

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 February. 1975 at 6 p.m.

Present:

Cllr. Mrs. J. Barlow	Mr. K. Harrington
Mr. M. Birmingham	Cllr. P. Hickey, P.C.
Cllr. M. Brady	Dr. P. C. Jennings
Cllr. D. Browne	Cllr. D. Kinsella
Cllr. M. Carroll	Miss M. Lacey
Cllr. J. Connolly	Cllr. Mrs. E. Lemass
Mr. J. Corcoran	Cllr. T. Leonard
Mr. H. Corrigan	Dr. J. R. Mahon
Dr. J. Cullen	Dr. A. Meade
Cllr. H. P. Dockrell, T.D.	Cllr. C. Murphy, T.D.
Cllr. J. Durning	Mr. D. O'Flynn
Cllr. G. Doyle	Mr. M. Ruane
Prof. J. S. Doyle	Cllr. J. Sweeney
Ald. A. FitzGerald	Dr. J. Walker
Cllr. Mrs. A. Glenn	

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. T. Hand and Dr. J. O'Conneii, T.D.
Cllr. P. Hickey, P.C, Chairman, presided.

Officers in Attendance:

Mr. E. O Caoimh	Chief Executive Officer	Mr. J. Doyle
Mr. J. J. Nolan	D/Chief Executive Officer	Mr. H. Dunne
Mr. F. J. Donohue	Programme Manager	Mr. A. O'Brien
Mr. T. Keyes	Programme Manager	Mr. K. Quinn
Prof. I. Browne	Chief Psychiatrist	Mr. E. Dunphy
Mr. F. McCullough	Admin. Assistant	Mr. J. A. Duggan
Mr. J. Clarke	Admin. Assistant	Mr. P. A. Sheehan
Mr. P. J. Swords	Admin. Assistant	Miss L. O'Kelly
Mr. J. F. Reynolds	Finance Officer	Miss K. Dolan
Mr. R. N. Lamb	Personnel Officer	
Prof. B. O'Donnelli	Dublin Medical Officer	

13/75

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of meeting held on the 9th January having been circulated were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. Leonard, seconded by Cllr. Connolly.

14/75 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Cllr. Connolly asked when the emergency plan committee would commence operations and he was advised that it was intended to hold the first meeting this month.

15/75 PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES

- (a) *No. 1 Visiting Committee meeting held at St. Columcille's Hospital on 9/1/1975.*

The report of this committee meeting was noted, Cllr. Sweeney having been assured that the Department of Health were being pressed for approval to the proposed improvements in the electrical services at the Hospital.

- (b) *No. 3 Visiting Committee meeting held at the County Hospital, Naas. on 10/1/1975.*

The report of this committee meeting was noted. Mr. Birmingham raised the question of how improvements at this hospital, which had been submitted to the Department of Health, were progressing and Mr. Swords advised of the current situation.

**16/75 MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF LOCAL
 ADVISORY HEALTH COMMITTEES**

- (a) Minutes of County Dublin Local Health Committee meeting held on 6th January, 1975, having been circulated, were noted, the Chief Executive Officer having pointed out to the members that some of the recommendations of the Local Health Committee involved expenditure and that the Board could not act on them as there were no funds provided therefor in the current estimates.

He indicated that when the final allocation of funds was determined all advisory committees would be informed of the position.

- (b) Minutes of County Wickiow Local Health Committee meeting held on 17th February, 1975, having been circulated, were discussed.

Cllr. Sweeney referred to the apprehension created by the reporting in the press of the proposed closure of Wickiow Hospital. Mr. Nolan outlined the background to the decision of the Visiting Committee, explaining that the only intention was to benefit the people of Wickiow by giving them better and more concerted community care and clinic services. The C.E.O. also advised the

members that he had replied to a letter from the President. Wicklow Chamber of Commerce, on similar lines. Cllr. Carroll also contributed to the debate.

Deputy Murphy raised the question of the proposed hospital at Arklow and Mr. Swords informed him that he was willing to meet this committee. Cllr. Sweeney stated that he fully supported the proposal to have the hospital in Arklow. A general discussion took place on the relative merits of Hospital and Home confinements. After a debate to which Cllr. Sweeney, Cllr. Mrs. Barlow, Dr. Meade, Cllrs. Durning and Connolly, Dr. Jennings, Cllr. Mrs. Glenn contributed and to which Dr. O'Donnell replied, the minutes were noted.

17/75 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Dr. Meade proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to enable an item of importance to be discussed, i.e., the situation which would have to be met should the doctors in the choice of doctor scheme withdraw their services. Cllr. Mrs. Barlow seconded the motion. After a short discussion the motion was put to the meeting and was carried by 15 (fifteen) votes to 14 (fourteen). The voting was as follows:—

For (15) Cllr. Mrs. Bartow, Mr. Corcoran, Mr. H. Corrigan, Dr. Cullen, Prof. Doyle, Mr. Harrington, Cllr. Hickey, Miss Lacey, Dr. Mahon, Dr. Meade, Deputy Murphy, Mr. O'Flynn, Mr. Ruane, Cllr. Sweeney and Dr. J. Walker.

Against (14) Mr. Birmingham, Cllr. Brady, Cllr. Browne, Cllr. Carroll, Cllr. Connolly, Deputy Dockrell, Cllr. Doyle, Cllr. Durning, Ald. FitzGerald, Cllr. Mrs. Mrs. Glenn, Dr. Jennings, Cllr. Kinsella, Cllr. Mrs. Lemass, Cllr. Leonard.

As the necessary three-fourths majority was not received, Standing Orders could not be suspended and the meeting then proceeded to deal with the next item.

18/75 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 1975

The following Report No. 6/1975 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:—

" In my Report No. 1/1975 I mentioned that proposals for development of services in the three programmes had been submitted to the Department of Health.

These proposals were discussed by officers of the Department and the Board at a meeting in the Custom House on 17th January. The Board's proposals for capital expenditure in the current year were also discussed. The Board's priorities of capital and revenue expenditure were outlined in detail, and noted by the Department officials, who stressed that the money available for all health board areas was very limited. They explained that each health board's needs were being examined and when this examination was complete, each health board would be told its allocation for the development of services including grants under Section 65 of the Health Act, 1953, to voluntary organisations.

It is expected that this information will be received early in February. If so, I shall be able to submit details to the Board at the March meeting."

After a short discussion the following motion was proposed by Mr. Corrigan and seconded by Deputy Dockrell and was unanimously adopted:

"That the proposals outlined in Report No. 6/1975 be noted."

19/75 OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION

The following Report No. 7/1975 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:

" In Report No. 2/1975 I requested the Board's consent to temporary borrowing up to £3,000,000 by way of overdraft during the three months to 31st March, 1975.

The request for £3,000,000 overdraft was based on the assumption that the overdraft of £3,953,522 on the Board's Account at 31st December, 1974, would be greatly reduced by a substantial payment of Health Services Grant early in January, 1975. In the event a payment of £1 million Health Services Grant was received early in January. As a result the overdraft was not contained within the limit of £3 million. It exceeded £4 million for most of the month and rose to £5,009,214 on 20th January, 1975. An instalment of grant in respect of 1975 amounting to £1.8 million was received today.

It is expected that a further instalment of grant to cover arrears will be received in February, but the amount of this instalment has not yet been determined. In these circumstances it is necessary to seek the Board's consent to temporary borrowing up to a limit of £5 million during the

months of January and February. It is unlikely, however, that this limit will be reached on more than a few occasions during the period.

A further report on the situation will be submitted at the next meeting of the Board."

On a proposal by Deputy Dockrell, seconded by Cllr. Carroll, the following motion was adopted:

"That the Eastern Health Board hereby consent to the temporary borrowing by way of overdraft as outlined in Report No. 7/1975."

**20/75 GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES-
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GENERAL MEDICAL
SERVICES CARD APPLICATIONS**

The following report No. 9/1975 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:—

" At meeting of the Board held on 5th December I undertook to inform the Board of the proposed wording of the acknowledgment of applications for medical cards.

I propose to have two letters:—

- A. Acknowledging applications which contain sufficient information to enable the Board to determine eligibility within a few days.

The wording will be as follows:—

"I wish to acknowledge receipt of your application

dated _____ for a medical card.

Your application is being examined and a decision as to whether or not you are eligible will be made as soon as possible but not later than two weeks from this date."

6. Acknowledging applications which have not been completed fully or where confirmation of income is required.

The wording will be as follows:—

"I wish to acknowledge receipt of your application

dated _____ for a medical card.

To enable the Board to make an early decision as to whether or not you are eligible will you be good enough to forward to this office, as soon as possible (e.g., certificate from your employer showing your income over the past six months. Form of certificate is attached)."

The Medical Card Section is considering a change in the processing of applications for Medical Cards which is expected to shorten considerably the interval between the date eligibility is determined and the date on which the applicant is requested to choose his doctor. The new procedure is about to be tested and if it is feasible it should not be necessary to continue to issue acknowledgment at A above."

Alderman A. FitzGerald congratulated Mr. Dunne on the proposed form of acknowledgment but suggested that a time limit should be inserted when a request was made for additional information or verification of some facts in the form. Dr. Jennings suggested that in the case of old people who did not supply the extra information requested, that an Inquiry Officer or Assistance Officer should call on them to explain what was required. After a lengthy discussion to which the previous speakers. Cllr. Connolly, Cllr. Durning, Dr. Walker. Dr. Meade, Cllr. Mrs. Glenn and Cllr. Mrs. Barlow contributed and to which Mr. Donohue and Mr. Dunne replied, the report was noted and the following motion proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Glenn and seconded by Cllr. Browne was unanimously adopted:

"To propose that all old age pensioners, permanently disabled and infirm persons be exempt from annual scrutiny for medical cards."

**21/75 ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION AT
NEWCASTLE HOSPITAL FOR MENTALLY
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN**

The following Report No. 10/1975 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:

" I have considered carefully the application from the County Wicklow Association for the Mentally Handicapped for additional accommodation in the Nurses' Home at Newcastle Hospital, Co. Wicklow, and I have consulted the staff about this. I recommend to the Board that the additional accommodation be granted. This consists of two sitting rooms, a toilet, a kitchenette and store adjoining the L-shaped room at present used by the Association.

I recommend that the granting of this accommodation be subject to the following conditions:—

1. That the Association will undertake not to seek further accommodation in any existing buildings at Newcastle Hospital.

2. That the Association will take all necessary precautions to ensure privacy of staff quarters and reasonable quietness so that night staff can sleep during the day. This will involve confining the children to an area including the quarters they now occupy, the additional accommodation proposed, the yard and playing field. It will be necessary to ban vehicular traffic other than staff cars and vehicles transporting the children to and from school, from the front of the home, and it will also be necessary to keep the gate into the yard locked while the children are at school.
3. That the Association will fully indemnify the Board in respect of its public liability in regard to the Association's activities.
4. That the temporary building at the back of the Home be removed within a period of three months unless planning permission for its retention is obtained within that period.
5. That the Chief Psychiatrist is satisfied that the standard of care in the unit is satisfactory.

Approval to the foregoing will involve re-location of staff recreational facilities and administrative offices and since this entails the re-location of telephones, redecoration, etc., it would be some time before the facilities sought could be made available. The cost is likely to be in the region of £1,000, but more precise details on this will be obtained later. This figure will, however, have to be allocated from the existing maintenance provision as no funds for this development are available. It is normal for the Board to pay capitation rates for handicapped children in approved Care Units, but the project at Newcastle is a new development and again no funds are available in the current year for this. Accordingly, the cost of the Care Unit, other than heating, lighting and food will have to be met in the current year by the Association if they wish to open the Unit in the current year.

During the course of my discussions with the staff, they expressed their concern at the impression that had gone abroad that they had objected to the provision of services for the handicapped children. This is, of course, quite incorrect. The staff have sought to preserve quietness so that night staff can sleep and also privacy and, when you have regard to the fact that children have been found in bedrooms, on stairways, boiler house, on the road, etc., it is not surprising that staff have expressed their concern. Some members of the Association have given the impression that the demands of the

- (2) Lease dated 13th October, 1972, Eastern Health Board to Mary Ellen Brennan, relating to a Cottage and Garden on the lands comprised in the Lease No. 1 subject to the yearly rent of £20-00— Report No. 68/1971 to the Board Meeting held on 6th January, 1972, refers.
- (3) Lease dated 6th March, 1974, Eastern Health Board to Mary Ellen Brennan, relating to 14 acres at Oberstown, Co. Dublin, subject to the yearly rent of £300-00—Report No. 71/1972 to the Board Meeting held on 5th October, 1972, refers.

Mrs. Brennan has applied to the Board for permission to transfer the remaining period of her interest in the lands to Mr. Mark Sheehy, 37, Glenview North, Swords, Co. Dublin, with whom she has entered into a contract for sale. Mr. Sheehy intends to use the property for market gardening.

Satisfactory personal references have been received as to Mr. Sheehy's suitability and I propose, subject to the execution of a guarantee document with Mrs. Brennan and to the payment by her of the Law Agent's costs and any rent due, to give consent to the transfer of her interest in the Leases to Mr. Sheehy.

The Law Agent has advised that this transaction does not come within the scope of Section 83 of the Local Government Act, 1946, and, in the circumstances, the Minister's consent to the arrangement is not required."

On a proposal by Cllr. J. Connolly and seconded by Cllr. M. Carroll the following motion was unanimously adopted:

"That the Eastern Health Board consent to the proposals outlined in Report No. 11/1975."

23/75 HEALTH CONTRIBUTIONS (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS, 1974

Letter dated 31/12/74 from the Department of Health on the above subject having been circulated was noted.

24/75 CREATION OF ADDITIONAL POSTS

The following Report No. 8/1975 was submitted by the Chief Executive Officer.

" Creation of Additional Posts of Porter, St. Ita's Hospital.

The internal deliveries of stores and meals from the Kitchen and Stores at St. Ita's Hospital are made by means of vans manned by four drivers employed on a seven-day rota basis.

In the past help was provided by using the services of patients. Due to the changing nature of therapy treatment the services of patients for these duties are no longer available. The Programme Manager has examined the needs in this area and is satisfied that there is a need for two additional Porters at a cost of £3,300 pa., which will eliminate overtime costs exceeding this.

I propose with the consent of the Board to seek the sanction of the Minister for Health to the creation of these additional posts."

On a proposal by Cllr. Carroll seconded by Cllr. Browne it was unanimously resolved as follows:—

"That the proposals outlined in Report No. 8/1975 be noted."

25/75 NOTICES OF MOTION

The following motion in the names of Cllr. J. Connolly and Cllr. J. Durning was considered:—

" In the installation of a kidney machine in a private home the full cost be borne by the appropriate authority or Eastern Health Board whatever the case may be."

After a discussion to which Mr. Ruane, Cllr. Dockrell, Dr. Walker, Cllrs. Mrs. Barlow and Mrs. Lemass contributed and to which Mr. Swords replied, it was agreed that the matter would be referred back for a report.

26/75 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Letter dated 13/1/1975 from the Department of Local Government conveyed approval to the continuation of the arrangements whereby Dublin Corporation functions as a public assistance authority and administered by the Board up to and including 31st January, 1976.
- (b) Letter dated 3/2/1975 from the Royal Hospital, Donnybrook, inviting Mr. J. J. Nolan, recently nominated as a Board member, to attend the next meeting of its management committee. The members expressed approval of this arrangement.
- (c) Letter dated 5th November from Department of Health was read in which the Minister advised that in assessing a person's eligibility for Hospital Services, an income from casual or unforeseen overtime should not be taken into account in determining eligibility under the income limit of £2,250 p.a. section.

27/75

CONGRATULATIONS

Before the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman informed the members about an exhibition in Ballsbridge called Opportunity Ireland at which the Eastern Health Board, in conjunction with the other health boards, had a stand. He wished to publicly thank Mr. R. N. Lamb, Personnel Officer, and Mr. J. Byrne, S.E.O. Personnel, and all the other officers concerned for their efforts in making the event such an outstanding success. The members endorsed the Chairman's congratulations.

The meeting terminated at 7.45 p.m.

CORRECT:

E. O CAOIMH,

Chief Executive Officer.


Signed: Chairman.