

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of proceedings of Monthly Meeting
of the Eastern Health Board held in
St Vincent's Hospital, Athy, Co Kildare
on Thursday 3 May 1984 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT

Dr J D Behan
Cllr L Baton
Mrs B Bonar
Cllr D Browne
Cllr M Carroll
Mrs D Clime
Cllr E Doyle
Prof J S Doyle
Cllr B J Durkan TD
Mr P Finegan
Cllr Mrs E Fitzgerald
Cllr M Freehill
Mr J Gahan

Cllr Mrs A Glenn TD
Cllr A Groome
Cllr T Hand
Dr R Hawkins
Cllr P Hickey
Cllr F Hynes
Dr D I Keane
Dr P McCarthy
Prof J McCormick
Cllr E Stagg
Cllr J Sweeney
Cllr W C Willoughby

APOLOGIES

Mr N Andrews TD, Dr R J Draper, Dr B Powell

IN THE CHAIR

Cllr Mrs A Glenn TD

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P B Segrave, Chief Executive Officer
Mr K J Hickey, Programme Manager, General Hospital Care
Mr T P Keyes, Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care
Mr F J Donohue, Programme Manager, Community Care
Mr J F Reynolds, Finance Officer
Prof B O'Donnell, Dublin Medical Officer of Health
Mr L P Kavanagh, Personnel Officer
Mr G Brennan, Technical Services Officer
Mr M J O'Connor, Senior Executive Officer, Secretariat

The Chairman informed the members of the recent deaths of:

- (i) Sr Agnes Minogue, former Matron, St Patrick's Home, Navan Road.
- (ii) Miss Brenda Gallagher, Matron, Bru Chaoimhin, Cork Street, Dublin.
- (iii) Mr Fred McKay, former Staff Officer, Expenditure Unit.
- (iv) The mother of Miss Elizabeth Maher, Assistant Section Officer, Expenditure Unit.
- (v) Mr Frank Murphy, Senior Health Inspector.
- (vi) The brother of Miss E Fulham, Superintendent Public Health Nurse, Co Kildare.

The members stood in silence as a mark of respect to the deceased.

48/84

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 1984
AND OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 1984**

The minutes, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr Hickey, seconded by Cllr Hynes.

- (a) **Matters arising from the Minutes:**
Cllr Freehill enquired regarding a further report relating to the Foundation for Human Development.

Following a discussion to which Cllr Freehill, Mrs Bonar and Cllr Browne contributed, the Chief Executive Officer said that he would present a report to the Board as soon as possible.

49/84

QUESTION

On a proposal by Cllr Carroll, seconded by Mr Finegan. it was agreed to answer the question which had been lodged.

Cllr E Stagg

'That the Board be informed of the number of bed vacancies in each geriatric hospital and institution in the Board's area, giving the name of the hospital/institution involved; and that the Board be further informed of the size of the waiting list in each case and how such lists are compiled.'

INSTITUTION:	TOTAL BEDS (Geriatric Patients)	PATIENTS ASSISTED BY EHB	TOTAL PATIENTS	VACANCIES	WAITING LIST	HOW WAITING LIST COMPILED
Augustinian Ratoath	60	48	60	Nil	yes - 50	Names entered at date of application
Beaumont	76	32	76	Nil	yes - 150	Names entered al date of application
Gascoigne	27	23	27	Nil	no ———	
Glenindare	24	8	24	Nil		
The Haven	9	3	9	Nil	no ———	
Jewish Home of Ireland	45	33	45	Nil	no ———	
Kilmacud House	38	13	38	Nil		
Maryfield Chapelizod	76	17	76	Nil	yes - 75	Names entered at date of application
Maryville Donnybrook	50	47	50	Nil	no ———	
Molyneux	30	25	30	Nil	yes • 5	Preference given to blind patients
Nazareth House	116	24	116	Nil	no ———	
Old Men's Home	25	6	22	3	yes • 3	Names entered at date of application
Our Lady's Manor	107	47	107	Nil	yes • 200	Names entered at date of application
Queen of Peace	54	7	54	Nil	yes • 47	Names entered at date of application
Sybil Hill	205	38	205	Nil	no ———	
Simpson's	41	35	41	Nil	no ———	
St John's House of Rest	30	30	30	Nil	no ———	
St Joseph's Portland Row	96	79	92	4	no ———	
St Joseph's Kilcroney	34	1)	34	Nil	yes - 6	Names entered at date of application
St Mary's Pembroke	30	28	30	Nil	yes - 45	Names entered at date of application
St Monica's	120	6	120	Nil	yes - 100	Names entered at date of application
St Patrick's Kilmainham	120	60	120	Nil	no ———	
West field	51	11	45	6	yes - 50	Names entered at date of application
TOTALS	1,464	631	1,464	13	736	

EHB LONG-STAY HOSPITALS/HOMES	TOTAL	VACANCY	WAITING LIST	HOW WAITING LIST COMPILED
	BEDS		LIST	
St Brigid's Home	133	Nil	60 (all female)	Names entered at date of application on referral from Consultant in Geriatric Medicine
St Clues Home	97	Nil	54 (all female)	Names entered at date of application on referral from Consultant in Geriatric medicine
Bru Chaoimhin	169	Nil	male + 8 female)	Names entered at date of application on referral from Consultant in Geriatric Medicine
Ctonskeagh	72	Nil	40 (25 male + 115 female)	Names entered at date of application on referral from Consultant in Geriatric Medicine
St Mary's (Extended Care)	168			
Acute Geriatric + Welfare)	121	289 (+ 56 other specialities)	Nil	Names entered at date of application on referral from Consultant in Geriatric Medicine
St Colman's, Rathdrum	154	Nil	5(4 male 1 female)	Names entered at date of application from patient's G J*.
Wicklow District	30	Nil	24(12 male 12 female)	Names entered at date of application from G,P.
St Vincent's, Athv	310	(+14 maternity)	Nil	Admissions through the Admissions/Assessts Unit
	30	(+44 other specialities)	Nil	Names entered at date of application from
TOTALS	1336		320	

Royal Hospital	229	(+85 young chronic sick beds)	Nil	49(3) female. IS male)	Names entered at date of application from inner hospitals
James Connolly	56	(+236 other specialities)	Nil	Nil	
St James's	337	(+ 475 other specialities)			Names entered after assessment by (imsultam
TOTALS	1.998			372	

WELFARE HOMES				
NAMES	BED OCCUPANC	VACANCIES	WAITING LIST	
'The Orchard		None		Names are placed on waiting list after assessment by Admissions Committee
'St Brock Clonskeagh	A	None		Names are placed on waiting list after assessment i missions Committee
'Clajehiven' Ballygall 'Ashgrove House Navan Road.		None		Names are placed on waiting list after assessment by Admissions Committee
TOTALS		TOTAL.	200	

50/84

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT

- (i) 'I have circulated to the members copies of Regulations made by the Minister for Health which provide that, with effect from 1 June 1984, persons admitted for hospital inpatient services in a public hospital who are in arrears with health contributions will be liable for an admission charge of £100.'
- (ii) 'I have circulated to the members a copy of the principal conclusions in the Green Paper on 'Services for the Handicapped - Towards a Full Life' for their information.

It is expected that printed copies of the Green Paper will be available shortly. I will arrange to have a copy circulated to each member in due course.'

- (iii) **General Hospital Services in South-East Dublin and East Wicklow Area**
At our last Board meeting it was agreed that the letter dated 15 March 1984 from the Department of Health regarding the co-ordination of services provided by the three general hospitals in South-East Dublin and East-Wicklow be considered in detail by the St Columcille's Hospital Visiting Committee at a meeting on 26 April 1984.

The Committee decided to recommend to our Board that:

- (1) Our Board should avail of the offer contained in the last paragraph of the letter to meet with the Minister for Health to discuss the matter.
- (2) Before arranging for a deputation to meet the Minister the matter should be further considered by a Committee of the full Board at a Special Meeting at an early date.

I should remind the Board that arrangements have already been made for a deputation from our Board to meet with the Minister for Health on 28 May in connection with our submission on the constitution of the future Management Board for Beaumont Hospital. It seems appropriate that the proposed co-ordinating body for the general hospital services in South-East Dublin and East-Wicklow should also be discussed with the Minister on that occasion.'

