The National Emergency Medicine Programme

What is the National Emergency Medicine Programme?

The National Emergency Medicine Programme (EMP) is a shared initiative involving emergency care clinicians, professional training and representative groups and the Clinical Strategy and Programmes Division of the Health Service Executive that aims to improve the safety and quality of care and reduce waiting times for patients in Emergency Departments (EDs) in Ireland. The Programme commenced in July 2010. The EMP Report, launched by the Minister for Health in June 2012, is the most comprehensive and ambitious strategic plan for emergency care ever undertaken in Ireland. Contributors to the Emergency Medicine Programme include:

- Irish Association for Emergency Medicine (link to http://www.iaem.ie/)
- Irish Committee for Emergency Medicine Training (link to https://www.rcsi.ie/emergency_medicine)
- Emergency nurses (internal link to ENIG text below), with the support of the Office of the Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, HSE (link to http://www.hse.ie/go/ONMSD/)
- Representatives of Pre-hospital Care, the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (link to http://www.phecit.ie/) and the National Ambulance Service (http://www.hse.ie/go/ambulanceservice)
- Health and Social Care Professionals (internal link to HSCP section below).
- ED staff across the country through workshops, training programmes and hospital visits.
- Patient representatives, with patient and family participation (internal link below to person centred emergency care) being a key element of the Programme’s ongoing work.

Key EMP Recommendations

- Patients, their families and communities should receive high quality emergency services no matter when or where they seek emergency care.
- Emergency care is a vital part of our health care system and is best delivered through Emergency Care Networks (internal link below) that include pre-hospital (ambulance) systems, Emergency Departments (ED) (internal link), Local Injury Units (LIUs) (internal link below) and acute hospitals.
- Appropriate clinical governance structures and practices are advocated to drive improvement in the quality, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of patient care, with clearly defined authority, accountability and responsibility for all members of the emergency care team.
- Patients should not experience delays to emergency care or hospital admission and all patients should be assessed, discharged or admitted from the ED within 6 hours of arrival.
- There should be a standardised approach to providing emergency care in all EDs and LIUs, supported by evidence-based practice and clinical guidelines.
• Emergency care is best provided by doctors who are fully trained specialists in Emergency Medicine and increased numbers of Consultants are needed so that more patients can be seen by senior doctors rather than by doctors who are training to be specialists.

• The nurses working in our EDs need to have special skills and they should have additional training to be able to provide as much patient care as possible. More nurses should be trained to become Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioners (rANP) (internal link to section below).

• Emergency patients should be able to access care from Health and Social Care Professionals (internal link to section below) when they need it, including care provided by physiotherapists, occupational therapists and medical social workers.

• The Programme will introduce standard ways of recording, measuring and monitoring ED activity and the quality of care so that EDs can continuously improve the safety, quality and efficiency of their work.

• There should be reliable systems of resource allocation against service demand, clinical activity and the complexity of care to support value in emergency care.

The programme is not a “once-off plan” but is about continued improvement into the future to design and provide a system of emergency care organised around patients’ needs.

Click here to read the Emergency Medicine Programme Report 2012 (link to pdf 01EMP Report 2012)
Click here for an overview of the Emergency Medicine Programme (link to 02 figure EMP structure)
Click here for further information on the EMP Report Launch 2012 (link to http://www.iaem.ie/index.php/emp-report-2012) or to view photos (internal link to 03 launch photos)
Click here for EMP solutions for current challenges in the National Emergency Care System (pdf to follow)