**For immediate release. Saturday 6th October 2012**

The Irish Hospital Consultants Association is concluding an intensive round of briefings for members on the proposals from the Labour Relations Commission of 17th September. Following today’s Annual Conference, the Association will now be putting the proposals to each individual member for their views.

The Conference also voted by an overwhelming majority to continue with its practice of over twenty years whereby consultants will individually decide if they can accept proposed changes to their contract terms. Therefore as outlined throughout all the PSA discussion the IHCA will not be entering into a collective agreement on the proposals. This reflects the views of members at all briefing meetings conducted to date.

Members also expressed their anger at the revised terms to be offered to newly appointed consultants. These terms will further exacerbate the already difficult recruitment environment where over 20% of advertised posts in 2011 could not be filled. Any further delay in recruiting consultants of the calibre required will seriously damage the implementation of the acute care programmes to which the Association is committed. Delaying the programmes is not in the interests of sick patients or taxpayers.

**Ends**

**For further information contact:**

**Mr Denis Evoy, President or**

**Martin Varley, Secretary General,**

**087 2274099**