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**Irish Nurses Organisation**  
*Cumann na nAltraí Gaelacha*

General Secretary  
**Liam Doran**

LD/MR

19 June 2009

Mr Eugene Donoghue  
Chief Executive Officer  
An Bord Altranais  
18-21 Carysfort Avenue  
Blackrock  
Co Dublin

**Re: Nurses and Midwives - Industrial Action**

Dear Mr Donoghue

I refer to my previous letter, dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009, and your reply, of 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009, regarding the above.

Your reply has now been considered, by my Executive Council, and I am to advise you that, in our view, the critical issues we identified in my earlier letter remain outstanding and have not been clarified by your recent letter of 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

In the context of An Bord's continuing review of this matter, and with reference to the letter now issued to every nurse and midwife, this Organisation is again seeking specific guidance/direction, for nurses and midwives, with regard to the following:

1. We note An Bord's statement as follows:

*"We expect nurses/midwives to be supported as they endeavour to apply their ethical standards".*

However we must ask for a definitive statement, from An Bord, with regard to what a nurse/midwife should do when this "expected support" is not provided by her/his employer, or appropriate authority, therefore leaving them in what they determine to be an unsafe/unsatisfactory clinical care environment.

2. What should a nurse or midwife do, when issues, such as staff shortages, have been fully processed, through all available industrial relations procedures, including Rights Commissioner findings, independent third party reviews and/or Labour Court recommendations, but the employer/appropriate authority refuses to accept the outcome thus continuing a clinical environment which has, at that time, been confirmed as being unsafe/unsatisfactory?

**SERVING NURSES & MIDWIVES**

3. We are again seeking the correspondence, we assume you have issued to hospital management in Sligo General Hospital, seeking their views on why 600 plus nurses found it necessary to take industrial action arising from staff shortages.

It remains this Organisation's view that An Bord Altranais, under its statutory remit, can, and should, provide definitive guidance, to nurses/midwives, in situations where unsafe or unsatisfactory clinical care environments have been identified.

Furthermore it is our belief that the failure of An Bord, to provide this specific advice/leadership and, in particular, to raise directly with employers/appropriate authorities the concerns of nurses/midwives, is an abdication of An Bord's remit with regard to protecting the public and respecting the judgement of the registered nurse/midwife.

While recognising the speed with which you responded to our original letter we are again asking, due to the continued urgency on this matter, that you would issue a further reply, to us, with very specific guidance, as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



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**LIAM DORAN**  
**General Secretary**