

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Mid-Western Health Board held in the Boardroom, 31/33 Catherine Street, Limerick on Friday, 14th December, 2001 at 11.00a.m.

Presiding/	Cllr. K. Sheahan, Chairman	
Present/	Cllr. J. Bourke	Cllr. P. Bulger
	Mr. P. Burke	Cllr. R. Butler
	Cllr. B. Chambers	Cllr. J. Clifford
	Dr. D. Clinch	Cllr. P. Daly
	Dr. M. Donovan	Cllr. J. Egan
	Cllr./Dr. J. Hennessy	Cllr. M. Hourigan
	Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan	Dr. J. Lemasney
	Mr. L. McNamara	Dr. R. O'Flaherty
	Cllr. T. O'Malley	Cllr. K. Sheahan
Apologies/	Cllr. J. Casey	Dr. T. Casey
	Sen. J. Cregan	Mr. D. McAvinchey
	Dep. J. O'Sullivan	
In Attendance/	Mr. S. deBurca, Chief Executive Officer	
	Mr. J. O'Brien, Assistant Chief Executive Officer	
	Mr. G. Crowley, Assistant Chief Executive Officer	
	Mr. J. Conway, Assistant Chief Executive Officer	
	Mr. T. Hourigan, A/Assistant Chief Executive Officer	
	Dr. K. Kelleher, Director of Public Health	
	Mr. P. Brosnan, A/Director of Mental Health	
	Ms. M. Woods, Communications Officer	
	Ms. D. O'Keefe, Secretariat	

National Health Strategy

To facilitate the Members who could not attend a previous presentation on the National Health Strategy, a discussion took place prior to the monthly meeting of the Board.

Cllr. T. O'Malley voiced his disappointment at the poor turn-out by the Members for the discussion on the National Health Strategy, particularly as the Members had requested a specific time to discuss the Strategy. The Chairman, Cllr. K. Sheahan and Mr. L. McNamara agreed with Cllr. O'Malley. However, Cllr. J. Bourke stated that a 10.00 a.m. meeting prior to the monthly meeting of the Board never worked and suggested not doing it again.

1(a) Silent Prayer

- 1(b) Deputation from Red Ribbon Project** Anne Mason from the Red Ribbon Project gave a brief presentation to the Members and circulated information on the Red Ribbon Project to the Members and the Executive

1(c) Vote of Sympathy A vote of sympathy was extended to staff who had recent bereavements.

The Chairman, Members and the Executive conveyed their sympathy to Cllr. S. Hillery on the death of his wife.

1(d) Minutes The Minutes of Meeting of the Board held on 9th November, 2001 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Bourke, seconded by Cllr. T. O'Malley. Cllr. R. Butler requested to comment on the meeting of the Board held on the 9th November but he was over-ruled by the Chairman.

2. Correspondence The Department of Health & Children acknowledged receipt of letter from the Board regarding the Askeaton Investigation and confirmed that the matter is receiving attention.

Further to correspondence from Fr. Gerry Daly requesting support for the Redemptorists Poor Campaign, the Members agreed to donate £10 each as has been the practice in previous years. The Members' donation will be deducted from travel/subsistence claims.

The Department of Health & Children responded to a resolution adopted by the Mid-Western Health Board calling for a top-up facility where there is exceptional need for patients who are presently availing of Nursing Home Subvention in the Mid-Western Health Board area and indicated that the matter is under review.

3. CEO's Report **Draft Service Plan 2002**
A meeting of the Board in-Committee to consider draft Service Plan 2002 will take place on Wednesday, 19th December, 2001 at 11.00 a.m.

Christmas Lunch

The Members were reminded that the Board's Christmas lunch would take place at 1.30 p.m. following the meeting of the Board. The media present were also invited to attend.

The Special Residential Services Board

A note on the functions of the Special Residential Services Board was circulated. Mr. G. Crowley, Assistant Chief Executive Officer is a member of this Board.

