
Thursday Jan.24, 2013

CROSS PARTY SUPPORT FOR JOINT PNA/INMO BOYCOTT OF 'CUT PRICE' NURSING POSTS

Unions to intensify lobby of local TD's

Deputies and Senators from all parties turned out in force this week to support the Psychiatric Nurses Association (PNA) and Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) in their on-going campaign of boycott of HSE efforts to recruit 1,000 nurses on reduced pay rates.

The two nursing organisations held an intensive round of information/ briefing meetings with TD' and Senators in Dáil Eireann on Wednesday (Jan.23rd) at which they outlined their fundamental opposition to the HSE move to recruit newly graduated nurses on salaries of 80% of the agreed rate of pay.

The unions had earlier met with both Sinn Fein and Labour Party parliamentary parties and on Wednesday addressed a packed meeting TDs and Senators organised and chaired by Labour Party Deputy Patrick Nulty.

Speaking after the briefing sessions, PNA Deputy General Secretary, Seamus Murphy said the two unions were extremely encouraged by the show of support and solidarity with the boycott campaign from TDs and Senators from across the country.

'The meetings with Oireachtas members offered our articulate, eloquently newly qualified nurses and opportunity to detail their personal accounts of the struggles, sacrifices and achievements they encountered in the course of their training. However, having qualified as nurses they have been met with this latest attack by the HSE and Government which targets the nursing profession in a most unfair, unjust and offensive way.

The INMO/PNA reaffirmed their outright opposition, to the proposed HSE graduate programme, and reiterated their shared view that it is nothing other than an attempt to introduce cheap labour under a superficial guise of an educational graduate programme.

'The HSE are presenting this flawed initiative as some sort of opportunity for new graduates. In reality, is an overt attempt to recruit cheap labour in breach of agreed salaries'.

Nurse graduates from both unions will be intensifying their campaign and meeting TD's at clinics throughout the country this weekend.

The consistent message remains from PNA/ INMO

- The boycott remains in place and will continue until this programme is withdrawn
- Ireland's health services will now suffer a further skills drain in the nursing profession as a result of Government & HSE's position which will be irreparable for delivering a modern health service.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Below you will find a fact sheet which details the facts behind the PNA/INMO opposition to the HSE recruitment plan.

- **FACT:** The 1,000 contracts are not new/additional/extra posts. The initiative simply involves the displacement of 1,000 agency/temporary staff, on the agreed pay scale, with the replacement into their posts, of new graduates on 80% of the agreed scale.
- **FACT:** These newly graduated nurses/midwives will be required to perform the full range of duties, responsibilities and obligations, as required of all other registered/regulated nurses/midwives, and will be required, due to already poor staffing levels, to do this on their own without proper mentorship or support.
- **FACT:** Starting pay for newly qualified nurses/midwives has already been cut by 24% since 2009. This is already more than other public servants.
- **FACT:** The direct conversion of currently employed agency staff into direct employment, would potentially save the HSE 26.5% or up to €23 million. *
- **FACT:** The HSE would save 54% on their current costs if they employed newly qualified nurses/midwives on the correct salary scale.
- **FACT:** The HSE are withdrawing contracts, which already apply to hundreds of 2012 graduates, so that they can offer these same graduates contracts at €22,000. This would mean a total pay cut of 39%.

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ENDS.