

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of Proceedings of Special Meeting of the  
Eastern Health Board held in the Boardroom, St.  
Brendan's Hospital, on Thursday 23rd April, 1981  
at 6 p.m.

PRESENT

Dr. J. Behan	Mr. K. Harrington
Cllr. L. Belton, T.D.	Cllr. P. Hickey P.C.,
Mrs. B. Bonar	Cllr. F. Hynes
Cllr. D. Browne	Dr. A. Meade
Cllr. M. Carroll	Cllr. H. Reilly
Cllr. E. Doyle	Dr. B. Sheehan
Cllr. B.J. Durkan	Cllr. E. Stagg
Cllr. M. Freehill	Cllr. J. Sweeney
Cllr. Mrs. A. Glenn	Cllr. G. Timains T.D.,
Cllr. A. Groome	Dr. J. Walker
Cllr. T. Hand P.C.	Cllr. Mrs. M. Waugh

APOLOGIES

Prof. J.S. Doyle and Ms. N. Kearney

IN THE CHAIR

CLLR. DAN BROWNE

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. P.B. Segrave	Prof. B. O'Donnell
Mr. F.J. Donohue	Prof. I. Browne
Mr. T. Keyes	Mr. J. Doyle
Mr. J.F. Reynolds	Mr. A. O'Brien
Mr. P.J. Swords	Miss A. Flanagan
Mr. J. Sadlier	Mr. M. Cummins
Mr. J. Clarke	Miss E. Larkin
Mr. P.I. Lyons	Mr. J. Leech
Mr. F. McCullough	Mr. K. Ward
	Mr. M. O'Connor

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Prior to the Special Meeting the Minister for Health, Dr. Michael Woods, accompanied by the Secretary, Dr. B. Hensey, and Mr. Liam Flanagan, Assistant Secretary, had outlined the programme for capital development for 1981 in the Eastern Health Board area and dealt with plans both for the health board itself and for the voluntary hospitals and institutions in its area. A copy of the Minister's address has been circulated to members.

The Chairman thanked the Minister and his officials for coming to meet the members and expressed appreciation of the manner in which he had received the Board's deputation on 23rd February 1981 in support of the capital programme submitted.

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**REVENUE ALLOCATION 1981**

The Chief Executive Officer introduced the following Report No. 12/1981 on the non-capital allocation for 1981 and the Book of Estimates.

"By letter dated 25th March, 1981 the Department of Health has notified the Board of the approved level of net expenditure for 1981 made up as follows:

	£m.
(a) Direct expenditure by board (excluding its share of the expenses of the General Medical Services (Payments) Board	102.000
(b) Payments in respect of the expenses of the General Medical Services (Payments) Board	13.900
(c) Payments in respect of services provided for eligible patients in voluntary hospitals and joint board hospitals	128.800
(d) Payments in respect of services provided for eligible patients in homes for mentally handicapped persons	11.300
<b>Total:</b>	<b>256.000</b>

The amount of £102m is intended to cover provision of existing services at current levels and as indicated in paragraph 9 of the Department's letter, no additional commitments, extension, upgradina or improvement are provided for.

On the foregoing basis the allocation has been set out in the enclosed book of estimates."

In introducing the Report the Chief Executive Officer pointed out that the allocation for 1980 had been £85 million and the estimated out-turn £104 million. The 1981 allocation for direct expenditure by the board was, therefore, 11% over the estimated out-turn for 1980 and was ■■ intended to maintain existing services at current levels. It included provision for the 2nd phase of the National Understanding but not for any other increases in pay or additional expenditure for any new nost.s. On the non-nay <;ide the allocation was expected to rovpr all price movempnt in 1981 and provision was made for essential maintenance only and the replacement of essential medical and surgical equipment. The allocation is to be limited by a determination to be made under Section 31 of the Health Act 1970 under which the Minister for Health is authorised to specify the level of expenditure which is to be incurred by a health board.

While every effort would be made to onerate within the allocation the Board's ability to do so could be affected by a number of important considerations -

1. The impact of inflation in the relevant areas of the non-nay hudnet
2. The level of demand for services
3. The effort and co-operation of all the staff in ensuring that services are provided for those who require them as efficiently and effectively as possible.

A discussion followed on the Chief Executive Officer's introduction to which CI Irs. Mrs. Glenn, Ms. Freehill and F. Hynes contributed.

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Cllr. Stagg enquired if there would be an opportunity to comment on the Minister's statement regarding the Capital Allocation for 1981 and the Chairman stated that the Capital Programme would be on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Board. Councillor Stagg said that this was unsatisfactory and proposed the suspension of standing orders to enable a discussion to take place. His proposal was seconded by Cllr. Durkan. As there was not unanimous agreement the motion was put to a vote. The voting was as follows:-

FOR: Cllr. L. Belton Mrs. B. Bonar, Cllr. B.J. Durkan Cllr. M. Freehill Cllr. A. Glenn Cllr. H. Reilly  
Dr. B. Sheehan Cllr. E. Stagg Cllr. Mrs. M. Waugh

AGAINST: Mr. K. Harrington Cllr. P. Hickey Cllr. F. Hynes

7 Dr. A. Meade Cllr. J. Sweeney Cllr. G. Timmins

Dr. J. Walker

ABSTAINED: Dr. J. Behan Cllr. A. Groome

4 Cllr. M. Carroll Cllr. D. Browne

As the requisite majority of three quarters was not reached the motion was declared defeated.

Dr. Behan commented that the Book of Estimates did not contain details relating to the expenditure of £140 million in respect of payments for eligible patients in voluntary hospitals and in homes for mentally handicapped. He enquired as to the authority for the Department's allocation of more than half the Health Board's total budget directly to agencies over which the board had no control. The Chief Executive Officer stated that these matters would be examined and he would report to the board at a later date.

59/81**BOOK OF ESTIMATES**

At this stage, on the suggestion of the Chairman, it was agreed to examine the Book of Estimates page by page. Arising out of this examination the following points were dealt with:

- (i) On the suggestion of Dr. Harrington it was agreed that in future the budget figures for medical and dental services would be shown separately.

(ii) Dr. Meade suggested that the statistics relating to the numbers of patient days and average daily cost should be provided and this was accepted.

(iii) The following motion was proposed by Deputy G. Timmins, seconded by Deputy L. Bel ton, and unanimously agreed:

"That this Board request the Minister for Health to increase the capitation payment from £30 per week to £50 per week in respect of patients maintained in nursing homes."

(iv) It was agreed that representations should be made to the Minister for the Environment regarding the liability of nursing homes to pay rates to local authorities.

(v) Dr. Behan referred to the budget of £22 million for St. Brendan's, St. Ita's and St. Loman's Hospitals and stated that, at 1981 prices, the cost of maintaining a patient in an institution for life is approximately half a million pounds. He noted that the estimate was set out on the basis of institutions and enquired if in future details could be given on the basis of catchment areas. The Chief Executive Officer agreed to examine this.

(vi) Dr. Sheehan referred to the reduction in the amount provided for practice premises grants in the general practitioner services from £6,500 in 1980 to £6,000 in 1981 and suggested that the Board should be investing more money in developing practice premises.

(vii) Dr. Harrington stated that a report on the Fluoridation of Water Supplies was awaited by the Board. Mr. Donohue stated that the report would be submitted within the next three months.

(viii) Dr. Walker enquired if the board could consider the inclusion of a separate item in the estimates for staff training. He considered that the premier health board in the country should set and maintain the highest standards and encourage the principle of in-service training for all ranks. The Chief Executive Officer stated that he accepted the points made by Dr. Walker and that the question of staff training and development would receive his personal attention during the next year.

The following resolution was then proposed by Cllr. Hickey, seconded by Cllr. Hynes, and unanimously agreed:-

**\*It is resolved that the allocation for non-capital health expenditure, 1981, in the sum of £115.9 m. be adopted and apportioned as set out in the book of estimates prepared by the Chief Executive Officer, and that the Minister be informed accordingly.\*"**

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With regard to the Minister's address Cllr. Durkan maintained that nothing major had been disclosed and stated that it would be better to embark on a worthwhile programme now having regard to the likelihood that inflation would double costs over the next four years, that he had expected an allocation for the Naas Hospital and that he was disappointed to note that proposals to provide accommodation for the community care services in Co. Kildare had been ignored. He was also disappointed with the minor capital allocation of £100,000 having regard to the fact that £80,000 had been allocated for minor capital works a few years ago.

Cllr. Hickey stated that he would like to congratulate the Minister and took the view that the Minister was making available capital monies for the health board and that most of the items on the first page of the capital priority list had been dealt with.

Dr. Walker supported Cllr. Hickey and proposed a vote of thanks to the Minister for coming to meet the members. This was agreed.

The Chairman advised the members that the Minister had informed him that he was prepared to meet a deputation from the Care of the Aged Committee and that he would examine the report of the Project Team on St. Brendan's Hospital immediately he received it.

He further stated that he wished to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the Chief Executive Officer, the Programme Managers and all the staff of the health board for the co-operation and assistance which they gave to him and the board members at all times.

The meeting ended at 8 p.m.

**CORRECT. P.B. Segrave  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.**

Signed.....

**CHAIRMAN**