

Ireland

Configuration of paediatric services

CESP Dec 2005



Basic demographics

- 4 million (1 million children)
- Highest birth rate in the EU
- GDP per head of population above EU average (1973 59% EU average ; 1999 111% EU average)
- Net immigration (returned emigrants + asylum seekers + migrant workers)
- Move from rural farming to high tech. industry

A period of reflection !



Paediatric care

- 120 secondary/tertiary paediatricians(1 per 8,000 children)
- 7 year training in Ireland + overseas
- District general (11) , regional (5) and tertiary(3) hospitals
- No primary care paediatricians (primary care delivered by GP's)
- Increased number of CCH paediatricians

GP training in paediatrics

- 6 months in secondary/tertiary hospital
- Lecture course in common problems
- Diploma in Child Health examination
- Some specialization in paediatrics among large group practices
- Refresher days
- GP syllabus currently being revised
- Little role in health promotion

Paediatric nursing

- Direct entry to paediatric nursing
- 4 year degree course
- Add – on courses possible (eg i/v teams)
- Clinical nurse specialists well-established
- Advanced nurse practitioners esp. in neonatology
- ICU nurses shortages ++

Strengths

- PNMR 8 per 1,000 ; CNMR 1.8 per 1,000
- SIDS rate 0.7 per 1,000
- Well-trained family doctors
- Developed GPT + HST in paediatrics (7 years)
- Skilled nursing staff + clinical nurse specialists
- National neonatal transport service
- Close links with EU/UK/N America/Australia

Deficiencies

- Low breast feeding(<40%) and immunisation rates (circa. 85%)
- Lack of a single tertiary centre
- Small isolated units
- Not EWTD compliant at present
- No national paediatric transport service
- Too few paediatricians (need to double)

Future directions

- Significant consultant expansion
- Centralization of tertiary services/neonatology
- Ambulatory 9-5 units
- National paediatric transport service
- More consultant-delivered care out of hours
- Greater support for disadvantaged groups
- Movement of paediatric trainees across Europe

**Do not try to change the world !!
(unless you are Stefano!!)**

