

2020

Year of the Nurse & the Midwife

Nursing now
Northern Ireland

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Edition 1: July 2020

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the 2020 International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife newsletter.

In what has been the most challenging year ever faced by our Health and Social Care service, our workforce has exhibited its dedication, commitment and compassion toward the people of Northern Ireland. We are truly fortunate to have so many organisations devoted to the health and wellbeing of the nation. I thank you for your service during what has been an exceptionally challenging period.



In this edition we look back on some of the events that have taken place since the start of the year, as well as the response of our professions to Covid-19. Going forward, further editions will be published as we continue to capture the invaluable contributions of nurses and midwives across the country.

Kind regards

Professor Charlotte McArdle
Chief Nursing Officer

Launch of the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife 2020

2020 has been dedicated to the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. For the first time ever, there will be a global celebration of the benefits that nursing and midwifery bring to the health of the population.

Speaking at the official launch in NI of the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, the Health Minister said: "With 2020 being the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife this is a once in a generation opportunity for us in Northern Ireland to raise the profile and status of nursing and midwifery and celebrate all that is good about each profession, with the ultimate goal of continuing to provide high quality care which delivers the best outcome for our citizens."

Watch videos from the launch on the [Department of Health's YouTube](#) channel.



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Response of our professions to Covid-19

Despite the significant pressure placed on health and social care due to the pandemic, the response of nursing and midwifery was outstanding.

Nurses were instrumental in the opening and operation of Northern Ireland's first Nightingale Hospital. The 230 bed regional facility was staffed by a team drawn from across Northern Ireland to manage the anticipated surge of Covid-19 patients requiring intensive care.



Speaking at the time the Health Minister said: "I fully recognise the challenges these emergency arrangements will present for staff, with new ways of working and in many cases a new workplace location. I am determined that we will do everything possible to support them and their colleagues across the HSC as they take on the many challenges that Covid-19 brings. We owe them all a debt that can never be repaid."

Providing testimony to the work of the health and social care system, the Nightingale Hospital was temporarily stood down in May.

Nursing and midwifery students join the workforce early

Although 2020 has been designated the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife it will also be recalled as a time when over 600 nursing and midwifery students were at the forefront of the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

In support of their health and social care colleagues nursing and midwifery students from the Open University, Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University joined the workforce early. To enable this The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) working in partnership with the Council of Deans of Health (CoD) and the Chief Nursing Officers from the four United Kingdom countries issued joint statements setting out how nursing and midwifery students could contribute to the ongoing battle against Covid-19. Senior nursing and midwifery students with less than six months remaining of their undergraduate pre-registration programme could choose to join the workforce as a paid member of staff until they achieved full registration. Second year and early third year students would also be given the option of a paid placement.



Chief Nursing Officer Professor Charlotte McArdle paid tribute to the nursing and midwifery students and said "It is highly commendable that students are embracing the opportunity to help at this time of great need. I wish to extend a personal thank you to all nursing and midwifery students and assure them of my full support as they rise to this challenge."

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NI Launch of Future Midwifery Standards

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) had the first of the UK formal launches of the Future Midwife Standards in NI on 15th January 2020. These Standards reflect contemporary national and international evidence on the health, well-being, needs, views and preferences of women and the newborn infant.

The Standards set an evidence-based benchmark for the profession, creating a foundation for midwives of the future to receive a first-class education and reflect the transforming health and care world in which midwives work.

Dr Dale Spence, Midwifery Officer for Department of Health, highlighted that "This is an exciting time for midwifery in NI, one with real opportunities to make a lasting and positive difference to the lives of women, babies and families."



Dr Dale Spence, Midwifery Officer for Department of Health speaking at the launch

Launch of the Global Leadership Development Programme

The Global Leadership Development Programme aims to develop young nurses and midwives leadership, policy-making, quality improvement and partnership working skills. The programme forms part of the 2020 Nightingale Challenge Northern Ireland, which aims to equip and empower the next generation of nurses and midwives as leaders, practitioners and advocates in health and build a cadre of strong politically astute nursing and midwifery leaders, well positioned to play a full part in strengthening nursing and midwifery in Northern Ireland.

Minister of Health for Northern Ireland Robin Swann addressed the 30 young nurses and midwives who are undertaking the Global Leadership Development Programme. He congratulated them on their successful application to participate in the bespoke programme and on their opportunity to develop their global leadership and partnership working skills, allowing them to develop as senior and strategic leaders of the future.



Global Leadership Development Programme participants



Mary-Frances McManus from DoH addressing participants

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NIPEC Annual Conference and launch of NMTG Report

The Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council (NIPEC) held its annual conference on 10th March 2020. The theme of this year's conference centred on celebrating the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife and setting it in the context of the Global Nursing Now Campaign and Nightingale Challenge.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Catherine Hannaway, Dr Billy Rosa, and two nurses, Alana Divito from Northern HSC Trust and Laura McLaughlin from Western HSC Trust. The speakers discussed the role of Nurses and Midwives Tackling 21st Century Global Health Issues.

Health Minister Robin Swann formally addressed the conference and launched the Nursing and Midwifery Task Group Report saying that it "points the way to a new era for nursing and midwifery in Northern Ireland."

The Minister commended the report and continued to say that it "sets out the critical issues facing midwifery and nursing and does so within the context of the health and social care needs facing our population over the next 10 to 15 years."

