

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE MID-
WESTERN HEALTH BOARD HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, 31/33
CATHERINE STREET, LIMERICK, ON FRIDAY, 11TH OCTOBER,
2002 AT 11.00 A.M.**

Presiding/ Cllr. S. Marsh, Vice-Chairman

Present/	Dr. Y. Begley	Cllr. J. Bourke
	Cllr. P. Bugler	Mr. P. Burke
	Cllr. R. Butler	Cllr. J. Casey
	Cllr. B. Chambers	Cllr. J. Clifford
	Dr. D. Clinch	Sen. N. Coonan
	Dep. J. Cregan	Cllr. J. Egan
	Cllr./Dr. J. Hennessy	Ms. M. Hogan
	Cllr. M. Hourigan	Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan
	Dr. J. Mullane	Dr. P. McKenna
	Ms. M. O'Donnell	Mr. L. MacNamara
	Dep. J. O'Sullivan	Dr. J. O'Riordan

Apologies/	Cllr. P. Daly	Cllr. S. Hillery
	Mr. D. McAvinchey	Cllr. K. Sheahan

In Attendance/ Mr. S. deBurca, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. G. Crowley, Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Mr. J. Conway, Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Dr. K. Kelleher, Director of Public Health
Mr. J. O'Grady, Regional Manager
Mr. T. Hourigan, Regional Manager
Mr. P. McDonald, Director of Finance
Mr. J. Hennessy, A/Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Ms. M. Woods, Communications Officer
Ms. D. O'Keeffe, Secretariat
Ms. T. Fitzgerald, Staff Officer

1(a) Silent Prayer

1(b) Vote of Sympathy	A vote of sympathy was extended to staff who had suffered recent bereavements.
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1(c) **Minutes** Minutes of meeting of the Board on the 13th September, 2002, were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. B. Chambers, seconded by Cllr. M. Hourigan.

2. **Correspondence** Minister Michael Martin has confirmed that Mr. Paul Burke and Ms. Anne Kenny-Ryan will fill two of the casual vacancies on the Board. Confirmation of the third nominee is awaited. Mr. Paul Burke and Ms. Anne Kenny-Ryan were formally welcomed back as Board Members for a further term of office.

3. **CEO's Report** **The Chief Executive Officer briefed the Members on the following:**

The CEO paid tribute to Ms. Deirdre O'Keeffe, Secretary to the Board and formally congratulated her on her promotion to Community Care Services in Co. Clare. The Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Sandra Marsh, joined the CEO and congratulated Ms. O'Keeffe on behalf of the Board Members. Ms. Therese Fitzgerald was welcomed as the in-coming secretary to the Board.

Private Hospital

As indicated at the last meeting of the Board, Bons/Bupa are entering into direct discussions with the authors of the VHI report. The Members will be kept informed.

Update on Vomiting Bug

Reference was made to a misleading article in the media which caused considerable confusion and upset in the community. The CEO confirmed that Ireland has experienced several outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease caused by Norwalk-like virus since the beginning of 2002. Many of the outbreaks have occurred in hospitals, residential institutions, hotels, and, particularly during the Summer. Guidance

on the management of outbreaks of illness due to NLV has been produced for use in hospitals. This includes advice/education of staff and patients, strict hand washing and cleaning procedures, limitation of visitors, admissions and also movement of staff and patients/residents.

Flu Vaccination

A press release regarding the flu vaccination was circulated to the Members for information. Particular emphasis focused on at risk groups, such as the elderly and younger people suffering from chronic diseases. This vaccine is also being made available to the Board's staff.

NDP

No allocation was provided for new projects in 2002. Meetings on outstanding issues have taken place with the Department of Health and Children.

Cancer in Askeaton and Surrounding Areas 1994-1999

The National Cancer Registry of Ireland (NCRI) was commissioned in 2001 to prepare a report on cancer incidence in the Mid-Western Health Board 1994-1999. Maps with details of Cancer Standardised Incidence Ratio's (SIRs) in the Mid-West region compared to Irish rates were circulated to the Members together with map of the Mid-West region. According to the report cancer rates in the Mid-West are lower than the national average. Cancer rates in the Askeaton study area 1 and 2 were lower than the Mid-Western Health Board average.

Villa Maria, Parteen

This Mental Health Facility remains closed because of unresolved Industrial Relations issues.

Breast Cancer Awareness

The CEO outlined arrangements at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital. At the request of Sen. N. Coonan, Mr. J. Hennessy will look at holding information days also at Nenagh and Ennis General Hospitals. A question raised by Dep. J. O' Sullivan on the extension of the Breast Screening Programme to this area gave rise to a debate on the full implementation of the Symptomatic Breast Disease programme. Mr. P. Burke advocated the prioritisation of investment in that programme. To inform the issue of choice and priority in the context of limited resources it was agreed to circulate a briefing note to members.

Acquisition of Property

The Board reaffirmed its agreement to facilitate executive negotiations on property acquisition. Proposals will be formally presented to the Board in due course. This was proposed by Ms. M. O'Donnell and seconded by Cllr. B. Chambers.

Minister's Award

Congratulations were conveyed to Mr. Willie Reddy and staff in the Mid-Western Regional Hospital on winning the runners-up prize in the Minister's Awards for health and safety innovation as a result of a project addressing the hazard that is violence in the modern healthcare environment. The Members have shown an interest in this issue in the past.

Housing Aid for the Elderly

An Inter-Departmental Group on Needs of Older People has been established by Minister Callely. One of the issues being examined by the Group is the Special Housing Aid Scheme for the Elderly. The Board has raised a number of issues in relation to the scheme in the Mid-Western Health Board. The Members will be kept informed of progress. Sen. Coonan

welcomed the setting up of this Group.

National Conference on Older Persons

This conference will take place in the Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick on 6th and 7th November, 2002. Any Board Member who is interested in attending was invited to contact the CEO's Department for more details.

NHS/Service Planning Process

The CEO will be advising the Board of new dates for quarterly reviews.

Ennis General Hospital

A DCP is being developed which will address current issues and should be finalised by the next meeting of the Board.

Bed Capacity

The Board was allocated 78 beds under the Bed Capacity Review to come on stream in the current year. To-date, 42 additional beds are now in place. The Board's Management has now received approval to proceed with capital work at the Regional Orthopaedic Hospital, Croom. This work will take six months to complete and then beds can be commissioned. Management is in discussions with the Department of Health & Children regarding the commissioning of 5 surgical beds at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital before year's end.

Consultant Rheumatologist

In response to a request for an update by Cllr. M. Hourigan, the CEO stated that this matter is still with Comhairle na nOspidéal. The Members will be kept informed.

Incontinence Wear

In response to a request for an update by Deputy J. O'Sullivan, the CEO stated that he has spoken with the Minister and Finance officials in the Department of

Health and Children regarding the funding of this service. This item has been included in the Board's bid for 2003 allocation.

Hospital of the Assumption, Thurles.

In response to concerns raised by Sen. N. Coonan, the CEO stated that sanction of the construction contract is awaited from the Department of Health & Children. If the Board gets NDP funding this year it will be possible to keep to the 2004 completion date. At present, there are no approvals for new projects. The Executive will be meeting the Department of Health & Children in the coming weeks.

Recruitment of Speech Therapists, North Tipperary.

In response to Cllr. J. Casey, the CEO stated that the Executive is currently engaging with a group in recruiting overseas. The Members will be kept informed.

4. **Report of the CEO's of Financial Results
Report No. 72/02** Report No. 72/02 was noted.
5. **Review of Service Plans 2002
Report No. 73/02** Report No. 73/02 was noted and was discussed in detail at the Service Plans 2002 review meeting which took place on the 4th October, 2002.
6. **Summary of the First Report on the National Counselling Service for Adults who have suffered Childhood Abuse
Report No. 74/02** Report No. 74/02 was noted. The full Report and Executive Summary were also circulated to the Members. Cllr. S. Marsh joined Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan in complimenting the staff who provide this service locally.

7. **Implementation of General Practitioners Co-operative Out-of-Hours arrangements in Tipperary North.** Report No. 75/02 was noted. The North Tipperary Board Members welcomed this development and thanked all those who enabled it's development. Mr. T. Hourigan confirmed that a review has commenced on the impact of Shannondoc in Clare on the A&E Services, particularly in relation to paediatrics. Mr. Hourigan confirmed that a Report on the impact of G.P. Co-op (Shannondoc) on A/E Services will come before the Board.
8. **Report of the Inspector of Mental Hospitals for year-ending 31st December, 2001.** Report No. 76/02 was noted. The full report was circulated to the Members. Mr. Hourigan gave a brief summary on the findings of the Inspector, Dr. Dermot Walsh particularly in relation to Unit 5B, Limerick and services for patients in North Tipperary. The CEO stated that while he holds Dr. Walsh in high regard, he had written to Dr. Walsh voicing concerns at some of the content of what has been reported in Chapter 7 (South Eastern Health Board) and particularly in relation to the Tipperary Mental Health Services. The CEO stated that the Inspector raised doubts about the feasibility of developing an independent mental health service in North Tipperary and said the bed requirement should be provided at the Acute Unit in Limerick. The CEO confirmed that this is not an option. Cllr./Dr. J. Hennessy welcomed the Board's commitment to the development of an Acute Psychiatric Unit in Nenagh, in spite of the Inspector's report. Dr. J. O'Riordan agreed with the CEO's statement and stated that while the opinions given by the Inspector are personal opinions, they were not appropriate in relation to provision of mental health services for North Tipperary in Limerick Acute Unit.

The CEO informed the Members that a letter outlining his concerns was sent to Dr. Dermot Walsh and will be circulated to the

Members for information. It was proposed by Cllr. J. Egan and seconded by Cllr. J. Casey that a Motion be adopted stating that the *"This Board wishes to convey it's grave concern to the Minister for Health and Children in relation to the Inspector of Mental Health's reference in his 2001 Report regarding the provision of an Acute Psychiatric Unit at Nenagh General Hospital. The Board reaffirmed it's commitment to this Development and requested that the Department of Health and Children also confirms it's recognition of this priority in the Board's area."*

Mr. T. Hourigan stated that it is planned to bring a report to the Board in November as a result of two national reports on suicide.

9. **Report of Fluoridation Forum**
Report No. 77/02
- Report No. 77/02 was noted.
The full report was circulated to the Members for information.
10. **Population change in the MWHB 1996-2002**
Report No. 78/02
- Report No. 78/02 was noted.

Signed/

Cllr. S. Marsh, Vice-Chairman

S. deBurca, Chief Executive Officer

Date