

# Ready to 'role'



Newly appointed student and new graduate officer, **Dean Flanagan**, is determined to make a difference in his role with the INMO

MY NAME is Dean Flanagan. I'm a native of Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare, and I will be taking over the duties of Dara Ann O'Malley as the student and new graduate officer of the INMO. I would like to take this opportunity to say 'hello' to all new graduates, current students and the new nursing and midwifery students who are entering college this month. I would also like to thank Dara Ann for all of her hard work over the last two years.

I am a general trained nurse and did my training at St Angela's in Sligo. I was a member of the student union in my third year of college and during this time I organised various local marches against tuition fees and against the introduction of the internship pay cuts.

I was determined during my internship year not to become another statistic of emigration, and my first staff nurse post was at the Millrace Nursing Home in Co Galway for five months. From there, I moved back to Sligo Regional Hospital and since returning to work where I trained, I have worked in the emergency department, medical wards, the ear, nose and throat department, and the ophthalmic ward over a period of two years.

It is very clear to see that, at this moment in time, our profession is being undermined, undervalued and overstretched and our youngest colleagues get hit time and time again. All of you who have been involved in any of the recent protests and demonstrations have shown such resilience and dedication to your chosen profession, despite all of the obstacles that have been put in your way.

This is where I want to help you. I hope that by the end of my term the students

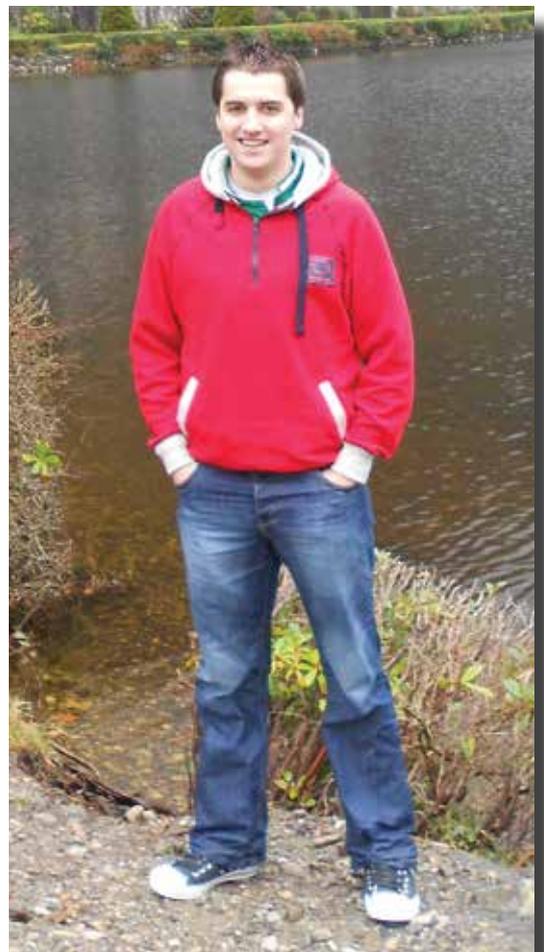
and new graduates will still have that fight, that hunger and that love for their profession.

However, I also know that this is no easy task as we enter a new chapter of uncertainty with the government's new graduate scheme. I cannot tell you how I will proceed with this issue until we receive more information, but I hope to ensure that what you have lost in monetary terms will be offset by the government's investment in the new educational component of its graduate initiative.

I hope to work closely with the Student Section of the INMO and the three youth forums of the INMO around Ireland. It was at the Western Youth Forum meetings that I learned how the union works for its students and members, how issues are raised and discussed, but most importantly, how it offers a platform on which issues affecting younger nurses and midwives can be discussed. I plan to work to encourage more students and new graduates to attend these meetings.

Once I have found my feet in my new role as student and new graduate officer of the INMO, I hope to visit every university and hospital where students and new graduates are studying or working, and meet you all face to face. I will be available to offer help and advice on whatever issues or problems you may be experiencing in your studies or job.

I intend to help those nurses and mid-



wives who feel that they have no other choice but to emigrate by keeping in touch with them and hopefully providing an email service of news updates from Ireland, including job opportunities.

I am so excited to have this opportunity to work for you and I will strive to be available to you during your studies and placements as a student, or during your work as a newly qualified nurse.