

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of Proceedings of monthly meeting of the Eastern Health Board, held in the Boardroom. St. Brendan's Hospital. Grangegorman. on 6th September, 1973 at 6 p.m.

Present:

Commissioner John Berry	Commissioner T. Leonard
Mr. Michael Birmingham	Dr. James McCormick
Cllr. M. Brady	Ciir. A. Mahon
Cllr. P. J. Burke	Dr. J. R. Mahon
Cllr. M. Carroll	Dr. A. Meade
Mr. Hugh P. Corrigan	Mr. Dermot O'Flynn
Cllr. Michael Cunningham	Commissioner J. O'Keefe
Cllr. J. Guinan	Mr. Martin Ruane
Commissioner L. Hayes	Cllr. J. Sweeney
Cllr. P. Hickey, PC.	Cllr. J. Temple
Dr. P. C. Jennings	Deputy G. Timmins
Miss Kay Kinsella	Deputy E. Timmons
Miss Mary Lacey	Dr. John Walker

Apologies for Absence

Mr. J. Corcoran, Dr. J. Stephen Doyle and Mr. Kevin Harrington.

Councillor Patrick Hickey, Chairman, presided.

Officers in Attendance:

Mr. E. O Caoimh, <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	Mr. J. Clarke
Mr. J. J. Nolan, <i>Deputy Chief Executive Officer</i>	Mr. P. J. Swords
Mr. F. J. Donohue, <i>Programme Manager</i>	Mr. P. I. Lyons
Prof. B. O'Donnell, <i>Dublin Medical Officer</i>	Mr. J. Doyle
Mr. J. F. Reynolds, <i>Finance Officer</i>	Mr. H. Dunne
	Mr. M. Murray-Hayden
	Mr. E. Butler
	Mr. K. Quinn
	Miss K. Dolan
	Mr. A. Duggan

93/73 CONDOLENCES

The Chairman referred to the death of Dr. T. Bergin, R.M.S. St. Ita's Hospital and having paid a tribute to him for his service and devotion to duty, the members passed a vote of condolence with his family in their great loss.

94/73 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of monthly meeting held on 2nd August, 1973 having been circulated were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. P. J. Burke and seconded by Mr. H. Corrigan with the following amendment:

Substitute "chloramphenical" for "anti-biotics" on Page 209, second last line.

95/73 RESIGNATION

The Chief Executive Officer informed the Board that Professor Ivor Browne had expressed a wish to be relieved of his assignment as Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care because of pressure in his professorial and other commitments. Professor Browne would continue to hold his statutory post of Chief Psychiatrist and Medical Superintendent of the District Mental Hospital but had agreed to continue until the post had been filled.

The Chief Executive Officer advised that he had requested the Local Appointments Commission to fill the vacancy. The Chairman praised Professor Browne for his reports on the Psychiatric and Geriatric Services which had been before the Board and the members associated themselves with his remarks.

96/73 PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES

The Reports of the proceedings of the following Committees having been circulated, were adopted:—

(a) *"Report of Meeting of No. 1 Visiting Committee held at St. Columcille's Hospital on Thursday, 2nd August, 1973, at 3 p.m."*

Present:

Councillor J. Temple. Miss M. Lacey, Mr. J. Corcoran. Commissioner J. O'Keeffe.

Commissioner O'Keeffe presided.

An apology for inability to attend was received from Deputy H. P. Dockrell.

Office s in Attendance:

Dr. W. J. Roche, Medical Superintendent; Rev. Sister Ambrosia, Matron; Mr. G. Irwin, Engineering Officer; Mr. K. Cross, Chief Clerk; Mr. P. J. Swords, Administrative Assistant.

BUSINESS

The report of the meeting held on 4th January, 1973, was reviewed.

Maternity Department. Out-Patient Clinics. Physiotherapy:

The members were advised that the Department of Health had approved of an allocation of £20,000 in this year's Capital Budget in respect of improvements at St. Columcille's Hospital. Proposals covering improvements in the Maternity Department, Out-Patient Clinics, Physiotherapy and an Intensive Care Unit had been prepared by the Architect, following consultation with the senior medical and nursing staff of the Hospital. The proposals are at present being examined by the Department of Health and it was expected that the work would be put in hands shortly. An outline of the proposed improvements was given to the members and these included the improvements in Ante-Natal and general Out-Patient Clinics, provision of a larger nursery in the Maternity Department, a new building for Stores and the adaptation of a ward area to provide an intensive nursing care area for medical patients. These proposals would result in an increase of seven beds in the Maternity Department and an increase of three beds in the medical and surgical sections.

Day Hospital:

The provision of Day Hospital facilities at St. Columcille's was being kept under review. There was no allocation of funds for this project in the current year.

Ambulance Service:

Mr. Swords stated that the survey of the Ambulance Services operated by the Board was still in progress and that the activities of the services operated from St. Columcille's, Dun Laoghaire Corporation and East Wicklow were being reviewed as part of the overall examination of the services. Having regard to the work-load at St. Columcille's Hospital, it had been decided as a temporary measure to make certain adjustments in the rostering arrangements at St. Columcille's. Ambulance calls between midnight and 8 a.m. were now being dealt with by the Dun Laoghaire Fire Brigade Ambulance, the Ambulance Services based at St. James's Hospital and by the local Ambulance Contractor. The number of calls previously

responded to from St. Columcille's had been averaging 1-4 per night.

Nursing Staff:

Matron stated that there were the usual seasonal difficulties in maintaining a full complement of nurses, but every endeavour was being made to overcome the shortage by regular advertising and also by the employment of female attendants in certain areas of the Hospital.

Nurse Training:

The members noted that following the last meeting of the Committee, Matron, St. James's Hospital, had been asked to examine the possibility of seconding an additional two students to St. Columcille's. The St. James's Nursing School was unable to accede to this request at the time. The members requested that a further approach be made to the School with a view to increasing present numbers. Sister Ambrosia stated that she could make residential accommodation available for these students.

Engineering Services:

Following a recent competition three Engineering Officers had been appointed and a number of appointments to the post of Maintenance Officer were being processed. Discussions were taking place with the Department of Health and Unions involved and every effort was being made to have the full supervisory Engineering Staff available as quickly as possible. The newly established Engineering Base at Clonskeagh which was at present under the control of Mr. Irwin was for the time being looking after St. Columcille's.

Heating, Hot Water and Electrical Services:

Mr. Swords stated that reports received from the Board's Engineering Officers indicated that the heating, hot water and electrical services etc. which had been modernised at the time the Hospital was reconstructed, approximately 20 years ago, had now reached the stage when extensive renewals and updating were required.

Accordingly, the Consulting Engineers had been instructed to carry out surveys of these services and the Department of Health had been advised that an allocation from the Capital Programme for 1974/75 would be necessary. The expenditure involved would be at least £50,000.

Pathology:

Dr. Roche stated that discussions were currently taking place with the Blood Transfusion Service Board and the

Department of Pathology. St. Vincent's Hospital, Elm Park, with a view to providing a more satisfactory emergency blood service, including cross matching, for St. Columciile's where there was a very large demand for blood supplies.

General:

Or. Roche stated that every endeavour was being made to accept all applications for admission to the Hospital and in fact he had arranged for the provision of temporary beds to deal with emergency admissions. On a number of occasions recently the number of patients in the Hospital had exceeded the bed complement. Mr. Swords stated that the Matron had authority to employ additional nursing staff when required to meet emergency situations without prior reference to Headquarters. Dr. Roche reported that there was no waiting list for x-ray examinations.

Hospital Statistics:

For the information of the members. Dr. Roche supplied the following statistics:—

<i>Financial</i>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Admissions</i>	<i>Births</i>
1961/62	2,269	331
1962/63	2,258	378
1863/64	2,436	587
1964/65	2,829	719
1965/66	2,633	693
1966/67	2,736	652
1987/68	3,113	732
1968/69	3,027	629
1969/70	2,983	604
1970/71	3,128	558
1971/72	3,367	545
1972/73	3,583	541
4 months to 31st July.		
1973	1,260	232
Estimate 1973/74	3,800	700

**X-RAY DEPARTMENT
MONTHLY AVERAGE OF PATIENTS**

	<i>Casualty</i>	<i>Extern</i>	<i>Wards</i>	<i>Wicklow</i>	<i>Total Monthly Average</i>
1971	250	75	404	45	774
1972	302	62	420	26	810
6 months to					
June. 1973	429	115	410	45	999
July. 1973	483	139	396	57	1,075

Inspections:

The following areas of the Hospital were inspected:—

X-Ray Department, Theatre area

Children's Unit

St. Patrick's Ward (Male Surgical)

Kitchen

Area of the proposed Out-Patient Clinics

Physiotherapy Department.

The members noted that the two x-ray machines were in use at the time of the visit. Mr. Irwin showed them the autoclave which had recently been installed in the Theatre area. The extent to which St. Columcille's is dealing with serious road accidents was apparent from the inspection in St. Patrick's Ward.

Miss Lacey complimented Matron and her staff on the very high standard of cleanliness noted in the various areas of the Hospital.

The members thanked Dr. Roche, Matron and other members of the staff for courtesy shown to them during their visit. They wished to record their appreciation of the excellent Hospital services being provided by St. Columcille's for the Community which it serves.

Next Meetings:

The next meetings were arranged as follows:—

Baltinglass District Hospital:

Friday, 28th September, at 3 p.m.

St. Columcille's Hospital:

Tuesday, 16th October, at 3 p.m.

Rathdrum & Wicklow:

Thursday, 25th October, at 3 p.m.

The meeting finished at 4.45 p.m."

(b) *"Report of the Meeting of No. 3 Visiting Committee held at St. Ita's Hospital on Friday. 3rd August. 1973 at 3.00 p.m.*

Members Present:

Councillors M. Cunningham, A. Mahon, M. Brady.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor P. Hickey. Chairman and Dr. A. Meade and Mr. D. O'Flynn.

Officers in attendance:

Dr. J. T. Bergin, *Medical Superintendent*. Dr. M. N McGuinness, *Clinical Director*. Miss M. F. McEntee, *Matron*, Mr. P. Healy, *Deputy Head Male Nurse*. Mr. T. Leonard, *Engineering Officer*. Mr. T. McNamee.

In the absence of the Chairman the Chair was taken by Councillor Cunningham, Vice-Chairman.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Brady who was appointed to fill the vacancy on the Committee.

Arising from the minutes of the last meeting the Engineering Officer told the Chairman that the central heating renewal was proceeding satisfactorily. The sections for renewal during the summer were well up to schedule. These consist of four buildings in the female section, three being wards and the fourth being the Old Nurses Home (Female).

When the heating season begins later in the year these four buildings will operate on the new system. (The rest of the hospital will continue on the old system). During the Winter, installation will continue in buildings such as Churches, Stores etc.

Mr. Leonard told Councillor Mahon that the original contract was for a figure of £188,000. subject of course to prices and wages variation clauses. The present value would be somewhere in this region of £210,000 not including extras in works.

Proposed expenditure on the renewal of toilet accommodation in Wards 8a and 8b have not yet been cleared.

In reply to Councillor Mahon, Dr. Bergin said that very few patients in the temporary buildings would be suitable for discharge. The buildings themselves were not ideal. In further reply to Councillor Mahon's enquiry as to whether there was any programme of building to replace these temporary buildings he said that it was hoped that proposals for two new units of 250 places each will emanate from Eastern Health Board Mental Handicap Committee.

The Engineering Officer stated that the maintenance cost of the temporary buildings was very high. Regular interior and exterior painting was needed. A large area of flooring had been removed and placed in Ward 11 Female. Complete toilet renovation had taken place in Ward 9 Male. All three buildings, however, still remain a fire risk.

In reply to Councillor Brady, Dr. Bergin said that in many cases of psychiatric illness, particularly in young people and

where the illness is of relatively recent onset, the patient can be restored to normality, in certain instances, however, one can get recurrent cases.

Dr. McGuinness pointed out that large numbers who suffer from psychiatric illness are at present treated at out-patient clinics. Of the new referrals to the clinics less than one in five would require hospitalisation. There are five out-patient clinics provided by the hospital.

The Committee visited the Admission Unit and saw the alterations which have been made to convert this unit into (a) an Acute Treatment Unit for short stay patients and (b) a re-assessment and rehabilitation unit for long stay patients.

They also visited the temporary buildings 8A and 8B male, 9A and 9B male and 11 and 11B female. The members were impressed by the standards maintained therein even though the buildings were not satisfactory. The Chairman and members thanked the staff for their courtesy and in particular the catering staff for an excellent meal.

The date of the next meeting was set for Thursday, 8th November, 1973 at 3.00 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 5.30 p.m.

97/73 OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION

The following Report No. 40/1973 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:—

"At a meeting held on 5th July last, the Board consented to the temporary borrowing by way of overdraft, up to a limit of £2.5 million during the quarter ending 30th September, 1973.

The overdraft on Revenue Account is required to meet the Board's current expenditure, pending the receipt of monthly instalments of the State's Health Grant and instalments of contributions from the rating authorities. During the past months the Board's Account has been heavily in overdraft and has in fact exceeded the approved limit, reaching a height of £4 million at the end of August.

The reason for this considerable overdraft is that large sums are due from the rating authorities and the Department of Health. It was understood that instalments of contributions would be paid monthly by each rating authority. This is not happening, and approximately £2 million was due at the end of August, some of the authorities being three months in arrear.

The authorities have stated that their own Accounts are in overdraft, due mainly to delay in recoupment of Grant-type expenditure, and that they are not in a position to make regular monthly payments to the Board. The Department of Health is paying regular instalments of Health Grant during the current year, but approximately £2.6 million is due in respect of Health Grant for the three years to 31st March, 1973, the major part being in respect of 1972/73.

The matter has been discussed in detail with officials in the Department of Health who agreed to make an additional payment of £1 million at the end of August and a further additional payment at the end of September. The Department officials pointed out that the Board's Accounts for 1971/72 and 1972/73 have not yet been audited and that a final apportionment of the Board's cost between Health Grant and rating authorities' contributions cannot be made until audit is completed.

With a payment of £3 million Health Services Grant at the end of August the Board's overdraft at the beginning of September will be in the region of £1 million. The Board's expenditure is at present running at the rate of £2.6 million per month. Consequently, if substantial payments are not received from the rating authorities during September overdraft will amount to approximately £4 million by the end of the month.

Accordingly, I recommend that the Board consent to increasing the overdraft limit to £4 million during September, 1973 and, in view of the uncertainty regarding rating authorities contributions, to retaining the limit on overdraft at that figure during the three months to 31st December, 1973."

After discussion to which Commissioner Berry, Cllr. A. Mahon, Cllr. John Temple contributed the following motion on a proposal by Dr. J. McCormick seconded by Deputy E. Timmons, was unanimously passed:—

'That the Eastern Health Board hereby consent to the temporary borrowing by way of overdraft as outlined in Report No. 40/1973."

98/73 COMHAIRLE NA N-OSPIDEIL SELECTION PROCEDURES

This item had been deferred from the August meeting to enable the members to consider the matter more deeply and after a wide-ranging discussion to which Dr. Meade, Commissioner Hayes, Cllr. P. Hickey, Mr. D. O'Flynn, Dr McCormick

and Cllr. Guinan contributed the following motion was agreed, on a proposal by Dr. Meade seconded by Cllr. Burke, by all the members present with the exception of Commissioners Hayes and Berry who abstained.

'That this Board is of the opinion that a selection procedure based on the present Local Appointments Commission system—with some modifications, is the best basis for a Consultant Selection Procedure and that we are in agreement with the concept of a lay Chairman. Also that the imbalance between the medical representation on the Selection Board as presently constituted be corrected with at least one member from each region.'

99/73 ADDITIONAL OFFICES AND EXCESS
EXPENDITURE

The following Reports No. 41/1973 and No. 41 A/1973 from the Chief Executive Officer were submitted:—

"(A) *Additional Offices:*

(i) *Tutor, St. Loman's Hospital*

The approval of An Bord Altranais has been obtained to have St. Loman's Hospital recognised for psychiatric nurse training of up to 12 students subject to the appointment of a Nurse Tutor. I propose with the consent of the Board to seek the sanction of the Minister for Health to the creation of an additional office of Nurse Tutor for assignment to St. Loman's Hospital.

(ii) *Physiotherapist, County Hospital, Naas*

On the recommendation of the County Physician and County Surgeon, I propose with the consent of the Board to create an additional office of Physiotherapist to bring the approved establishment in this grade to two. Provision has been made in the current estimates for the cost of this extra post.

(iii) *Two additional Male Attendants—St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy:*

I have examined a request from the Matron, St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy, to employ two additional male attendants and am satisfied from this examination that there is need for these extra staff. Provision for the costs involved has been made in the current estimates and I now seek the consent of the Board to increase the establishment of male attendants by two.

(iv) ***Additional Posts of Dental Surgeon and Dental Attendants:***

The Programme Manager, Community Care, in consultation with the Chief Dental Surgeon, has had a comprehensive examination carried out on the need for expansion of the Dental Services. As a result of this investigation, I am satisfied that there is a need to have the services of an additional nine Dental Surgeons and ten Dental Attendants. The present complement is 1 Chief Dental Surgeon, 5 Senior and 35 Dental Surgeons. I propose, with the consent of the Board to seek the sanction of the Minister for Health to the creation of these 19 additional posts. It is not anticipated that all these posts will be filled within the current financial year and consequently there is enough money provided in the estimates to cover any over-expenditure involved.

(v) ***Assistant Superintendent Public Health Nurse.***

I propose with the consent of the Board to increase the establishment of Assistant Superintendent Public Health Nurse from five to ten to provide adequate supervisory staffing in view of the expansion of the community care programme. It is not envisaged that these posts will be filled within the period 31st March, 1974 and if even two are created and filled there is adequate provision for the costs involved in the current estimates.

(B) ***Revision of Salary Scales:***

(i) ***Para-Medical Staff:***

Following conciliation, agreement has been reached with the unions concerned to increase the salary scales of all para-medical grades by 10% with effect from 1st January, 1972 on the same basis as approved for nursing personnel. The sanction of the Minister for Health has been obtained to these revisions. I now seek the consent of the Board to the cost of applying these increases for which no provision has been made in the current estimates. The cost for the period to 31st March, 1974 is £43,500 and in a year £19,000.

(ii) ***Pharmacists and Assistant Pharmacists***

Agreement has been reached at Conciliation Conference to increase the rates for Pharmacists by 10% with effect from 1st January, 1972 and the sanction of the Minister for Health has been received to these revisions. The cost of applying the increase, for which no provision has

been made in the current estimates is £8,000 for the period to 31st March, 1974 and £3,000 per annum.

(iii) *Health Inspectors.*

The sanction of the Minister for Health has been obtained to increase the salary scales of Health Inspectors on the basis of a recent Arbitration Award. The cost of applying this increase, for which no provision has been made in the current estimates is £10,000 per annum and £34,000 for the period ending 31st March, 1974.

(iv) *Labour Court Recommendation 2777*

Week-end/Public Holiday and night duty payments.

Psychiatric Nurses:

In my report No. 18/1973 of 2nd March, 1973 I advised you that the Minister for Health had sanctioned the terms of the above recommendation on the basis that "normal pay" was 1/365th of the officers annual salary. The cost of application on this basis was £95,000 for the period to 31st March, 1973 and £200,000 in the period 31st March, 1974. The Board consented to this expenditure.

The unions concerned were not prepared to accept the 1/365 as a basis for payment and referred the matter to the Labour Court for clarification. Agreement has now been reached that the daily rate be obtained on the basis of a week's pay (1/52) divided by 1/5 and the sanction of the Minister for Health has been obtained to this agreement.

The additional cost approx. of applying the award on this basis is £110,000 for which no provision has been made in the current estimates. The expenditure of £405,000 mentioned above covers the cost of applying Labour Court Recommendation 2771 to Nurses in the Psychiatric Service up to the level of Charge Nurse/Ward Sister.

(C)

The Minister by Circular K 122/18 of 17th July, 1973 and Circular K 121/72 of 27th August, 1973 has increased capitation rates for children maintained in Homes for the Mentally Handicapped. The cost involved is estimated at £188,000 per annum but because of its retrospective element the extra cost for the current year will be in the region of £210,000.

Authority is accordingly requested to extra expenditure in the sum of £405,500 as outlined above.

The Minister in his letter of 30th April, 1973 (Min. 63/73 refers), stated, inter alia, that if it were found that inescapable costs had the effect of increasing expenditure above the level then estimated, a suitable payments arrangement would be made."

"Report No. 41 A/1973.

EXCESS EXPENDITURE —WAGES REVISION

***Week-end, Night Duty Allowances to Non-nursing Personnel—
Labour Court Recommendation 2886.***

Negotiations with the unions for increases in special week-end and night duty allowances for non-nursing personnel have been under discussion for some time and recently the Labour Court made a recommendation on this subject following the hearing before the Labour Court of a similar claim from the Mid-Western Health Board.

I have accordingly agreed to meet the claim on the basis of the settlement reached in the Labour Court subject to the sanction of the Minister. The revised rates are as follows:—

Sunday Work:

£2.05 (males) £1.65 (females) from 1/4/1972.
Time and a half from 1/7/1972.
Time and three-quarters from 1/1/1973.
Double time from 1/7/1973.

Night Work

£2 05 (males). £1 65 (females) from 1/4/1972.
Time and one-sixth from 1/7/1972.
Time and one-quarter from 1/1/1973.

The cost of applying the settlement for the period 1st April, 1972 to 31st March, 1974 is £122,000 for the Eastern Health Board staff plus an additional sum of £54,000 for the non-nursing personnel employed in St. James's Hospital who continue to be on the staff of the Eastern Health Board. The St. James's Hospital Board are being advised of this settlement.

No provision has been made in the estimates for this expenditure and authority is accordingly requested to cover expenditure in the sum of £176,000."

After discussion to which Mr. Ruane, Cllr. A. Mahon, Dr. J. Walker and Cllr. P. J. Burke contributed, it was unanimously

resolved on a proposal by Cllr. P. J. Burke, seconded by Cllr Mahon as follows:—

"That we, the Eastern Health Board, consent to the proposals contained in Report No. 41/1973 and 41 A/1973 and authorise the expenditure of £581,500 in the current financial year in excess of that provided in the Estimate of Expenses for 1973/74 under the following heading:—

<i>Service</i>	<i>Purpose of Expenditure</i>	<i>Amount</i> £
HEALTH	Board Hospitals—General	123,960
	Board Hospitals—Psychiatric	139,100
	Joint Board Hospital—St. James's	65,660
	Extern Hospitals	210,000
	Children in Care	6,900
	Infectious Diseases	4,510
	Supervision of Food & Drugs	5,550
	Central Services	2,820
GENERAL PURPOSES	Health Inspectors	23,000
		£581,500'

100/73

CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Letter from the Department of Health dated 17th July was read, advising that the Minister had agreed to the appointment of Mr. J. Guinan to be a member of the St. James's Hospital Board consequent on the resignation of Mr. M. Clinton. T.D.
- (b) Letter dated 31st July, 1973 from the Department of Health enquiring as to when the Board would furnish their views as to the feasibility of implementing the recommendations of the I.N.C.A. Report which related to services provided by Health Boards. The members were reminded that they had a sub-committee on Alcoholism which had met since the original letter from the Department and that a further meeting was being arranged to endeavour to finalise its views. Mr. D. O'Flynn suggested that the sub-committee should be broadened and after discussion Commissioner L. Hayes and Dr. A. Meade agreed to join the sub-committee. The members further empowered the sub-committee to co-opt such other

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persons as they considered would be of value to them
in their deliberations.

The meeting concluded at 7.15 p.m.

CORRECT.

EOGHAN O CAOIMH.

Chief Executive Officer.

P. H. ...
Chairman.