



SICKO...Coming Soon To Cork?

'Sicko' is the name of the new Michael Moore film exposing the US health service for what it is – a profit hungry machine that puts money first and people second. In the good ol' US of A, if you don't pay when you get sick then it's tough luck.

Beacon Medical Group is our very own Irish version of Sicko. They are the spearhead of Mary Harney's new 'co-location' plan for the hospital service in Ireland and in January they submitted a proposal to build a large 'private' hospital on the grounds of Cork's University Hospital (CUH) in Wilton.

Why would a group of business men with a track record in property and commercial developments turn their hand to building and running a hospital? The answer is simple – Harney and Co are offering them a prime site to build on; they are also promised big subsidies and Beacon is guaranteed a nice, large slice of the lucrative 'privately insured' healthcare market. In return Beacon are doing their bit to fulfil the Fianna Fáil/PD/Green Party government strategy to encourage privatisation and private business operation in every area of life in Ireland.

The Irish health service already operates on apartheid lines. There's a fast track for those with health insurance and long waiting times for the rest of us. The Beacon operation at CUH will make this situation even worse. Here's why:

1. Just The Best Jobs Please! Beacon will cherry pick the work they take on. They'll accept the 'high end' well paid jobs (via the National Treatment Purchase Fund) and leave the chronic essential care that is labour intensive to the public



Cork University Hospital 2010?

service. This will drain even more resources from the public system.

2. Anti-Union: Beacon will promote work practices that are anti-union and about 'being flexible'. 'Flexibility' is just a catch phrase to take orders from management and it's what the HSE bosses dream of. Beacon will be promoted in the media as a 'model' in this regard.

3. Free-Loading: Beacon will build on public land. But its hospital will actually be physically linked to the existing CUH so as to be able to avail of public facilities – paid for from PAYE taxes!

The arrival of Beacon at CUH in Cork is far from a done-deal. There is opposition but it's not linked. There's concern but no one is quite sure what to do next. We can stop Beacon but this means joining together. At the centre of any opposition must be health workers in Cork and in particularly those at CUH. Over the next while anarchists will be putting out more information about the need to oppose Beckon. If you interested in helping us do this then get in touch.

Find out more at: www.wsm.ie/health

May Day in Cork Get Involved!



As many people know May Day is international workers day. Across the world it's a day of protest and struggle. It's also a day to celebrate solidarity. In Cork a new May Day Committee that includes the Independent Workers Union is meeting regularly to make May Day in Cork even bigger and better. We need you! If you are interested in helping to organise events, or if you have ideas or you just want to meet and help out, we'd love to see you along. The May Day Committee meets every fortnight at the IWU offices on North Main Street. Contact us at maydaycommittee@gmail.com for details of the next meeting.

Contacts

Cork Shell to Sea :
>> corksheltosea@gmail.com

Independent Workers Union:
>> 55 North Main Street

CAZ Social Space & Bookshop :
>> 61 Barrack Street

Cork Women's Right to Choose
>> cork.womens.right.to.choose@gmail.com

Putting Politics Before Health

Abortion is a criminal offence in Ireland, even in cases in which a woman is carrying a non-viable foetus, is pregnant as a result of rape or incest or where pregnancy threatens her health. The state has not clarified the circumstances in which abortion to save the life of the women is permissible.

The following is an interview with a member of the Cork Women's Right to Choose (CWRTC), an activist group campaigning for abortion rights in Cork:

WSM: Abortion is a touchy subject in Ireland, what are your opinions on this subject?

CWRTC: We believe that Irish women and all women have the right to decide if they are ready to have a child, in fact British statistics show that 19 Irish women a day believe in those rights and travel to the UK, despite this the Irish state continues to treat abortion as a criminal offence rather than a health issue.

WSM: How did you get involved in campaigning? And why?

CWRTC: I think it was the X case that got me going. In 1983 while the referendum campaign was going on I was very angry at the blindness of some of the people who smugly promoted the amendment, especially those who said pregnancy was never a threat to women's lives and who implied that anyone who argued for abortion on any grounds was immoral. I had 3 small children and I didn't really know what to do to help the campaign. I remember how depressing it was to hear the referendum result. I couldn't believe

people voted for something so oppressive of women. My first real involvement in campaigning came during the demonstrations and meetings in response to the X case. On why I got involved, I suppose I felt a sense of outrage at what happened to the girl in the X case, that she was dragged through the courts and that so much more than her body was violated.



WSM: How do you describe the current situation in Ireland?

CWRTC: It discriminates against women, denies them dignity and autonomy, endangers women's lives and health, and can inhibit their participation in paid employment, education and training and in social and political life. The current situation is an oppressive and inequitable one. Not only does it inflict silent and solitary journeys on women, it results in a two-tiered system of eligibility for health care, where abortion services are accessible only to those who are free to travel to Britain or other destinations and can afford to do so. The restrictive nature of abortion information and the difficulties in travelling particularly impact on women from rural areas, minors, women living in poverty and on certain ethnic groups such as Travellers, and on asylum seekers.

WSM: What is the ideal law that you would like to see here?

CWRTC: I think getting abortion out of the criminal and constitutional law (as in Canadian law) is important but I think the most important thing is that women are not subordinated and that the decisions about their fertility should be theirs and not made by law makers. Talking about choice is a bit vague though without talking about making sure that all women have ready access to counselling, having genuine choices and that class and money (and other factors) cease to be issues - as they are now.

WSM: So what is happening in Ireland and in Cork?

CWRTC: There are many groups lobbying in Ireland for change, and it is changing rapidly as young and old speak out against these injustices. We have an active group in Cork who meet fortnightly to plan different events. Last year we organised workshops, gatherings, and regular stalls. We are working on outreach and have many supporters writing articles also. This year we have a workshop at the Ladyfest, and a public meeting for September. I'm sure you will also see us on the streets at our monthly stalls on Patrick's Street.

WSM: So what message do you have for our readers?

CWRTC: I would say join the pro-choice protest! And talk with people about it, we have regular meetings in Cork and an email list to get information -

Just write to: cork.womens.right.to.choose@gmail.com

Find out more at:

www.wsm.ie/abortion

Anarchism & the WSM

After ten years of Celtic Tiger Ireland the old lies are beginning to unravel; the politicians, the property developers, and the business class have made a packet, while the rest of us have seen an attack on our services, corrupt government and environmental destruction. Now, as we face into a recession,

we're left with a health service on the brink of collapse, water not fit for drinking, and a government making noises about an attack on wages. But things are beginning to change, across Ireland people are beginning to organise and fight for social change.

As anarchists, the WSM are fighting for a society organised for human happiness, a society without the need for

leaders and bosses and where the wealth of the world is owned in common.

We have branches in Cork, Belfast and Dublin, and are working in a number of campaigns, including the Shell to Sea campaign, the Campaign for Decent Public Health System, and pro-choice activism. WSM Cork meets every week, so feel free to come along.

Workers Solidarity Movement

www.wsm.ie

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