across the country have been told to implement plans for further health cuts or they may be responsible for the closure of their facilities, the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation has claimed.

“Union leader Liam Doran told TDs yesterday he was aware of comments made to nursing directors while seeking feedback on what he said was an extra €80 million of cuts sought by the HSE. The INMO has said the HSE is looking to implement the extra cuts on top of €212 million in cutbacks.

“These cuts are due to be achieved by a further reduction in staffing, a reduction in the ‘skill mix’ and by filling nursing vacancies with newly graduated nurses or interns. Mr Doran said the ‘skill mix’ was to change to a ratio of 40 ‘nursing’ for every 60 healthcare assistants. He said the previous agreed policy under the Haddington Road Agreement was a 50:50 mix.

“As of today the INMO... has not received any commitment to engage in discussions on this pivotal issue,” he told the Oireachtas health committee. The implementation of this measure has the effect of removing from nursing directors all the autonomy they need to ensure safety... He also said that nursing directors were told they would lose their power to recruit agency staff if they did not comply with the cost-saving diktats.”

University Hospital Limerick

The *Limerick Leader* (June 14) reported on the HIQA report on University Hospital, Limerick under a headline – **INMO: Report must be a watershed for ED overcrowding.** “Nurses are ‘acutely con-

cerned’ about the management response to ‘specific clinical incidents’ in recent months, the INMO’s Mary Fogarty has said.

“Responding to the HIQA report which highlights “unacceptable” risks to patients in the overcrowded unit, the Limerick representative of the nurses union said that the review must mean the issues continually raised by the INMO in recent years are finally dealt with. And no amount of reorganisation of services will compensate for the extra resources the INMO believes the A&E needs.

“It is imperative that this HIQA report marks a significant turning point in the standards of services available to patients presenting to hospitals in the group, Ms Fogarty said. This report confirms the INMO stance, in recent years, that the clinical governance arrangements and staffing levels in Limerick Hospital, are inadequate to meet the needs of the patients attending.”

According to Ms Fogarty: “This lack of proper clinical governance, and overcrowding, are also significant causes of stress to our members whose first priority, every day at work, is the safety of patients... This Organisation remains acutely concerned about the response of management to specific clinical incidents that have occurred in recent months and these must be addressed and learned from as part of the implementation of the recommendations within this HIQA report.

“The INMO will be looking for an immediate meeting with local and national management in the HSE, demanding full implementation, together with the necessary resources, so that all of the actions and shortcomings in this report are implemented and addressed without delay,” Ms Fogarty said.

‘Bring Back Our Girls’

On June 13 the *Irish Independent* gave space to a story on an INMO protest – **Little girl joins nurses’ Nigeria vigil.**

“The plight of 276 kidnapped schoolgirls was remembered during a protest outside the Nigerian embassy in Dublin yesterday.

“Around 25 nurses from the International Section of the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO), wore T-shirts and held signs that read ‘Bring Back Our Girls’, before handing in a letter to the Nigerian ambassador to Ireland, Felix Yusufu.

“Schoolgirl Isoken Ugiagbe (7), who was picking up a new passport with her dad, also joined in. Chairperson of the International Section of the INMO, Ibukun Oyedele, said: “There is strength in numbers, and people around the world will hear our voices. We pray that they can help facilitate the quick release of our girls.”

Survey on bullying

Nurses team up with researchers to study extent of bullying in workplace, according to a headline in the *Irish Examiner* (June 3).

“The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation has teamed up with NUI Galway and the National College of Ireland to study the extent of bullying experienced by its members at work. Bullying in the workplace is intended to be addressed through the HSE’s Dignity at Work policy that came into operation in 2004. Yet, according to the INMO, academic and practitioner evidence suggests that nurses and midwives working in Ireland continue frequently to experience workplace bullying.

“It is unfortunate that INMO members are still reporting high levels of allegations of bullying in the workplace, said INMO director of industrial relations Phil Ni Sheaghda yesterday as the study was launched at the organisation’s headquarters in Dublin.”

*Ann Keating is the INMO media relations officer
email: annkeating@inmo.ie*