

## 4. Older People

The Service Plan for Older People outlines the services provided for people over the age of 65 years requiring care in the community and residential care.

### **Mission Statement**

*To improve the health and quality of life of older people in the four counties Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Longford.*

This will be achieved through the provision of a range of interventions in the home, in the community, in acute hospitals and in care centres for older people. The interventions offered will include disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment, care and rehabilitation and health promotion initiatives.

The care group approach focuses attention on meeting the needs of the population through the evaluation and adoption of strategies for delivering the mission.

### **Strategic Direction of Board**

In keeping with the Action Plan for Health and Social Gain for the Elderly published in 1997, the strategic direction of the Board includes the following:

- Improving community services so that older people where appropriate can be maintained in their own home.
- Improving linkages in the continuum of care between home care, community care, acute care and long stay care. This is being done through the provision of flexible respite care, through the work of the carer co-ordinator and through the Community Ward Programme.
- Shifting the balance from long term care to rehabilitation/assessment and respite.
- The re-configuration of services should facilitate as many older people as possible in availing of services within a 12 mile radius of their home.
- Since the adoption of the Action Plan for Health & Social Gain for the Elderly significant progress has been made which includes the following:
  - Development of rehabilitation services which are now available in St. Joseph's, Longford, St. Mary's, Mullingar, Abbeyleix, Edenderry and Tullamore (Aged Care Unit). Locations where rehabilitation services need to be developed include Mountmellick, Athlone and Birr.
  - Conversion of old welfare accommodation in Riada House to nursing accommodation.
  - The appointment of a carer co-ordinator for Laois/Offaly.

- The development of a Community Ward Project in the Tullamore area.
- The establishment of an old age psychiatry service in Laois/Offaly.

## **Review of Performance Against 1999 Service Plan**

### **Mapping Service Utilisation**

The Board has conducted a study of the availability and utilisation of services throughout its area by older people. The study on the utilisation of beds took account of beds in private nursing homes both within the health board area and outside which were occupied by Midland Health Board residents and has shown differences in the uptake both of community services and long-term beds. The study will help to inform a review of these facilities which will take place in the Year 2000.

The Board has achieved the targets set in the 1999 Service Plans which include the following:

**£0.300 m** was applied to meet the staffing implications of developments in Community Nursing Units in Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry. **£0.100 m** was applied to meet staffing implications of expanding by 10 the bed complement in St. Vincent's to take ten patients transferred from the Psychiatric Services at St. Fintan's Hospital.

### **Admission/Discharge Policy**

The Board has commenced implementation of an admissions/discharge policy and the establishment of assessment teams. This will ensure that those most in need occupy long-term beds.

### **District Care Unit**

The District Care Unit, a programme whereby an enhanced level of community care is delivered to suitable older people in their own homes was commenced in the Tullamore area in 1999. Patients come from within a 15 mile radius of Tullamore. The programme at any given time has an average of 15 patients receiving care. The total throughput for 1999 is expected to be about 30. Instruments of measurement of outcomes showed an improvement for all patients discharged and the well being of their carers also improved. In general recipients of the service attained a significant improvement in independence and carers were very positive about the programme. The programme is helping to free up hospital beds. The estimated cost of the programme for 1999 was **£0.080 m**.

### **Home Help Services**

Additional home help including home help supervision was provided at a cost of **£0.023 m** for each Community Care Area. Additional 20 hours per week was provided in Longford/Westmeath and Laois/Offaly for Assistant Home Help Supervisors at **£0.007 m** each to improve service co-ordination, data collection and payments. This permitted the expansion of home help services in the Board's area. As a result of a review of Home Help Services conducted in 1998, protocols are in place to ensure that those most in need receive the service. More home helps have also been trained to act as care attendants

### **Day Care Centres**

Summer closures of Day Centres were shortened by four weeks to one week to improve continuity of care.

### **Improved Community Structures**

The need to deliver the package of services to populations of 25,000 – 35,000 people within a 12 mile radius of their home requires development of the multi-disciplinary team concept. In 1999, two additional Senior Public Community Care Health Nurses (SPHNs) were appointed to Laois/Offaly and Longford/Westmeath catchment areas to take account of the need for quality improvements and clinical leadership within the multi-disciplinary sector team. The appointments were made in late 1999.

### **Subvention to Nursing Homes**

A sum of **£0.465 m** was provided in the Midland Health Board allocation of 1999. This helped the Board to comply with the terms of the Amendment to Nursing Home Regulations introduced with effect from 1/1/99.

### **Carer Support**

The objective of the carer co-ordinator service is to identify the population of carers in need of support, identify shortfalls in the support they receive and to enable carers to cope and also to access services.

Training programmes in "Caring and Coping" for carers and hospital based care attendants have been conducted in Edenderry and Abbeyleix.

In 1999 consultation took place with voluntary organisation e.g. Alzheimer's Society and Carers Association.

### **Outreach Physiotherapy**

Outreach physiotherapy services were provided on a pilot basis through a project based in Aughnacliffe, Co. Longford. This enhanced older peoples' access to physiotherapy in the Dolmen Community Centre, Aughnacliffe, in St. Joseph's Hospital, Longford and in older persons' homes throughout Longford.

## **Health Promotion, Information & Awareness**

The Board co-ordinated an intersectoral group which initiated a number of projects for UN Year of Older Persons. The Midland Regional Committee was allocated £17,200 to fund specific projects and meeting criteria laid down by the National Steering Committee. A particular success of the year was the beginning of a network of voluntary organisation and individuals throughout the region, which will be developed further in the future.

The Board trained 16 tutors in the 'Go for Life' programme and this is available now to all community groups throughout the region. Pilot training programmes were conducted for carers in Edenderry and in Abbeyleix.

## **Education, Training and Occupational Health**

In care centres throughout the Board's area, training programmes in lifting were conducted as part of the Board's occupational health programme. Training was also conducted in food hygiene and wound care.

## **Therapy Outcomes Database**

Work continues on the development of an outcome database for therapies and a proposal will be submitted to the Department of Health and Children in 2000.

## **Consultation with the Public**

An evaluation of the Edenderry Forum was commenced by the Board in 1999. The results will be used to inform consultation with older people and the general public about services for older people.

## **Additional Funding 2000**

The Board received **£1.735 m** for service development which includes a net figure of **£896,000**.

Nursing Home Subvention	0.266
Home Help Development	0.075
Enhanced Services (discretionary)	0.225
Support to Carers	0.100

Improvements to Community Support Structures	0.075
Additional Staffing in long-stay units	0.100
Alzheimer Society of Ireland	0.055
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£896,000</b>

In addition, **£0.221 m** was allocated to take account of demographic changes.

### **Summary of Application of Development Funds**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Service Development</b>
Nursing Home Subvention	266
Home Help Development	75
Community Ward Programmes	200
Community Physiotherapy	118
Rehabilitation Long Stay Units	200
Health Promotion	28
Improved Community Structures	75
Support for Carers	100
Alzheimer's Society	55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,117</b>

## Emerging Issues

Emerging issues identified by the board include the following:

**Demographic Trends.** The Midland Health Board has a higher than average proportion of older people in its population – 12.2% over 65 years and 5% over 75 years. Population estimates suggest that proportionally the greatest increase will be among the ‘old’ old (over 80 years).

The increasing age and dependency of those in the Board’s care centres for older people has implications for staffing. A recent independent review of staffing needs in some of the Board’s care institutions put the cost of the extra staffing required at **£0.800 m** approximately.

The need to provide quality services in the community and in our institutions for those with Alzheimer’s Disease. This will have capital in addition to revenue implications.

The need to review long term bed numbers to ensure that beds are accessible on a needs basis. Refurbishment of some facilities will have capital implications.

The board recognises and accepts that there is a growing demand for support for carers.

## Care of Older People In Their Own Community

Strategic Focus	Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators
<b>To ensure that long-term care is available on a needs basis in all sectors of the Board’s area.</b>	<p>A detailed review of the utilisation of beds, including beds in the private sector has shown that the overall utilisation is in keeping with the Health Strategy guideline that not more than 10% of those over the age of 75 years should be in long-term care at any given time. However, because of the geographical location of existing beds and their utilisation pattern, some sectors are availing of considerably more beds than others, having regard to their population of older people. In general, less beds for older people are being used in the Birr, Tullamore and Mullingar sectors while Longford, Athlone and Portlaoise are using more than the 10% target.</p> <p>Waiting lists for admission to Board’s long stay units ranged from 2 months to 3 years (Tullamore). The long waiting lists in Offaly will be alleviated when extra beds come on stream in Riada House, Tullamore (20 beds) and the new Birr Community Nursing Unit (30 beds) in 2001. In the meantime the District Care Unit will be extended to include Birr and the</p>

	<p>admissions/discharge procedures will help to alleviate pressure.</p> <p>A need which has already been identified by our Board is the replacement of St. Mary's, Mullingar. In keeping with its stated policy of providing services within a 12 mile radius of people's home, the Board will have regard to the need to provide a Community Care Unit in North Westmeath.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicator:</b> All applicants for long-term care will be formally assessed by a multi-disciplinary team within two months of application.</p>
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<b>Strategic Focus</b>	<b>Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators</b>
<p><b>To ensure that older people can access long-term care within a 12 mile radius of their own homes.</b></p>	<p>In 2000, the Board will establish a project group in each county which will determine the appropriate number of beds to be provided and the location of those beds within the county.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.1</b> To develop proposals for appropriate capital projects for each of the four counties.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicator</b></p> <p>Proposals developed and submitted to the Department of Health and Children.</p>

## Rehabilitation

<b>Strategic Focus</b>	<b>Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators</b>
<p><b>Reorienting the activity of community care units through the establishment of rehabilitation programmes.</b></p>	<p>Over the past few years the Board has introduced rehabilitation services to most care centres for older people. Introduction of rehabilitation in the remaining units - Athlone, Mountmellick and Birr - is a priority for the Board. With the commissioning of the new Community Nursing Unit in 2001 it is intended to provide a rehabilitation service in Birr.</p>

	<p><b>Cost per Unit:</b></p> <p>Occupational Therapist <b>£0.025 m</b></p> <p>Physiotherapist <b>£0.025 m</b></p> <p>3 Care Attendants <b><u>£0.045 m</u></b></p> <p><b>Total £0.095 m</b></p> <p>Regional training of care attendants to assist in provision of rehabilitation. <b>£0.010 m</b></p> <p><b>Target 4.1.2</b> Establishment of rehabilitation services in Mountmellick and Athlone.</p> <p>The rehabilitation services in the Board's care centres for older people will be monitored and evaluated over the next two years.</p> <p><b>Total cost of additional rehabilitation: £0.200 m</b></p>
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### **Subvention to Nursing Homes**

A sum of **£0.230 m** has been allocated.

In order to ensure that utilisation of long-term beds is appropriate and equitable, the board will monitor utilisation of health board and nursing home beds by sector.

In January, 1999, out of a total of 253 persons being subvented 102 (40.3%) were in receipt of maximum subvention. By October, 1999, the proportion had changed to 160 out of 305 (52.5%).

Given the increased dependency of those in receipt of subvention, the increased number of persons in receipt of subvention and the ageing of the population, the increased level of funding allocated for 2000 is adequate to meet current demand trends.

### **Care of Older People in Their Own Home**

<b>Strategic Focus</b>	<b>Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators</b>
<b>Provision of services to enable older people to remain in their own</b>	The Board will extend the pilot District Care Unit introduced

<p><b>home.</b></p>	<p>in 1999 in the Tullamore area to Birr, Portlaoise and Mullingar.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.200 m</b></p> <p>An interim evaluation of the District Care Units will be conducted in 2000.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.3</b> Establishment of District Care Units in Mullingar and Portlaoise and extension of Tullamore District Care Unit to Birr.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Care Units established in Mullingar, Portlaoise and extended to Birr.</li> <li>• Interim evaluation of District Care Units conducted in 2000.</li> </ul>
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### Home Help

Strategic Focus	Service Developments, Targets and Performance Indicators
<p><b>Provision of services to enable older people to remain in their own home.</b></p>	<p>A total of <b>£0.950 m</b> has been allocated to home help services. This will enable the Board to increase pay rates to a minimum of £4.40 per hour and to cope with expected growth in the needs of the service in the current year. The Board will review the delivery of the Home Help Service with a view to enabling it to identify unmet needs.</p> <p>The Board will continue its commitment this year to training Home Helps to act as care attendants.</p>

### Community Physiotherapist

Strategic Focus	Service Developments, Targets and Performance Indicators
<p><b>Enabling older people to access services in their own community.</b></p>	<p>The implementation of the District Care Units has highlighted the need for a Community Physiotherapy Service for those who need to follow-up physiotherapy. This need was also highlighted in a study which measured the outcome of interventions for fractured hip and hip replacement. Other important considerations include the need to</p>

	<p>provide a service to community care centres for older people and the difficulty which some older people have in travelling for services. The Board proposes to recruit one physiotherapist each for the Tullamore, Portlaoise and Mullingar areas.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.108 m</b></p> <p>Administrative support will be needed for paramedical services in the Birr area.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.010 m</b></p> <p><b>Total Cost of New Service: £0.118 m</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators:</b> The Board will monitor the number of people assessed as needing home physiotherapy, the number who receive it and the waiting times, in those areas with community based physiotherapists.</p>
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### Support for Carers

Strategic Focus	Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators
<p><b>Identification of needs of carers and enabling them to cope.</b></p>	<p>The carer co-ordinator in Laois/Offaly works closely with carers associations to identify needs.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.4</b> In partnership with the Carers Association. The Board will develop and implement a carers assessment form in 2000.</p> <p>The carer co-ordinator will continue to train carers in coping in caring skills.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.5</b> Phase 2 of the Attendant/Carer Training programmes will consist of sessions in Edenderry, Abbeyleix, Mountmellick and Athlone in 2000.</p> <p>The Board in partnership with carer organisations will develop an information pack for carers.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.005 m</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicator</b></p>

	<p>Information pack developed.</p> <p>In 2000 the Board will recruit a carer co-ordinator for the Longford/Westmeath area to conduct similar programmes.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.035 m</b></p> <p>The Board will subvent the Carers Association to the extent of <b>£0.010 m</b> and develop a service agreement with them. The service agreement will cover co-operation with the Board and development of carer resource centres and a telephone helpline.</p>
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### Day Care Centres

Strategic Focus	Service Developments, Targets and Performance Indicators
<p><b>Improved community services to meet the needs of carers.</b></p>	<p>In 1999 the Board shortened the summer closure period of day centres in order to improve continuity of care. In response to demands from carers, the Board will pilot longer opening hours in one day care centre in each Community Care Area of the Board.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.020 m</b></p> <p>In 2000 the Board will evaluate the service provided in its day centres.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.020 m</b></p> <p><b>Target 4.1.6</b> Completion of evaluation in 2000.</p>

### Alzheimer's Disease

Strategic Focus	Service Developments, Targets and Performance Indicators
<p><b>Supporting Carers</b></p>	<p>Results from the Board's mapping study show that 3 out of every 100 Public Health Nurse visits are made to a patient with Alzheimer's Disease.</p>

	<p>The Board has had discussions with the Alzheimer's Society on the training of Information and Advice Counsellors and also on the training of carer support workers and on the contracting of services from carer support workers trained by the Society from funding provided by FÁS.</p> <p>Graduates from the training programme for carer support workers are expected to come on stream in September, 2000.</p> <p>The Board will have further discussions with the Alzheimer's Society early in 2000 and will put in place a service agreement for service funding.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.055 m</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicator:</b> Service agreement in place in 2000.</p>
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<b>Strategic Focus</b>	<b>Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators</b>
<p><b>Community structures which will facilitate sector management.</b></p>	<p>The Board plans services for older people on the basis of six geographical sectors, each with a population of approximately 30,000 people. The appointment of an extra Senior Public Health Nurse to each community care area will mean that all six sectors will now have the clinical leadership of a Senior Public Health Nurse.</p> <p>Each Senior Public Health Nurse will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contribute to the assessment of needs of older people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure provision of public health nursing, twilight nursing, home help and other services on an equitable basis.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Oversee the quality of clinical care.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cost: £0.070 m</b></p> <p><b>Target 4.1.7</b> Recruitment in early 2000.</p>

## Health Promotion

Strategic Focus	Service Development, Targets and Performance Indicators
<p><b>Promotion of better health among older people and disease prevention.</b></p>	<p>The Board will promote physical activity for older persons through the ‘Go for Life’ Programme in partnership with the regional VECs. This programme will be delivered by trained peer leaders.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.8</b> The Board will support trained tutors to deliver ‘Go for Life’ Activity Days to community groups for older people.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicator</b></p> <p>4 courses run</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.9</b> The Board will promote physical activity in health board facilities for the older person i.e. Day Care Centres, Elderly Care Hospitals, Community Nursing Units, Welfare Homes and Private Nursing Homes.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicator</b></p> <p>The Board will assign a Health Education Officer to lead these programmes.</p> <p><b>Cost: £0.030 m</b></p> <p>The Board will develop a health information programme for older people. A targeted health promotion programme will be developed for older people with diabetes.</p> <p><b>This will involve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piloting a number of health information courses for older People.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Promotion the courses among older people.</li> </ul>

**Enable older people to have more control over their health by giving them more information.**

- Carrying out evaluation.

**Performance Indicator**

Training provided.

Pilot talks carried out.

Evaluation carried out.

The Board will develop a health information programme for people with diabetes.

**Performance Indicator**

Programme planned and implemented in 2000.

The Board will promote uptake of influenza vaccine among older people.

**Target 4.2.1** Increase uptake from the 1999 figure of 50% to 60% in 2000.

**Performance Indicator:** Vaccination Uptake.

<b>Prevention of disease and reduction of hospital admissions.</b>	
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