The members agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that Item 6 on the Agenda regarding membership of the St James's Hospital Board should be deferred for consideration at the Special Meeting of the Board which would be held in Committee on 21 May 1984 at 6.00 pm in St Brendan's Hospital.

51/84

NOMINATION OF MEMBER FOR CO-OPTION TO THE
BOARD OF CHEEVERSTOWN HOUSE LTD

The members agreed that this item should be deferred to the June meeting of the Board.

S2/B4

SUPPLEMENTARY WELFARE ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The following Report No 8/1984 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted.

'Our Board, at a meeting held on 1 March 1984, agreed with the terms of the following resolution:-

'That the Eastern Health Board, recognising the vital role of Supplementary Welfare in meeting the income needs of many families during this prolonged recession, calls for a report on the current operation of the Supplementary Welfare Allowances Scheme and in particular on the reported withdrawal of clothing allowances paid under this scheme.'

The attached report identifies the major issues relating to the administration of that part of Social Welfare service which falls to be administered by our Board under the Social Welfare (Supplementary Welfare Allowances) Act 1975).

The report shows how the Supplementary Welfare system has moved from being an emergency (or fire brigade) service for persons at risk to what is now, in effect, an additional Social Welfare service.

Some fundamental policy decisions need to be made in relation to the future of this service as it has very important policy and resource implications for our Board.'

1. INTRODUCTION

The Supplementary Welfare Scheme came into operation on 1 July 1977.

This scheme has replaced the former home assistance service which operated under the Public Assistance Act 1939.

Persons eligible

Under the Scheme, which is administered by the health boards, subject to the general direction of the Minister for Social Welfare, every person in the State whose means are insufficient to meet his needs and those of his dependants is entitled to Supplementary Welfare Allowance.

A person does not normally qualify if he is:-

- (a) receiving full-time education;
- (b) in full-time employment; or
- (c) directly involved in a trade dispute (but a payment may be made here for dependants).

Aid may, however, be granted to such persons in cases of urgency.

Rates of Payment

The prescribed rates of Supplementary Welfare Allowance are the same rates as for Unemployment Assistance (rural rate).

Additional Payments

If a person is already receiving a basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance or a weekly payment under a State income-maintenance scheme (e.g. an old age pension), or if he has other limited means, he may qualify for a weekly addition to supplement such income. The amount of the addition is determined on the claimant's particular needs. Sudi needs could arise if a person is, for instance, paying a very high rent on his house or if he is ill and requires extra heating or a special diet.

Payments for exceptional and emergency needs

A single payment may be made in exceptional or emergency circumstances to meet a special need such as furniture, bedding, cooking apparatus or other items of basic household equipment.

Appeals

Where a claimant is dissatisfied with a decision on his claim an appeal may be made against that decision to a person in the Health Board area appointed by the Minister for this purpose. An appeal should normally be made in writing and should set out the grounds on which the appeal is based.

Organisation

The service is provided by 103 Community Welfare Officers. Extra officers are made available for the fuel scheme. These officers serve defined districts, the sizes of which are determined by the anticipated number of recipients rather than by total population.

The officers are available daily at stated times at various health centres within their districts. They are supervised and controlled by 13 Superintendent Community Welfare Officers who are assigned to Community Care areas; some areas by reason of the volume of work have two Superintendents.

2. DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1977

(a) Cash Payments

The two factors having the greatest effect on the workload of the service under this heading are:

- (i) the number of cases paid each week and
- (ii) the number of 'new cases' dealt with each week.

Set out hereunder are details of the expanding workload in the Dublin area since July 1977. The December 1981 figure represents an increase of 58% in number of cases paid and 636% in the number of new cases since July 1977. The February 1984 figure represents an increase of 149% in the number of cases paid and 1,705% in the number of new cases since July 1977. The dramatically higher increase in the 'new cases' indicates a fundamental shift away from long-term payments towards short-term or 'once off payments. As each new case generates an interview, investigation and book-work, the number of new cases is the workload criterion of greatest significance.

