

SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the South Western Area Health Board held in the Board Room, South Western Area Health Board Headquarters, Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare, on Tuesday, 1st October, 2002, at 2.00 p.m.

Present

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Dr. S. Barry | Cllr. C. Byrne |
| Cllr. E. Byrne | Mr. J. Fallon |
| Dr. M. Gueret | Dr. K. Harkin |
| Ms. A. Harris | Ms. M. Hoban |
| Cllr. C. McGrath | Cllr. M. Miley |
| Dr. B. Murphy | Cllr. C. O'Connor, T.D. |
| Cllr. S. Ó Fearghail, T.D. | Cllr. J. Reilly |
| Cllr. T. Ridge | Cllr. D. Tipping |

Non-Voting Members

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Ms. N. Harvey | Mr. G. McGuire |
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Apologies

Mr. P. Aspell

In the Chair

Cllr. T. Ridge

Officers in Attendance

Mr. P. Donnelly, Chief Executive Officer
 Mr. P. Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive
 Ms. B. Clarke, Assistant Chief Executive
 Mr. H. Kane, Assistant Chief Executive
 Mr. S. O'Brien, Assistant Chief Executive
 Mr. D. Lyons, Director of Finance
 Mr. R. Mitchell, Director of Communications
 Mr. R. Kavanagh, Senior Manager, Operations
 Ms. C. Bergin, Senior Manager, Operations
 Ms. B. Manning, Operational Manager, Children & Families
 Mr. R. Healy, Board Secretary
 Ms. A. Farrell, Administrative Support, C.E.O.'s Office
 Ms. P. Dempsey, 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 then proceeded to advise 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 Standing Committee meetings. The following members were elected:-

Community Services & Continuing Care Standing Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Tommy Cullen

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Colm McGrath

Disabilities, Mental Health & Addiction and Acute Services Standing Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Jim Reilly

Vice-Chairman: Dr. Barney Murphy

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

2. *Association of Health Boards*

I wish to inform members that our former Chairman, Deputy Charlie O'Connor, T.D., has informed the CEO that he wishes to step down as one of our Board's representatives on the Association of Health Boards. Deputy O'Connor also wished to express his thanks to members for allowing him to serve in this capacity. Deputy O'Connor will be replaced at the Association by Cllr. Martin Miley. I also wish to inform members that Mr. Joe Fallon will replace Mr. Michael Murphy as one of the Board's representatives to the Association.

In addition I wish to advise members that two of the eight members who now represent the Board at the Association of Health Boards need to be nominated to sit on the Executive for the coming year. I would appreciate the co-operation of the Group Leaders in finalising these nominations. The Board Secretary will write to the leaders in this regard over the next few days.

3 *Committee Meetings*

I would like draw members' attention to the Meeting Schedule in the Agenda Papers and to note that a Finance and Property Committee Meeting, a Protocol and Procedures Committee Meeting and a Child Care Advisory Committee Meeting will take place in early October. Full details and relevant correspondence will be forwarded to you in advance of these meetings.

I would also like to inform members that a Special Meeting of the Community Services & Continuing Care Standing Committee will take place at 11.00 a.m. on Thursday, 10th October, 2002, in the Board Room, Cherry Orchard Hospital. A date and venue for the ordinary monthly meeting of this committee has yet to be finalised.

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 26TH AUGUST, 2002, AND BOARD MEETING HELD ON 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2002.

The minutes of the proceedings of the Special Board Meeting held on 26th August, 2002, and Board Meeting held on 3rd September, 2002, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly, seconded by Cllr. C. McGrath.

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QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

On a proposal by Mr. J. Fallon, seconded by Cllr. C. McGrath, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged.

1. Dr. Siobhán Barry

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

- As funding and Comhairle na nOispidéal approval has been received by the South Western Area Health Board (S.W.A.H.B.) to proceed with permanent appointments to the two existing temporary Consultant posts in Kildare, could the C.E.O. inform the Board what obstacles now exist to the filling of these posts, and when might they be advertised?
- Given the ongoing shortages of acute psychiatric admission beds in Naas General Hospital, has consideration been given to the possibility of commissioning beds for the use of the severely stretched mental health services in the Phase 3 development of the Naas General Hospital site?”