Recognition of A&E Training Posts

Mr. P. Burke voiced his concern over a recent letter from the Medical Council that all trainees from overseas must be in posts which are recognised by the Medical Council as training posts. Several smaller units have been identified as not being suitable for training. He urged the Board to give adequate consideration to this issue well in advance of the July intake of NCHDs. Mr. Burke felt that A&E in Ennis and Nenagh are not likely to be recognised for surgical training and there is a need to look at other models. There is also a need to recognise the capability of these units and what should be referred to major A&E units in the area. If guidelines are drawn up it will be possible to staff these units. Mr. Burke stated that he was not talking about down-grading of services, but rather re-orientating services. Major units cannot be put in Ennis and Nenagh as they do not have the local population for such units. The CEO confirmed that this matter will be given priority for attention in line with the Acute Services Strategy.

Arrangements for Standing Committee

Meetings 2002

The arrangements as outlined in the Report of the Chief Executive Officer will commence in January 2002 as agreed with the Chairman, Cllr. K. Sheahan.

National Health Strategy Proposal

It was agreed that the brief of the Service Plan Sub-Committee be extended to include strategy implementation and monitoring.

Ennis General Hospital

A further meeting of the Project Team was held on the 4th December, 2001. The Board's management has now issued a formal request to the Department of Health & Children to establish the Design Team. This letter issued on the 6th December, 2001 and a response is awaited.

Acute Psychiatric Unit – Ennis

The Acute Psychiatric Unit in Ennis opened on the 11th December, 2001 and is a major step forward for the Health Service in Clare and details of the next steps in alternative service development were circulated to the Members.

Recent Resolution by Clare County Council

A recent resolution by Clare County Council required the CEO to attend a meeting of the

Council. The CEO stated that public representatives are nominated to represent their parent authority. An appropriate response is being issued.

Orthodontics

In response to Cllr. T. O'Malley, Mr. J. O'Brien confirmed that the Department of Health & Children has created a grade of Orthodontist Specialist. Dr. Lemasney agreed that the recruitment of this grade may lead to a substantial improvement in the provision of the Orthodontic Services in the Mid-West. Dr. Lemasney recommended that the Board advertise as soon as possible and also in the UK and other EU Countries. These specialists will have a right to some private practice. The private sector is a help by buying in.

In response to Cllr. P. Daly regarding the high waiting list in Clare, Mr. J. O'Brien confirmed that is the intention to appoint three Orthodontic Specialists across the Board.

Radiotherapy Service

Recognising that Dep. J. O'Sullivan had submitted a question to the Board regarding Radiotherapy Services, Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan proposed that a second Registrar in Oncology be appointed. This proposal was seconded by Mr. P. Burke.

Dr. Joe Lemasney

Dr. Joe Lemasney will formally retire as Consultant Dental Surgeon for the Mid-Western Health Board, but will continue as a Board Member. Dr. Lemasney was commended on his major contribution to the organisation and was wished well on his retirement.

**4. Overview of
Financial Results
Report No. /01**

Report No. 86/01 was noted.

**5. Report on the
National Advisory
Committee on
Palliative Care
Report No. 79/01**

Report No. 79/01 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. B. Chambers, seconded by Cllr. T. O'Malley.

- 6. Report on the Services for Homeless People Report. No. 80/01** Report No. 80/01 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. R. Butler, seconded by Cllr. B. Chambers.
- 7. Report on the Provision of General Practitioners Out-of-Hours Services Report No. 81/01** Report No. 81/01 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. R. Butler, seconded by Cllr. T. O'Malley.
- 8. Report of the National Working Group on Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Services (First Report- 02/01) Report No. 82/01** Report No. 82/01 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. R. Butler, seconded by Mr. L. McNamara.
- 9. Report of the Inspector of Mental Hospitals Year-Ending 31/12/00 Report No. 83/01** Report No. 83/01 was noted.
- 10. Report on the Mental Health Act 2001 Report No. 84/01** Report No. 84/01 was noted.
- 11. Report on Housing Aid for the Elderly Report No. 85/01** Report No. 85/01 was proposed by Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan, seconded by Cllr. T. O'Malley.
- 12. Annual Report for Acute Hospital Services 2000 Report No. 87/01** Report No. 87/01 was noted.
Dr. J. Lemasney stated that there was a poor attendance by Board Members for various scheduled meetings of the Acute Hospitals Committee for which presentations had been prepared by Acute Hospital Care staff and that such meetings had to be abandoned because a quorum was not achieved.
- 13. Report on Winter Initiative Report No. 88/01** Report No. 88/01 was proposed by Cllr. B. Chambers, seconded by Cllr. T. O'Malley.
- 14. Report on the Waiting List Initiative Report No. 89/01** Report No. 89/01 was noted.

