

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE
MID-WESTERN HEALTH BOARD HELD IN
RAHEEN HOSPITAL, TUAMGRANEY, CO. CLARE
ON FRIDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY 2004 AT 11A.M.**

- Presiding/** Cllr. B. Chambers, Leaschathaoirleach
- Present/**
- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Dr. Y. Begley | Cllr. T. Berkery |
| Cllr. J. Bourke | Cllr. P. Bugler |
| Cllr. J. Casey | Cllr. J. Clifford |
| Cllr. P. Daly | Cllr. J. Egan |
| Cllr./Dr. J. Hennessy | Cllr. S. Hillery |
| Ms. M. Hogan | Cllr. M. Hourigan |
| Ms. A. Kenny-Ryan | Cllr. J. Meagher |
| Dr. P. McKenna | Mr. L. MacNamara |
| Ms. M. O'Donnell | Dr. J. O'Riordan |
| Cllr. K. Sheahan | Cllr. K. Walsh |
- Apologies/**
- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Mr. P. Burke | Cllr. R. Butler |
| Dr. D. Clinch | Ms. N. Fitzpatrick |
| Cllr. S. Marsh | Mr. D. McAvinchey |
| Dr. J. Mullane | |
- In Attendance/**
- Dr. S. deBurca, Chief Executive Officer
 Mr. G. Crowley, Assistant Chief Executive Officer
 Mr. J. O' Brien, Assistant Chief Executive Officer
 Ms. Tessa Greally, Specialist in Public Health Medicine
 Mr. J. Conway, Assistant Chief Executive Officer
 Mr. T. Hourigan, Regional Manager
 Mr. J. O'Grady, Regional Manager
 Mr. P. McDonald, Director of Finance
 Ms. T. Fitzgerald, Staff Officer
 Ms. M. Woods, Senior Executive Officer
 Mr. S. McNulty, General Manager
 Ms. P. McNamara, Director of Nursing
 Ms. M. Molloy, Care Group Manager
- 1(a) Urnaí Tosáí**
- 1(b) Vote of Sympathy** A vote of sympathy was extended to staff who had suffered recent bereavements.
- 1(c) Minutes** Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 9th January, 2004 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Bourke and seconded by Cllr. Jim Casey.

Board Question

Cllr. K. Sheahan referred to question he had submitted asking for “details of the properties owned and rented by the Board and valuations where available” was not included in the Agenda for the February Board Meeting. The CEO responded by stating that this question had not been deemed appropriate for inclusion on the Agenda, but that Cllr. K. Sheahan was afforded the opportunity to review the register. The CEO indicated that a report would be brought to the next Board Meeting In-Committee, where he would deal with any specific issues. Cllr. Sheahan asked that his dissatisfaction regarding this issue be noted.

2. Correspondence

Hospital of the Assumption

Notification has been received from the Department of Health and Children of approval to proceed to tender on the Hospital of Assumption, Thurles, subject to Conditions and Requirements.

Cllr’s Casey, Egan, Hennessy and Berkery all welcomed this announcement.

The Development Control Plan for Ennis General Hospital

The Department of Health and Children have advised that ‘no objection is raised to acceptance of this Brief. It should now be issued to the selected design team, to facilitate, in the first case, the negotiation of an acceptable fee for the proposed planning and design work.’ In response to Cllr. P. Daly and Cllr. Sean Hillery, the CEO stated that A&E is included in the planning brief, and that no timescale had been set.

Acute Psychiatric Unit, Nenagh

An acknowledgement from the Private Secretary to Minister Martin stated that the Notice of Motion submitted by the Board is receiving attention.

3. CEO's Report

The Chief Executive Officer briefed the Members on the following:

Radiotherapy Services

The following proposal was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Bourke and seconded Cllr. M. Hogan, and adopted unanimously.

“The Mid-Western Health Board hereby authorises the Chief Executive Officer to grant a license to the Mid-Western Hospitals Development Trust for the purpose of the development of a Radiotherapy Centre at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital Dooradoyle. To enable the Trust to contract with the Mater Private Hospital to provide services to public and private patients, this Board also authorises the grant of a licence to the Mater Private Hospital to operate the proposed facility on the Mid-Western Regional Hospital site.”

A lengthy discussion followed to which the Board Members contributed. They congratulated the Mid-Western Hospital Trust, Mr. J. P. McManus and the staff involved in progressing this project.

McDonalds / Obesity

Cllr. P. Daly expressed his concerns that the recent planning objection, by two Health Promotion Staff could effect the provision of 70 extra jobs in Ennis.

Responding to Cllr. Pat Daly, the CEO outlined that there was no Board policy regarding such issues at this time. However a policy will be considered and brought before the Board. He stated that the action taken was made was an honest personal statement made by committed people. He outlined that while what had happened was unintentional, the Board had received a lot of support on this matter including Prof. Cecily Kelleher.

Cllr. J. Bourke welcomed the additional opportunity to discuss the growing problem of obesity.

Cystic Fibrosis Unit Mid-Western Regional Hospital

The CEO advised that work on the Cystic Fibrosis Unit at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital is nearly completed. The funding for this upgrade was funded by voluntary donations.

Cllr. K. Sheahan welcomed this facility for young adults, and acknowledged the contribution of Dep. D. Neville and various voluntary interests.

Announcement of the granting of an Adjunct Professorship to Dr. R. Gupta by the University of Limerick

Dr. Gupta has been granted an Adjunct Professorship at the University of Limerick. The Executive and Board conveyed their congratulations to Dr. R. Gupta, Consultant Oncologist.

Housing Aid for the Elderly

There has been an increase of 6% in this year's allocation. The current statistics indicate the scheme is at a critical point. The scheme is under review by Minister for State Ivor Callally's interdepartmental group.

A discussion followed to which a number of Members contributed. They expressed their concern over the growing waiting lists, the outstanding number of urgent works which need to be completed and the need for the scheme to be run by the Local Authorities who have the technical expertise and the responsibility for housing.

Cllr. K. Sheahan expressed his concerns regarding VFM and asked that a report be brought before the Board on the average cost of an installation of a storage heater.

In response to Cllr. M. Hourigan, the CEO indicated that this allocation would not make a considerable impact on Waiting Lists.

Private Hospital

The CEO stated that the Department of Health and Children was briefed on this recently and that the Board will kept updated on progress.

Regional Maternity Hospital

The Department of Health and Children have undertaken to provide funding for the extension to the Mid-Western Regional Maternity Hospital.

Stella Maris

The purchase of the Stella Maris Nursing Home has been concluded. The formal handover from the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Evron is to take place on the 1st March, 2004.

Financial Position at the end of 2003

The CEO advised the Board of his appearance before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health on the 26th February, 2004.

He informed the Board that such an enquiry would find nothing that was not already known to the Department of Health and Children. The surplus was a direct result of compliance with the Department's policy and practice.

Cllr. P. Bugler stated that the type of reporting that had occurred in the last week reflected badly on Board Members. The Mid-Western Health Board had adopted a conservative and responsible attitude to its Service Plan. The 2003 Letter of Determination was explicit that no additional funding would be forthcoming in 2003, however extra funding of €41 m had been received in late 2003.

A number of Members expressed their concern that the Board was being wrongly accused mismanagement in order to justify the of dissolution of the Health Boards. The Members welcomed the opportunity to appear before the Joint Oireachtas Committee to be vindicated.

Cllr. T. Berkery highlighted that no beds were closed in the region or elective surgery postponed, while Mr. L. MacNamara highlighted that carrying forward a surplus was excellent news as we are starting into 2004 in an excellent position.

Following a lengthy discussion the Board adopted the following statement on the proposal of Cllr. Paul Bugler and Cllr. Sean Hillery.

“This Board is gravely concerned and condemns any inference from certain sources that either it as a corporate body or its executive

in any way deviated from its Service Plans at the expense of patient/client care.

It emphasises that the underspend in 2003 arises from compliance with national policy and Department of Health and Children budget parameters and the assignment of additional funds in the latter part of 2003.

The Board is very disappointed that its yearly performance is not acknowledged by those who should know better. The Board welcomes the interest of the Joint Oireachtas Committee in impartially reviewing this matter.”

Consultants’ Industrial Action

In response to Dr. Y. Begley the CEO stated that the Hospital Consultants have proposed Industrial Action over the new Clinical Indemnity Scheme.

There are two Unions representing the Consultants the Irish Hospitals Consultants Association (IHCA) and the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO). The IHCA are proposing to escalated Industrial Action on the 16th February, which will restrict Out-Patients Clinics and suspension of work in relation to the Waiting List Initiative and the National Treatment Purchase Fund. Proposed escalation from the 23rd February would result in the withdrawal from all emergency services in hospitals. Talks in relation to Contingency Plans will be taking place from the 12th February.

The Board will be kept apprised of developments.

- 4. Presentation on Care and Case Management**

Mr. Seamus McNulty gave a presentation on the Care and Case Management project in operation in East Clare.

Members congratulated the staff involved in this project and called for the expansion of this project, as a model for future schemes.
- 5. Report of the Committee on the Dermatology Services**
Report No. 05/04

Report No. 05/04 was noted.

6. **“Home from Home? The Views of Residents on Social Gain and Quality of Life: A Study in Three Care Centres for Older People”**
Report No. 06/04

Report No. 06/04 was noted. Mr. J. Conway outlined brief summary of the report.

7. **Palliative Care Needs Assessment – Mid West Region**
Report No. 07/04

Mr. J. Conway gave a brief summary of the report and the stakeholders involved.

8. **Old Age Psychiatry Services Review**
Report No. 08/04

Report No. 08/04 was noted. Mr. J. Conway summarised the report and the previous report of the Board “Who Cares” he also acknowledged the working group and the particular input of Dr. R. Loane, Mr. T. Hourigan.
Mr. L. MacNamara welcomed the report and acknowledged the work of the staff in bringing forward this report.
Replying to Mr. L. MacNamara’s query Mr. J. Conway stated that a timescale had not been set and a working group would be set up shortly.

9. **Transfer of Mount St. Vincent’s Residential Childcare Centre**
Report No. 09/04

Report No. 09/04 was noted.

10. **Transfer of Property – Mount St. Vincent’s Residential Childcare Centre**
Report No. 10/04

Report No. 10/04 was noted.

Notice of Motion:

Submitted by Cllr. J. Hennessy: “That the Mid-Western Health Board reject the Hanly Report in its present form”

Mr. Joe Hennessy gave a brief outline of the background to his Motion. A number of Members expressed their concerns with the Hanly Report especially in relation to the future of smaller hospitals.

The Motion was debated and proposed by Cllr. Paul Bugler and seconded by Cllr. Sean Hillery. However, the CEO advised that it was contrary to Government Policy and that any variation of, or alternative to policy would have to be based on specific evidence.

11. **Questions:**
a. **Submitted by Dr. Clinch:**

“ Over what time scale will it be possible to ensure that there is no mixing of children with adults in wards which are primarily designated for adults with serious acute psychiatric conditions?”

The response has been circulated, and is appended as an integral part of the minute.

Signed/

Cllr. B. Chambers, Leaschathaoirleach

S. deBurca, Chief Executive Officer

Date