Reply:

- There are no obstacles which will either delay or prevent the filling of these posts which are currently being processed by the Local Appointments Commission.
- The development of the new hospital in Naas followed an assessment of need of the acute hospital bed resource for the Kildare/West Wicklow area. In this context, the number of acute hospital beds now being made available in the hospital is in line with the National Bed Capacity Review which requires our board to provide an additional 93 acute beds by the end of 2002. As a consequence, it is not an option to consider the use of any of the additional beds in Naas Hospital as in-patient psychiatric beds.

The board is, however, examining other options which may be available to deal with the acute psychiatric bed issue in the context of the comprehensive review completed in 2001. The priorities identified in the review were included in the service plan for 2002 and will be incorporated into the service plan for 2003 and subsequent years.

2. Ms. Maria Hoban

“Re: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in the South Western Area Health Board.

- Would the C.E.O. outline the services for the acutely mentally ill and suicidal child and adolescent clients presenting to the South Western Area Health Board services?
- Would he also comment on the services in the Board’s area for the 16-18 year age group with similar presenting problems?
- Are the services to be outlined adequate for these two groups in the South Western Area Health Board?
- Will he state both the immediate and future plans for these services with particular emphasis on the child and adolescent services?”

Reply:

- Children who present with suicidal or deliberate self-harm behaviour are directed towards the Accident and Emergency Department of the National Children’s Hospital in Tallaght or Our Lady’s Hospital for Sick Children in Crumlin. The service in Crumlin is delivered on behalf of the South Western Area Health Board by St John of Gods Child Psychiatric Service.

Following physical assessment and, if necessary, stabilisation, a psychiatric assessment is carried out and treatment is delivered as appropriate.

The majority of cases are discharged home in the care of their parents and offered follow-up care by the community-based Child and Adolescent Psychiatric services.

A small number may require in-patient admission at our facilities at Courthall.

- Section 190 of the 1945 Mental Treatment Act allows for the admission of young people aged over 16 years to an Adult Mental Health service. This provision has been revisited in the Mental Health Act 2001, which will be implemented on a date to be specified by the Minister for Health & Children. Under the new legislation, Adult Services will only be available to those aged 18 years or older. The mental health services in the Board accept referrals of young people aged over 16 years, a small number of whom will require in-patient admission (*see below*). The South Western Area Health Board Adult Mental Health Services currently experience significant pressure in meeting the needs of an expanding population and prefer, where possible, to provide community-based interventions, however, occasionally it is necessary to admit younger adults.

***Number of In-Patient Admissions to South Western Area Health Board
Psychiatric Units in 2001***

| Service | <15 yrs | 15-19 yrs | 20-44 yrs |
|--|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Kildare/West Wicklow Mental Health Service | 0 | 3 | 26 |
| Dublin West/South West Mental Health Service | 0 | 3 | 17 |
| Dublin South City Mental Health Service | 0 | 0 | 24 |

Data from the Inspector of Mental Hospitals Report 2001

A number of young people continue to attend the Child & Adolescent services beyond the age of 16 years if this is felt appropriate.

Our Board would prefer to offer specific services for the mental health needs of adolescents with a transitional service for those already known to the Children's Services. Additional resources will be needed to develop such a service.

- The Review Group on Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services established by the Department of Health and Children recommends the creation of a six-bed in-patient unit within each Board's area. Our Board is currently seeking resources for this initiative and its implementation will enhance the level of deliverable service to this category.
- Significant progress has been made in formulating a comprehensive plan for the development of mental health services for Children & Adolescents. All disciplines have been consulted and invited to contribute to this process that began earlier this year. It is hoped to bring this plan to the relevant Standing Committee shortly. The implementation of this plan will be contingent on funding.

