

SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

**Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the South Western Area Health Board held
in the Board Room, Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare,
on Tuesday, 7th October, 2003, at 2.00 p.m.**

Present

Mr. P. Aspell
Dr. S. Barry
Cllr. C. Byrne
Cllr. E. Byrne
Cllr. T. Cullen
Cllr. J. Daly
Ms. A. Harris
Ms. M. Hoban

Cllr. M. Miley
Ald. M. Mooney
Dr. B. Murphy
Cllr. C. McGrath
Cllr. F. O'Loughlin
Cllr. J. Reilly
Cllr. T. Ridge

Non-Voting Members

Ms. N. Harvey

Cllr. G. McGuire

Apologies

Dr. M. Gueret

Dr. K. Harkin

In the Chair

Ald. M. Mooney

Officers in Attendance

Mr. P. Donnelly, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. H. Kane, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. M. Rogan, Assistant Chief Executive
Ms. R. Buckley, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. D. Lyons, Director of Finance
Mr. T. McMahon, Director of Human Resources
Ms. M. Queally, A/Assistant Chief Executive
Ms. B. Hannon, Director of Services for Older Persons
Mr. G. O'Neill, A/Director of Mental Health & Addiction Services
Mr. D. Delaney, Director of Communications
Ms. C. Cuffe, Senior Manager, Operations
Mr. K. Cleary, Senior Manager, Operations
Mr. R. Healy, Board Secretary
Ms. P. Dempsey, Administrative Support, C.E.O.'s Office
Ms. L. Deering, Administrative Support, C.E.O.'s Office

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CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Members were invited to join with the Chairman in standing for a minute's silence to express sincere sympathy to those whose names were included on the list of condolences.

The Chairman also advised members of the following:-

1. *Election of Standing Committee Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen*

I would like to inform members of the outcome of elections held at the recent committee meetings. The following members were elected:-

Primary, Acute and Community Services Standing Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Tommy Cullen

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Colm McGrath

Finance and Property Committee

Chairman: Ald. Mary Mooney

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Jim Reilly

The election of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the other committees will take place at their respective meetings.

2. *Safe Disposal of Household Medications – Campaign Launch*

Members will be aware that the South Western Area Health Board launched the '**DUMP**' (**Dispose of Unused Medications Properly**) pilot project late last year to gather and safely dispose of unused medications. An evaluation report on the pilot project was brought to Standing Committee at the time with a future rollout of the project planned.

I would like to inform members that Mr. Tim O'Malley, Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children will officially commence the launch of the '**DUMP**' Campaign (**Dispose of Unused Medications Properly**) on Thursday, 9th October 2003 at 11.15a.m. in the Dental School and Hospital, Lincoln Place, Dublin 2. He will also launch the "credit card" size crisis card "*Numbers when you need them*" pocket directory. Information has been circulated with the CEOs Report in this regard.

3. *N.A.H.B. Visit Confirmation*

I wish to confirm that the second Northern Area Health Board visit for the month of October is to Baleskin Refugee Centre, St. Margaret's Road, Baleskin, Co. Dublin on October 14th, @ 2.30p.m.

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2003

The minutes of the proceedings of the Board Meeting held on 2nd September, 2003, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly seconded by Mr. P. Aspell.

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QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

On a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly seconded by Mr. P. Aspell, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged.

1. Cllr. Don Tipping

“To ask the Chief Executive to present a report on the number of G.P.s per population for the South Western Area Health Board area and will he within this report detail what proposals there are to improve the ratio in the Tallaght area given that it is stated that the ratio is the worst in the region and that the age profile of the G.P.s is such that the situation will get worse.”

Reply:

The ratio of General Practitioners per population for the Eastern Region is 5.32 per 10,000 population. The ratio for the South Western Area Health Board is 4.53 per 10,000 and for the Tallaght area in particular is 5.58 per 10,000.

The Primary Care Strategy recognised the need to recruit more health care professionals including general practitioners. Action 3 of the Primary Care Strategy identified the need to prepare a Primary Care Human Resource Plan which will address human resource issues to develop the capacity of primary care. This plan will be produced by the Primary Care Task Force working with the Health Service Employers Agency and Health Boards. The Primary Care Strategy also stated that human resource requirements will need to be reflected in increased intake to relevant undergraduate and postgraduate faculties or in the provision of new undergraduate courses, as appropriate. This objective is currently being pursued with the relevant training bodies and the education sector in line with the integrated Manpower Action Plan and the Health Skills Group (as set up under PPF).

