



Press Release

Centre of Nurse Education to open at Mercy University Hospital

A new state-of-the-art Nurse Education Centre will put Mercy University Hospital, Cork (MUH) at the forefront of nurse education in Ireland.

The €5.27 million facility, which is to open on 24th November 2008, will provide practical training, tutorial, lecture, research and study facilities for Mercy University Hospital staff and other health care professionals.

The state-of-the-art centre will be used to educate and train all support personnel who contribute to a patient's treatment. This will include those working in the acute hospital sector, continuing care, community care, learning disability and care of the older person.

The facility has an overall area of 1,337 square metres over three floors and includes lecture rooms with a capacity for 100 people, a library with two reading rooms, tutorial rooms, practical training rooms, equipment rooms, computer room, offices etc.

Mercy University Hospital has a proud tradition of nurse training dating from 1911 when the Training School for Religious Sisters was opened, not just for training Mercy Sisters but also Sisters from other Religious Communities. In April 1922 lay probationers were allowed to train in the Mercy and in December 1955 the first lay nurses were accepted for training. The Catherine McAuley School of Nursing was established in 1979 and this became the Cork Voluntary Hospitals School of Nursing in January 1989.

The Report of the Commission on Nursing was drawn up following extensive consultation by the Department of Health and Children/HSEA in 1998. In respect of nurse training a number of important changes were made in this Report. Undergraduate nursing training was transferred to third level institutions and the former Cork Voluntary Hospitals School of Nursing was designated a Centre of Nurse Education by the Department of Health & Children. The hospital then drew up plans to build a new facility to house the Centre.

Centres are required to operate on a regional level to ensure the provision of a service sensitive to the needs of the area. Currently the Centre is required to operate on a regional level, charged with the responsibility for responding to service needs that support national and local health policy of the:

- Mercy University Hospital,
- South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital,
- Community Hospitals in Cork,
- Primary Care Services
- Intellectual Disability Services.

Mary Dunnion, Director of Nursing at MUH said: “Educational programmes need to be service driven, have equity of access, be flexible, have clinical focus, have standardisation, be quality assured and be sustainable. This will involve working in partnership with the Directors of Nursing Midwifery Planning and Development Units, Nursing Management, Practice Development, Hospital Management, Community Care agencies and Higher Education Institutions.”

The strategy is based upon the premise that professional development is vital to the provision of quality patient care. Professional development is a process of lifelong learning that meets the needs of patients, delivers outcomes of the Health Service Executive’s Transformation programme and enables professionals to expand and fulfill their potential.

The National Qualification Authority of Ireland, the Higher Education Training Awards Council, the Further Education Training Awards Council and An Bord Altranais have developed a new national framework of qualifications for all nurse education courses/programmes so that credit, access and progression is available to nurses and midwives.

“Mercy University Hospital acknowledges the co-operation of the local community and thanks them for their patience and tolerance during the building work which took place on a very tight and difficult site”.

“The hospital also acknowledges the role of the City Council and the Planning Department in granting planning permission, allowing the new facility to be built.”

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