



Commemorative Issue Nursing 400

Nursing 400

Celebrating 400 years of nursing care

2009 is a significant year for the nursing portfolio as we are in the unique position of celebrating 400 years of nursing care across our three base hospitals. We are celebrating 150 years of nursing care in the Adelaide Hospital, 125 years in the Meath Hospital and 125 years in the National Children's Hospital.

Our Nursing 400 celebrations aimed to acknowledge the contributions of all our nurses, both past and present, who have provided quality care to many thousands of people over the years.

Four days of celebrations were held from Monday 25th May to Thursday 28th May 2009.

Being in the unique position of celebrating 400 years of nursing care we were required to celebrate in style, and in style we did.

The committee decided that the most appropriate theme for the celebrations was: The Past, The Present and the Future of Nursing in AMNCH.

This special edition of Le Cheile will highlight many of the elements of the four day celebration. Our thanks go to all who gave their time to speak at the various events.



Sharon Wallace, Paediatric E.N.T. CNM2 checks Miriam O'Callaghan's pulse at the launch of the Nursing 400 celebrations held in the Hospital recently.

'Mighty trees from little acorns grow'



Speaking about the Nursing 400 celebrations, Ann Donovan, Director of Nursing, AMNCH said "The old adage 'Mighty trees from little acorn's grow' is particularly true when applied to the Nursing 400 celebration. This entire event evolved from a throwaway remark by a colleague at a meeting in early 2008. Initially we thought we would host a one day nursing conference to mark the event, but on reflection we decided that 400 years of nursing care deserved more than a one day conference. All the nurses past and present had to be acknowledged for their contribution to the thousands of patients and their families that they looked after over all these years".

She continued that, "it was from this belief that the theme of the week evolved. On the launch day we were delighted to have Ms. Miriam O'Callaghan, RTE presenter compère the event. We were also delighted to have Mr. Maurice Neligan, Retired Cardiothoracic Surgeon and Dr. John Barragry, Consultant Endocrinologist, AMNCH to speak at the opening seminar."



Pictured at the launch of Nursing 400 were from right to left: Joy Gordon wearing the old Adelaide Hospital uniform, Mr. Maurice Neligan, Retired Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Miriam O'Callaghan, RTE presenter, Sharon Wallace wearing the old National Children's Hospital (NCH) uniform, Dr. John Barragry, Consultant Endocrinologist, AMNCH and Ann Kissane Murphy wearing the old Meath Hospital uniform.

Mr Maurice Neligan recalled his journey from junior doctor to skilled surgeon, his professional relationships with his nursing colleagues and recounted many humorous anecdotes that kept the audience amused. He used his own experience to highlight how integral nursing was to many key developments that enhanced the service offered to patients.

Professor John Barragry led the fascinated audience through a well-researched history of the three hospitals. He presented a charming PowerPoint presentation of historical slides, photographs and paintings, interspersed with many amusing stories of our nursing and medical predecessors.

A Blast from the Past

Following the very successful opening day of the 'Nursing 400 conference we were really pleased that there was such a marvellous response to the second day –A Blast from the Past. The plan was to have the talks in the combined Liffey and Tolka rooms, but the numbers who booked in were so large that we had to use the tiered Lecture Theatre.

The aim of the day was to give past nurses a reminder of the working and training they went through, and to give present day nurses an insight into a very different world of nursing and hospital work that could be recalled over the last 50-60 years. This approach also emphasised the rapid changes that have taken place in recent times.

It was very obvious by the response of the audience that many memories were brought to life by the presentations. Afterwards present day staff said they thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and were interested and highly amused at some of the events recalled.



*Pictured were:
Yvonne Seville,
former Matron of the
Adelaide Hospital,
Maura Connolly,
former Matron of the
NCH and
Elizabeth O'Dwyer,
former Matron of the
Meath Hospital.*

“absolutely nothing was disposable at all in those days”

The three speakers were the retired Directors of Nursing from the base hospitals. The first talk was given by Yvonne Seville, who recalled some of the earlier training days in the preliminary training school with learning situations that are unbelievable today. She said that nurses had to clean and dust bathrooms and sluice rooms, that all dressings and swabs had to be made by the nurses on night duty or weekends and that there was absolutely nothing disposable at all in those days making life busy to say the least. On night duty the junior nurses would have to cook supper for the night sisters, with many disasters happening to the food. There was also emphasis on ward routine, cleanliness and professional behaviour.