Table A
Weekly numbers and cost of SWA Cash Payments

Week-ending	Cases Paid	New Cases	Cost
2/7/1977	3,511	1%	£ 17,580
7/1/1978	3,757	189	23,119
1/7/1978	3,742	302	28,543
6/1/1979	3,768	249	29,894
7/7/1979	5,118	469	57,056
12/1/1980	4,409	650	53,102
9/7/1980	5,739	988	81,618
24/1/1981	5,232	1,164	93,606
17/3/1981	5,914	1,472	105,152
11/7/1981	5,846	1,444	123,963
5/12/1981	5,670	1,454	118,000
24/7/1982	6,527	1,722	175,101
30/7/1983	8,657	3,242	235,066
17/12/1983	8,836	3,202	236,261
25/2/1984	8,767	3,538	260,142

(b) Beds, bedding, clothing etc.

Some goods are issued from the Stores on foot of requisitions written by Community Welfare Officers. Each requisition follows an interview, investigation and book-work, and therefore influences the workload of the Community Welfare Officer. The increase in the numbers of persons availing of this service has also resulted in substantial increase in the workload of the staff of the Welfare Stores.

Table B gives details of the numbers of such 'in-kind' requisitions issued in a particular month by Community Welfare Officers over the period since 1977.

Table B Requisitions
issued by Community Welfare Officer

Year	January	Total for Year
1978	108	f 1,503
1979	215	3,697
1980	308	5,456
1981	330	4,879
1982	461	7,187
1983 (January)	703	8,957
1983 (December)	868	

In addition to these a considerable number of applications for doming, particularly for children, are met by issue of a special payment by the Community Welfare Officer. Increasing use of this method has been made recently. A review of these arrangements is in progress.

(c) Fuel Schemes

Up to October 1979 the only fuel schemes in the Board's area were operated by Dublin Corporation and Dun Laoghaire Borough Corporation.

In October 1979 the Board introduced a Winter Fuel Scheme for those parts of the Board's area not covered by the Urban Scheme. At the same time the Urban Schemes changed from providing fuel directly to the beneficiaries to issuing vouchers which were exchangeable for any type of fuel. In October 1980 a National Fuel Scheme was introduced which applied, not only to areas not covered by the Urban Schemes, but also to persons residing within the urban areas who are not eligible under the Urban Schemes. These factors together with increased awareness by the public of their entitlements under the schemes, has resulted in a sharp increase (750%) in the number of persons availing of the schemes - see Table C. These schemes operate from October to April with the bulk of applications arising in September /October each year. The Board has introduced a cheque payment system in place of vouchers. Applications are processed locally by the Community Welfare Officer.

The Board have been made aware on several occasions, of the many anomalies in the fuel schemes. The Minister has indicated that the schemes are now being reviewed with a view to having a single scheme for 1984/85 and to the removal of many of the anomalies.

Table C
Numbers of recipients under Winter Fuel Schemes processed by the Board's Community Welfare Officers

	Dublin Corporation	DunLaoghaire Corporation	National	Total
1978/79	3,055	227	-	3,282
1979/80	7,036	434	1,465	8,935
1980/81	-	660	10,996	11,656
1981/82	-	1,100	16,784	17,884
1982/83	-	1,100	22,219	23,309
1983/84	-	1,200	25,600	26,700
----- ,----- •				(projected)

Note: Up to 1979/80 Community Welfare Officers distributed Cheap Fuel Scheme vouchers to certain recipients on behalf of Dublin Corporation. On the introduction of the National Fuel Scheme these categories of recipients were issued with payments under that Scheme by Community Welfare Officers. The Dublin Corporation continues to operate a Cheap Fuel Scheme for specified categories who always have been eligible under their scheme.

(d) Footwear Scheme

This scheme provides for the making of cash payments towards the cost of footwear for children of parents dependant on Social Welfare or similar benefits.

**Table D Number of chfldrea
benefitting under the Footwear Scheme**

1977/78	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84 projected
5,694	7,648	8,372	11,215	11,489	31,714	40,250

(e) Appeals

The introduction of the Supplementary Welfare Allowances Act provided for a right of appeal against any decision of the Board to refuse SWA. The number of appeals has grown considerably since the introduction of the appeals system - see Table E. Each appeal requires an investigation and written report by the Superintendent CWO, in many cases a medical report from the Director of Community Care, and detailed examination at head office before decision by the Appeals Officer.

**Table E Numbers of appeals
received under SWA Act**

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Annual Figure	105	208	337	225	638	761

(0 Total Supplementary Welfare Allowance Expenditure 1978 - 1984

Table F

	Basic SWA	In Kind	Fuel Schemes	Footwear Scheme	Total
1978	1,638,812	55,054	31,822	25,458	1,751,146
1979	3,488,072	123,916	107,393	59,166	2,778,547
1980	4,204,341	235,326	551,985	79,365	5,070,017
1981	6,756,172	368,377	1,020,920	19,541	8,165,010
1982	10,041,077	590,679	3,673,424	256,732	14,561,912
1983	13,262,600	879,627	2,955,428	288,998	17,386,653
1984 (Est).	15,295,500	1,169,400	3,600,000	275,000	20,339,900

Because of pressure of work it is not possible without affecting the day to day service to produce a further detailed breakdown of this expenditure in any year. Surveys carried out, periodically, indicate that the caseload can be analysed under the following classes of payments.

Table G

Substitute payments: i.e. to people awaiting or not having received Social Welfare payments	50%
Rent supplements:	15%
Exceptional needs payments - energy cost	10%
Exceptional needs payments - clothing etc.	10%

PARTICULAR PROBLEMS CURRENTLY ENCOUNTERED

Substitute Payments

Surveys carried out in a number of individual districts show that up to 60*7* of all payments made in some districts are substitute payments. The average incidence of these payments over the whole of the Board's area is somewhat less. Nonetheless, as shown in Table G above, it is running at a very high level.

Where these payments are made to a person who is awaiting Social Welfare Benefit i.e. whose application for Benefit is being processed or who has not received a Social Welfare payment which he normally receives, e.g. because of a delay in the post, the money is recoupable to the Board. Table IT below shows the number of such recoupment claims made since 1980 and indicates the present high level of substitute payments.

Table H
Number of claims for recoupments
from Department of Social Welfare

	Labour Exchange	Disability Benefit	Others	Total
1980	7,640	5,104	2,034	14,778
1981	11,079	9,691	1,320	22,090
1982	13,901	7,180	1,850	22,991
1983	15,388	6,121	1,820	23,339

While discussions with the Department of Social Welfare have improved the situation somewhat, it is still far from satisfactory and discussions are continuing.

Increase in rent and exceptional needs payments

Persons seeking these forms of assistance are generally in receipt of a Social Welfare Benefit or Allowance, principally Unemployment Assistance, Unmarried Mothers' Allowance or Deserted Wives' Allowance/Benefit.

(i) Rents

The current SWA rate includes a sum of £1.50 towards payment of rent. With the current level of rents the majority of persons in receipt of Social Welfare payments who live in rented accommodation would be entitled to an SWA payment. In some areas of Dublin over 50% of SWA payments are rent supplements. The numbers of persons seeking and receiving assistance, under the SWA scheme with mortgage repayments is also increasing, because of the current recession.

It has been represented to the Department of Social Welfare that consideration should be given to paying any appropriate assistance with rent as part of the relevant Social Welfare payments. Those entitled to rent supplements are largely in receipt of means tested Social Welfare payments. It seems undesirable and wasteful that they should have to undergo a further means test to receive an SWA rent supplement.

(ii) Clothing

The number of applications for assistance with clothing are increasing sharply. It is considered and has been represented to the Department that all Social Welfare payments should contain an element to provide for replacement of all clothing thus rendering it unnecessary for SWA payments to be made other than in exceptional circumstances.

(iii) ESB and Gas bills

Applications for assistance in paying the above bills are again generally received from persons in receipt of Social Welfare payments, and the need for this type of assistance is growing rapidly and it is estimated that it could double in 1984. It has been represented to the Department that the need for this type of assistance can best be met by extending the Free Electricity and Bottled Gas schemes to categories of Social Welfare recipients other than those eligible at present.

