

## EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

*Minutes of Proceedings of Meeting of Eastern Health Board  
held at St. Brendan's Hospital, Grangegorman, on Thursday,  
7th October 1976. at 6 pan.*

*Present:*

Cllr. Mrs. J. Barlow  
Mr. M. Birmingham  
Cllr. M. Brady  
Cllr. D. Browne Cllr.  
M. Carroll  
air. J. Connolly  
Mr. J. Corcoran  
Deputy H. P. Dockrell  
Dr. J. S. Doyle  
Cllr. J. Durning  
Ald. A. FitzGerald  
Cllr. Mrs. A. Glenn  
Mr. K. Harrington  
Cllr. P. Hickey

Dr. P. C. Jennings  
Cllr. Kinsella  
Miss K. Kinsella  
Cllr. Mrs. E. Lemass  
Dr. J. McCormick  
Dr. J. R. Mahon  
Dr. A. Meade  
Deputy C. Murphy  
Deputy Dr. J. O'Connell  
Mr. D. O'Flynn  
Mr. M. Ruane  
Cllr. J. Sweeney  
Dr. J. Walker

*Apologies for Non-Attendance: Mr. H.*

Corrigan. Cllr. T. Hand and Miss M. Lacey.

Cllr. M. Carroll, Chairman, presided.

<p>Mr. E. O Caoimh Mr. F. Donohue Mr. T. Keyes Prof. B. O'Donnell Mr. J. Sadlier Mr. J. F. Reynolds Mr. R. N. Lamb Mr. E. Elliott Prof. G. Gorman</p>	<p><i>Officers in Attendance:</i> Chief Executive Officer Programme Manager Programme Manager Dublin Medical Officer Technical Services Officer Finance Officer Personnel Officer Planning &amp; Eval. Officer Clinical Director</p>	<p>Mr. P. J. Swords Mr. F. McCullough Mr. J. Clarke Mr. J. Doyle Mr. H. Dunne Miss L. O'Kelly Mr. K. Quinn Mr. A. O'Brien Miss K. Dolan Mr T. Barry Mr. A. J. Duggan</p>
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### 107/76      CLINICAL DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As agreed at the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held earlier in the evening. Dr. Gorman read a statement on behalf of himself and his fellow Clinical Directors, on the up-to-date situation insofar as patients and their medical treatment was concerned. He explained that he and his

colleagues were concerned about the lack of heating where old people were concerned, that it was not serious while the current fine spell lasted, but could be a very serious problem if the weather changed and became much colder. He pointed out that the position had been maintained so far at an adequate level due to the massive effort made by the nursing staff, in particular, but the very fact of the nursing staff being engaged on ancillary work meant that patients were not obtaining the full medical treatment recommended by the Clinical Directors. On behalf of the Clinical Directors he appealed to the Board to try and achieve a speedy solution to the unofficial strike and also appealed to the strikers to resume work on humanitarian grounds, pending a settlement.

Mr. Keyes updated the members on the situation since the special meeting on the 30th September. The Personnel Officer Mr. Lamb, gave a resume of the situation for the benefit of those members who were unable to attend the special meeting.

After a general discussion to which Cllr. Mrs. Glenn, Cllr. Mrs. Barlow, Cllr. Durning, Deputy Dr. O'Connell and Mr. Ruane contributed, the Chairman undertook to call a special meeting of the Board if the situation deteriorated sufficient to warrant such an action.

#### **108/76 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 2nd September, 1976, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. Sweeney, seconded by Mr. Ruane.

#### **109/76 PROCEEDINGS OF VISITING COMMITTEES**

The reports of the following Visiting Committees having been circulated, were dealt with as follows:—

- (a) No. 1 Visiting Committee held at District Hospital, Wicklow, on 8th September, 1976—noted.

Dr. Walker enquired if in fact ante-natal and gynaecological clinics were held at this hospital. Mr. Swords undertook to investigate it.

- (b) No. 1 Visiting Committee held at Newcastle on 8th September, 1976—noted.

- (c) No. 2 Visiting Committee held at Bru Chaoimhin on 15th September, 1976—noted.
- (d) No. 2 Visiting Committee held at Old Coombe Day Centre on 15th September, 1976—noted.
- (e) No. 3 Visiting Committee meeting held at St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy. on 18th July, 1976—noted.
- (f) No. 3 Visiting Committee meeting held at Cherry Orchard Hospital, on 22nd September, 1976—noted.

A lengthy discussion on the merits of triple immunisation as opposed to dual type immunisation took place. The question of availability of 'flu vaccine to medical card holders was also raised. Dr. O'Donnell explained the position on the cost of this injection and said that he was examining the situation. It was agreed that he should arrange to have a report available for the next meeting. Dr. Jennings, Dr. McCormick, Mr. Ruane, Dr. Meade, Dr. Walker and Mr. O'Flynn contributed to the debate.

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#### PROCEEDINGS OF LOCAL HEALTH COMMITTEES

The Minutes of the following meetings of Local Health Committees were dealt with as follows:—

- (a) Kildare Local Health Committee meeting held on 15/7/1976—noted.

Mr. P. J. Swords undertook to examine the X-Ray equipment position at Naas and Athy.

- (b) Dublin County Local Health Committee meeting held on 6/9/1976—noted, Cllr. Connolly enquiring as to the current position of the orthodontic services and Mr. Donohue, Programme Manager, replying.

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#### BORROWING PROPOSALS—CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The following Report No. 42/1976 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:—

"I submit, herewith, a schedule of Capital Expenditure for which long term borrowing arrangements must be made:—

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Estimated Grant</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>Loan Approved</i>	<i>Amount to be Raised</i>
Child Guidance Clinic and Day Nursery, Ballyfermot	125,000	23,000	102,000	42,500	59,500
Arklow Health Centre —	100,000	50,000	50,000	—	50,000
Crumlin Health Centre— alteration — — —	14,000	7,000	7,000	—	7,000
Welfare Home, Ballymun	206,000	—	206,000	170,000	36,000
Welfare Home, Clonskeagh	185,500	—	185,500	160,000	25,500
Heating Services, St. Ita's	650,000	325,000	325,000	250,000	75,000
	1,280,500	405,000	875,500	622,500	253,000

I propose, with the approval of the Board, to request the sanction of the Minister for Health to the raising of loans amounting to £253,000 from the Commissioners of Public Works."

On a proposal by Cllr. P. Hickey, seconded by Mr. M. Ruane, it was unanimously resolved as follows:—

That proposals contained in Report No. 42/1976 be

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#### DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY CARE TEAMS

The following Report No. 43/1976 from the Programme Manager, Community Care, was submitted:—

"At its meeting on 6th November, 1975 the Board approved of proposals in Report No. 42/1975 for the development of ten Community Care Teams in the Health Board Area. By letter dated 22nd January, 1976, the Department of Health intimated that the proposals were acceptable in general, subject to further consideration of certain points raised, including staff levels, duties and complements, and accommodation to be provided as headquarters for each area. However, the Department also indicated that—

'due to the present financial restrictions it will not be possible to provide any additional funds for the Board, over the amount of the present financial allocation, for the creation of extra posts or the provision of new premises for Community Care Teams.'

Following discussions between officers of the Department of Health and the Health Board and representatives of the Medical Organisations, the Minister for Health subsequently approved of:—

- (a) The creation of two posts of Director of Community Care and Medical Officer of Health in lieu of the two former posts of County Medical Officer (Kildare and Wicklow) and the appointment to them of the two permanent serving County Medical Officers— Dr. Brendan O'Donnell and Dr. C. F. Warde. These appointments have been made with effect from 1st April, 1976.
- (b) The creation of three posts of Director of Community Care and Medical Officer of Health for the Dublin Area in lieu of the following three posts:—
  - (i) The post to which Dr. John Walker is at present assigned;
  - (ii) The post of Deputy Chief Medical Officer formerly held by Dr. M. Crowe, and
  - (Hi) The post of Senior Assistant Chief Medical Officer formerly held by Dr. P. Dunleavy.

These three posts were advertised by the Local Appointments Commission in August and it is expected that recommended candidates will be available for appointment early in the New Year.

- (c) The creation of a fourth post to be filled by the transfer of Dr. K. Quinn, County Medical Officer, County Leitrim, from the service of the North Western Board with the agreement of the Medical Organisations. Arrangements are being made for Dr. Quinn's transfer.

The fact that the assignment of Directors and their full teams to all eight Dublin Areas cannot proceed simultaneously gives rise to a number of difficulties. The organisation of certain services (including General Medical, Nursing, Child Health, Dental and Income Maintenance services) on an area rather than a central basis cannot be fully implemented until all of the new teams are complete. However, this particular problem would be minimised and the transfer of functions to the first four Directors and their staffs facilitated by applying the new system in contiguous areas.

The position is further complicated by our inability, in present circumstances, to proceed with the appointment of a full complement of area staffs, particularly senior grades, as set out in Report No. 42/1975.

If maximum benefit is to be derived from the initial group of four appointments for the Dublin Area, the Directors of Community Care should be assigned to areas of growth where they can become involved as early as possible in the planning and provision of the appropriate health services and their co-ordination with other local services and facilities to meet the needs of emerging communities.

The foregoing considerations suggest an arrangement whereby the first Directors in Dublin would be assigned to:—

- (a) Area No. 4 which includes the present Crumlin pilot area as well as the new town of Tallaght;
- (b) The following three areas north of the Liffey:—
  - (i) Area No. 6 which includes the rapidly developing district around Blanchardstown
  - (ii) Area No. 7 in which is included Ballymun;
  - (iii) Area No. 8 incorporating new and developing communities in North County Dublin and the North-East of the City (including Coolock, Kilbarrack, Donaghmede, Darndale and Priorswood).

The establishment of Community Teams in these three contiguous areas would result in the development of the new system of Community Care in all North Dublin and, as already indicated, would facilitate the progressive devolution of services now administered centrally.

As indicated in Report No. 42/1975, pending the appointment of Directors, arrangements have been made, within the limits of available resources, to implement the Community Care team concept on *an area* basis. This will continue in the four remaining Community Care areas with a view to having services organised on this basis and ready to work on these lines with their Directors when appointed."

Deputy Dockrell referred to Minute No. 20/1974 in which the Board had agreed to the appointment of a Director of Community Care for the Dun Laoghaire area, that the present Report was at variance with that decision and consequently proposed the following motion:—

"That Report No. 43/1976 be amended by deleting the Director of Community Care for Blanchardstown and substituting therefor a Director of Community Care for the Dun Laoghaire area including in particular the Killiney and Ballybrack areas."

Cllr. M. Carroll, Chairman, seconded the motion.

The Programme Manager, Community Care explained to the meeting that he was suggesting these areas to the Board because these were developing areas, areas of ground where there were large numbers of children involved. He considered it very desirable to have Directors of Community Care assigned to these areas where they could become involved, as far as possible, in the planning and provision of the appropriate health services and their co-ordination with other local services and facilities to meet the needs of the emerging communities. He also felt that the Services in Dun Laoghaire were of a very high standard and its need was not as pressing as the areas to which he was suggesting that the new Directors of Community Care be appointed. Deputy Dockrell, Mr. O'Flynn, Cllr. Browne, Cllr. Mrs. Glenn, Cllr. Durning, Cllr. Sweeney, Cllr. Connolly, Cllr. Mrs. Barlow, Dr. Meade, Ald. FitzGerald, Cllr. Hickey, Mr. Ruane, Dr. Jennings, Dr. McCormick, Miss Kinsella, Mr. Corcoran and D. Walker contributed. Deputy Dockrell's motion was put to the meeting and was defeated by 19 votes to 5, the voting being as follows:—

FOR: Cllr. M. Carroll, Deputy Dockrell, Cllr. Durning, Dr. Meade and Dr. Walker.

AGAINST: Cllr. Mrs. Barlow, Mr. Birmingham, Cllr. Brady, Cllr. Browne, Cllr. Connolly, Mr. Corcoran, Dr. J. S. Doyle, Ald. FitzGerald, Cllr. Mrs. Glenn, Mr. Harrington, Cllr. Hickey, Dr. Jennings, Miss Kinsella, Cllr. Mrs. Lemass, Dr. McCormick, Dr. Mahon, Mr. O'Flynn, Mr. Ruane and Cllr. Sweeney.

Mr. O'Flynn then proposed and Cllr. Browne seconded the following motion:—

"Propose that Report No. 43/1976 be adopted and the areas suggested (4, 6, 7, 8) be given priority."

The motion was carried by 19 votes to 5, the voting being identical with the voting on Deputy Dockrell's motion.

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### VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR GENERAL PRACTICE

The following Report No. 44/1976 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:—

"When submitting their observations on the report of the Consultative Council on General Medical Practice (the McCormick report) in 1974, the Working Party endorsed the recommendation of the Consultative Council under the heading of Education, that aspiring General Practitioners should receive appropriate training in primary health care in approved training practices.

In the interval an Irish Institute of General Practice has been established and has been approved by the Council for Post-Graduate Medical and Dental Education and Training as the professional Body to undertake the major role in programmed training for General Practice.

There are Regional Vocational Training Committees in Cork, Galway and Dublin—the Dublin Committee covering the areas of the Eastern, South Eastern, North Eastern and Midland Health Boards. At the request of the other Chief Executive Officers concerned I have agreed to become a member of the Dublin Regional Committee.

The approved training programme for young doctors comprises two years varied hospital experience and one year of practical experience in General Practice during which the trainee is required to undertake a project. The first trainee to be assigned to an approved training practice in the area of the Dublin Regional Committee has recently taken up duty with a General Practitioner in the Dublin area. In accordance with arrangements already approved by the Minister for Health for the programme in the Southern and Western regions I recommend a grant of £2,106 to the Dublin Regional Committee in respect of the current year."

After a short discussion the following motion proposed by Professor Doyle, seconded by Dr. Meade was unanimously adopted:—

"Propose that recommendations contained in Report No. 44/1976 be adopted."

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**DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITAL MATERNITY SERVICES**

The following Report No. 46/1976 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted as was the following accompanying report from the Dublin Medical Officer—

"In the attached memorandum Professor O'Donnell has given his observations on the discussion document on the Development of Hospital Maternity Services recently issued by Comhairie na n-Ospideal, a copy of which is appended. The Comhairie indicates that it has found it impossible for the purpose of its functions to make forecasts as to birth numbers and bed requirements until more precise information is available about the current fertility trends in the Dublin catchment area. It points in this connection to a reduction of 660 in the number of births in 1975.

I have received a number of inquiries in recent weeks about the provision of a Maternity Unit at James Connolly Memorial Hospital. Inquirers have been informed that this will not be a matter for the Health Board but that it is known through its representation on the Hospital Board that the planning of a Maternity Department which would provide up to 80 beds was brought to the sketch plan stage some time ago in consultation with the Department of Health. The proposal has not proceeded further to date as a decision has not yet been conveyed to the Hospital Board."

"The Discussion Document published by Comhairie na n-Ospideal commences by pointing out that it is difficult to forecast the future birth trends in the Dublin area. Factors favouring an increase are the continued growth of population in the Dublin area and the decline in emigration, while in favour of a decrease is the fact that the average size of families is tending to decrease.

Section 2 may be summarised by the statement in it if the basic aims of ensuring safe delivery and giving the infant the best chance of optimal health and normal development are to be achieved, every expectant mother should have ready access to care at a consultant-staffed obstetric/neonatal unit. In other words, it advocates the termination of small district hospital-type Maternity Unit.

Section 3 makes the suggestion that the three large Dublin Maternity Hospitals should each be associated with a general hospital, so as to pool equipment and personnel. Each pair of hospitals would serve a convenient population catchment area.

The Comhairie considers that, in the long run, each of these large Maternity Hospitals ought to be physically located on a general hospital campus. However, as long as the present hospitals exist as physically separate entities, close links, including shared departments, should be formed with the appropriate major general hospital units serving the population in the same geographical area.

In order to correct the present north/south imbalance in Maternity Hospital accommodation, the report suggests that the Maternity Unit at St. James's should be transferred to James Connolly Memorial Hospital. It also suggests that the Maternity Unit at St Columcille's should be run down and that the Unit at St. Patrick's, Navan Road, should be closed.

The report does not spell out what particular Maternity Hospital should be associated with what particular General Hospital, but an arrangement something as follows is obviously what the Comhairie has in mind:—

	<i>North City</i>		
General Hospital	Mater	Beaumont	James Connolly Memorial Hospital
Associated Maternity Hospitals	Rotunda	Rotunda	Own Unit
	<i>South City</i>		
General Hospital	St James' Newlands	Elm Park	National Maternity
Associated Maternity Hospitals	Coombe	Coombe	Hospital

The remainder of the report deals with hospital services outside the Eastern Health Board area."

The discussion document from the Comhairie na n-Ospideal was also circulated for the consideration of the members.

A general discussion took place on the proposals and the following motion proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Glenn, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Barlow, was unanimously adopted:—

'That this Board re-iterates its decision to have a maternity unit provided at James Connolly Memorial Hospital and to convey this decision to the Minister that this Board does not agree to the transfer of the St. James's Unit to any other hospital.'

Deputy Dockrell and the Chairman were strongly opposed to any suggestion that the Maternity Unit at St. Columille's should be closed. Dr. Mahon, Mr. O'Flynn and Dr. Walker also contributed to the debate, following which it was decided that the matter should be deferred to the December meeting so that it might be more fully considered.

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**HEALTH SERVICES (LIMITED ELIGIBILITY) REGULATIONS,  
1976 AND HEALTH SERVICES (AMENDMENT)  
REGULATIONS, 1976.**

The following letter dated 9th July, 1976, from the Department of Health was noted:—

"I am directed by the Minister for Health to enclose copies of the above mentioned regulations.

Those regulations fix new limits of £3,000 for 'limited eligibility' entitlement under the Health Act, 1970 for non-manual workers insured under the Social Welfare Acts and for persons not insured under these Acts. The new limits came into effect from 1st July, 1976.

In the case of non-insured persons, the limit refers to income as determined in accordance with the Health Services (Limited Eligibility) Regulations, 1971. In the case of insured persons, the limit is the annual value of the rate of remuneration received from non-manual employment. There is no means limit for insured manual workers. All insured workers are entitled to assistance towards the cost of prescribed drugs and medicines.

The purpose of the regulations is to bring the £1,600 and £2,250 eligibility limits into line with changes in money values and incomes since they were fixed in 1971 and 1974. Provision has therefore been made in Article 3 of the Health Services (Amendment) Regulations to extend by one year the entitlement of persons whose remuneration in the period 1st April 1974 to 1st July 1976, increased from £2,250 a year or less to more than £3,000 a year because of pay increases in line with Clause 3 of the National Wage Agreements, i.e., their eligibility will continue until the end of the contribution year in which the remuneration exceeded the £2,250 and for three further contribution years."

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## NOTICES OF MOTION

The following motion proposed by Dr. J. Walker, was seconded by Mr. K. Harrington:—

"That the Eastern Health Board:—

- (i) Welcomes the Report, published in March, 1976, of the Working Party on Public Health Medical Services as appointed by the Minister for Health in July, 1973;
- (ii) Endorses the recommendations contained within the Report, and
- (iii) Adopts the Report as a document of Policy."

The Chief Executive Officer pointed out to the members that many of the views expressed in the Working Party report are at variance with recommendations made in the McCormick report and suggested that the matter be referred to the Scientific Committee for detailed examination. Dr. Walker while concurring with the views expressed by the Chief Executive Officer thought that the Board should adopt the Working Party report as being overall more suitable. Mr. Donahue, Programme Manager, Community Care, stated that the Working Party's report did not deal adequately with the Dublin area and was silent on the positions of Senior Medical Officers. It introduced the concept of a fixed area for doctors which was not wholly desirable. In reply to the points made. Dr. Walker pointed out that other Health Boards had adopted the report and on balance he felt the Board should do the same. It was finally agreed that the motion should be referred back for further examination.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Letter dated 7th October from the Department of Health, was read, stating that the Minister had not yet finished his review of the overall position of Health agencies in regard to their financial problems and until this was completed he was unable to give a decision on the question of adjusting the limits of expenditure insofar as the Eastern Health Board was concerned under Section 31 of the Health Act, 1970. When the review was completed he would be in touch with the Board. The letter was noted.

- (b) Letter dated 7th October, 1976 from the Department of Health referring to the Board's resolution on the control of expenditure in the general medical service was read. The Minister referred to promising developments which appeared to have arisen from the establishment of the Working Party on prescribing and dispensing in the General Medical Service. The letter advised that further meetings were being arranged to work out detailed arrangements for the implementation of the Working Party's recommendations. The letter was noted.
  
- (c) Letter dated 1st October, 1976, from the General Medical Services (Payments) Board referring to the Board's resolutions regarding the appointment of an additional Medical Officer and an additional Pharmacist to the Board's staff was read. It stated that the overall staff position of the Payments Board was being examined and would be considered later at a meeting of the Payments Board on the 26th October, after which a further letter would be sent to the Board. The letter was noted.
  
- (d) Letter dated 23rd September, 1976, from the North-Western Health Board and letter dated 6th October, 1976, from the Mid-Western Health Board advising that their members have noted the Eastern Health Board resolution regarding publicity campaign to demonstrate the advantages of healthy living, were read and noted.
  
- (e) Letter from the Chairman Rehabilitation Institute asking for the Board's co-operation in the nominating of persons for "People of the Year" awards was read. The letter was noted.
  
- (f) Letters from the Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Limited, offering special cover to members of Local Authorities attending meetings, were read. The benefits available were outlined as was the premium cost of £1. The members decided that the cover offered should be accepted and at Cllr. Mrs. Barlow's

request it was agreed to circulate copies of the letters to the members. The letters were noted.

**CORRECT:**

**E. O CAOIMH**

*Chief Executive Officer.*

*Signed.*

*Chairman.*