

On the ground with the president



Graduate pay campaign

OUR campaign against the graduate nurses' pay cut continued this month, beginning on February 1, with a protest at HSE HQ, Dr Steeven's Hospital. This date was significant as it was supposed to be the closing date for the 'initiative', which has now been extended indefinitely. We had a great turnout at the demonstration, which saw Dara Ann O'Malley, INMO student officer, and several graduates handing in a letter and petition to Tony O'Brien, director general of the HSE.



I recently spotted a black and white photograph on the wall of a colleague's office and realised that it was a picture of Main Street, Kilkenny in 1980, when nurses and midwives marched against hospital overcrowding and pay. History is now repeating itself. It took time, solidarity and resilience to win past campaigns – we won them and we will win again. Don't feel that all is lost if we do not get an instant reaction. We must stand firm, as nursing graduates have done in successfully boycotting these underpaid jobs. I encourage midwifery, intellectual disability and psychiatric graduates to hold firm and support their colleagues, by maintaining the boycott now that the government's recruitment programme targets their disciplines.

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Lobbying of TDs

OUR lobbying of TDs continued this month with numerous meetings with individual TDs and political parties. It has not been easy to get their attention, but persistence pays off. It's important to maintain the pressure on TDs at a local and national level. We aim to influence opinion on the graduate nurse pay initiative and the government's position on premium pay and allowances. Updates on these issues will be emailed regularly to INMO reps and posted at www.inmo.ie. Please inform yourself with the facts directly from the INMO and not the media.

In the coming weeks, members will be asked to take part in the 24/7 Frontline Services Alliance meetings and rallies, similar to the national rally of the Alliance in Dublin last month. Frontline workers have lost at least 14% of their salary. It is unfair and inequitable to expect a relatively small number of workers, who work unsocial hours, to take an additional pay cut of at least 10.6%. We work while others sleep or enjoy important holidays with their families. We work 24/7, 365 days a year, caring for the elderly, the sick and the disabled. Our Gardaí, prison service, ambulance and fire fighter colleagues protect us daily by merely turning up for work. Let us not underestimate our value to society. Your pay is well-deserved and worth fighting for, so please get involved in the above campaigns and show that you are willing to fight for what you deserve.

ICTU march

I LED and addressed the ICTU anti-austerity march in Waterford on February 9, which received a great turn out, with almost 10,000 people marching for the common cause. It was a pleasure to speak at the rally about our graduate nurses who are a great example of unity. There is much admiration in our communities for what our graduates have achieved by maintaining the boycott of the recruitment drive.

Suicide prevention

ON FEBRUARY 6, Tom Ryan and I attended a meeting with Gerry Raleigh, director of the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP). This meeting was prompted by a motion at our last conference on suicide prevention.

We hope to set up training programmes in conjunction with NOSP to provide frontline staff with skills to aid early intervention and detection of those at risk. If you require information on suicide prevention go to: www.nosp.ie

Oireachtas committee

ON FEBRUARY 24, Liam Doran, INMO general secretary, Elizabeth Adams, INMO director of the professional development centre of the INMO, Geraldine Talty, INMO first vice president, James Geoghegan, INMO second vice president and myself, presented the our survey on staffing levels to the Oireachtas Health Committee. This independent survey was completed by Dr Keith Hurst. The presentation, which was put together by Elizabeth Adams, is available at www.inmo.ie

Retired Section

On February 7 the Retired Nurse and Midwives Section held its AGM at INMO HQ. I would like to thank all members of this most active section for their very warm reception. It is inspiring to meet a group of people who are still so active in the Organisation. They have fought many battles, and through their dedication we achieved so much over the years. I wish them all long, healthy and happy retirements.

Get in touch

You can contact me at the INMO headquarters at Tel: 01 6640 600, through the president's corner on www.inmo.ie or by email to: president@inmo.ie

Claire