(c) Sudden peaks in demand

Handling these 'peaks' has been one of the greatest difficulties facing the service in recent years. The principal causes of such peaks have to date been:

- (a) Major strikes
- (b) Difficulties within the Department of Social Welfare resulting in non-payment of Benefits.
- (c) Postal difficulties resulting in non-receipt of Benefits and other payments.
- (d) Closure of a factory drawing its work-force from a particular area

(d) Arrears of clerical and accounting work

The sharp rise in all aspects of the workload on the service in many years has resulted in an accumulation of arrears of clerical and accounting work in many districts.

(e) Provision of suitable premises for the service

The main difficulty here is the provision of suitable secure accommodation at health centres, or elsewhere for Community Welfare Offices and their clients. The problems are two-fold.

- (i) The need to improve existing accommodation used by community Welfare Officers and their clients.
- (ii) The need to provide additional accommodation for the additional Community Welfare Officers, both those recently recruited and those likely to be recruited in the future.

The standard of accommodation both for staff and public has become a matter of concern for some time now. While some improvements have been made the resources are not always available to bring the accommodation to the required standard. There is an urgent need to provide suitable and sufficient accommodation including suitable waiting accommodation for clients.

PRESENT STAFFING LEVEL AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

(a) Present staffing level

(i) Field Staffing 13 Superintendent

Community Welfare Officers

103 Community Welfare Officers (including 13 available for substitute duty).

Additional Community Welfare Officers are recruited seasonally to operate the National Fuel Scheme (October - March) and as extra holiday cover during the summer holiday period (June - September).

(ii) Clerical and administrative staff

1 Senior Administrative Officer (with other responsibilities)

1 Senior Executive Officer

1 Section Officer

2 Assistant Section Officers (one post is temporary)

6 Permanent Clerical Officers (there are in addition 11 posts of clerical officer approved on a temporary basis, 9 of whom are assigned to the clearing of arrears of accounting work).

1 Clerk/Typist

(b) Staffing requirements

(i) Held staff

At present approval of the Department of Health is being sought to 15 additional posts of Community Welfare Officer to meet the present level of demand for the service. In the meantime arrangements are in hand to recruit the 15 additional officers on a temporary basis. Trends indicate that this demand will continue to grow and that further Community Welfare Officers and Superintendent Community Welfare Officers may be needed in the near future. The situation is being kept under close review, in the light of the economy generally and policy decisions regarding the matters referred to above i.e. ESB bills, rents, clothing etc.

It is necessary to make special arrangements for the provision of a Community Welfare Service for Travellers and Homeless Persons. These groups have special needs and present particular problems in delivering the necessary service to them. It is considered that a team of 1 Superintendent Community Welfare Officer and 6 Community Welfare Officers (including 2 Community Welfare Officers already engaged in providing the service for the homeless), who would develop the specialist expertise necessary to meet the special needs of these groups, be assigned to this work. One additional Superintendent Community Welfare Officer and 4 additional Community Welfare Officers will be required for this purpose.

(ii) Clerical and administrative staff

The growth in demand for this service has necessitated considerable increase in field staff in recent years. The clerical and administrative staff has not increased sufficiently in that time to provide adequate back-up for the augmented field staff and to exercise proper control over the expanding services. The following additional head office staff are presently being sought.

1 Senior Administrative Officer (full-time)
 1 Section Officer
 4 Assistant Section Officers (one post already approved on a temporary basis)
 13 Clerical Officers (including the making of permanent posts of 10 out of the present 11 temporary posts)
 2 Clerk/Typists
 1 Receptionist
 1 Inquiry Officer

In addition it is necessary to provide adequate clerical support for the Superintendent Community Welfare Officers. With the present number of Superintendent Community Welfare Officers an additional 11 posts of Clerk/Typist are required.

CONCLUSION

The demands on the Community Welfare Service have grown at an unprecedented rate since 1977 and particularly over the last three years. The problems arising from this increase have placed great strain on the service particularly in the areas of (a) staff, (b) accommodation (c) work methods and accounting procedures.

(a) Staff

Although considerable increases in staff have already been secured, further increases are being sought. Continued expansion of demand will necessitate still further increases in the future.

(b) Accommodation

Particular difficulties are being experienced in meeting the need for accommodation for the increased number of staff and the increasing numbers of the public who seek to avail of this service. Strenuous efforts are being made to meet this need through re-allocation of existing premises, provision of new temporary accommodation and the seeking of suitable premises to rent.

(c) Work methods and account procedures

Currently we are examining to what extent computerisation can assist in the operation of the service. The accounting and clerical procedures are also under review particularly in this regard.

It will be seen from the above that we have a major dilemma at present. The fact is that the number of persons in need of services is increasing rapidly at a time when our resources in terms of staff and money are in the decline.

There is also an urgent need for some fundamental decisions to be made in relation to the role which our Board is to play in this area. At the present time there is a real danger that two parallel systems, one operated by the Department of Social Welfare directly, and one operated by our Board on behalf of the Department of Social Welfare may continue to develop.'

At the request of the Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer introduced the Report. He said that policy decisions would have to be made at Department level relating to the future organisation and overall administration of the Social Welfare system. The nature and role of growth of the Board's role under the 1975 Act had grown out of control. The Board had not the personnel and facilities to cope with the rapid growth.

There were implications for the health and other personal social services even at the current level of demand. The role of the Board and the development of parallel social welfare services were basic issues which required consideration and decision.

Following a lengthy discussion to which Cllrs Mrs Fitzgerald, Hand, Stagg, Hynes, Professor McCormick and Dr Kenne contributed and to which Mr Donobne, Programme Manager, Community Care Service replied, the members agreed with Professor McCormick's proposal, which was seconded by Cllr Carroll, that a copy of the Report should be sent to the Commission on Social Welfare and that the Board should proceed with the recruitment of additional staff as outlined in the Report. The members also agreed with a proposal of Cllr Mrs Fitzgerald, which was seconded by Cllr Hand, that the Department of Social Welfare be requested to introduce a scheme for the making of interim payments at labour Exchanges.

53/S4

ST JAMES'S HOSPITAL BOARD

Consideration of Department of Health letter of 16 April 1984 regarding the composition of the Board of St James's Hospital was deferred to the Special Meeting to be held on 21 May 1984.

54/84

PROCEEDINGS OF VISITING COMMITTEES

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

- (i) No 1 Visiting Committee meeting held in Vergemount Hospital, Clonskeagh on 14 March 1984.

On a proposal by Cllr Hickey, seconded by Cllr Doyle, the report was noted.

- (ii) No 1 Visiting Committee meeting held at St Colman's Hospital, Kathdrum on 23 March 1984.

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

- (iii) No 3 Visiting Committee meeting held in Naas General Hospital on 11 April 1984.

On a proposal by Cllr Groome, seconded by Cllr Stagg, the report was noted.

On the suggestion of Dr Sedan, it was agreed that the Board should pay tribute for his service to the hospital to Dr Waldron, Physician, who would be retiring on 31 May 1984.

SS/S4

PROCEEDINGS OF LOCAL COMMITTEES

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

- (i) Kildare Local Committee meeting held on 8 March 1984.

Oa a proposal by Cllr Stagg, seconded by Cllr Groome, the report was noted.

00 Dublin City Local Committee meeting held on 9 April 1984.

On a proposal by Cllr Browne, seconded by Oh- Carroll, the report was noted.

(iii) Dublin County Local Committee meeting held on 12 April 1984.

On a proposal by Cllr Mrs Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr CarroU, the report

56/84

NOTICES OF MOTION

(i) The following motion was proposed by Cllr Mrs Fitzgerald:

'That this Board should seek to improve the liaison between the Community Care Service and the hospitals in relation to the discharge home of terminally ill patients.'

The notion was seconded by Cllr Freehill and following a discussion to which CHrs Mrs Fitzgerald and Freehill, Mr Finegan and Prof McCormick contributed and to which Mr Hickey, Programme Manager, General Hospital Care replied, was agreed.

(IT) The motion in the name of Mr Andrews was deferred to the June meeting of the Board.

57/84

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter dated 24 April 1984 from the Hospital Joint Services Board, copies of which had been circulated, was noted.

The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm

**CORRECT: P B Segrave
Chief Executive Officer**

Chairman