

## **CHANGING TIMES:**

On March 1<sup>st</sup> the Children Detention Schools in Dublin (Trinity House, Oberstown Boys & Girls, Finglas) ended an era as part of the Department of Education and Science and became part of the new Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS). St. Joseph's, Clonmel also ceased operating as a detention school on the same day and became part of the HSE. We wish the new services well in the future.

## **Ministers Update:**

Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, speaking at the Council launch said “ This is the first time that health and social care professionals in Ireland will be regulated under statute and it is a very significant step in our drive towards ensuring high standards of patient safety. The establishment of the Health and Social care Professionals Council demonstrates my commitment to ensuring that professionals are well regulated in the interests of patient safety and best practice and also to the benefit of the professionals themselves.

The Act which provides the legal basis for the establishment of the Council is a groundbreaking piece of legislation. The Act establishes in law for the first time the principle of non - professionals being in the majority on a regulatory body. I am very pleased to say that this principle of non professionals being in the majority is to be carried through to other regulatory bodies and is reflected in the draft legislation regulating medical practitioners and pharmacists which I am currently bringing through the Oireachtas.

The views expressed in The Link are not necessarily those of the IASCW and should not be taken as



# **The Link**

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## **ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The 2007 IASCW conference, held in Limerick on February 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, was very successful. With speakers from Ireland (North & South), Sweden and USA there was no shortage of diverse and interesting views. The workshops were well attended and the SNAPSHOT presentations got a very positive response. These were 5 minute presentations given by a number of delegates from around the country. Minister for Children, Brian Lenihan, in what was probably his last address to an IASCW audience as Minister for Children, concentrated on the proposed referendum on the rights of the child. The NOVUS Ireland award was presented to Fr Peter McVerry and DIT launched a publication entitled “ In a Changing Ireland has Social Care Practice left Religious and Spiritual Values Behind?” As always, acquaintances were renewed, ideas exchanged and, hopefully, the conference theme “Looking Back to Go Forward” was realised. Again, thanks to Rainbow Children's Services for their support and all those who worked to make the conference a success. IASCW President, Phil McFadden informed delegates in his closing address that the 2008 conference will take place in Waterford in February of next year. Preparations for this are now underway and members will get initial details in due course.

## ***SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE:***

The Health Bill 2006 was published on December 14<sup>th</sup> last. It will, when enacted, put the SSI on a statutory footing through the establishment of the Office of the Chief Inspector of Social Services. This will mean the SSI becoming part of the new Health Information & Quality Authority (HIQA) which will be responsible for driving and advocating quality and safety, not only in the area of children's services, but across the entire health and social services in Ireland on behalf of the citizen. As part of the new Authority the role of the SSI will be expanded to inspect and register residential services, both statutory and non statutory, for people with disabilities and older people, in addition to children's services. The SSI will also monitor the delivery by the HSE of foster care services, the quality of day care services older people and people with a disability, the scheme for boarding out of older people and the HSE's pre school inspection system. Michelle Clarke, who has been the SSI Chief Inspector up to now, will be changing her role within the Office of the Chief Inspector.

## ***COUNTDOWN CARDS:***

Each member should have received their COUNTDOWN discount card for 2007 by now. If you have not received yours contact Lorraine Ryan at 087-9708426.

## ***WEBSITE FOR IASCW***

The IASCW website is now a reality. Log on at

[www.iascw.ie](http://www.iascw.ie)

Email is [info@iascw.ie](mailto:info@iascw.ie)

Phone number 087-9708426

Or Post

12, Manorfield Walk, Clonee, Dublin 15.



## ***REGISTRATION***

On March 26<sup>th</sup> Finbarr Flood chaired the first meeting of the Health & Social Care Professionals Council. This was the first step toward realising the long awaited process that will ultimately see the Registration of care workers. This initial meeting allowed those on the council to meet for the first time and exchange views. Further regular meetings are scheduled with a view to getting the actual registration boards established so that the process can then move forward. David Power, a member of the IASCW Executive represents the association on the Council and we will be bringing members regular feedback from David on these very important proceedings. One of the aspects of the proposed process is where current child care workers who may not be trained as social care workers will find themselves. One thing does seem certain. There will have to be agreement on the method whereby these will be absorbed into the registration process under section 91 of the Health & Social Care Professionals Act. Comparisons have, quite validly, been made between such workers and the situation that pertained in the past to teachers and nurses who were registered on the basis of their experience and relevant qualifications as nurses and teachers up to the time of registration.

## ***SYMPATHY***

MONA HEARN R.I.P.: Social care training in Ireland owes much to Dr. Mona Hearn who died in January of this year. Mona was at the forefront in establishing social care training in the mid 1970s in Cathal Brugha St. College of Catering, Dublin. This was the beginning of what was to emerge as training as provided now by DIT. A more elaborate picture of Mona's role and achievements will, deservedly, be included in the next edition of CURAM due out in June.