

Preparing for the Future: the importance of CPD



Joanne Broggy, Dr. John O'Reilly, Prof. Norman Reid, Miranda Stephenson, Dr. George McClelland, Co-Director NCE-MSTL, Dr. Peter Childs.

The 2009 ChemEd Conference was held in the University of Limerick (17 October) and was attended by over 70 teachers and educators from across the country. The theme of the day was **'Preparing for the Future: the Importance of CPD for the Chemistry Teacher'**. The conference was organised by the National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and Learning (NCE-MSTL) in collaboration with the SLSS, RSC, ICI and SCI.

Dr. George McClelland, Co-Director of the NCE-MSTL opened the conference saying *"Teacher professional development opportunities have never been more important giving the focus on the necessity to fulfill higher science and mathematics skills requirements for Ireland's success as a knowledge economy."*

The morning session centred on learning and **Prof. Norman Reid**, Emeritus Professor of Science Education University of Glasgow and Honorary Professor of Science Education University of Dundee, talked about how improvements in classroom learning, laboratory learning and problem solving can be enhanced by the concept of pre-learning. He said *'Let us be scientists about teaching and learning'* and talked about how information load is an important factor to consider in order for students to succeed.

In the afternoon, **Miranda Stephenson**, Deputy Director of the National Science Learning Centre York, reinforced the message that science education is completely dependant on the quality of science teaching. She talked about how the shortage of specialist teachers in the UK is leading to low numbers of pupils pursuing science subjects. *'In the UK teacher professional development opportunities are overcoming this problem'* and Miranda closed her talk inviting Irish teachers to embrace continuing professional development so as to enhance enthusiasm and inspiration in science teaching and learning.

All presentations from the conference are available in the National Centre for Excellence website www.nce-mstl.ie