

**First Pan-European Nurse Educators Conference
Udine, November 2007**

**The Career Pathways of Nurse Educators in Europe: A
Collaborative Project**

BASELINE INFORMATION GATHERING SHEET

One of the important early stages of this project is to gather baseline information from each of the 12 participating countries on:

- the country and its health care services;
- pre-qualification student nurse education and training;
- the preparation and role of nurse educators or teachers; and
- organisational factors.

This information, together with the literature review, will inform the development of a more detailed and focused questionnaire for the next stage of the project.

Country: Ireland

[Section 1: Background to the country and its health care services](#)

Please provide a brief summary of your country (geography, population, economy) and the current health care services (organisation and funding arrangements).

Geography

History/Politics

- State founded in 1922
- 26 Counties with a land mass of 84,421 sq kilometres
- Capital city is Dublin
- It is a republic with a written constitution and a parliamentary system of government
- President is Head of State
- Taoiseach (Prime minister)
- Dail Eireann elected by STV system
- Two main parties Fine Gael and Fine Fail
- Fine Fail is currently in power since 1997

Demography

- Population of Ireland over past 20 years has increased by 15.7% to 4.2 million.
- Increase due to change from net emigration to net immigration 10% of population is now foreign born – two biggest groups Poles followed by Nigerians
- A third of its population under 30

- Large scale urbanising in last 10 years - Dublin now has a population of 1.5 m
- Aging population- life expectancy for both men and women has increased consistently-currently 79
- 90% of population is Catholic though religious observance is rapidly declining
- Strong Catholic/Celtic identity (sport, music, arts and literature)
- Two languages spoken - English (Hiberno English) and Irish (part of the Gaelic family of languages)
- Immigration (particularly non-Catholic/non-Christian) mean identity is increasingly becoming a political issue within the country

Climate

Economy

- Long history in Agriculture, that has transformed in recent years to one dependent on trade industry and investment.
- Celtic Tiger
 - 1995- 2000 economic growth 10%
 - 2001-2004 “ 7%
- Euro currency system Jan 1999

Current Health Services (organisation and funding)

- Public and Private systems of Healthcare
- Significant long term improvements in mortality rates for major causes of deaths
- Suicide, motor vehicle accidents and cancer care are causes for concern
- Bed-days have increased by 8.6% since 1997 (persons over 65 years and over account for half the usage)
- Out-patient attendance 47% higher
- A +E increased by 5.6%

Health services employment

- Significant increases since 1997- 2006 overall employment up by 57%
- Largest increase (150%) health and social care professionals
- Nursing increased by 34.3% (n=36,737)

Expenditure

Data drawn from 2006

- 12, 337 million Euros representing an increase of 236% since 1997
- General Hospital Programme largest consumer of health resources receiving 45% of all non-capital funds
- Compared with other OECD countries Irelands health spending per capita ranks midway (GNP 8.8%)

Section 2: Pre-qualification student nurse education and training

History

Commission on Nursing (1998)

- A blueprint for the future of nursing in Ireland
 - Preparation for the Profession
 - Professional Development
 - Regulation of the Profession
 - National Council
 - Career Pathways
- Education up to 2002 took place within schools of Nursing located within hospitals
- 1998 Commission on Nursing recommended an all graduate profession and transfer of education into third level
- Government accepted recommendations and transfer took place in 2002

Type of training

Describe the type of student nurse education and training. For example, is the training generic or specialised (mental health, adult, child, learning disabilities and/or community)?

Five pre-registration BSc programmes

- Children's and General Nursing (integrated) 4.5 years (RCN+ RGN)
- General Nursing 4 years (RGN)
- Intellectual Disability Nursing 4 years (RNID)
- Midwifery 4 years (RM)
- Psychiatric Nursing 4 years (RPN)

Academic level and length of training

What is the academic level of pre-qualification nurse education and training? For example is it at diploma or degree level? How long (in years) is the pre-qualification nurse education and training?

- The National Qualification Authority of Ireland (NQAI) has placed pre-registration degree programmes in nursing/ midwifery at Level 8.
- A four year programme
- The Academic award is Bachelor of Science (BSc)

Funding arrangements

How is pre-qualification nurse education and training funded? For example, is it government funded or self-funded?

- Dept of Health and Children fund educational institutions for pre-registration education
- Means- tested grant for students
- 36 week rostered clinical placement with receipt of 80% pro rata of first point of staff nurse pay scale

Type of institution/s providing education and training

Where does the education and training of pre-qualification student nurses take place? For example, in universities, polytechnics, colleges of further education, technical colleges, independent schools of nursing or hospitals/health services?

- .
- All Programmes take place in 13 Higher Education institutions in association with 56 main Healthcare Agencies (Hospitals/ clinical sites)

Number of institutions providing pre-qualification nurse education and training

How many institutions provide pre-qualification nurse education and training? 42 programmes with a total of 1890 places in nursing and midwifery at pre-registration level

INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY

- Athlone IT
- Dundalk IT
- Galway-Mayo IT
- Letterkenny IT
- Tralee IT
- Waterford IT

UNIVERSITIES

- Dublin City University
- University of Limrick
- Trinity College Dublin

The NUI Colleges:

- UCD
- UCC
- NUIG
- St Angela' College Sligo

Minimum educational qualifications

What are the minimum education qualifications needed to enter pre-qualification nurse education and training?

- Nursing Careers centre responsible for the processing of mature applications to the pre-registration Honours Degree Programme works with:
- The Central Applications Office(CAO) processes school leaver applications

Entry Requirements:

Standard Applicant:

- Leaving Certificate Examination
 - Minimum grade of C 3 X 2 higher level papers
 - Minimum grade of D3 x 4 ordinary/higher level papers in following subjects
 - Irish or English
 - Mathematics
 - A laboratory Science subject
 - Three other subjects
- Meet the minimum educational requirements specified by the Third Level Institution

Mature applicant

- A quota of places is allocated to mature applicants/ a dynamic quota which may vary.
- Applicant 23 years or over
- Aptitude Test
- Interview

Pay scales for qualified nurses

Please describe the salary scales for qualified nurses.

- Staff nurse 30,453-43,718 euros

Section 3: the preparation and role of nurse educators or teachers

Number of nurse educators or teachers

How many nurse educators or teachers do you have?

Numbers (appx)

- 424
- 55 with PhDs

Number of nurse educators or teachers with a PhD or other doctorate

How many nurse educators or teachers have a PhD/doctorate?

Pay scales of nurse educators or teachers

Please describe the salary scales for nurse educators or teachers.

Pay grades

- Assistant Lecturer: 40,000 – 50,150 Euros
- Lecturer: 54,390 - 85,992 Euros
- Senior Lecturer – 78,161-104,491 euros
- Professorial – 84,092-108,157 euros

Minimum academic and professional qualifications

What are the minimum academic and professional qualifications needed to become a nurse educator or teacher?

Entry level qualification

- None formally, but an expectation of a minimum of BSc/BA/BNS (Hons) and Masters qualification

Education and training for nurse educators or nurse teachers

Are there any specific education and training requirements for nurse educators or teachers? For example, a teaching qualification or a postgraduate diploma or Master's degree in Higher Education.

Role of nurse educators or nurse teachers

Please provide a brief summary of the role of nurse educators or teachers that includes: teaching, research, administration and practice. Is there an expectation to carry out research? How is clinical competence maintained?

Role expectation

- Teaching
- Clinical
- Research
- Administration

Career pathways

Please provide a brief description of the career pathway from clinical nurse to nurse educator or teacher. Is there a nationally recognised career pathway?

Career Pathway

- No nationally recognised career pathway

Section 4: Organisational factors

Professional and/or regulatory bodies

Please describe the national nursing professional and/or regulatory body and its role in the preparation of nurses and nurse educators or teachers.

- Professional/ Regulatory Bodies
 - An Bord Altranais
 - National Council
- Health Service Executive

Academic autonomy

Are academic nursing departments/schools headed up and managed by nurses or by staff from other disciplines?

Section 5: Other

Future Issues

- Age profile of academic staff
- Financial difficulties facing Health service
- Reform of post-registration/ post-graduate education
- A new commission on nursing established to review manpower planning

Key Publications

- Government of Ireland (1998) *The Report of the Commission on Nursing – Blueprint for the Future* Dublin Stationery Office
- National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery (2006) *Report on the Baseline Survey of Research Activity in Irish Nursing and Midwifery* Dublin Stationery Office