

25th November 1998

**To: Each Health Board
Mr Bernard Carey – DOH&C
Ms Maria Cronin – IBEC**

Re: Measures to alleviate Nursing Shortage.

Dear Colleague

I refer to previous correspondence and discussions.

Set out below is a summary of the current position on various initiatives to alleviate the nursing shortage.

Overtime

The position is as stated in our letter of 3/11/98. Your attention is drawn to the penultimate sentence. Overtime rates apply only in respect of time in excess of the normal working week i.e. 39 hours. Overtime rates do not apply to job sharers working in excess of 19.5 hours in any week or to any time in excess of 19.5 hours and less than 39 hours.

Job Sharing

HSEA has agreed with the Nursing Unions to revise the current job sharing scheme to provide for greater flexibility within a regulated framework. It is not intended at this stage to extend the scheme to arrangements whereby employees attend for less than 50% of the wholtime attendance liability. Rather the immediate objective is to facilitate increased attendance by current job sharers and potential employees in excess of the 50% of the wholtime attendance liability.

These new arrangements will require prior discussions initially with Health Service employers and then Nursing Unions. It is important to reiterate that such discussions are taking place in the context of a nursing shortage and that whatever arrangements emerge will facilitate greater nursing presence where this is required.

It is important that health service employers do not enter into any formal agreement with individuals prior to the completion of these discussions.

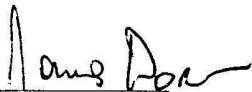
Incremental Credit

- a) At the Conciliation Conference on 3/11/98 it was agreed that health service employers would, with effect from that date, give full incremental credit to nurses on permanent appointment for all genuine nursing experience in Ireland and abroad. This flexibility and discretion is seen as a facility to enhance the ability of health service employers to recruit nurses.
- b) The HSEA has also indicated it's willing to remove the 7th point barrier on incremental progression for temporary nurses. It is proposed that this will be implemented on a phased basis over a number of years i.e. in 1999 the barrier will be raised to the 8th point and in 2000 to the 9th point etc.

The INO are seeking full incremental credit for all temporary nurses. No Agreement has been reached on this point and the matter will be the subject of a Labour Court Hearing.

We will keep you informed of any further developments.

Yours sincerely



James Doran

HEAD OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS