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National

HMI hosts second national Conference in Dublin

To an audience of almost 300 delegates, conference speakers addressed issues of policy, assessed the experience of health service managers and challenged long held beliefs and mindsets about how health services in Ireland are delivered.

HMI President, Mr. Richard Dooley opened the event urging that health managers must “move away from the control paradigm that has evolved and that is in danger of making technocrats of people who joined the health services primarily to foster positive health strategies and deliver positive health outcomes to the communities that we serve”.

Dooley stressed the challenging and changing situation of the Irish healthcare system, “We are in our fourth year of successive and extensive budget cuts which had seen almost two billion euro removed from our funding base with a loss of almost 5,000 staff over the same period.” He explained the continued need for structure and strong management of the healthcare delivery system, with clearly defined relationships to ensure an efficient, inclusive and responsive system. Emphasis was placed on the relationship between the state and healthcare managers and the need for the formalisation and professionalization of health service management.

Health minister Dr. James Reilly, T.D was also present at the conference and addressed the crowd. His focus was on the training and support of health managers, “We have never sufficiently valued strong leadership in the health services. These skills must be nurtured, encouraged and, if necessary, taught to our managers. I know that good work is already under way in training and developing managers which is a very positive development.”

The Minister emphasised the key role of the health manager, believing that good organisation and good management saved lives in the health services and stressed that it should be health managers who should drive the culture of change in the health system in both the short and medium term.

In recognition of the precarious situation of healthcare in Ireland, Dr. Reilly said that the health service has no choice but to do better with less and spoke of increased patient involvement in care. He concluded by saying, “We stand at the cusp of an enormous and unprecedented task and you as Managers are at the sharp end of it.”

Other highlights in the packed programme included a significant address from Dr. Ambrose McLoughlin, Secretary General of the Department of Health. McLoughlin assured the HMI and health managers of the full support of the Department for the professional development of managers.

“The competence of managers is as important as the competence of clinicians. The development and maintenance of managers’ competence and the development of your capabilities is something about which, as Secretary General, I feel very strongly.”

For more information on the conference and the HMI in general, please visit: www.hmi.ie

EHL becomes FHL, marketing a change in governance and focus

The Ententes Hopitaux Luxembourgeois has rebranded as the Federation des Hopitaux Luxembourgeois to mark its new governance and focus on mutualisation.

During their general assembly on the 22nd May 2012, the EHL confirmed a change in governance. For the past two years the EHL debated the issue and decided that the association must consider in a better way all the actors in the hospital, defending the interests of the hospital and also the hospital managers. Including all actors in the hospital is not without its complications. Medical doctors, for example, are independent workers and so not part of the decision-making structure of the hospital. They are, however, key actors in the sector and need to be included in meetings and work with managers. There are many actors with specific interests and lobbies. For this reason the new structure was developed with three platforms:

1. Medical directors
2. Nurse directors
3. Administration and financial directors

The executive committee remains but there is a new board to work between the committee and the three platforms. The idea is to be more active: pro-active and reactive and to improve working standards by considering the activities and interests of the different actors in the hospital.

The current economic climate has shown that hospitals and associations must be more efficient and must work together. Projects of politicians, of stakeholders health insurance companies must be taken into consideration and everyone must work together by mutualisation. This will include discussion on the level of logistic activity but also for core business- medical services. One current project is the creation of a new association structures for IT in hospitals with structures for laboratory and purchasing to follow.

For more information, please visit: www.fhlux.lu (N.B. The new Website is under construction and will be accessible in December 2012)

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