15. **Report on Limerick Mental Health Services – Development of Physical Facilities Report No. 90/01** Report No. 90/01 was noted.
- Mr. L. McNamara acknowledged the support of the Executive particularly Mr. T. Hourigan regarding the closure of St. Joseph’s Hospital, Limerick.
- In response to Cllr. J. Bourke regarding the future use of St. Joseph’s Hospital, Limerick, Mr. T. Hourigan referred to Page 4 of the Report which details facilities for the remaining patients in the Hospital. The CEO also confirmed that it is planned to transfer the Corporate Headquarters of the Mid-Western Health Board to St. Joseph’s and also other departments which are currently leasing property in various locations in the City.
16. **Report on Youth Homelessness Strategy Report No. 91/01** Report No. 91/01 was noted.
17. **Proposed Purchase of Property – Unit 4, Richmond Court, Dock Road, Limerick Report No. 92/01** Report No. 92/01 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Bourke, seconded by Cllr. R. Butler.
18. **Report on Health Services in North Tipperary Report No. 93/01** Report No. 93/01 was noted.
- Cllr. J. Egan stated that while it is vital to continue to improve Nenagh, it is also vital to have every facility possible in Limerick. With regard to two-person crewing of Ambulances in North Tipperary, Mr. J. Conway stated that this will come before the Board in Service Plan 2002 at meeting scheduled for 19th December, 2001.
19. **Questions**
- (a) **Question submitted by Cllr. T. O’Malley:**
“What plans have the Mid-Western Health Board to appoint a third vascular surgeon for the Mid-Western Health Board region?”
- A written reply was circulated and is appended hereto as an integral part of the Minute.
- (b) **Questions submitted by Ald. J. O’Sullivan:**
“To ask the CEO the present level of service provision for radiotherapy patients within the MWHB area, if there are any proposals from the Department of Health & Children to extend

radiotherapy services outside the Dublin, Cork, Galway centres, especially within the MWHB area, and if he is satisfied that those who develop cancer are receiving the most effective care and treatment and that their quality of life is enhanced to the greatest extent possible under the present arrangements?”

A written reply was circulated and is appended hereto as an integral part of the Minute.

Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan voiced her concern over inequity of access. Mr. J. O’Brien stated again that the Mid-Western Health Board had on three occasions agreed to meet the National Expert Group, but is still waiting a response.

- (c) *“To ask the CEO the number of beds not presently in use in the Mid-Western Regional Hospital, for a firm date on which these beds will be available and used?”*

A written reply was circulated and is appended hereto as an integral part of the Minute.

- (d) **Question submitted by Dr. D. Clinch:**
“The Health Board has previously recognised that it is essential for planned surgical admissions to continue throughout the year. It has previously been the pattern that in the winter months there has been a major overspill of medical patients onto surgical wards. Inevitably, this has resulted in cancellations of large numbers of planned surgical operations.

In this setting the delay in the opening of some 40 surgical beds at the Regional Hospital is a source of major concern. Could the Board please be informed as to when the opening of these Surgical beds is likely to take place?”

A written reply was circulated and is appended hereto as an integral part of the Minute.

- (e) **Question submitted by Cllr. P. Bugler:**
“I am asking the CEO what progress has been made in implementing the Ambulance Report adopted earlier this year by the Board, with specific reference to:
- (i) *East Clare, Scariff, Capital Developments,*
 - (ii) *The Recruitment & Training of FMT’s?”*

A written reply was circulated and is appended hereto as an integral part of the Minute.

(f) Question submitted by Cllr. R. Butler:

“I will ask the CEO at the next meeting of the Board, that due to the fact that the village of Patrickswell now has its Development Plan (which includes the building of 800 houses) in the final stages of implementation with Limerick County Council, does he think that the provision of a Health Centre needs to be expedited as quickly as possible, and could he further say when it is envisaged that such a Health Centre might be provided?”

A written reply was circulated and is appended hereto as an integral part of the Minute.

Signed/

Cllr. K. Sheahan, Chairman

S. deBurca, Chief Executive Officer

Date/
