

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of Proceedings of monthly meeting of Eastern Health Board held in the Boardroom, St. Brendan's Hospital, Grangegorman, on Thursday 11th January, 1979 at 6.00p.m.

Present

Cllr. Mrs. J. Barlow	Ms. Noreen Kearney
Dr. J.D. Behan	Dr. D.G. Kelly
Cllr. Dan Browne	Cllr. Denis Kinsella
Cllr. Michael Carroll	Deputy Thos. Leonard
Cllr. Jos. Connolly	Sr. Columba McNamara
Cllr. H.P. Dockrell	Dr. Aidan Meade
Ald. Alexis FitzGerald	Deputy Ciaran Murphy
Cllr. Mrs. A. Glenn	Dr. B. Sheehan
Cllr. Austin Groome	Cllr. Emmet Stagg
Cllr. Thos. Hand	Cllr. John Sweeney
Mr. Kevin Harrington	Dr. John Walker
Cllr. Patrick Hickey P.C.	

Apologies

Mr. H. Corrigan, Cllr. Eric Doyle, Prof. J.S. Doyle, Prof. J. McCormick and Mr. M. Matthews

In the Chair Alderman

A.FitzGerald

Officers in Attendance

Mr. J. J. Nolan	Prof. I. Browne
Mr. F. Donohue	Mr. C. Mansfield
Mr. T. Keyes	Mr. J. Doyle
Prof. B. O'Donnell	Mr. H. Dunne
Mr. J. Reynolds	Mr. E. Dunphy
Mr. F. Elliott	Mr. A O'Brien
Mr. R.N. Lamb	Miss K. Doian
Mr. J. Sadlier	Mr. T. Barry
Mr. P.I. Lyons	Miss R. Carolan
Mr. F. McCullough	Mr. M. Cummins
Mr. J. Clarke Mr.	Miss E. Larkin

1/79 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Monthly meeting of the Eastern Health Board held on 7th Decerrber, 1978. having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. J. Connolly seconded by Mr. K. Harrington.

**2/79 PRESENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN FOR
ST. JAMES'S HOSPITAL BY PROF. HOWIE, T.C.D.
CHAIRMAN, ST. JAMES'S**

The Chairman welcomed Professor Howie, Dr. O'Dea and Mr. Dalton, who attended to present the Development Control Plan.

Prof. Howie, in an address illustrated by slides, explained to the members the plan for the development of the new hospital at the St. James's complex. He indicated the proposed hospital complex as it will eventually emerge and the various stages contemplated by which the final plan will be achieved. Prof. Howie indicated that the first phase of the development involved the building of a communications centre and the construction of a new boiler-house at the Garden Hill site which will start during 1979.

The Chairman thanked Prof. Howie for his presentation which he said was most interesting and very valuable to the members. Mr. Nolan said that the Board would be pleased with the provision being made in the new complex for 400 beds for the care of the aged and that the St. James's Hospital Board were pioneers in the provision of this amount of such accommodation in a large acute hospital. He hoped that the Board's dental service would receive consideration when the dental hospital facilities were provided in the complex. It was unfortunate that the Health Board staffs would have to leave the site to facilitate the hospital development but the Minister had already been asked to authorise the provision of alternative office premises. He was glad to report that the Garden Hill transfer of property between the Hospital Board and the Health Board was nearing a solution. It was right that the Health Board should be interested in hospital developments in general and it might be possible to arrange for similar presentation to the Board of the plans for the new Beaumont Hospital and possibly those for the extension to the Mater Hospital.

Dr. Behan asked that a request be put to the St. James's Hospital Board to indicate ways in which the Health Board could help the hospital in their development programme and that the reply be submitted to the Eastern Health Board.

379 PROCEEDINGS OF VISITING COMMITTEES

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

- (a) No. 1 Visiting Committee and Wicklow Local (Health) Committee joint meeting at St. Colman's Hospital Rathdrum, on 30/11/1978.

In reply to Cllr. Mrs. Glenn, Mr. Donohue stated that it was hoped that the temporary health centre at Coolattin would be installed by next April. On a proposal by Cllr. Sweeney seconded by Cllr. Kinsella the report was noted.

