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Combining and integrating life /social sciences and citizen trainers in nurse education - a n. ireland initiative

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Before commencement of the academic year 2012/2013 the social sciences, public health and the biomedical sciences were taught to separate modules reinforcing the perception off separate disciplines

As a result of significant discussion and interdisciplinary negotiation the life, social sciences public health/ health education were drawn together in the one module for the academic year 2012/13. The module provides the undergraduate students with an introduction to an understanding of Life Sciences, psychology, sociology and public health and their contribution within the context of nursing and midwifery. The intention is to provide the student with a more integrated understanding and teaching focussed on health promotion rather than disease management.

One of the particular areas of interest and sensitivity is engaging the students to the context of the Northern Ireland civil unrest (the Troubles); this involves a co-educational initiative with service users. The tutorials are substantially led by those who had been involved with and experienced loss and trauma as a result of the conflict as 'citizen trainers,' in improving students understanding of the impact of 'The Troubles' on patients and clients affected by the events and to help better provide a quality of care. This approach is relatively unique and clearly reflects the School's policy of progressively engaging with users and carers of nursing and midwifery services as co-educators to students. Only now could perhaps such a sensitive level of training to student nurses and midwives be delivered across communities with potential educative lessons for other communities experiencing significant civil unrest and sectarian conflict.

Biography:

Dr John Power and Johanna McMullan are both lecturers in the School of Nursing and Midwifery Queen's University Belfast. Johanna McMullan is currently a Ph.D. student. They jointly coordinate the life, social science and public health module 'Health and Well-Being' delivered to undergraduate nursing and midwifery students. They both emanate from significant clinical backgrounds with many years in clinical practice as front-line clinicians, ward or unit managers or service managers, before returning to education. They both have an increasing range of joint publications significantly reflecting from their teaching and learning experience.