

# Welcome to National Leadership & Development Forum 2015

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**Fionnuala Cook OBE**

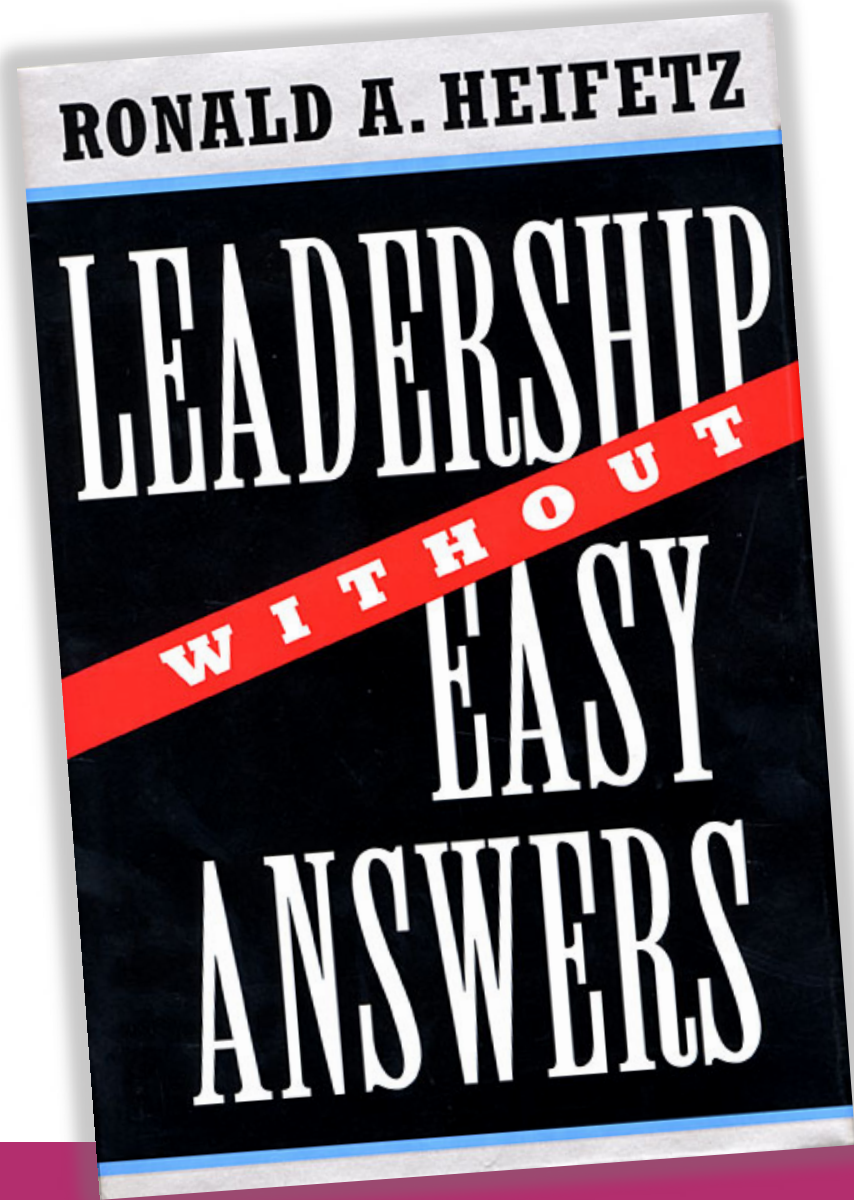
President, Hospital Caterers Association



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# Foodmatters

HCA NATIONAL LEADERSHIP &  
DEVELOPMENT FORUM 2015

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FIONNUALA COOK

OFFICIAL OPENING AND WELCOME SPEECH

THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2015

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted, once again, to welcome you to this Annual Feast of Food and Fellowship. Many of you are old friends from previous years but some delegates and exhibitors are new. Let me tell you, you are going to have a Good Time. You are going to enjoy yourself. You are going to learn a lot and expand your horizons and meet new people and make new contacts. Wait to you see what the organisers have laid on for you at the President's Dinner and the wild time we'll have at the Branch Dinner.

This year's Event is not a run of the mill Conference, but a thought-provoking and stimulating Leadership Forum.

Make no mistake we know you are leaders already. You are leading in each Hospital kitchen, in each ward, clinic, day centre, psychiatric unit, convalescent ward... You have been aiming for high standards and you have achieved them. You have been recognised by your peers and promoted by your bosses.

So what have you come here to do? I know that some delegates have come to let down their hair and sample whatever pleasures are on offer. Our Vice President Mike Hall did that a few years ago at another Conference and look what happened to his hair.

You can play an active part in today's and tomorrow's Programme. You are going to hear some excellent and amusing speakers. You are going to hear shocking and sad stories of underperformance and even neglect. You are going to hear new ideas and sound advice.

When I think of leadership I think of Ronald Heifetz's wonderful book 'Leadership without Easy Answers'. Heifetz teaches that leadership is not about one person getting a brilliant idea and charging off into battle expecting everyone to follow him. Rather it is about working together to realise better ways of working and better policies and strategies. You are about to learn other speakers ideas of leadership. You will have to decide what paths to follow and what steps to take.

Today our Sessions will illustrate how we 'Create the vision', and tomorrow we are going to be considering [the](#) huge importance of the ward end service - commonly referred to as the 'Last 9 Yards'.

We are here in Scotland in the midst of history being made. Some of that history making should rub off on us. We want to make history by having a Forum for each of us to enjoy and profit from. Our organisations, whether you are in a small unit with 70 beds or a huge hospital with a 1000 people to feed three times a day, will profit from what we are about to learn.

At last year's Conference we saw the keen Scottish team ready and keen to produce a first class Forum in Glasgow. We have sampled their warm hospitality at Alternative Burns Nights and Study Days. I can heartily recommend what they produce.

In the Exhibition Halls you will find the products which have been created and assembled by the leaders in the world of Hospital Catering. Whether you are looking for new machinery or new food or new ways of feeding visitors and staff, you will find new and exciting ranges to sample and discuss and consider and choose among the trade stands and displays in the Exhibition Halls. Make sure you spend time there as it will be to your benefit.

Listen and talk to people, the delegates and exhibitors. Ask questions, strike up friendships and get maximum value from this great event. Tell me, tell the Committee what you think, give us your feedback so we can continue to produce top class and relevant events.

It is such a pleasure to be here and I hope you enjoy yourselves as much as I am going to do.

It is with great pleasure that I declare this Forum open.