The second speaker Miss Elizabeth O'Dwyer gave an account of her training which started in the North Infirmary

Hospital in Cork. Once again there was emphasis on the hospital routine and the long hours worked. Miss O'Dwyer explained that for many years of her young life and growing up that she loved helping people and in particular the elderly and when the opportunity arose to apply for nursing she cherished this chance and regarded it as her vocation.

Miss Dwyer continued by mentioning the uniform and in particular the caps that signified the students changing years – the most significant being 'the veil' which was presented by Matron as a student entered their third year. What pride and a sense of responsibility was bestowed upon nurses!

In 1968 she applied for and was successful in securing the position of Matron in the Meath Hospital, Dublin. She stated that she was happy and honoured to take up this role particularly with regard to the reputation the hospital held associated with nurse training.

She said that one of the important roles as Matron was to enable her nurses, in particular the senior staff, to engage in professional development and prepare themselves adequately for both clinical and managerial roles in the ever changing world of healthcare.

Miss O'Dwyer concluded her talk by mentioning current day nurse education and the academic level at which staff are engaging. She cherishes this and is confident in the role of nursing today.

The final speaker was Mrs. Maura Connolly who spoke about the history of the National Children's Hospital and its nursing. One interesting aspect of this talk emphasised how the paths of the three hospitals crossed many times over early years. There were some interesting old photographs of nursing staff and notably, some with a red cross on the sleeve of the uniform.

Mrs. Connolly outlined significant differences between nursing children and adults by saying: "nursing sick children is very different from caring for adults". Florence Nightingale recognised this when she said "It takes a special kind of person to become a nurse, and it takes a

special kind of nurse to care for sick children".

She outlined some interesting aspects of how children's nursing has changed significantly over the years. Very far back a distinguished Physician stated that "if you take a sick child from its parents or nurse you will break its heart immediately".

It took over 200 years for extraordinary changes to take place in nursing children and to arrive where we are today with all day and night visiting for parents and guardians. Harcourt Street was a very special place for the many nurses who trained there and it was with great sadness that we closed the doors in 1998.

However, it is the staff who create the quality of care to the children – not necessarily the building and thankfully that treasure has come with us to Tallaght.

Mrs. Connolly stated that she has fond memories of the sisters who were in Harcourt Street. "They saw me through my student, staff nurse, Assistant Matron and Matron days.

In bringing the second day's events to a close Mrs Connolly said, "There is an old Chinese expression that states ***'When you drink the water try to remember who dug the well'***. We hope that the contribution made to the nursing profession and to the children and their families that we cared for will be remembered in good faith in the years to come".

Pictured examining some nursing memorabilia which was part of the "Here and Now" exhibitions were Louisa Cullen and Victoria Howlett both of whom are CPCs in AMNCH.



The Here and Now: The Pursuit of Excellence

On Wednesday 27th May the nursing staff of AMNCH held a seminar on The Here and Now: The Pursuit of Excellence in conjunction with the momentous occasion of the Nursing 400 celebration.

The Here and Now Committee organised a day which celebrated current developments in the nursing service in AMNCH.

The day began at 12.30pm with refreshments in the River Rooms.

24 stands representing various aspects of nursing care were exhibited. The exhibition format represented the diversity of achievement in the nursing department in AMNCH.

It was obvious from the quality of the stands that presenters spent a great deal of time and effort preparing for the day. A wide variety of topics were presented including the following: Health Promotion, Nurse Prescribing, Nursing Leadership, Child Psychiatry and Child Health, Women's Health and Care of The Older Person.

The stands and presenters encouraged participation and interaction. There were quizzes, competitions and prizes to be won. Jane Dillon, staff nurse in Lynn ward, won the door prize of a €50 voucher.

Dr Ann Marie Ryan, Chief Education Officer, An Bord Altranais; Ann Donovan, Director of Nursing, AMNCH and Marian Connolly, Acting Director of Nursing NCH AMNCH judged the stands.

Suzanne Greene (CNM2), Nicola Cogan (Stroke CNS) and Audrey Cullen (Falls CNS) won the prize for best stand called Care of the Older Person. The aim of the stand was to demonstrate the diverse role the nurse has in caring for the older person.

Five different nursing areas came under the Age Related Healthcare umbrella: Stroke Service, Falls Service, William Stokes Unit, Charlie O'Toole Day Hospital and the Community Liaison Service. The stand provided a platform to inform colleagues of the specialised and varied responsibilities of the nurses working in the Age Related Healthcare Department. It also provided information on some of the new developments in the department such

as the Acute Stroke Unit and the Active Stand Clinic. The stand also contained information and advice on a range of topics including: Stroke, TIA, Thrombolysis, Falls, Osteoporosis, Dementia and Elder Abuse.



Pictured were: Suzanne Greene (CNM 2), Nicola Cogan (Stroke CNS) and Audrey Cullen (Falls CNS) who won the prize for best stand for their stand entitled Care of the Older Person.

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Mary McDonald, Children's Respiratory, CNS won a special prize for her outstanding exhibition of memorabilia of past times from the Adelaide, Meath and National Children's Hospitals. Mary painstakingly assembled an extensive collection of memorabilia from the three hospitals. The collection included photographs, exam papers, procedure equipment, former nurse uniforms and Invalid cookery amongst other items.

Dr Ann Marie Ryan, Chief Education Officer, An Bord Altranais, spoke about current developments in Nursing. Dr Ryan recognised the great work that is happening in nursing in AMNCH and highlighted the fact that we have five Nurse Prescribers out of a total of 80 registered in the country.

The day was a great success with approximately 200 visitors attending from both within and outside the organisation.

Pictured was Mary McDonald, Children's Respiratory, CNS who won a special prize for her outstanding exhibition of nursing memorabilia of past times.



Pictured at the Here and Now: The Pursuit of Excellence exhibition were: Caitriona Dennehy, Victoria Howlett, Carrie McLean, Aine Donnelly (student 2008 group) Nessa Fitzgerald, Louise Cullen, Sinead Maher, Sandra McCarthy.



Pictured at the launch was Karen Farrar, Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Women's Health.



Pictured were Nikki Lee, Programme Nurse Co-ordinator for the Bowel Screening Programme and Joy Gordon, Acting CNM2 in endoscopy.

Tomorrow's World

Professor Mary McCarron, Associate Professor and Head of School, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin presented the opening address on the third day: Tomorrow's World: Back to the Future.

Professor McCarron presented an overview of unprecedented changes in nursing and in nurse education during the past decade. She asserted that the development of nursing as an academic discipline is only of value if nurses remain true to caring and the care issues in nursing. Professor McCarron encouraged nurses to embrace change. She provided an example of plans for the development of a Centre for Preventative Medicine and how the School of Nursing and Midwifery are very committed to working in partnership with their AMNCH nursing colleagues in having a Centre for Clinical Nursing Research as part of this development. Professor McCarron concluded her presentation with the words of Barack Obama:

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

Siobhan O'Connor, Nurse Practice Development Co-ordinator (paediatrics), AMNCH took the audience through her personal experiences as a nurse over the last 20 years, bridging the recent past with the here and now at AMNCH. She outlined how there were no nursing representatives in the Department of Health & Children during the 1980s. Now there is a Chief Nursing Officer and nurse advisors who are contributing to healthcare policy development at national level. The Director of Nursing Services Office within the HSE has added another dimension to nursing involvement at a senior level, influencing healthcare policy. The establishment of the National Council of Nursing and Midwifery and the Nursing & Midwifery Planning and Development Units has also led to nurses playing a more active role in managing and developing their own profession than was the case previously. Siobhán concluded by reminding us that nurses must never lose sight of what nursing is all about – it's about empowering patients and their families to take ownership and responsibility for their own health. The fundamental needs of the patient and family have not changed over the years. Patients have always wanted, and will always want, a caring nurse who



