

SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of the proceedings of the special meeting of the South Western Area Health Board held in Red Cow Moran's Hotel, Red Cow Complex, Dublin 22, on Monday, 29th January, 2001, at 11.30 a.m.

Present

Mr. P. Aspell
Mr. G. Brady
Cllr. E. Byrne
Ms. A. Harris
Cllr. C. McGrath
Ald. M. Mooney
Cllr. C. O'Connor
Cllr. D. Tipping

Dr. S. Barry
Cllr. C. Byrne
Cllr. T. Cullen
Ms. M. Hoban
Cllr. M. Miley
Dr. B. Murphy
Sen. S. Ó Fearghail

Observers

Mr. G. McGuire

In the Chair

Cllr. C. O'Connor

Officers in Attendance

Mr. P. Donnelly, Chief Executive
Ms. B. Clarke, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. H. Kane, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. R. Mitchell, Director of Communications
Ms. P. Bryan, Senior Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Mr. R. Kavanagh, Senior Manager, Operations
Ms. C. Cuffe, Senior Manager, Operations
Mr. R. Healy, Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Ms. A. Farrell, Administrative Support, Chief Executive's Office

5/2001**CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

- The Chairman informed members that correspondence has been received from Mr. Matt O'Connor, Secretary to the Association of Health Boards in Ireland, advising that the Annual Conference of the Association will take place in the Allingham Arms Hotel, Bundoran, on 30th & 31st March, 2001. Members were encouraged to attend.
- The Chairman advised members that anyone who is interested in attending the "Cross Border Rural Child Care Project" Conference in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan, on Monday, 5th February, 2001, should notify Ms. Annette Farrell in the Chief Executive's Office as soon as possible.

The Chairman reminded members that the Board needed to select two members from the eight nominated members to the Association of Health Boards to serve on the Executive of the Association. This matter will be considered at the Board meeting in February.

The Chairman then invited the Chief Executive to present his report to members regarding service visits.

Prior to presenting his report, the Chief Executive advised members of progress regarding the future construction of a new health centre in the Lucan area. Members were informed that our Board's Estate Management Officer is actively seeking to identify a suitable site in the area for this purpose. In the interim, in recognition of the current difficulties with service delivery for this catchment area, it is planned to develop additional services for the public from the medical centre in Ballyowen. A more detailed report in this regard will be brought to members at the next Board Meeting. Equally important it gives members an opportunity

6/2001**RE: REPORT 1/2001 – REVIEW OF SERVICE VISITS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr Pat Donnelly, Chief Executive, presented Report 1/2001 to members which comprised a summary of the service visits for E.R.H.A. members which have taken place since March 2000 [copy filed with official minute]. The areas covered in the report included the following:-

- Objectives of Service Visits
- Impact on Service Delivery
- Statistical Information
- Reduction/Cancellation of Visits
- Procedures for Visits including notification, procedures adopted, executive attendance, reports
- Recommendations

In conclusion, the Chief Executive emphasised the importance of service visits as a means of informing members of the complexity and wide range of services currently being delivered and in providing them with an opportunity to meet staff engaged in this work. These visits can also assist members in identifying any gaps or deficiencies in services which may need to be addressed at Area Board or E.R.H.A. level. Equally important is giving members an opportunity to see the commitment and enthusiasm of staff and the quality of the work they undertake on behalf of the Board.

Members thanked the Chief Executive for his succinct and comprehensive report and paid tribute to the members of the Protocol and Procedures Committee for their detailed examination of this issue.

Discussion ensued to which Cllr. C. O'Connor, Cllr. C. McGrath, Ms. A. Harris, Cllr. M. Miley, Dr. S. Barry, Ms. M. Hoban, Cllr. E. Byrne, Dr. B. Murphy, Cllr. D. Tipping, Ald. M. Mooney, Mr. G. McGuire, Mr. P. Aspell, Mr. G. Brady, Cllr. C. Byrne, and Sen. S. Ó Fearghail contributed at which the following issues were raised:-

- Members indicated their support for the recommendations included in the Chief Executive's report.
- Members requested that a mechanism/forum be established to allow members to discuss/follow up issues raised at service visits. The recommendation in the Chief Executive's report that a review of service visits be included as an agenda item at the monthly Community Services and Continuing Care Standing Committee was welcomed.
- Members indicated that service visits have been very useful in helping them to acquaint themselves with the wide range of services being provided by health board and voluntary organisations throughout the three area health board regions. They acknowledged the variety and high quality of services currently being delivered and recommended that this should be translated into positive publicity.
- Members requested that consideration should be given to the possibility of arranging visits to facilities involved in providing services connected with the food chain.
- Some members indicated that they found the schedule of visits (3 per week) onerous and were unable to attend a lot of the visits due to their current work commitments, particularly those members whose work involves service provision within the health services.
- It was indicated that many members have difficulties in attending visits on Fridays. It was suggested that consideration be given to approaching the Northern Area Health Board in this regard with a view to altering their schedule to take this into account.
- Members acknowledged the preparatory work and hospitality afforded to them by service providers who are hosting visits and emphasised that every effort should be made to ensure that members' appreciation of these efforts be reflected in the numbers of members in attendance and the general attention to the presentations given at visits.
- The provision of refreshments/lunch at visits was discussed. In this regard, it was indicated that a light lunch would be sufficient in the middle of the day. It was also suggested that members should indicate in advance their ability to attend so that the organisation/service provider can estimate the quantity of food which will be required on the day. The use of a venue "off site" e.g. local pub, hotel, restaurant for the provision of sandwiches/light lunch was also suggested to avoid unnecessary pressure on areas which are not sufficiently equipped to cater for large numbers.
- The possibility of follow up visits to some sites on a rotational basis over the lifetime of the Board to monitor progress, was suggested.
- The Chairman of the Protocol and Procedures Committee suggested that the views expressed by members regarding service visits be discussed at a forthcoming meeting of that committee. A final report, which will incorporate recommendations based on the issues raised, can be brought to members at a future Board Meeting.

Following the above discussion the Chief Executive responded as follows:-

- Feedback from members regarding visits provides a valuable opportunity to debate policy issues regarding overall service delivery.

- The following three South Western Area Health Board documents will enable members to identify that issues raised by them arising out of visits are being addressed:- National Development Plan; Provider Plan; 3-5 Year Service Agreement.
- Members' suggestions and observations regarding the future organisation of visits will be examined by the Protocol and Procedures Committee.

Members noted the report.

7/2001

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 6th February, 2001, at 2.00 p.m. in the William Stokes Post-Graduate Centre, St. James's Hospital, Dublin 8.

The meeting concluded at 1.00 p.m.

**CORRECT: P. DONNELLY
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

CHAIRMAN