3. Cllr. Eric Byrne

"Will the C.E.O. confirm that a pilot project on the provision of "Home Subventions" for the care of the elderly in their homes exists and is operated by the Northern Area Health Board?

Will he say when he intends to introduce to the South Western Area Health Board a similar scheme and will he make a statement on this issue?"

Reply:

We are informed that the Northern Area Health Board is currently operating a pilot project on the provision of "Home Subventions" to elderly people. The project is in its infancy and will require review and examination to determine its effectiveness.

The outcome of this pilot project in the Northern Area Health Board will be a key factor in determining developments in this regard within our Board.

107/2002**PRESENTATION ON REPORT OF THE FORUM ON FLUORIDATION**

Dr. B. O’Herlihy, Specialist in Public Health, gave a slide presentation to members on the Report of the Forum on Fluoridation [copy circulated with agenda papers].

Members thanked Dr. O’Herlihy for his presentation and discussion followed to which Cllr. C. McGrath, Cllr. E. Byrne, Cllr. J. Reilly, Dr. B. Murphy and Cllr. T. Ridge contributed.

Dr. O’Herlihy responded as follows:-

- Dental decay can potentially be a very serious condition, however, there has been a dramatic improvement in dental health in general in recent years.
- Concerns expressed by the public regarding water fluoridation were acknowledged by the Forum in their report and they have recommended ongoing information for the public on this issue.

Members noted the presentation.

108/2002**C.E.O.’S REPORT**

The C.E.O. read Report No. 14/2002 to members [copy filed with official minute].

Areas covered in the report are set out below:-

- Census 2002 – Population Increase in the South Western Area Health Board
- Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Initiative
- Community Alcohol Awareness Project
- Naas General Hospital Update
- Report of the Inspector of General Hospitals
- Allocation for TREOIR
- National Counselling Service (NCS)
- Directory of Food Safety Laboratory Services
- National Disability Authority (NDA)
- Seminar on the Economics of Tobacco Control
- Review of Motions

Members thanked the C.E.O. for his report. Discussion followed to which Dr. M. Gueret, Mr. J. Fallon, Cllr. J. Reilly, Dr. S. Barry, Cllr. E. Byrne, and Ms. M. Hoban contributed and to which the C.E.O. responded as follows:-

- The Report of the Inspector of Mental Hospitals 2001 is to be discussed at the relevant Standing Committee and a presentation given to members re same at a future Board Meeting. Recommendations for our Board in this report have already been, or are currently being, addressed.
- Members’ support for the mental health/intellectual disability initiative outlined in the C.E.O.’s report was welcomed.

- Clarification was provided regarding the Community Alcohol Awareness Project in Kilcock.
- Members were updated regarding a dispute by contract cleaners at the Meath Hospital.

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

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MATTERS FOR MENTION/MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters for mention/matters arising from the minutes.

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PROGRESS REPORT FROM STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

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 19th September, 2002, was adopted.

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NOTICE OF MOTION

The following motion was proposed by Cllr. E. Byrne and seconded by Cllr. T. Ridge:-

“Given the publicity and the comments of the Chairperson of the South Western Area Health Board as reported in the Irish Mirror (16/09/02) and repeatedly quoted on the Niall Boylan 98 FM “Talk of Dublin” show (16/09/02) that the Chief Executive Officer issue an urgent statement on the facts of the case and that he will make a comprehensive statement on this issue.”

Discussion followed to which Cllr. E. Byrne and Cllr. T. Ridge contributed. The C.E.O. also provided clarification on the background to this issue.

The motion was noted.

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CORRESPONDENCE

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

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SCHEDULE OF VISITS FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS (OCTOBER 2002)

The schedule of visits for Board Members and Standing Committee meetings for October 2002, which had been circulated with the agenda papers, was noted by members.

Mr. G. McGuire advised members that the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Health Boards in Ireland is taking place on 16th October, 2002. Members agreed to defer the service visit organised for this date as outlined in the schedule.

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DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The November meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 5th November, 2002, at 2.00 p.m. in the Board Room, Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare.

CORRECT: P. DONNELLY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHAIRMAN