

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of Proceedings of monthly meeting of Eastern Health Board held in the Boardroom, St. Brendan's Hospital, Grangegorman, on Thursday 2nd August, 1979 at 6 p.m.

Present

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| Ald. B. Ahem. T.D. | Mr. K. Harrington |
| Dr. J.D. Behan | Cllr. P. Hickey P.C. |
| Cllr. L. Belton T.D. | Cllr. F. Hynes |
| Cllr. D. Browne | Dr. P. McCarthy |
| Cllr. J. Connolly P.C. | Prof. J. McCormick |
| Cllr. E. Doyle | Dr. A. Meade |
| Prof. J.S. Doyle | Cllr. M. Freehill |
| Cllr. B.J. Durkan | Dr. B. Sheehan |
| Ald. A. FitzGerald | Cllr. J. Sweeney |
| Cllr. Mrs. A. Glenn | Dr. J. Walker |
| Cllr. T. Hand P.C. | Cllr. Mrs. M. Waugh |

Apologies Mr. H. Corrigan and Cllr. G. Timmins

In the Chair Ald. A. FitzGerald,
Chairman

Officers in Attendance

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|-------------------|------------------|
| Mr. T. Keyes | Mr. H. Dunne |
| Mr. R.N. Lamb | Mr. J. Doyle |
| Mr. F. McCullough | Mr. T. McManus |
| Mr. J. Clarke | Mr. C. Mansfield |
| Mr. J.F. Reynolds | Mr. A. O'Brien |
| Mr. P.I. Lyons | Mr. F. Murphy |
| Mr. J. Sadlier | Miss E. Larkin |
| Dr. B. O'Donnell | Mr. M. Cummins |
| Dr. I. Browne | |

105/79

CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman informed the members of the recent deaths of Dr. Desmond McCarthy, Clinical Director, Cluain Mhuire Family Centre, and of Mr. J. Corcoran, Chargehand Electrician, St. Brendan's Hospital. Drs. Sheehan, McCarthy and Behan, also joined in paying tribute to Dr. McCarthy and the services rendered by him to the Board. The members stood in silence as a mark of respect to the deceased and the Chairman requested that the sympathy of the Board be conveyed to the bereaved families.

The Chairman congratulated Dr. J. Behan on his election to the Chair of St. James's Hospital Board and Or. Behan, in reply, thanked the members and his colleagues for their support.

The Chairman also referred to the fund raising activities of the Eastern Health Board Golfing Society. He advised the members that as a result of an open day at Blainroe Golf Course, Wicklow, on 30th June, 1979, generously supported by various sponsors, £800 was raised for Mental Handicap, £500 being presented to the Parents and Friends Association for St. Joseph's, Portrane and £150 each being presented to Association for Mentally Handicapped in Wicklow and Kildare.

The Chairman referred to the concern over non-collection of refuse in the city and the inherent danger of rodent infestation. Prof. O'Donnell stated that while refuse collection in the centre city areas is reasonably satisfactory collection in the suburbs is very irregular. Much refuse is now left out in plastic bags which are alright if they are not torn. He stated that on the evidence available there has been no increase in the rat population in the city in the first six months of the year and in fact the Rodent Control Section have received less calls in this period than the same period last year. He recommended, however, that householders should (1) store refuse, where feasible, inside of their garden walls in order to prevent it being scattered on the roadways and (2) burn a lot of the refuse. He said that spraying refuse with disinfectant would net serve any purpose nor would the laying of rat poison be effective since the rats had so much food available to them in the refuse. He also stated while the Army had been independently operating a refuse disposal system at the start of the dispute there is now a liaison between the Army and the Corporation in collections.

Cllr. Mrs. Glenn referred to a particular problem of rat infestation in the Iona area where there is a concentration of houses that are divided into flats, the tenants of which have no option but to leave their refuse out in nearby laneways. Prof. O'Donnell undertook to have this problem looked into.

106/79 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- (a) Minutes of proceedings of the ninth annual meeting held on 12th July, 1979 having been circulated were confirmed on a proposal by Prof. Doyle, seconded by Cllr. Hickey.
- (b) Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting held on 12/7/1979 having been circulated were confirmed on a proposal by Prof. Doyle seconded by Cllr. Hickey.

107/79 PROCEEDINGS OF LOCAL (HEALTH)
COMMITTEES

The Minutes of Dublin County Local (Health) Committee held on 2nd July, 1979, having been circulated were noted.

Prof. J. Doyle referred to the report on Accidental Choking — item 2 of paragraph 2 of the Minutes — and to the proposal that the technique involved in the Heinrich Manoeuvre be circulated to all hotels and eating places. Prof. O'Donnell said that he has prepared an article with photographs demonstrating the application of the technique for the Hotel and Catering Journal and has advised that this article be cut out and displayed in prominent places in hotels and other areas where food is served. Prof. Doyle said that he recently saw on English T.V. a film demonstrating the procedure and thought that the Health Education Bureau should be asked to obtain this film and have it shown on RTE television. Cllr. Mrs. Glenn proposed that the Board should write to the Health Education Bureau advising that time should be purchased on T.V. to make the public aware of the procedures set out above. Cllr. Hickey supported this proposal and it was agreed that a letter be sent to the Director of the Health Education Bureau, on these lines.

Cllr. Hickey referred to the paragraph 2 of the Minutes and stated that in his opinion increased representation on the Board of Leopardstown Hospital was desirable. The members agreed that the Minister for Health and the Board of the Hospital be advised that the Eastern Health Board wished to have its representation on the Board increased to three.

Referring to paragraph 5 of these Minutes Cllr. Connolly stated that while medical card investigation officers should take all home circumstances of applicants into account they should not tell the applicant at the visit whether they think the card will be granted or not. Mr. Dunne informed Cllr. Connolly that the Board's Inquiry Officers did not make recommendations on the granting of services. Their function was to collect the facts concerning income. In practice they often help applicants to fill in forms correctly and advise them on services in respect of which they may be unaware of their entitlement. A discussion on the continuation of medical cards to persons who were no longer eligible, e.g. persons who obtained a card when they were on strike and who subsequently returned to work, followed, to which Dr. Meade, Cllr. Hynes, Prof. McCormick, Dr. McCarthy, Cllr. Durkan and Mr. Harrington contributed. Mr. Dunne informed the members that, through no fault of the Board, reviews of medical cards fell behind during the postal dispute. He also pointed out that in law applicants must be considered for cards on the basis of their own circumstances in their own right and regardless of whatever other family income may be

evident In reply to a question from Cllr. Durkan concerning provision of medical services for large families who have one income and where they are unable to or incapable of proper management of this income, Mr. Dunne stated that where redical evidence in support of hardship is provided the Board will consider each case on its own merits. He also informed the members that Inquiry Officers are sent out in three circumstances —

1. When someone is reported as being in urgent need of a medical card an officer is sent out on a special visit
2. When an application is received from a person who has no experience of filling in application forms or who is handicapped and is unable to complete the form or
3. Where the Board has difficulty verifying information submitted by the applicant concerning his means, e.g. income on investments.

He invited any Board member who had a particular problem concerning medical cards to contact him direct

108/79

QUESTIONS

On a proposal by Cllr. Hickey seconded by Cllr. Sweeney it was agreed the question be answered.

ALDERMAN ALEXIS FITZGERALD

QUESTION

"Would the Chief Executive Officer comment on the extent of the waiting list for public dental services at the present time and compare these with the position two years ago. Has any recent case been made to the Department of Health by the Chief Dental Surgeon on the appointment of specially trained dental auxiliaries to cope with the demand for these services?"

REPLY

The following are the waiting lists for dental treatment of eligible adults for May, 1977 and May, 1979 in the Dublin area:—

| 1 Category of Patient | Over 60 yrs. of age | Others (excluding students) | Totals |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| May, 1977 | 278 | 5150 | 5,428 |
| May, 1979 | 527 | 3512 | 3,742 |

In addition the figures for students are:

| | |
|-----------|------|
| May, 1977 | 779 |
| May, 1979 | 4213 |

The figures for students indicate the number who applied for treatment since 1/6/76.

At the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Irish Dental Association in April, the Minister for Health indicated that additional finance will be made available this year for the provision of dental treatment for eligible adults. At present, discussions are taking place between the Department of Health and the Irish Dental Association with a view to provision of dental treatment by private dentists for eligible adults.

Waiting lists for eligible school children vary from area to area, and also vary according to the treatment needed. These patients are treated in Health Board Clinics by whole-time dental officers.

At present, a review body is looking at the career structure of public dental officers and it is hoped that an improved career structure will be created so as to improve recruitment into the whole-time salaried service.

The Dentists Act, 1928 prohibits the employment of operating dental auxiliaries. The Minister for Health has indicated that this act will be replaced soon by a new Dentists Act, which will comply with the E.E.C. Directives on Dentistry and will allow for the employment of operating dental auxiliaries. When this act is passed, recommendation will be made about the employment of dental auxiliaries in the Eastern Health Board Dental Service.

109/79 SCREENING FOR HYPOTHYROIDISM IN NEW BORN INFANTS

The following letter dated 13th July 1979 received from Dept. of Health was submitted:—

"Dear CEO

From 1 August next, the national screening service for newborn infants provided at the Children's Hospital, Temple Street, Dublin, which at present covers Phenylketonuria (PKU), Homocystinuria, Maple Syrup Urine Disease (MSUD), Tyrosinaemia and Galactosaemia, will be extended to include primary hypothyroidism.

Hypothyroidism (or cretinism) is a congenital disorder involving insufficiency of thyroid gland function which retards normal physical and mental development. The disease is not generally detectable clinically until mental retardation has been established, which is then irreversible. If hypothyroidism is detected very soon after birth, particularly within the first two weeks, effective treatment can be provided to offset the development of cretinism.

The incidence of hypothyroidism has been found to be approximately 1 in 4,000 births in some European countries where screening programmes have been carried out. On this basis primary hypothyroidism might be detected in about 15-20 infants in Ireland each year.

The screening arrangements for the detection of primary hypothyroidism will involve collecting one extra blood sample on the filter paper used for existing screening service for PKU, etc. This paper will then be sent to the laboratory in Temple Street Hospital for investigation of the biochemical features of the disease. The blood sample should not be taken from the infant earlier than the fourth day of life. If the infant is discharged or transferred from hospital before the fourth day of life appropriate arrangements should be made to collect the blood specimen on the fourth day of life or as early as possible thereafter.

In any case in which a positive result is obtained from the screening test a full blood sample will be required as quickly as possible for further examination in Temple Street Hospital. If this second test proves positive arrangements will be made for a clinical examination of the infant by a paediatrician and for an x-ray examination. If, as a result of these examinations, treatment is needed it is important that it be commenced as soon as possible, ideally before the fourteenth day of life.

Delays in starting treatment after the first two weeks of life increases the risk of intellectual impairment. Because of this time limitation it is important to ensure that blood samples and, where necessary, any clinical and x-ray examination be arranged without delay.

The treatment consists of thyroid substitution therapy, as prescribed by the paediatrician which can be administered orally in the home. The medicines are inexpensive and are available free of charge to medical card holders.

Confirmed cases should be seen on a monthly basis by the paediatrician. After a year the infant will be admitted by the paediatrician to a children's hospital or to the paediatric department of a general hospital to assess his condition and evaluate the effect of the treatment provided.

The Minister strongly urges all health boards to encourage the full use of this new service for hypothyroidism and to inform all appropriate hospitals and doctors in their area of the availability of the service. The service is being organised by Dr. S.F. Cahalane, Pathologist, Children's Hospital, Temple Street, Dublin. Dr. S.F. Cahalane has informed paediatricians regarding the procedures for hypothyroidism and has explained to them how the service will operate.

The service will operate as a pilot scheme for a year, when its effectiveness will be reviewed. For this purpose a small group has been set up to monitor and evaluate this new screening service. Dr Cahalane, a number of paediatricians, an endocrinologist, a biochemist and a medical officer from the Department of Health will act on this group.

The screening tests carried out in Temple Street will be provided (as for PKU) free of charge for all infants. However, the ordinary rules of eligibility for health services will apply in relation to the clinical and radiological examinations.

Your support in implementing this valuable scheme would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

B. HENSEY

Secretary"

Prof. O'Donnell informed the members that almost all infants are born in institutions and that it is exceptional for mothers to be discharged before the 5th day after the birth of the child.

Dr. Walker referred to paragraph 4 of the notice and stated that as soon as a notification of birth is made to a Community Care headquarters a Public Health Nurse visits the home to ensure that all recommended tests have been carried out and to give the mother any advice or assistance she may require. Responsibility for carrying out this check rests with the community care programme.

Dr. Behan referred to follow-up procedures in respect of children born in private institutions and the importance of ensuring paediatric examination for them. Mr. Clarke informed him that the Board's area services cover all children and undertook to have the notice from the Department circulated to all directors of community care.

Dr. B. Sheehan advised that mothers should be informed of the importance of having tests carried out and that responsibility for ensuring that tests are done should be placed with the mother.

Cllr. , *rs. Glenn considered that mothers and children were being discharged too early and they should remain in hospital until all tests are done. Prof. McCormick and Dr. McCarthy paid tribute to the key role being played by the Public Health Nurses in this area.

Ald. FitzGerald recommended that this matter should be brought to the attention of the Health Education Bureau. The Board agreed to his recommendation. The following motion proposed by Cllr. Freehill and seconded by Dr. Sheehan was adopted:

"That the E.H.B. advise all Maternity Hospitals to inform mothers of the necessary screening tests that need be carried out in the early days of the child's life.

- (a) that this information be given during the ante natal care period;
- (b) that adequate information be given on reason for tests."

110/79 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 1979

The following report No. 34/79" from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:

"At the special meeting held on the 23rd February, 1979 the Board was informed (Report 11(a) 1979) of the progress made with Capital projects then in hand and also of the new programme for 1979 as approved by the Minister for Health.

The further progress attained by the 30th June with the on-going projects is shown hereunder:

Community Care Programme

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ballinteer Health Centre | Completion anticipated September 1979 |
| Blanchardstown Health Centre and Day Nursery | Contract well in hand |
| Coolock Health Centre and Day Nursery | Completion anticipated November 1979 |
| Millbrook, Tallaght Health Centre and Day Nursery | Completion anticipated July 1979 |
| Finglas Health Centre | Contract well in hand |
| Wicklow Health Centre and Community Care headquarters | It has been necessary to invite fresh tenders |
| Maynooth Health Centre | Contract well in hand |
| Kilbarrack Health Centre | Plans agreed with Department of Health and contract documents being completed |

General Hospitals Programme

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Mechanical services, St. Columcille's | Boilerhouse portion 90% complete Work in progress |
| St. Colman's Hospital, 22 bed unit and day centre | Complete |
| Bru Chaoimhin — Fire precautions systems | Further fire precaution works to commence in July |
| Legion of Mary Hostel, North Brunswick Street | Schedule of accommodation approved: planning in progress |
| St. Vincent's, Athy: Phase 3 | |

Special Hospital Programme

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Nurses' Home, St. Ita's Hospital | Complete |
| Telephone and fire system, St. Ita's Hospital | Complete |
| Up-grading of female chronic block, St. Ita's Hospital | Complete |
| Up-grading of male chronic block, St Ita's Hospital | Work well in hand |
| Conversion of estate houses as hostels for the mentally handicapped | Contract being placed |
| St Loman's Hospital — Conversion of existing building to provide 23 additional beds | Work well in hand |
| St Brendan's Hospital — Fire precautions and sundry alterations, repairs, painting, etc. | |
| St Brendan's Hospital — Turf handling plant | 1978 approved programme complete |
| | Contract documents being finalised |

At the half-year stage, the programme of new works for 1979 for which, as previously reported, notification was received in mid-February has progressed as follows:

Community Care Programme

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Health Centre, Ballybrack | Sketch and cost plans under discussion with the Department of Health |
| Health Centre, Rowlagh | Plans agreed with the Department of Health and contract documents being completed |
| Welfare Home, Harolds Cross | Schedule of accommodation agreed with the Department of Health and plans being prepared |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Health Centre, Blessington | Plans agreed with the Department of Health and contract documents being completed |
| Health Centre and Community Care headquarters, Naas | Schedule of accommodation under discussion with Department of Health |
| Community Care headquarters, Dun Laoghaire (extension) | Proposal under examination |
| Health Centre, Athy | Planning in progress |
| Health Centre, Shillelagh | Contract documents being completed |
| Health Centre, Knockananna | Planning in progress |
| Special Hospitals Programme | |
| Fire precautions, etc.. St. Loman's Hospital | Contract documents being completed by Consulting Engineer |
| Up-grading of accommodation and services, St Brendan's Hospital | Work in progress |
| Extension of psychiatric clinic, Vergemount Hospital | |
| | Schedule of accommodation under discussion with Department of Health |
| Relocation of psychiatric service accommodation at Garden Hill, St James's Day Hospitals, St. James's and for St. Loman's and Dublin North West | Arrangements for relocation in hand Work in progress at St. James's: planning of unit for Dublin North-West in hand |
| Extension of Alcoholism Unit, St. Dymphna's | Schedule of accommodation under discussion with Department of Health |
| General Hospitals and Homes Programme | |
| Fire precaution works. St. Brigid's, Crooksling | Contract documents being completed by Consulting Engineer |
| Fire precaution works, St. Mary's Hospital | Contract documents being completed by Consulting Engineer |
| Special isolation unit, Cherry Orchard | Detailed planning in progress |
| Fever Hospital | |

In addition to the new works listed above approval was received to proceed with the planning of four other projects this year:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Community Care programme | |
| A Health Centre for Swords | Planning in progress |
| Special Hospitals programme | |
| Modernisation of a further unit at St. Ita's | Planning in progress hospital |
| A 20 bed acute unit at Newcastle Hospital, Co. Wicklow | Planning in progress |
| A Child Psychiatric Centre on lands at Cherry Orchard | Joint Health Board, Department of Health project team preparing detailed Brief |

There are, in addition, two major projects in hand, i.e. the Youth Development Centre to be built in the Central Mental Hospital and the Mental Handicap Centre to be constructed adjoining St. Columcille's Hospital. Contract documents for the former are being completed. The schedule of accommodation and cost plan for the Mental Handicap Centre has been approved by the Minister for Health and the design of the Centre is now in hand."

On a proposal by Dr. P. McCarthy seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Glenn the report was noted.

111/79 **VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**
Report No. 37/1979

The following report No. 37/1979 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:—

"Voluntary Organisations — Aid to General Hospitals and Homes

The Board will be aware from the reports of the Visiting Committees that there has been a considerable development in the involvement of Voluntary Organisations in contributing towards patients' comforts, equipment, outings, and in many other ways throughout most of the General Hospitals and Homes operated directly by the Board. There is every indication that this trend will continue and develop.

During the past few years Board Members have been associated with the formal presentation of equipment, furnishings and such like in a number of areas. For the information of the Board a summary is attached indicating some of the items of equipment donated to various locations. This list is not exhaustive and does not include items which continue to be donated anonymously as an expression of appreciation by patients and/or relatives. Neither does the list include the very valuable services which continue to be

provided by such Organisations as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Legion of Mary, I.C.A., Order of Malta, and many others.

The approximate total value of the equipment provided during recent years in the various areas is in the order of £100,000 and to this must be added the valued personal contribution of time given by many individuals in visiting long stay patients, many of whom are without relatives."

DONATIONS/GIFTS PRESENTED TO THE BOARD'S HOSPITALS/HOMES

| | Donation/Gift | Donated by |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Cherry Orchard Hospital | | |
| 1. December, 1968 | Special Typewriter costing £400 | Polio Fellowship of Ireland |
| 2. September. 1976 | £100-Used to purchase a radio and other items for the Childrens' Unit | Parents of former patient |
| St. Columcille's Hospital | | |
| 1. January, 1977 | £5,000 approx. - Used to purchase numerous items of medical equipment, furniture and Christmas gifts for patients. | Local Fund Raising Comm. (headed by Sgt. O'Sullivan) |
| 2. July. 1977 | £4,000 - Used to purchase equipment, furniture and other sundry items | Local Fund Raising Comm. |
| 3. February. 1979 | Bilirubinometer for Maternity Unit valued at £1,600 | Rotary Club, Dun Laoghaire |
| 4. March. 1979 | Foetal Monitor, value £5,000 | Fairy Hill Trust |
| 5. May, 1979 | T.V. Sets (Colour) and furniture for Day Room valued at £3,000 | Local Fund Raising Comm. |
| 6. April. 1979 | £1,500-Used to purchase equipment for Physiotherapy Unit. etc. £200 | Local Fund Raising Comm. Flag Day |
| 7. June. 1979 | | Local Fund Raising Comm. Golf Outing |
| St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy | | |
| 1. March, 1977 | T.V. Set | Kilcullen Club |
| 2. February. 1978 | Public Address System | 70 Athy Lions Club |
| | valued at £5,000 approx. | |

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| St. Colman's Hospital | £150 | Rathdrum Development Association |
| 1. Up to 1975 | Stations of the Cross | Non-Nursing staff of Hospital |
| 2. Up to 1975 | Valued at £640 £900 - | Members of the Community |
| 3. Up to 1975 | Used to purchase organ. Colour T.V. Sets, etc. | Patients' Comforts Fund |
| 4. Up to 1975 | £2.229 - Used to purchase Colour T.V., Tape Recorder, Record Player, Wireless and Furniture for patients | Members of the Staff |
| 5. Up to 1975 | £1.160-Used to purchase furniture £290 - Used to purchase furniture | Archdeacon Frazor, Rathdrum |
| 6. Up to 1975 | £3.000 towards buildings new hospital | St. Colman's Walk Comm. |
| 7. Up to 1975 | Grand Piano | Mrs. P. Arbuckle. Kilmacud, Co. Dublin |
| 8. November. 1976 | Approx. £50.000 raised from sponsored walks, etc. Used to provide holidays for the aged and handicapped and for the purchase of equipment for the Hospital and new Day Centre | Local Voluntary Organization |
| 9. From 1970 to date | | |
| District Hospital. Bartinglass | | |
| 1. April. 1979 | 26" Colour T.V. Set | Blessington Round Table |
| Widow Hospital | curtain surrounds | Regional Youth |
| 1. May. 1978 | £1.500 - Used to provide for beds, furniture, etc. £1,900-Used to purchase furnishings, etc. | East Club. Pram Derby. East Wicklow Regional Youth Club — Sponsored Cycle, Hospital Staff also |
| 2. November, 1978 | £2.000 + | Local Fund Raising Comm. |
| 3. May. 1979 | | |
| Bru Chaoimhin | Colour T V. | Liberties Senior Citizens Club, ditto |
| 1. August, 1978 | Portable T.V. for Day Club | |
| 2. May, 1979 | | |
| St. Brigid's Home | £1,200- Furnishings for Verandahs | Staff of the Home and Local Residents ditto |
| 1. April. 1978 | £1,500 - Furnishings | |
| 2. April, 1979 | | |

St. Patrick's Home

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. June, 1976 McCarthy, | Bequest £2.500 used for | Miss O.F. |
| 2 May 1978 | Colour T.V. Sets Stage Fittings, etc. | London Variety Club of Ireland" |

On a proposal by Cllr. P. Hickey seconded by Cllr. J. Sweeney the report was noted.

112/79 MEMBERSHIP OF DUBLIN DENTAL HOSPITAL BOARD

Following discussion on this matter to which Prof. McCormick, Dr. Behan, Dr. McCarthy and Mr. Harrington contributed, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Minister conveying the members wish that the composition of the Dublin Dental Hospital Board be settled and that the Eastern Health Board be given the right to nominate two members to the Hospital Board.

MEMBERSHIP OF MEATH HOSPITAL BOARD

Dr. McCarthy raised the matter of membership of the Meath Hospital Board and said he deplored the position where the Board had no say in regard to appointments made by a previous Board. Mr. Keyec explained what had happened and said that the Meath Hospital Act provided that the members of that Hospital Board appointed by the Health Board held office for three years unless they resigned or died. The next appointment of members will be in April, 1981.

The Chairman advised members that as Cllr. Kinsella had not been returned to the Health Board there was a vacancy on the Committee on Services for the Elderly. On a proposal by Cllr. Sweeney seconded by Dr. McCarthy, Cllr. Hynes was selected to fill the vacancy.

113/79 NOTICES OF MOTION

- (a) Cllr. Connolly said that he had received a letter from Mr. Keyes, Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care, which had also been circulated to the other members and he was satisfied with this reply and was not proceeding with the motion.
- (b) The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Freehill —

That the Eastern Health Board rejects the Health and Family Planning Bill 1978 because it fails to provide a badly needed comprehensive Family Planning service for the majority of people throughout the country. Among the many shortcomings of the Bill is its failure to:

- (1) provide for a comprehensive service for medical card holders.

- (2) provide for educational facilities for the training of medical and para medical personnel and therefore continues to put the health of women seriously at risk."

Cllr. Freehill explained that she had put down the motion at a time when the Bill was still being debated in trfe.Dail. At that time she did not know that the Minister's proposals had originally been debated at a special meeting of the Board and had resulted in a deputation to the Minister. However, there was, she said, considerable concern over the form of the legislation, in particular there was no provision for medical card holders or for training of medical under-graduates. Also responsibility for family planning advice was placed with the medical profession only and not with other home visitors such as Social Workers. It also placed family planning Clinics in an unworkable situation. The Chairman explained what had taken place at the time of the special meeting and in a general discussion it was agreed that as the Bill was now law no useful purpose would be served by debating it further. Mr. Keyes told the members that the Minister would have to make regulations to provide for the detailed operation of the provisions of the Act and that members would be circulated with all such regulations as they were made.

- (c) The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Freehill:—

"That Eastern Health Board discuss problem of residential care for children."

Cllr. Freehill said that she was concerned with all children needing care, particularly travelling families, the provision of a reception centre with adequately trained and paid staff and the adequacy of Places of Safety Orders to deal with the problem cases.

Mr. Doyle said that the Board was actively pursuing the question of accommodation and staffing with the Dublin Corporation and Dept. of Health. Cllr. Mrs. Glenn said she was well aware of the efforts being made by the Board and the Corporation to bring this matter to a conclusion and on her suggestion the members agreed that a full report be put to the October monthly meeting.

- (d) The following motion was proposed by Ald. FitzGerald:—

"That this Health Board recommend immediate examination of the need for an adequate Public Relations Service for the Board in view of the complexity of the services administered by the Board and the need to keep the public well informed."

The motion was seconded by Dr. McCarthy. The Chairman said he was aware of a lack of Public Relations in the Board

had said this important function needed a full time person to keep the public informed of the Board's services and activities.

In support. Dr. Walker agreed that there was an urgent need for such a service as demonstrated even at the present meeting by questions about entitlement to medical cards and the Role of Inquiry Officers. He said however that it was imperative that the function be carried out within the framework of the Board by a person in the service of the Board who would be versed in the Board's affairs and that it would not be proper to farm out such a service to an agency. The motion was agreed unanimously, and the Chairman asked that a detailed report be given to the October monthly meeting on the basis that the appointment would be one within the Health Board's service.

114/79

CORRESPONDENCE

The Secretary read the following correspondence —

- (a) Letter 19/7/1979 Ref. A.117/187. from the Dept of Health advising that the Minister would have no objection to the payment of a small cash allowance to residents without means in long-term extern institutions provided the cost can be met within the Board's approved allocation.
- (b) Letter 20/7/1979 from the Dept of Health drawing attention to a drop in the acceptance rate for immunisation against poliomyelitis and asking that the Board and its officers be made fully aware of poliomyelitis immunisation and that its importance be emphasised to mothers of young children and requesting the Board's co-operation in the efforts to achieve the highest possible levels of immunisation protection.
- (c) Letter 23/7/1979 from the Dept of Health advising that as from 1/7/1979 the National Association for Cerebral Palsy will be funded direct by the Eastern Health Board.
- (d) Letter 23/7/1979 from the Director, Army Medical Corps, expressing his appreciation to the Eastern Health Board Ambulance Service for the considerable help and co-operation recently given by them to the Depot Army Medical Corps in the provision of practical work to their students.

The meeting terminated at 8.20 p.m.

CORRECT. T. Keyes
Chief Executive Officer

CHAIRMAN