



Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation

Working Together



SIPTU



LD/MR

17 October 2014

Dr Siobhan O'Halloran
Chief Nursing Officer
Department of Health
Hawkins House
Hawkins Street
Dublin 2

Re: Proposed Increase in Retention Fee - NMBI

Dear Dr O'Halloran

On behalf of our three unions we wish to seek an immediate meeting with you to discuss the many serious issues arising from the decision, by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI), to seek an increase in the annual retention fee, from 1st January 2015, bringing it to €150.

We would ask you to note that our three unions are collectively totally opposed to this increase which we view as being wholly unnecessary, inexplicable and at complete variance to the approach of similar regulatory bodies.

In seeking discussions with you we would ask you to note the following:

- the proposed increase, by NMBI, would mean that they are seeking to increase the fee by 80%, within two years, with inflation running at less than 1% and after registered nurses and midwives have suffered a minimum of a 15% cut in their income;
- the increase is being sought in the context of the Board failing, completely, to be open and transparent about the costs it is incurring in such areas as legal and public relations fees; and
- the increase is being sought at a time when the profession has no confidence in the NMBI arising from its failure to provide any support, to registered nurses/ midwives, in the clinical area.

These early discussions will offer the potential to avoid the very serious issues which will emerge, for the health service, when nurses/midwives decline to pay the unwarranted increase being sought by NMBI. Such a development will present

serious problems, for the health service, and this would appear to be of no concern to NMBI.

Our three unions are fully supportive of a strong regulatory body, for nurses and midwives, which protects the public by ensuring nurses and midwives can work in an environment conducive to safe practice. Therefore, in these discussions, we would be seeking to agree a long term funding strategy which would recognise the obligations/involvement of all stakeholders towards the regulations of nurses/midwives. Such a strategy would involve:

- an agreed timeframe for the roll out of all aspects of the Nursing and Midwifery Act;
- the earliest possible introduction of an appropriate competency assurance scheme, for nurses and midwives, with all stakeholders recognising their responsibilities towards the creation and maintenance of same;
- reasonable legal and other fees being incurred by the Board with these being presented in an open and transparent manner;
- agreement on areas of revenue raising activity, by NMBI, separate from simply requiring nurses/midwives to solely fund all its activities; and
- active involvement, by NMBI, in ensuring nurses/midwives have their judgement respected, within the clinical environment, allowing them deliver safe care through safe practice.

We will contact your office to agree an early date and time for this meeting.

Yours sincerely



LIAM DORAN
General Secretary
INMO



KEVIN FIGGIS
National Nursing Officer
SIPTU



DES KAVANAGH
General Secretary
PNA