Pictured were: Professor Mary McCarron, Associate Professor and Head of School, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin; Siobhan O'Connor, Nurse Practice Development Co-ordinator (paediatrics), AMNCH; Ann Donovan, Director of Nursing, ANMCH and Aine Lynch, Nurse Practice Development Co-ordinator (Adults), AMNCH.

will educate, support and empower them through their illness, who will advocate for them and their family when they are not well enough to do so for themselves, who will comfort them through vulnerable times, perhaps even through dying, and who they can trust to do all of the above.

Aine Lynch, Nurse Practice Development Co-ordinator (Adults), AMNCH. guided the audience through a selection of some of the key nursing developments in recent years and demonstrated how these have applied to the nursing service in AMNCH.

She discussed how the role of the staff nurses, CNS and ANP have the potential to make a major contribution to the implementation of the health service reforms by the implementation of more nurse-led initiatives such as discharge planning, managing caseloads of patients with specific conditions such as diabetes and rheumatology and undertaking skills such as venepuncture and cannulation. She described the advent of nurse prescribing and the planned Nurse Prescribing of Medical Ionising Radiation. It was highlighted that healthy working relationships with interdisciplinary colleagues has aided the introduction of these significant changes to date.

Developments around the integration of acute and primary care sectors were discussed and finally, in keeping of the theme Tomorrow's World, a newly developed joint DATHS Nursing Strategy 2009-2012 was launched.

Thank You

There were several groups who supported this week of celebration and without their support and commitment this week would not have been such a success.

Special thanks to the following

Main Sponsors of the event:

- The Adelaide Society
- The Meath Foundation
- The National Children's Hospital Foundation Partnership
- Clonliffe Clothing

Other colleagues who contributed to the success of this event in giving their time and commitment:

- The Catering Department
- Laoise O'Murchu, Communications and Public Relations Manager
- Shane Duggan, Videographer
- Stephen Robinson, Facilities Manager
- Jimmy Daly, Post Room
- Mary Murphy, PA to Director of Nursing
- Mandy Sinnott, Director of Nursing's Office

And all the members of the Nursing Committee who are as follows:

- Ann Donovan, Director of Nursing
- Hilary Daly, Deputy Director of Nursing
- Mary Cotter, Principal Nurse Tutor
- Charlotte McMenamin, Assistant Director of Nursing
- Bernadette Corrigan, A/Assistant Director of Nursing
- Philippa Ryan Withero, Nurse Practice Development Dept
- Eoin Power, CNM3, NCH
- Mary McDonald, CNS, NCH
- Geraldine Hiney, Informatics Nurse
- Teresa Hayes, Partnership
- Yvonne Seville, The Adelaide Society
- Annette Hughes, The Meath Foundation
- Jennifer Sowman, NCH Foundation
- Tommy Walsh, Medical Photography
- Lisa O'Leary, Medical Photography



Pictured were members of the Nursing 400 Committee.

Special thanks must be given to the nurses who modelled the past and current nursing uniforms:

- Sharon Wallace
- Mary Moran and Anne Kissane Murphy
- Joy Gordon
- Annamma Raju
- Stephen Gilmore
- Cheryll Gilmore

A special thank you to Patrice Walsh, first year nursing student.

Thanks to all past nurses who sent in their photos and memorabilia, some of which were on display during the week of celebration.

Shane videoed the week's events and the DVD will be shown in the near future for all staff, especially those who were unable to come to any of the celebrations. A date and time will be sent out shortly and refreshments will be available on the day.

Finally congratulations to Ann Donovan, Director of Nursing, who was the brainchild behind this event and whose enthusiasm inspired all involved in the Nursing 400 celebrations.

A video of the four day event will be available shortly. For details on this please contact the Director of Nursing's Office, tel: (01) 414 2154.