

Embargo & Related Issues

As this newsletter goes to print it is more obvious than ever that there is unprecedented levels of frustration among social care workers at all levels at the effect the embargo is having on morale and work performance. The needs of the most vulnerable in all sections of society are clearly not being met. The HSE, by its own admission in the latest review (HSE Review of Adequacy of Child / Family Services 2005) just published, identified significant gaps particularly in the numbers of children at risk. If that was the case in 2005 we can only imagine what it is three years later with the impact of the embargo!

As you are probably aware the Health & Welfare division of IMPACT is currently balloting members seeking a mandate for industrial action. The union's view is that "current HSE and health service policies are damaging services and attacking working conditions." It further believes that staff and the public's confidence must be restored in the health service; existing services must be defended; the recruitment restrictions must be removed and services must be improved in line with legislative and policy commitments.

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The Link

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Membership Good News

Welcome to the April edition of The Link. A number of important developments have taken place since you last edition of CURAM reached you in December. Various proposals have been considered by the Executive in recent months to boost membership and broaden the base of the association. The background to these discussions has had to do with Registration and the fact that social care workers will have to pay a registration fee when they come within the scope of registration. An added fee for IASCW membership would place a further burden on people. Some final details regarding sponsorship of the IASCW are being dealt with at the moment and we hope to announce a new package for members and prospective members when CURAM is published in mid - late June. The essence of this package is that membership of the association would be based on payment of a modest administration fee with no diminution in the service provided to members.

Conference 2009

Next year's annual conference will be held in Sligo on February 25 /26th. We look forward to your attendance and we hope that the representation from the West and North West will be significant. While a theme for the conference has yet to be decided on we will be including the SNAPSHOT presentations, which have proven so effective at the past two conferences. More details with next edition of CURAM.

Annual Conference

The HSE embargo (still with us) did have some impact on attendance at the IASCW 2008 annual conference. However, there was a very good attendance in the circumstances and the conference was an unqualified success. We hope to bring you further details from the conference in the next edition of CURAM due out in mid-late June. Simonetta Ryan, Principal Officer with the DH&C opened the conference on behalf of Minister Brendan Smith. In relation to Registration she said that Finbarr Flood's place as Chairperson had been taken by Margaret Hayes (former Secretary General of the Department of Tourism). The recruitment process for a CEO was in its final stages and negotiations had begun with a chosen individual.

Again this year the snapshot presentations were very well received and the workshop choices allowed for lots of options over the two days. Orchard Children Services sponsored the annual IASCW award in recognition of an individual's outstanding contribution to social care. The recipient this year was Nan Dwyer of Miss Carr's Homes in Ranelagh, Dublin. We hope to bring you further details in the June edition of CURAM along with other conference material.

Time to Read?

If you have, you might be interested in "Growing Up in England: The Experience of Childhood 1600-1914" by Anthony Fletcher and published by Yale. You might even review it for CURAM? The author suggests, in the period covered, despite major political, economic, social and domestic upheavals, there was very little change to the experience of childhood? One wonders if that is true in the period from 1914!

REFERENDUM ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

In February of last year at the IASCW conference in Limerick the then Minister for Children, Brian Lenihan, spoke in detail about the urgency of ensuring that children's rights were underpinned by a constitutional amendment(s). At that time there certainly was much media coverage around the issue. However, as 2007 progressed the urgency appeared to go. There was some speculation that such a proposed constitutional change around the rights of children might be put to the people at the same time as the referendum on the Lisbon Treaty this June. That certainly will not happen. Indications are that there are real complexities around drafting an amendment that will have all party agreement in the Dáil and a solid expectation that the voters will approve.

COUNTDOWN CARD

2008 Countdown Cards for members are currently being distributed. To Register Your Card: log on to www.countdowncard.com to activate your account card.

Coming in CURAM

- * Good money saving news for Members
- * Opportunities for Social Care Workers
- * Brendan Colfer... Child Care Pioneer
- * Aid for systemic consultation... mapping system for Residential Care
- * Conference Review
- * St Patrick's College, Carlow... Students' View on social care issues
- * Leaving Care
- * Book Review

...And More