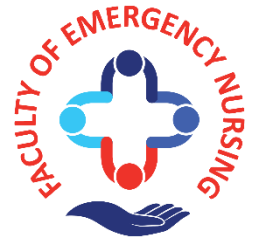


Why Emergency Nurses Are Leaving—And What Might Make Them Stay



Emergency departments have always been intense, but in recent years, the pressure has reached boiling point. Across the UK and Ireland, more and more emergency nurses are walking away—not just from their roles, but from the profession entirely. And while the reasons are complex, the message is becoming louder and clearer: something needs to change.

So why are they leaving?

It's not about a lack of resilience. Emergency nurses are some of the most adaptable, committed professionals in healthcare. They thrive in high-pressure environments. But when constant pressure isn't matched with support, recognition, or opportunity, even the most dedicated nurse begins to burn out.

Staffing shortages, overwhelming workloads, increased violence and aggression, and limited access to training and development have created a perfect storm. Add in the emotional toll of working with trauma and loss on a daily basis, and it's no wonder morale is low.

Many ED nurses feel like they're treading water—working harder than ever, but without progression, acknowledgment, or even time to reflect. In some departments, even basic education is sacrificed due to rota gaps. When nurses feel stuck, unsupported, or unseen, walking away starts to feel like the only option.

But what might make them stay?

Retention isn't just about pay or working hours—it's about *value*. Emergency nurses want to feel competent, confident, and connected to their purpose. They want to be able to grow. They want their expertise to be recognised, their voices to be heard, and their learning to be ongoing—not a one-time induction.

That's where solutions like those from the Faculty of Emergency Nursing (FEN) become game-changers.

FEN provides development that's *designed for ED nurses*, by ED nurses. It doesn't demand time away from the floor for traditional classroom learning—instead, it offers **flexible, focused sessions** that can be accessed online at a time that suits the nurse. Each webinar runs for around two hours, offering rich, in-depth content that's practical, relevant, and ready to use. Nurses can pause, revisit, and complete the session in their own time—before submitting a reflection-based evaluation that cements learning and counts towards CPD and revalidation.

FEN also recognises the importance of visible growth. Through its **vocational qualifications at Levels 6 and 7**, emergency nurses can progress their careers without having to leave the clinical environment. They're assessed where they work, by assessors who understand what the job actually involves.

Crucially, FEN qualifications *show* emergency nurses that their development matters. That someone has invested in their skills, their future, and their wellbeing.

By creating structured pathways, FEN helps nurses feel like they have a direction. By offering CPD that's relevant, respected, and reflective of ED life, it gives them the tools to thrive.

We won't stop emergency nurses from leaving by asking them to “cope better” or “do more.” We need to listen, to invest, and to reframe development as something that empowers—not burdens.

Because the nurses who stay? They're the ones who feel seen, supported, and proud of what they do.

FEN helps make that possible.