Within the report, key strategic priorities were identified which will seek to do three key things:

1. Stabilise the nursing and midwifery workforce to ensure safe and effective care.
2. Strengthening the role nursing and midwifery play in population and public health planning.
3. Enhancing the role nurses and midwives play within multi-disciplinary teams as part of the wider transformation of the health and social care system

Chief Nursing Officer Professor Charlotte McArdle added "I am delighted to see the launch of the nursing and midwifery task group report. It recognizes the challenges faced by our professions and identifies measures that can be taken to stabilize the workforce. I have said before there are no short term or quick fix solutions to the shortages we face across the Health Service but this report signifies light at the end of the tunnel."



Health Minister Robin Swann, Chief Nursing Officer Prof. Charlotte McArdle with the Chair of NMTG Sir Richard Barnett.

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Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation Conference

The Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation (CNMF) Conference 2020 was held at the Royal College of Physicians, Regent's Park, London on Friday 6 and Saturday 7 March 2020.

The theme of the conference was: **“CELEBRATE: Nurses and midwives, breaking down barriers, leaving no-one behind”**

As part of the 'Nightingale Challenge Northern Ireland Global Leadership Development Programme' 4 programme participants, Lauren Curran, Sinead Kernan, Michelle McCollum and Caroline Semple, took part in a 'learning visit' to London to attend the conference. The group was joined by other young nurse leaders from Pakistan, Uganda and the USA

As well as attending the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation Conference (CNMF), the visit included a networking reception with senior CNMF Board Members, a guided tour of the Royal College of Nursing with the opportunity to meet Dame Donna Kinnair, CEO of RCN, as well as many other UK and global nursing, midwifery and healthcare leaders.

The group received a tour of the Houses of Parliament from Lord Nigel Crisp, as well as visiting the Florence Nightingale Museum and the Mary Seacole statue at St Thomas' Hospital, London.



Attendees at Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation Conference



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Health for All Children Conference

The Health for All Children conference, aimed to update health professionals on the latest evidence in child and family health, was hosted and opened by Rodney Morton Director of Nursing, Midwifery and AHPS, Public Health Agency. A key focus of the Conference was “**Health for All Children**” (5th edition) which summarises the evidence supporting preventive healthcare and health promotion, providing an effective, community based response to the needs of families and children, from pregnancy to the age of 7 years.



Addressing the conference the Health Minister said: “While my Department continues to consider the needs of all citizens across what is an increasingly ageing population, the evidence increasingly shows that our priority must be to address those issues facing children in their early years. Only in doing so can we help to set them on a path of lifelong health and social wellbeing.”

Public Health Agency Health for All Children Conference

Minister Swann concluded: “Nurses, particularly health visitors, school nurses and midwives are often the first and sometimes the only health professionals that many families encounter; therefore they have a significant role to play in Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life.”

Professor Charlotte Mc Ardle Chief Nursing Officer said: “When we invest in children, we invest in the future. Investing in a child’s health, development and their environment brings benefits throughout life and across generations.”

International Midwives Day

International Midwives Day is celebrated on the 5th May each year. The Department of Health created a video as part of the celebrations for International Midwives Day, titled “Midwives Mobilising the World to Health and Wellbeing”. The video includes messages of support from Dr Tedros, Brenda Kelly, Prof Charlotte McArdle, Health Minister Robin Swann, Dr Dale Spence, Fran McConville, Ciara Close and Franka Cadee who highlight how the vital role that midwives play in keeping people safe during these challenging times. It can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/415166311>

International Nurses Day

The Department of Health organised various activities to be held during International Nurses Day on the 12th May. A video was created by the Department as part of the celebrations, titled “Nursing Northern Ireland and the world to Health and Wellbeing 2020”. It can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/417288101>

The Department delivered cakes to residential care homes as a thank you to the staff for their efforts during an exceptionally challenging time.

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‘Shine a Light’

To celebrate International Nurses Day, the Northern Ireland Executive asked families across Northern Ireland to 'Shine a Light' in tribute to their work in the battle against Covid-19.

First Minister Arlene Foster said: "How fitting it is that 2020 has been designated the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, because this is the year that we will remember the enormous contribution of our nurses and healthcare staff in the fight against Coronavirus. Let us recognise their incredible dedication; their professionalism; and their enormous personal sacrifice for the good of us all."

Deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill said "Our nurses are a shining light in the health service and it is difficult to put into words the depth of gratitude we feel for them at this time. While this emergency situation has brought their contribution to the fore, we must recognise the importance of their role in caring for us, and our families, throughout our lives."

To pay homage to the contribution of nurses a number of iconic landmarks, monuments and buildings across Northern Ireland were illuminated blue, the colour of the nurse, on the evening of Tuesday 12 May.



Florence Nightingale Ulster Museum Exhibition

A special exhibition celebrating the work of Northern Ireland's nurses and midwives was installed at the Ulster Museum just before social distancing measures were introduced due to the Coronavirus outbreak. The aim was to have the

exhibition open to the general public from March to June. The fact that nurses and midwives are now at the heart of efforts to tackle Covid-19 makes us even more determined to acknowledge their work and how it affects all of us. The Department of Health, Health and Social Care Trusts and fellow organisers are developing a "Virtual Exhibition" that the public can view on various forms of social media. It can be viewed online at

<https://smartify.org/tour/florence-nightingale-200>