2. Cllr. Eric Byrne

“To ask the C.E.O. if he is aware of the delay in granting Section 65 providers their benchmarking monies? Is he further aware that in the absence of staff receiving this payment the amount of staff unrest that is evident as a result of its non-payment? This is contrary to the purpose of benchmarking which was established to promote good work policies and the elimination of industrial action.

Could the C.E.O. indicate when benchmarking is likely to be paid to organisations who are categorised under Section 65 and will he make a statement on this matter?”

Reply:

All Section 65 agencies that are funded by the South Western Area Health Board, who employ staff who qualify for the benchmarking pay award, will be provided with the appropriate funding. The onus to apply for the funding rests with those agencies so involved and they must provide the Board with the necessary supporting material in order that the Board can process these claims and transfer the funding in due course.

3. Dr. Siobhán Barry

Re: S.W.A.H.B. Mental Health Services:

Could the Board be informed of the progress being made in:

- Recruiting permanent/fixed term Clinical Directors for the posts in Kildare & St Loman's Hospitals, currently filled in a temporary capacity?
- Developing a sector H.Q. & Day Hospital in Naas, as recommended in *The Report of the Inspector of Mental Hospitals 2002*?

Reply:

From our existing Consultant Psychiatrist complement we currently have an Acting Clinical Director in Kildare/West Wicklow but will be seeking additional resources to appoint a permanent Clinical Director for this service. We are currently seeking the views of the existing Clinical Directors on the preferred approach to recruiting permanent/fixed term Clinical Directors for both the Kildare and St. Loman's posts.

St. David's House on Main Street, Naas, has been identified as a possible location for the Day Hospital & Sector H.Q. for the Naas sector Mental Health Service. Some staff currently working in St. David's will relocate to Millennium Park. The St. David's House option is an interim arrangement pending the hand over of St. Mary's in Naas from Kildare County Council.

4. Dr. Siobhán Barry

Re: S.W.A.H.B. employment ceiling detailed in C.E.O.'s Report, September 2003:

Could the C.E.O. issue a statement on

- How this ceiling has been breached, in light of the well-documented vacancies in many clinical disciplines, e.g. Public Health Nursing; Speech & Language Therapists; Occupational Therapists; Social Work; Psychology, etc.
- Whether this ceiling is likely to interfere with, or result in, an embargo on recruitment to those previously mentioned clinical disciplines where vacancies currently exist?

Reply:

The employment ceiling for the South Western Area Health Board was set by the Eastern Regional Health Authority in March 2003, with effect from December 2002. The methodology used in setting the ceiling was to take December 2000 employment

level and to adjust the ceiling accordingly, based on approved service development in 2001 and 2002. The figure was also adjusted downwards by 50 w.t.e.s (whole time equivalents) to comply with the Government decision regarding Public Sector employment in August 2002.

As the initial December 2000 census figure represented actual whole time equivalents employed at a specific point in time, it does not take into account the vacancies which existed in the system at that time and which continued to prevail through 2002. Additionally, the methodology used did not account for approved employment arising outside the formal provider planning process.

As, and until we come back within our approved employment ceiling, we cannot be considered to have vacancies. We are currently engaged in a comprehensive process with our trade unions to manage the required reduction in employment level.

5. Dr. Kieran Harkin

- Could the C.E.O. please clarify/outline the purpose of the clothing grant and the criteria required for approval of such a grant?
- Could the C.E.O. please report on the number of such grants approved in the S.W.A.H.B. in the past year?
- Does the C.E.O. have any information as to what extent the original purpose of the grant is being achieved?

Reply:

Payments towards the cost of clothing are made by Community Welfare Officers throughout the board's area in accordance with legislation: The Social Welfare (Supplementary Welfare Allowance Act) (Consolidation) Act, 1993, and subsequent regulations. The Community Welfare Service is a regional service, administered by the Northern Area Health Board on behalf the three area health boards.

Payments towards the cost of clothing are considered "Exceptional Needs Payments", in accordance with Section 181 of the 1993 act, which states,

"a health board, may, in any case where it considers it reasonable, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, so to do, determine that supplementary welfare allowance shall be paid to a person by way of a single payment to meet an exceptional need".

Exceptional Needs Payments are, therefore, discretionary payments, based on an assessment of the applicant's needs and means.

These payments may be made for a variety of reasons. The reasons and type of evidence required are listed below (this is not an exhaustive list).

Type of Payment	Evidence
Communion/Confirmation/Religious Ceremony	Letter from Child's School
Maternity/Baby Clothes	Letter from Maternity Hospital/G.P.
Medical Reasons*	Letter from G.P. outlining Medical Condition
Funeral (of Close Relative)	Death Notice or Similar
Hospital Confinement Expenses	Letter from Hospital
On Release from Prison (if confined greater than 6 months)	Letter from Prison

* In order to qualify for clothing for medical reasons, the medical condition must necessitate clothing above that which would be considered normal, and the condition must be expected to last for a considerable duration.

In 2002, a total of 9,528 payments were made towards the cost of clothing in the South Western Area Health Board amounting to €1.195m.

I am satisfied that the payment towards the cost of clothing, as an "exceptional needs payment", was designed to meet one-off, unforeseen, exceptional costs and, as administered in our Board's area, is serving its intended purpose.

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PRESENTATION RE SERVICES FOR OLDER PERSONS IN THE SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

Ms. R. Buckley, Assistant Chief Executive for Older Persons, gave a presentation to members on Services for Older Persons in the South Western Area Health Board [copy filed with official minute]. Her presentation included the new arrangements for enhanced subventions, Public Private Partnerships and the Forum on Care of Older Persons.

Members thanked Ms. Buckley for her presentation. Discussion followed to which Ms. A. Harris, Dr. S. Barry, Cllr. J. Reilly, Cllr. M. Miley, Dr. B. Murphy, Cllr. E. Byrne, Cllr. T. Ridge, Cllr. C. Byrne, Ms. M. Hoban and Ald. M. Mooney contributed and to which Ms. R. Buckley, Mr. M. Rogan and the CEO responded as follows:-

- The position regarding the Kildare/West Wicklow home help budget was outlined.
- Members' views regarding the home help budget were noted.
- Population increases were not reflected in the level of funding received by the board.
- The need to maintain services within budget was highlighted.
- Clarification was provided on the guidelines on subvention/enhanced subvention.
- The need for additional funding for Psychiatry of Old Age Services was acknowledged.

104/2003**C.E.O.'S REPORT**

The C.E.O. read Report No. 11/2003 to members [copy filed with official minute].

Areas covered in the report are set out below:-

- Naas General Hospital
- Mental Health Services – Tallaght
- Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services
- Services for Homeless Persons
- Influenza Vaccination Campaign
- Survivors Experiences of the National Counselling Service (SENCS) Report
- Suicide Prevention
- Report of the Inspector of Mental Hospitals
- One Parent Families Information Guidelines
- Consultative Seminars – Early Childhood Care and Education

Discussion followed to which Cllr. J. Reilly, Ms. A. Harris and Ms. M. Hoban contributed and to which the C.E.O responded as follows:-

- Links between Naas General Hospital/Tallaght Hospital and St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy with regard to Consultant Geriatrician cover to be reviewed.

The C.E.O.'s report was noted.

105/2003**MATTERS FOR MENTION/MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Cllr. J. Reilly raised an issue concerning Coill Dubh Health Centre – update to be brought to next board meeting.

106/2003**PROGRESS REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

On a proposal by Ms. A. Harris seconded by Cllr. J. Reilly, the progress report from the Primary, Acute and Community Services Standing Committee meeting dated 24th September 2003, was adopted.

On a proposal by Dr. B. Murphy, seconded by Ms. M. Hoban, the progress report from the Disabilities, Mental Health & Addiction and Acute Services Standing Committee meeting dated 18th September was adopted.

107/2003**PROGRESS REPORT FROM FINANCE & PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

On a proposal by Ms. A. Harris, seconded by Cllr. J. Reilly, the progress report from the Finance and Property Committee meeting dated 22nd September was adopted.

108/2003**PROGRESS REPORT FROM CHILD CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

On a proposal by Cllr. E. Byrne, seconded by Ms. A. Harris the progress report from the Child Care Advisory Committee meeting dated 26th September was adopted.

109/2003**NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

Following discussion regarding motions which referred to funding, the motion, in the name of Cllr. E. Byrne listed on the agenda as Item 10.1 was not moved. It was agreed Cllr. E. Byrne would be given a report on funding provided to Rialto Day Care Centre.

The motion, in the name of Dr. K. Harkin, listed in the agenda as Item 10.2 was deferred until the November Board meeting.

110/2003**CORRESPONDENCE**

The items of correspondence, as referred to in the C.E.O.'s report, were noted by members.

111/2003**SCHEDULE OF VISITS FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS
(OCTOBER 2003)**

The schedule of visits for Board Members and Committee Meetings for October 2003, which had been circulated with the agenda papers, was noted by members.

112/2003**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The November meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 4th November, 2003, at 2.00 p.m. in the Board Room, Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare.

CORRECT:

P. DONNELLY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHAIRMAN