



77 Camden Street Lower, Dublin D02XE80
T: 01-5568269 E: info@ipposi.ie W: www.ipposi.ie

**IPPOSI submission to public consultation:
Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)
Statement of Strategy 2023-2025**

Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science & Industry - IPPOSI

Board: David McMahon (Chair), Sarah O'Connor, Prof Gianpiero Cavalleri, Eleanor Hannon, Prof Orla Hardiman
Dr Louise Hopper, Joan Johnston, Prof Jason Last, Conchúir MacGloinn, Dr Patrick Harrison
Ruth McIver, Gráinne O'Leary, Harriet Doig (Secretary), Julie Power, Rachel Morrogh, Prof Gaye Stephens

Registered Company Number: 408258 CHY No: 17079 CRA: 20062934

Introduction

IPPOSI recognises that the vision for person-centred care set out by Sláintecare will not be achieved without a well-trained, adequately-resourced, person-centred health workforce. An under-educated and untrained nursing and midwifery staff would exacerbate some of the inequalities within our health system and it would result in it being unsustainable, unsafe and unacceptable to our patients. Education is, therefore, a key concern for all stakeholders in line with UN Sustainable Development Goal 3.8.

IPPOSI, as a patient-led, partnership-based organisation in Ireland, strongly believes that collaborations and partnerships need to be built between patient groups/people with lived experience and the nursing & midwifery training bodies. NMBI have a key role to play in influencing and promoting these new types of person-centered partnerships in Ireland.

ERB 2022

NMBI have correctly placed the 13 recommendations that involve NMBI from the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022 – *A Pathway for developing and strengthening the role of the Nurse & Midwife*” (ERB 2022) to the forefront in the strategy statement. We acknowledge that many of these recommendations require projects and approaches extending beyond the lifetime of this statement of strategy and will require collaboration with a full spectrum of stakeholders.

Overall feedback on NMBI strategy 2023-2025

We believe the strategy statement would benefit from placing greater emphasis on meeting patient/service user/public needs, as well as those of NMBI professions, with more frequent inclusion of patients/the public as key stakeholders and partners in the text. By including specific references to patients and the public as recommended below, this emphasis becomes much more real for NMBI patient/public stakeholders.

Descriptions of patient & public involvement (PPI) are becoming pervasive in the Irish health system, across policy, service and research. The NMBI mission, vision and values would benefit from a definition and associated descriptors of PPI to be reflected in this new strategy, in line with ‘right touch regulation’, in order for PPI to be implemented in a consistent basis.

In addition, a clear articulation of what a person-centred approach means, in a way that patients, the public, your professions, colleagues and others can understand and use to hold you to account, would be a significant addition to the strategy. Patients and the public, your professions and partners should experience co-production as the NMBI habitual approach to the development of educational standards as well as ensuring better public understanding of your professions and of the role of NMBI. This co-production approach should cover, for example, co-production of curricula, complaints mechanisms, appeals processes, regulatory and governance terms of reference, strategic and performance reporting documents.

If NMBI agree on the importance of greater involvement of patients & the public in transformative N&M education, then PPI must be seen as a vital ingredient in all N&M education within all colleges and teaching hospitals. NMBI should promote the creation and support for roles for patient representatives on, for example, curriculum review working groups, new curriculum development, patients as co-teachers and mentors, patient evaluators.

Finally, a focus on the digitalisation of health care is rightly included within the strategy with specific reference to the Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Capability Framework published earlier this year from the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD). From an IPPOSI perspective, the education and training of nursing & midwifery professions on digital transformation should have a large emphasis on PPI/person-centred approaches. It is our belief that health information is patient information, and approaches to manage health information and tools for using and sharing health information should reflect the central role of the patient in managing their own health information. The addition of specific actions in the strategy in this regard would benefit the strategy overall.

Why have patient & public involvement in nursing & midwifery education?

Patient experience and perspective is now a very important element in health system design and service delivery. The thinking behind this is that patient (or person-) centredness helps to drive up the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and acceptability of health services; this then has 'participatory dividends' and a huge impact on health outcomes and health system finances. Health Education England captured these multiple benefits succinctly in a recent website post¹ and the evidence base verifying these benefits for both patients, education providers and nursing & midwifery professions alike is growing².

Some PPI is evident in undergraduate nursing training in Ireland but less so in postgraduate training – whereas some trainee specialist programmes include patients, there is a lack of consistency, resources and support in the approaches being used. This reflects both a need and an opportunity to revise and strengthen the role of patients as educators themselves for future generations of nursing & midwifery professionals in Ireland. This should go beyond tokenistic approaches, towards more sustainable, well-supported PPI/layperson involvement in the design & delivery of the ultimate education/training product.

Role of patient organisations

Patient organisations in Ireland must become proactive and link up with their local nursing & midwifery education programmes. Talking with the curriculum authorities, the teaching institutes and the course directors will open up dialogue and discussion. As the largest network of patient organisations in the country, IPPOSI is willing and able to play an active

¹ [Patient and public involvement in nurse education | Health Education England \(hee.nhs.uk\)](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/patient-and-public-involvement-in-nurse-education)

² Topping & Pedersen. Methods for involvement of patients, public and users in academic nursing education: A scoping review. Nordic Journal of Nursing research; March 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20571585221085989>

role in promoting, encouraging and supporting patient organisations in this regard. This will require active partnership with NMBI and other relevant stakeholders to ensure this can be effective and appropriate.

The most valuable commodity that patient organisations can share with N&M education decision-makers is their experience and perspective. Patients have a very good idea what kind of health care services and support they need from their healthcare professionals. Patients also have a very good idea on what are the most effective, skills, attitudes, values and beliefs possessed by healthcare professionals. These need to be operationalized into N&M curriculum and training.

Patient organisations can involve themselves in a number of aspects of N&M education including curriculum development and delivery, student assessment, quality assurance and governance issues. In addition, Individual patients or ‘experts by experience’ can contribute for example through the ‘patient voice and story’, teaching clinical and communications skills, as well as co-teaching with members of the faculty.

IPPOSI is supporting the embedding of ‘patients as educators’ across all healthcare professional regulators in Ireland and is liaising with the Medical Council, the Pharmaceutical Society and education providers in this regard.

Need for ‘PPI Training’ content

The role(s) of patients in delivering education and training is outlined above. There is a (parallel) need for undergraduate and postgraduate nursing & midwifery programmes to include education around the theory, approaches, international best practice of PPI and co-production. A number of online resources are available to leverage in this regard ^{3,4,5}

³ [Co-production: what it is and how to do it | SCIE](#)

⁴ <https://involve.org.uk/resources/methods/co-production>

⁵ [Resources Archive • PPI Ignite Network \(ppinetwork.ie\)](#)

Recommendations from IPPOSI in relation to NMBI Strategy (2023-2025):

Mission, Vision, Values

Figure 6 includes 'the public' as one of the different stakeholders that NMBI partners with. The text above the diagram lists 'representatives of patients and service users' as groups that NMBI works collaboratively/partners with.

Recommendations:

1. We believe that patients/service users are a KEY stakeholder in the development, communication and review of the N&M education mission. Inclusion of this KEY stakeholder, alongside 'the public', in the strategy would reflect well on both the importance and the influence of patients, as equal stakeholders to that of both learners and educators.
2. We suggest that the definition of 'patient/service user representatives' be broadened to 'patients & public partners' to reflect more partnership-based approaches with these stakeholder communities. We therefore propose inclusion of the term 'PPI partners' throughout the strategy to send a much stronger public message to those for whom nursing and midwifery staff serve.
3. It would also be useful from an IPPOSI perspective to know which patient / service representatives are being partnered with, and how they are being approached/appointed by NMBI. IPPOSI advocate for inclusive and transparent selection of PPI partners – ideally focusing on public advertisements and self-expressions of interest which are filtered through a pre-agreed selection criteria. IPPOSI remains available to provide advice on how this can be done consistently, effectively and sustainably.

Powered by Partnership

IPPOSI agree that the partnership approach to NMBI strategy implementation is crucial to strengthen the impact and adoption of the recommendations.

It is also key that education and training is co-produced between patients and trainees, and that both nurses and midwives have an individual understanding of their patients and their personal health journey. Some education providers already address this, but there must be greater encouragement by NMBI to do more in practice.

The standards and criteria that apply to the Educators (those responsible for the delivery, management or support of nursing & midwifery education programmes), should equally

apply to patients/people with ‘lived experience’ who are increasingly approached to become lecturers/educators but are done in a somewhat inconsistent fashion. This includes the policies and processes for Recruitment, Appointment, Training, Support and Evaluation for PPI partners who possess the key attributes of wanting to share their expertise and experience as well as being able to facilitate discussions. Patient-led groups such as IPPOSI, in addition to the PPI Ignite Network across all universities in Ireland are a willing source of knowledge, connections and advice in this area.

Recommendations:

1. Make a clear NMBI statement that Nursing & Midwife education and training should be more focused on meaningful patient involvement, including in-service co-design.
2. State a new NMBI ambition of putting the needs of the patient at the heart of the education, training and workforce planning process.
3. Commit to establishing a Patient Advisory Forum to provide advice to NMBI, and its Advisory Groups to ensure that the needs of the patient are at the heart of the education, training and workforce planning process and ensure a better connection between the decisions and regulations NMBI will make and the people they will ultimately effect.
4. Organise a multi-stakeholder workshop in 2024 on patients’ and public involvement in N&M Education to demonstrate NMBI’s leadership in this area.

Priorities

IPPOSI has focused on the ‘Promoting’, ‘Progressing’ and ‘Partnership’ priorities

Promoting >>Ongoing Key Strategic Actions>>Education & Guidance

Current Action	Proposed Changes
<i>Ensure our standards for education programmes include leadership and collaborative decision-making emphases to support nurse and midwifery representation in decision making and leadership forums.</i>	From a patient/public perspective, this action is somewhat unclear?

Progressing>>Ongoing Key Strategic Actions>>Education & Guidance

Current Action	Proposed Changes
<i>Ensure our education standards reflect the practice settings and competencies required in the evolving Irish healthcare model and the variety of settings in which our registrants provide services including non-acute setting such as primary care centres, GP practices, and in people’s homes.</i>	In terms of achieving Slaintecare ambitions, NMBI should promote the involvement of patients on community schemes such as family-attachment schemes, mentoring programmes and other community-based programmes, so that nurses and midwives can appreciate the social and economic determinants of health affecting their patients.

Progressing>>Ongoing Key Strategic Actions>>Our organisation

Current Action	Proposed Changes
<i>Hold lecture series and other events at which we will share data and provide a forum for conversation and collaboration about the future of the professions.</i>	Include a reference to a workshop on PPI (see recommendation above)
<i>Invest in the skills required to deliver on our strategy. We will do this through an annual staff training plan and a 3-year Board training plan.</i>	Staff and Board training plan should include training on PPI Theory as well as person-centered approaches to healthcare

Progressing>> New initiatives>> Education & Guidance

Current Action	Proposed Changes
<i>ERB 2022 - Higher education institutions, the Department of Health, the HSE and the NMBI, through a high-level working group, to review the undergraduate nursing and midwifery curricula.</i>	In terms of reviewing the curricula, Patients and public partners should be added to this high-level group, as well as the various other governance mechanisms – panels, committees – responsible for the development, oversight, and evaluation of education for learners. A minimum of two representatives appointed for each opportunity. This would ensure that patients and public partners input into the desired learner education outcomes, as identified by patients.

ERB 2022 - Review the standards and requirements for undergraduate programmes and practice placements settings to ensure we are preparing the next generation of nurses and midwives for the healthcare settings and models of care that they will find themselves working in.

As part of this standards review, criteria for the standards should strongly emphasise that PPI partners are a KEY stakeholder in nursing & midwifery education. If the role of patients & the public is restricted to 'outreach' or 'may include public/lay representatives' then this reflects poorly on the ability of this key stakeholder to be influential in N&M education. This can be rectified by outlining roles and responsibilities this KEY stakeholder can play in ensuring that the quality of N&M education in Ireland is aligned with international standards. Otherwise, it will appear that patients and laypersons are bystanders in this process, and mere 'subjects' of care.

Annex I – Who is IPPOSI?

The Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science and Industry (IPPOSI) – is a patient-led organisation that works with patients, government, industry, science and academia to put patients at the heart of health innovation.

To that end we hold meetings, workshops and training days that promote this objective, whether it is in the area of rare diseases, clinical trials, Health Technology Assessment, health information, digital health – or any other relevant topic that will promote patient understanding, and patient involvement in the treatment and decision-making processes that affect them in Ireland and Europe.

Through more than 15 years of forging close links and alliances between Patients, Clinicians, Scientists, Industry, Regulators and Policy Makers, IPPOSI has been the primary contact and conduit for patients interested in engaging more actively in the health innovation and education processes. IPPOSI is also recognised as a key influencer contributing towards the overall development of Health Research Policy in Ireland.

IPPOSI membership is open to all groups with an interest in healthcare and research and development; Patient Representatives, Academic, Science or the Healthcare Industry.

IPPOSI Board

Patient Organisations

David McMahon, *Irish Skin Foundation (Chairperson)*,
Sarah O'Connor, *Asthma Society of Ireland (Vice-Chairperson)*
Julie Power, *Vasculitis Ireland Awareness*
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IPPOSI Membership

105 Patient Organisations
126 Patient Advocates
244 Academic Scientists
23 Healthcare Industry Companies
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