

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF THE MID-WESTERN  
HEALTH BOARD HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, 31/33  
CATHERINE STREET, LIMERICK ON FRIDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2002  
AT 11.00 A.M.**

**Presiding:** Cllr. S. Hillery, Chairman

**Present:**

Cllr. Y. Begley	Cllr. J. Bourke
Cllr. P. Bugler	Cllr. R. Butler
Dr. T. Casey	Cllr. B. Chambers
Cllr. J. Clifford	Dr. D. Clinch
Dep. J. Cregan	Cllr. P. Daly
Cllr. J. Egan	Cllr. S. Hillery
Cllr. M. Hourigan	Cllr. S. Marsh
Dr. P. McKenna	Dr. J. Mullane
Mr. L. MacNamara	Mr. D. McAvinchey
Cllr. M. O'Donnell	Dep. J. O'Riordan
Cllr. K. Sheahan	

**Apologies:**

Sen. N. Coonan	Cllr./ Dr. J. Hennessy
Ms. M. Hogan	Dep. J. O'Sullivan

**In Attendance:**

Mr. S. deBúrca, Chief Executive Officer  
Mr. G. Crowley, Assistant Chief Executive Officer  
Mr. J. Conway, Assistant Chief Executive Officer  
Mr. T. Hourigan, Regional Manager  
Mr. P. McDonald, Director of Finance  
Mr. J. Hennessy, A/Assistant Chief Executive Officer  
Mr. S. McNulty, A/Regional Manager  
Dr. T. Greally, Public Health Specialist  
Ms. M. Woods, Communications Officer  
Ms. D. O'Keefe, Staff Officer Secretariat

**1 (a) Silent Prayer**

**(b) Vote of Sympathy** A vote of sympathy was extended to staff who had suffered recent bereavements.

**(c) Minutes**

Minutes of meeting of the Board held on 12th July, 2002 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. R. Butler, seconded by Cllr. M. Hourigan.

**2. Correspondence**

Further to Notice of Motion adopted by the Board which was submitted to the Minister for Justice, Equality and

Law Reform regarding violence against staff, the Minister's Office has been assured by the Garda authorities that a very serious view is taken of all offences directed to nursing and medical staff in hospitals and community settings.

A copy of letter from Inspector G. McNamara, Roxboro Garda Station was circulated to the Members. This letter detailed the number and type of offences of people who have caused problems at the Mid- Western Regional Hospital. The C.E.O. formally acknowledged the involvement and the co-operation of the Gardai with the Boards personnel in this regard.

### **3. Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The Chief Executive Officer briefed the Members on the following:

#### **Update on Consultant Appointments in Acute Services**

An update on Consultant appointments in Acute Services was circulated for the information of the Members. In response to Cllr. M. Hourigan's request for an update on the appointment of a Consultant Rheumatologist, Mr. J. Hennessy stated the issues are on the agenda of Comhairle na nOspideal for discussion. The Board will advertise immediately following Comhairle approval and will also advertise for a temporary filling of the post pending the appointment of a permanent Consultant Rheumatologist. Mr. Hennessy gave a breakdown of Consultant Pathologist posts advertised in response to a query raised by Mr. D. McAvinchey.

#### **Community Paediatrician**

The Mid- Western Health Board has received approval from Comhairle na nOspidael to appoint a Consultant Community Paediatrician with a special Interest in Community Child Health.

#### **Proposed Industrial Action-Theatre Nurses**

The I.N.O. has been repeatedly advised that the claim for increased on- call payments is a national issue and should be processed, through the appropriate mechanisms. The C.E.O. asked the I.N.O to reconsider their position as up to 40 operations will not take place if industrial action is taken on the 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2002.

### **Acute Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Unit**

In response to concerns raised by Dr. Y. Begley at the July meeting of the Board, the C.E.O stated that the Acute Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Unit will be located on the Mid-Western Regional Hospital campus. The specifics will be addressed in the context of the DCP. Dr. Y. Begley and Mr. L. MacNamara voiced concerns regarding the timeframe involved and the need to ring-fence finances to ensure such a Unit goes ahead.

### **Roscrea Ambulance Base**

Cllr. J. Casey welcomed the announcement that the Department of Health and Children Hospital Planning Unit has indicated that it has no objection to the Board proceeding with an ambulance base in Roscrea.

### **Scariff Ambulance Base**

Refurbishment of this site is now progressing and is scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

### **Incontinence Wear**

Further to previous discussions at Board meetings, as recently as last week the Department of Health and Children has been contacted about this issue and the need for a decision by the Department of Health and Children on funding requirement to enact this scheme.

### **Stella Maris**

Following discussions with the Members and the Department of Health and Children it was agreed on the proposal of Cllr. P. Bugler and seconded by Ms. M. O'Donnell that a Working Group would examine the option of purchasing Stella Maris with a view to using it as an Elderly Care Day Centre. They will prepare a brief for the Department of Health and Children in consultation with the local committee.

### **Ambulant Dementia Unit**

The Department of Health and Children Hospital Planning Unit has indicated that it has no objection to the Design Team proceeding to the next stages of the design and planning process. Mr. J. Conway will clarify points raised by the H.P.O. to proceed with this Unit.

### **Progress on Mental Health Services in Limerick**

The transfer of 38 elderly patients from St. Joseph's Hospital, Limerick to Villa Maria, Parteen has been delayed because of IR issues. Management is currently considering next steps and options are being evaluated. The Members will be kept informed.

### **National Cancer Forum**

The National Cancer Forum visited this region on the 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2002. Professor Paul Redmond, Chairman of the National Cancer Forum presented the current position on progress and implementation of the National Cancer Strategy and preparatory work for a revised National Cancer Strategy from 2003 – 2010. The Executive will present a detailed submission on behalf of the Board as part of the consultation process in preparing the revised National Cancer Strategy.

### **Mammography Service in Nenagh**

Approximately 300 patients per year avail of this service in Nenagh General Hospital. As the mammography machine in Nenagh General Hospital is no longer functioning to specification, the Members were advised that patients from North Tipperary are now being referred to the Mid-Western Regional Hospital for this service. This arrangement is consistent with providing access to a best practice service at the developing Centre of Excellence in Limerick. Cllr. J. Casey stated that while he wanted the best available treatment for the people of North Tipperary and did not have a difficulty in the service moving to Limerick or the consideration of a mobile unit, he did have concerns regarding the future of Nenagh General Hospital. He requested a meeting outlining the vision for Nenagh General Hospital with details of the services that can be provided at Nenagh General Hospital and indeed Ennis General Hospital. Cllr. P. Bugler queried why the National Cancer Strategy 1996 is being revised and Professor Higgins statement that there is a lack of progress in its implementation as he had and felt that this Board had made progress on it's implementation. Mr. McAvinchy agreed with the sentiments of both Cllrs. Casey and Bugler and accepted that providing a service for 300 patients per annum in Nenagh General Hospital is not the way to provide a screening service.

In response, the C.E.O. stated that there are two strands to this issue, (i) breast screening and (ii) symptomatic breast disease and stated that the first option of choice is a Centre of Excellence in the Mid-West and the need to invest in this Centre.

### **Private Hospital**

The C.E.O referred to management's response to a report commissioned by the VHI. Bons/BUPA are currently seeking a meeting with VHI.

## **Ennis General Hospital Development**

Awaiting formal approval to proceed with Design Team.

### **Bed Capacity**

The Board was allocated 78 beds under the Bed Capacity Review. 29 Beds in the Trauma Unit, Mid-Western Regional Hospital are scheduled to open in the next few weeks. The commissioning of 17 beds in the Regional Orthopaedic Hospital is conditional on capital works at Croom. Documentation was submitted to the Department of Health and Children in June and sanction is awaited. The commissioning of 5 surgical beds in the Mid-Western Regional Hospital is subject to capital works and sanction is awaited from the Department of Health and Children. Dr. Clinch raised the issue of bed designation in the context of the increased allocation of beds at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital. In response, the C.E.O. referred to a review of bed designation in the context of the additional provision and was awaiting a response from the Medical Board.

- 4. Report of the C.E.O's Overview of:**  
**(i) Financial Results**  
**(ii) Revenue Allocation**  
**2002: Adjustment**  
**Report No. 64/02**

Report No 64/62 was noted.  
The C.E.O. stated that the reduction in staff numbers by 65 will be achieved by the non-appointment of staff to posts previously approved. Cllr. P. Bugler stated that the Board has been extremely diligent and has come in under-budget every year and yet this Board is penalised the same as Boards where there is significant over-spend. Cllr. R. Butler requested a breakdown by Care Group of the specific posts referred to by the C.E.O. Cllr. Butler joined Cllr. Bugler in stating that this Board has been very prudent and should be rewarded and not penalised.
- 5. Waiting List Initiative**  
**Report No. 65/02**

Report No. 65/02 was noted.
- 6. Vacancy – Child Care Advisory Committee**  
**Report No. 66/02**

To fill the two vacancies, Ms. M. O'Donnell was proposed Cllr. P. Bugler and seconded by Cllr. J. Egan and Cllr. J. Casey was proposed by Cllr. R. Butler and seconded by Dep. J. Cregan.
- 7. Report on Lottery Funding Grants**  
**Report No. 67/02**

Report 67/02 was noted.  
Cllr. J. Egan to speak directly with Mr. G. Crowley regarding a specific query.

8. **Report on the  
General Medical  
Services  
(Payments) Board  
for the year ended  
31<sup>st</sup> December 2001  
Report No. 68/02** Report No. 68/02 was noted.
9. **Final Progress  
Report of the  
Implementation  
Group for  
Silvermines  
Report No. 69/02** Report No. 69/02 was noted.
10. **Report on BCG  
Vaccine  
Report No. 70/02** Report No. 70/02 was noted.
11. **Report of the  
Working Group on  
the National Anti –  
Poverty Strategy and  
Health  
Report No. 71/02** Report No. 71/02 was noted.

Signed/

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Cllr. S. Hillery, Chairman

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S. deBúrca, Chief Executive Officer

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Date