(b) No. 2 Visiting Committee meeting held at Central Mental Hospital, Dundrum, on 29th November, 1978.

In reply to Cllr. Browne Mr. Keyes said that the planning of the 30 bed unit was a little behind time because of alterations made arising out of experience gained elsewhere but it was hoped to start building in the current year. The Minister had been asked to agree to the provision of a second unit but had not replied as yet.

Mr. Sadlier said that he recognised the Committee's concern about maintenance but funds were insufficient to do all the necessary work at once. He detailed the work completed recently and in hand at present. He advised the members that the question of stationing tradesmen at the hospital was awaiting a recommendation from the Labour Court on traveling time. The Chairman expressed his concern at the poor attendance at some visiting committees. Following a discussion the following motion proposed by Dr. Behan and seconded by Cllr. Carroll was unanimously agreed:—

'That the existing four visiting committees, whilst retaining their existing membership composition, should, in like manner to the Community Care visiting Committee which is a Committee of the whole Board, be opened to all members of the Board and that the Agenda and dates of the proposed meetings be circulated to the entire Board thereby enabling any member who so wishes to attend.'

The Secretary is to arrange with the Chairman and Mr. Nolan on the implementation of the new scheme, including advance notice of times and venues.

On a proposal by Cllr. Browne seconded by Cllr. Connolly the report was noted.

(c) No. 4 Visiting Committee meeting held at St. Mary's Hospitals* Phoenix Park on 13th December. 1978.

The members complimented Dr. Godfrey and Mr. Swords on the report of the meeting and asked that the report be included in the submission to the special Board Meeting on the Care of the Aged.

Mr. Nolan referred to the visit by President Hillery to the hospital on Christmas Day, when he expressed his admiration for the good relationship the staff had with the old people and asked that this be conveyed to the members of the Board.

It was agreed that a report on the proposed development at St. Michael's Hospital be submitted to the next meeting of the Dun Laoghaire Local (Health) Committee. The Chairman asked that the Committee be also notified of the membership of the Board of St. Michael's Hospital.

In reply to Cllr. Carroll, Mr. Swords explained that the Health Board is only allowed to pay a maximum of £25. per week contribution towards expenses of a person residing in a private nursing home.

Cllrs. Mrs. Barlow and Connolly expressed concern at the apparent lack of nursing cover and the shortage of nurses in the board's hospitals, particularly long stay and asked if there was difficulty in recruiting nurses. Mr. Nolan in reply detailed some of the shortages but said that nurses often have a preference against heavy nursing or work in out-of-the way locations and this, together with difficulty in getting approval to increased complements,, often resulted in leaving long stay units short of nursing cover. This matter should arise again at the special meeting on the Care of the Aged.

Mr. D. Kelly enquired about the unit for training in home dialysis at St. Mary's. In reply Mr. Nolan said he had written to Jervls Street Hospital asking if they were negotiating accommodation with Beaumont Hospital Board without consultation with the Health Board. The Hospital replied that they were still in touch with An Comhairle about consultancy levels at Beaumont Hospital. However he was advised that the Beaumont Hospital Board had as yet no provision for accommodation of the Dialysis training unit and that training for the present would be continued at St. Mary's Hospital.

On a proposal by Cllr. Hickey seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Glenn the report was noted.

4/79 PROCEEDINGS OF LOCAL (HEALTH)
COMMITTEES

(1) Kildare Local (Health) Committee meeting held on 23rd
Nov. 1978.

In response to an enquiry from Dr. Behan, Prof. O'Donnell explained the position regarding the sale of unpasteurised milk. Cllr. Stagg referred to the item relating to the development of Naas Hospital. Mr. Nolan said that a Registrar would possibly become available later this year and it was hoped that an extra post would be created which would provide for rotation between the St. James's Hospital and Naas Hospital.

It might be necessary eventually to ask An Comhairle for greater cover.

A special pathology group from St. James's Hospital visited Naas to discuss the hospital's needs. It is proposed that there should be a small laboratory at Naas with a technician to deal with simple procedures — complicated tests to be done at St. James's Hospital as at present. Extending the training system to Naas might provide the necessary personnel for better cover at the Laboratory.

In reply to Mr. D. Kelly, Mr. Nolan said that while the relationship of the proposed Tallaght hospital with Naas would be taken into account it was considered at present that the best interests of Naas Hospital would be served by negotiating with the St. James's Hospital because of the Board's representation on that hospital board and the liaison already developed between the two hospitals.

On a proposal by Cllr. Dockrell seconded by Dr. Behan the report was noted.

(ii) Dublin County Local (Health) Committee meeting held on 4th Dec. 1978.

Referring to temporary dwellings Dr. Behan asked that a report be given on the agencies and services catering for the welfare etc. of itinerants. The members agreed to a suggestion by the Chairman that Prof. O'Donnell submit a report covering not only itinerants but all persons who reside in temporary dwellings.

On a proposal by Cllr. Carroll seconded by Cllr. Connolly the report was noted.

5/79 QUESTIONS

On a proposal by Cllr. Hickey seconded by Cllr. Sweeney it was agreed that the Chief Executive Officer answer the questions lodged.

CLLR. J. CONNOLLY

(1) QUESTION

"Could the Manager say if an helicopter Ambulance Service is under consideration for the new St James Hospital and if so will he give the following information

- (a) Cost of installation of service
- (b) Planned operational service
- (c) Type of helicopter.

REPLY:

It is not proposed to provide a helicopter Ambulance Service for the new St. James's Hospital. However it is proposed to incorporate a helicopter launching/landing pad in the new hospital complex at a cost of £5,000 approximately. It is expected that the hospital will avail as required of the emergency helicopter services as provided at present by the Army Cllr Corps."

CLLR. J. CONNOLLY

(2) QUESTION

"Will the Manager give the following information in regard to the present ambulance service in the City and County of Dublin for the year 1978:

Number of runs performed by ambulance service for

- (i) Accidents on Roads, Industry, Homes,
- (ii) Heart Cases.
- (iii) Other illnesses.
- (iv) False Alarms."

REPLY

The Dublin Fire Brigade will not have available the total number of Ambulance calls answered during 1978 for some months to come. The relevant figure for 1977 is 29,512 which is an increase of approximately 10% over the previous year. Due to a shortage of staff the records compiled are not classified under any particular headings.

The total number of calls answered by our own Service at 1 James's Street for 1978 was 30,096 and for a similar reason this figure is not analysed under different headings. However, a random survey was carried out on the calls answered over a two week period and the following is the breakdown.

1. Home to Hospital	40%
2. Day Hospital	36%
3. Inter Hospital Transfers	18%
4. Accident and Emergency	6%

6/79 ST. ITA'S HOSPITAL - 72 BED UNIT

The following Report No. 2/1979 was submitted:—

"I refer to discussion at the last Board meeting on the above unit and I now wish to report that following further meetings with staff representatives advertisements have been issued inviting applications for posts in this unit.

The staffing approved by the Minister for this unit is as follows:

- 1 Assistant Chief Nursing Officer
- 3 Charge Nurse/Ward Sister
- 8 Deputy Nurse/Deputy Sister
- 14 Registered Psychiatric Nurses
- 12 Trainee Nurses
- 12 Miscellaneous Staff
- 6 Domestic

It has been difficult in the past to obtain trained staff for this hospital but I am hopeful that we will obtain sufficient to open the unit on a phased basis.

I have asked the Director of Mental Handicap to consider opening the unit on a day basis as quickly as possible. He accepts that this should be done and is considering how this might be arranged.

I will keep the Board informed of progress."

Mr. Keyes reported that not many applications had yet been received due to the postal strike intervening. On a proposal by Cllr. Hickey seconded by Cllr. Carroll the report was noted, for further discussion at a future date.

7/79 REPORT OF SUB COMMITTEE ON PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

The Chairman advised the members that the adjourned meeting of the sub Committee had only met that morning and a report was not yet available. On the suggestion of the Chairman it was agreed that the Board would have a special meeting to deal with the various reports on St. Brendan's Hospital. He indicated that the Minister was anxious to meet a deputation from the Board on the subject. The meeting was fixed for 6 p.m. on Monday 22nd January, 1979. The Chief Executive Officer is to advise the Minister that the Board will seek a deputation with him after that date.

8/79 REVISED GUIDELINES FOR MEDICAL CARDS

The following report No. 1/1979 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted: —

GUIDELINES FOR MEDICAL CARDS

"The guidelines operative from 1st January, 1978 were based on the Consumer Price Index figures a: mid November, 1977. The Consumer Price Index figures for November, 1978 have now become available and having regard to them, I have

revised the guidelines with effect from 1st January, 1979 as shown hereunder.

Category	Current guidelines (operative from 1st January, 1978)	Revised guidelines from 1st January, 1979
Single person living with relatives	22.50	24.00
Single person living alone	26.00	28.00
Husband and Wife	37.50	40.50
Husband. Wife & 1 Child	41.00	44.50
„ & 2 children	44.50	48.50
.. &3 “	48.00	52.50
.. &4 “	51.50	56.50
.. &5 “	55.00	60.50
.. &6 “	58.50	64.50
each additional child under 16 years For each child over 16 years with no income and maintained at home by applicant	3.50	4.00
	5.00	5.50

To the Income Guidelines shown above are added:

- a) Weekly housing outgoings,
(rent, ground rent,
mortgage charges, etc.) 3.50 4.00
- b) Exceptional expenses necessarily incurred in travelling to and from work where these create undue hardship.

Persons in receipt of:

- (i) Social Welfare non-contributory pension at the maximum rates;
Old age (care) Allowance;
Deserted Wife's Allowance;
Infections Diseases Allowance;
Disabled Persons (Maintenance) Allowance;

- will be regarded as being eligible for a medical card without further assessment of means.

Cases of hardship will continue to be dealt with individually on merit."

Following a discussion regarding the Board's policy on the issue of medical cards to persons or dependants of persons on strike Mr. Donohue explained the Board's present policy and undertook to reply to any further questions on the matter at the meeting of the Community Care Committee arranged for the 17th January. On a proposal by Cllr. Sweeney seconded by Cllr. Carroll the report was adopted.

9/79 DEVELOPMENT OF NAAS HOSPITAL

Mr. Nolan reported that work on the new kitchen was progressing.

10/79 NOTICE OF MOTION

- (A) The following motion was proposed by Ald. A. FitzGerald and seconded by Cllr. Carroll.

"That the Minister for Health be asked to meet a deputation from this Health Board in relation to the long term development of casualty facilities in the city of Dublin, especially to serve the Port and Inner City; also the need to consider the retention of certain specialised hospitals in this area."

Speaking to the motion the Chairman said that it would be necessary to review certain sections of the hospital devolution plan because, having regard to traffic congestion, it was important to retain casualty facilities in the centre city areas and not let them run down to the stage where no casualty service is available. He said that at present there are 50,000 attendances yearly at the casualty unit in Jervis Street Hospital. Cllr. Mrs. Barlow, Dr. Behan and Dr. Walker supported the Chairman and referred also to the need to retain city hospitals as part of the Emergency Disaster Plan which should now be reviewed. On the suggestion of the Chairman it was agreed that the Board would ask the Minister to meet a deputation on the Emergency Plan and retention of casualty units in the city centre area, Mr. Nolan to arrange preparation of a brief for the deputation. The motion was passed unanimously.

- (B) The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Connolly:

"That consideration be given for the immediate introduction of a helicopter Ambulance Service in view of the following:

- (a) Road congestion
- (b) Traffic Chaos
- (c) Inadequate Road Services
- (d) Lengthy and costly delay to Ambulance Service
- (e) Indifference of Government to Road development for the provision of an efficient ambulance and other services."

Cllr. Connolly said he proposed the motion because of the difficulties experienced by ambulances due to traffic congestion. Calls were numbering 160 per day at present and it was very difficult for ambulances to negotiate the heavy traffic in the city. A discussion followed to which Cllr. Mrs. Glenn, Dr. Meade and Dr. Behan contributed in which the limitations of an helicopter as a method of transporting patients in built-up areas was discussed. Mr. Sadlier said that in addition to the need for a designated landing area for a helicopter there were limitations on its use during bad weather and at night. He paid a particular tribute to the ambulance staff who were doing a very good job in the difficult circumstances obtaining. As there was no seconded to the motion it was not put.

(C) The following motion proposed by Deputy Murphy was seconded by Cllr. Sweeney:

"That the provision of a new acute assessment unit at Newcastle Psychiatric Hospital be placed high on the Board's priority list for capital projects for 1979 and that, as a matter of urgency, the Board provide, install or replace much needed facilities which are either inadequate or non-existent and also to appoint a full-time industrial therapy officer."

Deputy Murphy said that this matter had already been raised at the joint meeting of No. 1 Visiting Committee and Wicklow Local (Health) Committee on the 30/11/78. He proposed the motion as he wished to ensure that this unit would be built in 1979. He was supported in discussion by Cllr. Sweeney, Cllr. Carroll and Dr. Walker. Mr. Keyes said that providing the capital allocation was made it was hoped to appoint an Architect for the project at an early date. As it would normally take six months to plan and six months to the placing of tenders it might be that building might not start until early in 1980. He would advise the Board of progress and was at present examining the question of the appointment of a full time industrial therapy officer. The motion was passed unanimously.

11/79 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) The Secretary advised the members that he had received a letter from Mrs. Corrigan, wife of board member Mr. Hugh Corrigan, advising that Mr. Corrigan was ill and would be unable to attend meetings for some time. The members asked that their good wishes for his speed/ recovery be sent to Mr. Corrigan.

(b) The Secretary read a letter dated 2nd January, 1979 from the Department of Health, stating there had been a steady increase in the number of cases of Rubella notified during 1978 and asking that the public should be made more aware of the Rubella scheme of vaccination available.

12/79 OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Mr. Nolan informed the members that he had written to the Central Council of the Federated Hospitals regarding the nomination of Drs. Blaney and Malone of the St. James's Hospital Consultant staff as Eastern Health Board representatives on the enlarged hospital Board. The Council, however, had indicated that it was reluctant to accept the Health Board's proposal. The members authorised Mr. Nolan to write to the Minister and acquaint him of the proposals made by the Eastern Health Board in an endeavor to meet the claims for representation made by the Central Council.

(b) Mr. Nolan advised the members that the staff organisation had indicated it wished to be represented on the project for the design of the new office building and he was authorised to so arrange.

(c) The members agreed that Mr. Nolan should continue negotiations with St. James's Hospital Board as to the allocation of costs of the provision of an ambulance site, the Child Psychiatric Unit and the new office accommodation in relation to the new Hospital.

(d) Mr. Nolan referred to the Allergy Clinic formerly held at Mercers Hospital and for the retention of which numerous representations had been made to the Board and to the Department of Health. He would endeavour to have facilities provided elsewhere.

(e) Mr. Nolan advised the members that Mr. D. O'Shea had been recommended by the Local Appointments Commissioners for the position of Chief Executive Officer. When Mr. O'Shea gives the date *on* which he proposes to take up duty a formal submission will be made to the Board for his appointment.

(f) The members agreed that as requested in the Department's letter Mr. Nolan should arrange for submission of information direct to the Minister for Health in relation to the notice of motion on conditions in Psychiatric Hospitals proposed by Deputy John Boland for tabling in the Dail.

(g) The Chairman asked that consideration be given to how the Board could help the organisation A.L.O.N.E. Mr. Donohue said that his department had asked Mr. Bermingham of the A.L.O.N.E. organisation for details of cases discovered by them but had received no reply.

(h) it was agreed that the Minister's draft order for the establishment of the Tallaght Hospital Board should be placed on the Agenda for the February meeting.

(i) Dr. Behan asked in what way the Board catered for the elderly during the current period of bad weather. Mr. Donohue informed the members that the Board maintains a register of old people at risk and that the Board's staff visit very frequently during spells of cold weather. On this occasion An Bord Altranais had loaned 40 student nurses to augment staff and he had removed the budgetary restrictions on Meals on Wheels and Home Help organisations. Nurses were supplied with stocks of blankets and the Board bought electric fires and gas heaters where required. In addition; an advertisement was placed in the papers impressing on the public the need to be alert for elderly people living alone who might be in distress.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.

CORRECT. J J. Nolan
Chief Executive Officer

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN