

Press Release

The Environmental Health Officers Association Yearbook 2004/5 Launch Harvey's Point Hotel, Lough Eske, Donegal Town, Donegal.

The Chairperson of the North Western Branch of the Environmental Health Officers Association, Ms Emer McShea welcomes the Chairman of the Association, Ms Ann Marie Part, Mr Pat Harvey, Chief Officer of the Health Service Executive, North Western Area, members of the Food Safety Authority, members of the Office of Tobacco Control, members of the Health Service Executive, local and national members of the Association and invited guests to the launch of the EHOA Yearbook 2004/5 in Harveys Point, Donegal.

Speaking at the launch, Ms Part expressed her delight to be at an event in Donegal, the first of its type to be hosted by the North Western Branch, as Donegal is very special to her. Ms Part's parents hail from Ardara, Carrigart and she always feels at home in this part of the country.

For over 50 years, environmental health officers have been at the forefront in protecting and improving public health, through undertaking activities aimed at preventing people from becoming ill. The EHOA can be justifiably proud of the contribution made by environmental health pioneers to health protection through action on unsatisfactory housing, unsafe food, dirty water supplies, inadequate sanitation and accumulations of waste. This work has developed into further public protection activities, such as food standards, air quality, communicable disease surveillance and health promotion.

The EHOA is the professional representative body for over 500 environmental health officers in Ireland.

The EHOA have demonstrated the importance of their role in tackling contemporary health challenges, for example cancer and coronary heart disease by undertaking the implementation of the ban on the consumption of tobacco products in the workplace alongside their colleagues in the Health and Safety Authority.

The success of this ban can be clearly seen by the high level of compliance in all aspects of Irish society and the co-operation all those involved in the enforcement of this momentous public health initiative have received, from those in the service industry, in the working environment and from the general public.

The Environmental Health Officers Association would like to acknowledge the co-operation they have received from all sectors throughout the last year and look forward to continuing co-operation in the future.

The Environmental Health Officers Association are continuing to keep a watchful eye on areas that are seen to be the traditional role of the EHO but are also scanning the horizon for other areas that have arisen as having a concern for the public health of the nation.

We frequently see environmental issues that may have health implications or health issues that may have environmental causes.

EHO's may not have a statutory role in certain areas but we should always have a voice and an opinion in all aspects of public health both nationally and internationally.

2006 is an important year for the EHOA as we host the International Federation of Environmental Health 9th World Congress in Trinity College, Dublin.

It is an event for which we have been planning for a considerable time and for which we are seeking to attract a large representation from around the world.

We hope that colleagues from less developed nations as well as the developed world will come together to share their experience, knowledge and practical skills in dealing with those factors in the environment which impact on our health.

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