

FOHNEU -25th Anniversary 1993-2018

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The celebration marking the 25- year milestone in the history of the Federation of Occupational Health Nurses (FOHNEU) took place in conjunction with the 48th Board Meeting hosted by the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) in Dublin Ireland.

Opening the Board Meeting, the INMO President Martina Harkin-Kelly welcomed the Board Members. to Ireland and to the newly refurbished Richmond centre.

The pivotal position of Occupational Health Nurses was illustrated from a societal perspective by the President who quoted Weber's Three Component Theory of Stratification (Wealth, Prestige and Power)) describing the workplace as an agent of socialisation and a microcosm of society. FOHNEU broadened the OHN scope and was instrumental in strengthening, identifying harmonising and implementing key standards and educational support programmes, which underpin the four key components of workplace health management:

Occupational Health & Safety

Workplace Health Promotion

Social & lifestyle determinants of health

Environmental Health Management.

Below: The FOHNEU Board with INMO President Martina Harkin-Kelly (front row center) at the INMO Headquarters in Dublin.





FOHNEU President Henriett Hirdi (right) preparing to the Birthday cake presented by the INMO in Dublin.



FOHNEU 2018

The 5 FOHNEU Aims are the indicators by which the progress of the Federation can be highlighted.

To contribute to the total health, safety, and well-being of the European working population.

A survey is in the final stages to benchmark with previous surveys undertaken to evaluate the involvement of the Occupational Health Nurse (OHN) in the development and delivery of services to the European Workforce. The surveys also illustrate the diverse approaches by OH Nurses at all levels in assessing and monitoring the health status of the workforce and promoting change to improve working conditions.

To raise the profile of Occupational Health Nursing within the European Union

Occupational Health Nurses are often in direct contact with the workforce, and have a key position to contribute to the identification and elimination of risks, and the implementation of health promotion strategies. We consider promoting health at work is sound economic policy. Raising the profile requires acknowledgment and support of the OHN contribution by politicians and professional bodies at national and EU level.

To promote training, education, and standards of professional qualifications.

FOHNEU considers specialised education and competencies to be the bedrock for the development and delivery of quality occupational health and safety systems. The EU Directives do not advocate the education and/or qualifications required to deliver Occupational Health and Safety. This area is regulated at National level and there are no unified educational standards.

To address this situation FOHNEU developed a Core Curriculum (1996). The Curriculum is designed to be adapted at National level to meet the needs of nurses working in different settings and to reflect cultural diversity, emphasising the autonomous role of the occupational health nurse as an important member of the workplace health and safety team.

The 3rd edition was published in 2014 and is available on the FOHNEU website- www.fohneu.org. Some countries have translated the Core Curriculum into the national language.

The Hanasaari Conceptual Model has been included in the latest edition. The model has been translated into 10 languages.

Although positive developments have been achieved in some of the EU Member States we continue to experience that the work of the occupational health nurse is undervalued with limited or no possibility to access specialisation or further education.

There are several reasons for this unfortunate situation including historical and cultural factors, and not least political awareness.

To evaluate the current status and progress of OHN education within the Member States FOHNEU is currently finalising a 3rd survey which will be published in 2019.

Initiatives to develop a European OHN Code of Ethics and an OHN Competency Document are in progress.

To encourage research into areas of occupational health practice, education, and management with publication of the results.

FOHNEU has organised 6 International Congresses. The 7th will be held in Budapest, Hungary 24th-26th April 2019. Since the first Congress in Brussels 1997 there has been a continuous increase in the number of research projects both oral and poster presentations, submitted by Occupational Health Nurses at the FOHNEU Congresses. This is an encouraging development.

To maintain an open dialogue with the EU organisations responsible for health and safety, public health and EU nursing authorities

FOHNEU has maintained contact with EU Official Stakeholders and Organisations and continues participation as an Official Partner in the EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Campaigns initiated in 2007,

Occupational health is facing continuous change and future challenges demand active participation by all FOHNEU representatives and national Associations/Groups throughout the Member States is required if we are to reach our Mission:

To consolidate and represent the voice of Occupational Health Nursing within the EU in order to promote the Health, Safety and Well-Being of the European Workforce.