



Introducing positive change - The launch of the JETS Workforce programme in the Republic of Ireland

In recognition of the JETS Workforce programme being implemented in the Republic of Ireland in 2023, we caught up with Lucy Byrne who is the nurse lead with the HSE Endoscopy Programme. Lucy has contributed to the JAG and JETS Workforce programme immensely both as a JAG nurse assessor and recently as an ENDO1 faculty. We spoke with her regarding the impact of the JETS Workforce programme within services in the Republic of Ireland since it's roll-out in 2023.


You have been heavily involved in setting up the JETS Workforce programme in the Republic of Ireland. Can you please describe your involvement, and what made you want to get involved with the programme?

Informal feedback from nurses identified a gap in training and education opportunities in endoscopy. The majority of hands on skills training courses for endoscopy nurses is delivered by industry in Ireland.

In 2022 the HSE Endoscopy Programme invited nurses working in endoscopy and related roles to take part in a training needs analysis survey. This was part of a scoping exercise to identify the training and education needs of these nurses.

What we discovered is that the knowledge and skills for nurses working in endoscopy and related roles have advanced considerably over the past number of years, and as a result, the survey verified a strong interest in an eLearning and competency based framework training programme.

The JETS Workforce training programme offered this type of structured approach to training and education.



What has the experience of setting up the programme in the Republic of Ireland been so far? What responses have you encountered? Have there been any particular challenges or highlights? If you have had any challenges, how do you think we can best respond to these?

The JETS Workforce training programme was launched in Ireland in May 2023. The HSE Endoscopy Programme have reviewed the JETS workforce programme to ensure the content and guidelines are relevant and applicable to endoscopy nurses in Ireland.

The HSE Endoscopy Programme have worked collaboratively with the JETS Workforce team during this time to ensure the launch was straightforward and easily accessible for services in Ireland.

There has been positive and encouraging feedback to date from nurses interested in undertaking the ENDO courses.

In particular there has been a lot of interest in the ENDO 3 management and leadership course. We are excited the JETS Workforce team are running this course on two dates in September in Ireland.

What do you think the benefits of the JETS Workforce programme are? This can include both the level of individual staff members, as well as the level of the hospital/service (or even healthcare and patients more broadly).

JETS Workforce is linked to the JAG quality standards for accreditation. This means the endoscopy workforce in Ireland have the option to undertake a training and education programme that provides a structured approach to learning as well being standardised and linked to JAG quality assurance and high quality patient care in endoscopy.

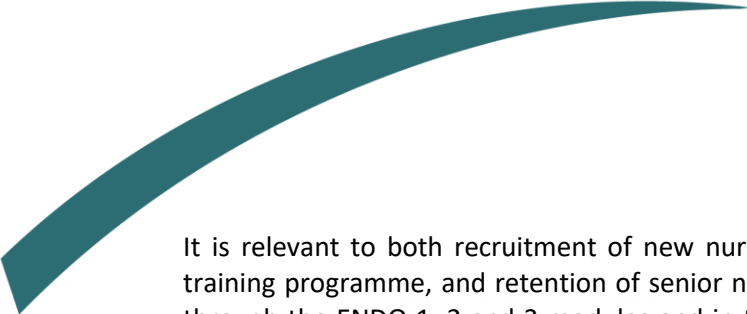
The JETS Workforce training programme can also help to monitor staff training and development. There is a clear pathway nurses can work towards to achieve competency through completion of DOPs, reflective statements and witness statements. As there are various ENDO courses to complete it will benefit new endoscopy nurses, senior experienced endoscopy nurses as well as endoscopy nurse managers and leaders in the service. It will also benefit nurses who carry out endoscopy procedures in other locations, such as theatres.

In the UK, endoscopy – much like most of the healthcare system – has been under considerable strain in terms of staffing, increasing referrals and growing waiting lists. Is this a similar experience in the Republic of Ireland?

Yes. Nursing recruitment and retention is a nationwide problem.

Service demands on the endoscopy workforce can prove challenging to release nurses in order to facilitate endoscopy education and training. Challenges are also recognised when training new staff in busy units with a high turnover of patients.

The JETS Workforce training programme is flexible to these service demands and can be completed in stages.



It is relevant to both recruitment of new nurses who can undertake the JETS Workforce training programme, and retention of senior nurses who can progress their learning needs through the ENDO 1, 2 and 3 modules and in turn provide evidence based training to new staff.

How has your involvement with the JETS Workforce programme made you reflect upon your working/ training in endoscopy? What kinds of training and development opportunities would you have liked to have had earlier in your career, or in the future? What kind of changes have you experienced in the culture of the workforce?

Yes. I started my training in endoscopy 20 years ago and training at that time was peer to peer support and training from industry. Endoscopy has progressed so much since then with new technology, advancement of endoscopy nurse roles and more complex therapeutic procedures. The role of the endoscopy nurse and the necessary knowledge and skills to work in endoscopy has evolved and grown to reflect these advancements.

As the world of endoscopy has progressed there is now also a wide variety of career opportunities for nurses working in endoscopy and endoscopy related roles to progress into. Nurses provide high quality levels of expertise relevant to their area of practice in Endoscopy to further improve the patient pathway, patient safety and patient experience in Endoscopy. Career opportunities include Nurse Endoscopist, Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP), Endoscopy Clinical Validation nurses, Pre-assessment nurses, Triage nurses, Nurses working in capsule endoscopy, Clinical facilitators in endoscopy, Endoscopy Nurse Managers as well as options to progress a career in Endoscope Decontamination.

Finally, can you please provide me with a short profile of yourself (how many years have you worked in the sector, what roles have you held in your career etc.)?

I have worked in the endoscopy setting for over 20 years and have accumulated valuable knowledge and experience during this time. I am the Nurse Manager (CNM2/Band 7) in the Endoscopy Unit in Sligo University Hospital since 2015.

I am also Nurse Lead with the HSE Endoscopy Programme. The Endoscopy Programme team consists of a Programme Manager, Clinical Lead, Training Lead, Projects Officer and Nurse Lead.

Finally I joined the JAG assessment team and completed my training as a JAG nurse assessor in 2023 which has provided me with further knowledge and experience in the JAG accreditation process both in the UK and ROI.