

Violence in the health sector – a broader view

The Fifth International Conference on Violence in the Health Sector is being hosted by Ireland this autumn, writes Elizabeth Adams

THE LARGEST worldwide conference dedicated to workplace aggression and violence within the health and social services sector is set to take place in Ireland this year, when the Fifth International Conference on Violence in the Health Sector comes to Dublin from October 26-28, 2016. This follows four successful international conferences on Violence in the Health Sector in Amsterdam (2008 and 2010), Vancouver (2012), and Miami, US (2014).

The theme of this year's conference is 'Broadening our view – responding together'. The Dublin venue (the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre, Santry) marks a homecoming for Irish nurse, Dr Kevin McKenna, lecturer with Dundalk Institute of Technology. Dr McKenna is a founding member and has co-chaired both the organisation and scientific committees of the International Conference on Violence in the Health Sector since its inception in 2008. In partnership with Bord Fáilte, the Dublin Convention Bureau, and Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dr McKenna has led the initiative to have Dublin selected as the host venue for the 2016 conference.

Work related aggression and violence within the health and social services sector is a major problem that diminishes the quality of working life for staff, compromises organisational effectiveness and ultimately impacts negatively on the provision and quality of care. These problems pervade both service settings and occupational groups. Dr McKenna completed his doctorate in this subject area with the RCSI, Dublin, and has led a number of national and international projects, including formulation of the Linking Service and Safety strategy for managing work-related aggression in Irish healthcare in which the INMO played a key role.

Together with Prof Ian Needham (chair) and Nico Oud (organiser), Dr McKenna has worked collaboratively with many national nursing associations under the umbrella

of the International Council of Nurses for more than a decade in delivering this international conference. This conference is supported by over 40 national and international agencies including the International Council of Nurses, International Labour Organization, Public Services International, World Medical Association, International Hospital Federation, American Nurses Association, Sigma Theta Tau International and the International Alliance of Patient Organisations. The INMO is active in the local planning committee to support the hosting of the 2016 conference.

Considerable advancement in addressing the problem of aggression and violence in health and social care have been achieved from educational, research, practice, service and organisational perspectives nationally and internationally. In addition to raising awareness, the 2016 conference will provide a platform to share these international developments, with a particular emphasis on best practice research and initiatives to effectively respond to the problem. The specific aims of this year's conference are:

- To sensitise stakeholders to the issue of workplace violence in health/social care
- To offer multiple perspectives of violence – including biological, spiritual, experiential, legal, political and societal – so as to enhance our understanding of the topic
- To exchange experiences and strategies to effectively respond to the problem of workplace violence in order to encourage collaborative responses.

The conference provides a unique opportunity for nurses and midwives to network with a diverse community of colleagues engaged in this important area of work. Apart from the geographical diversity of delegates, there is also a multiplicity of perspectives including clinical/service, organisational, educational, research and regulatory. The conference sub-themes cover many concepts including:

- Economical aspects and implications of



violence in healthcare

- Gender aspects and implications of violence in healthcare
- Legal and/or ethical aspects and implications for employers and employees
- Policies and strategies on workplace violence including local, national, and international and global guidelines, standards, reporting, prediction, risk assessment, prevention, management, after care and rehabilitation
- Scientific, methodological, operational aspects and instruments regarding workplace violence
- Social and psychological theoretical perspectives on workplace violence
- Staff training and education issues regarding workplace violence
- Violence towards patients and horizontal violence.

In addition to receiving a book of proceedings which includes abstracts and/or full papers by all presenters, all delegates attending will also receive a certificate of International Continuing Nursing Education Credits (ICNECs) from the ICN which is internationally accepted as continuing professional development.

Irish nurses and midwives are invited to submit an abstract for consideration as a conference workshop, an oral presentation or as a poster presentation. To submit an abstract or for further information on the conference see: www.oudconsultancy.nl/dublin_5_ICWV/index.html

Elizabeth Adams, INMO director of professional development, was actively involved with this conference during her tenure as consultant for nursing and health policy with the International Council of Nurses in Geneva