

On the ground with the president



Special delegate conference

IT GAVE me great pleasure to welcome delegates to our special delegate conference which was held in Croke Park recently. There was a great turnout at the meeting, considering the pressure that exists in members' workplaces every day, and I would like to thank all who attended. It was greatly appreciated.

During my address to the conference, I spoke about a major initiative with regard to proper, appropriate and adequate staffing levels. This campaign will be an absolute priority of the Organisation. The staffing of any ward, unit or service cannot be left to invisible, distant and uninformed lay managers who know nothing about dependency, acuity or patient need and are only fixated on the issue of balancing books.

We must learn from our own experiences, and international experiences, in relation to the growing number of adverse incidents, and ensure that positive change comes. The INMO believes this must involve empowering nurses and midwives to determine what is safe. We will be taking this campaign to all stakeholders in the health service and to policy makers.

I am delighted to announce that from January members' fees will decrease. We are also expanding our facilities and have purchased the old Richmond Hospital adjacent to INMO HQ to be used as an education and conference centre. (See pages 16-17)

Legacy project

THE National Women's Council of Ireland initiated the Legacy Project with the aim of challenging clichéd mainstream representations of women and work. I attended the launch of the 'Still, We Work' exhibition along with Mark Loughrey and Executive Council members Allison O'Connell and Noreen Watts. This exhibition, which is a result of the Legacy Project, was held in the Gallery of Photography in Temple Bar. It focused on how women's work contributes to society and is often invisible. The event featured seven testimonials from INMO members including myself, Eileen Lawrence, Noreen Watts, Allison O'Connell and Mark Loughrey, and was a very enjoyable event. (See page 19)



Claire Mahon and her daughter, Aoife, at the 'Still, We Work' exhibition in the Photography Gallery in Dublin

Joint midwifery conference

I RECENTLY opened the INMO/RCM All Ireland Midwifery Conference. The all-Ireland dimension to this conference makes it a very important annual event and is a perfect example of our two organisations working closely together to enhance our mutual knowledge, skills and competence in the interests of mothers and infants in Ireland.

The theme of the conference was 'Maternity care, everyone's affair – Practices, partnerships, policies and possibilities' which, regardless of where you work, has never been more relevant than now as we strive to ensure safe care through safe practice, despite decreased resources and the ever-increasing pressures on services.

Congratulations the organising committee on this excellent conference and thank them for their continued hard work on behalf of the Organisation and its members.

Ruhama

I ATTENDED a recent seminar by Ruhama, whom we worked closely with on the 'Turn off the Red Light' campaign. The non-profit organisation works with women affected by prostitution, offering a broad range of services and supports.

The seminar on 'Pathways through Prostitution' updated us on current research from Ireland and the UK, including a poignant discussion from Mia De Faoite, an inspirational speaker and survivor of prostitution and drug addiction. She is currently a student of philosophy at NUI Galway and an activist against prostitution and sex trafficking. She firmly believes that the legislation recommended by the Oireachtas Justice Committee should be passed into law.

Sadly, Ruhama's funding has been cut. To make a donation or indeed become a volunteer, contact them via their website at www.ruhama.ie

Happy Christmas



IT IS hard to believe that Christmas is upon us already. I extend my warmest wishes for the festive season to you all. Many of you will be working, providing excellent care on the frontline, but I do hope that you get some time out for yourselves to be with your families and loved ones.

I thank all INMO reps, branch and section officers who work voluntarily on behalf of the Organisation. This work is much appreciated and it certainly has been a very busy year for us all. Happy Christmas!

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