

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of Proceedings of Monthly Meeting
Held In
The Boardroom, St. Mary's Hospital, Chapelizod, Dublin 20
On
Thursday 2nd November, 1989 at 6 p.m.

PRESENT

Mrs. B. Bonar	Cllr. I. Callely, T.D.
Cllr. M. Carroll	Dr. R. Corcoran
Mrs. D. Clune	Dr. P. Devitt
Cllr. P. Dunne	Cllr. B. J. Durkan, T.D.
Cllr. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick, T.D.	Cllr. C. Flood, T.D.
Cllr. A. Glenn	Cllr. A. Groome
Dr. R. Hawkins	Cllr. P. Hickey
Cllr. F. Hynes	Dr. D. I. Keane
Cllr. T. Keenan	Dr. P. McCarthy
Mr. G. McGuire	Dr. J. Masterson
Cllr. C. Murphy	Ms. M. Nealon
Dr. J. O'Boyle	Dr. B. O'Herlihy
Cllr. J. Reilly	Cllr. R. Roche, T.D.

APOLOGIES

Cllr. O. Bennett, Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne, Prof. J. S. Doyle,
Cllr. M Gannon, Cllr. W.J. Harvey

IN THE CHAIR

Cllr. Austin Groome

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. K. Hickey, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. F. Donohue, Programme Manager, Special Assignments
Mr. J. Doyle, A/Programme Manager, Community Care
Mr. S. O'Brien, A/Programme Manager, General Hospital Care
Mr. M. Walsh, A/Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care
Prof. B. O'Donnell, Dublin Medical Officer
Mr. N. McNee, Management Services Officer
Mr. G. Brennan, Technical Services Officer
Mr. M. Gallagher, Finance Officer
Ms. M. Kelly, A/Personnel Officer
Mr. M. O'Connor, Secretary

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CONDOLENCES

On the proposal of the Chairman, votes of sympathy were passed with:

1. Mr. Brian Manning, Computer Department, on the death of his father.
2. Mr. John McKiernan, Superintendent Community Welfare Officer, on the death of his father.
3. Mr. Thomas Fitzsimons. Community Welfare Officer, on the death of his father.

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CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman read the following report which was noted by the Board.

The following items are for information only and are not for debate:-

1. Congratulation to Olqa Bennett

I am sure members will Join with me in congratulating Cllr. Olga Bennett on her appointment to be a member of Seanad Eireann.

2. Meeting with Minister for Health

At the last meeting of our Board I reported that the Minister for Health had arranged to meet with the Chairmen and Chief Executive Officers of the Health Boards on the 11th October, 1989 for a general discussion on the health services.

This meeting duly took place at which the Chairmen and Chief Executive Officers briefed the Minister on the current position of the Health Boards generally, with particular reference being made to the uncontrollable budgetary pressures being caused in a number of open-ended statutory services such as Community Drugs Scheme and Disabled Persons (Maintenance) Allowances. Reference was also made to matters such as the rising rate of inflation and particular needs in relation to dental waiting lists, services for the elderly and also mental handicap and psychiatric services.

The Minister indicated that his aim is to maintain the current level of services and that a supplementary estimate of £8m is being brought forward for the Drugs Refunds Scheme, Disabled Persons (Maintenance) Allowances, MMR scheme and Hepatitis B Vaccination. He also referred to the decision to allocate some funds this year for orthodontics in order to make a start on the dental waiting list problem. While there would be a continuing need for restraint and, in particular, the avoidance of any budget overruns in 1989, the Minister said, nevertheless, that it was his aim to maintain the current level of services and to make improvements in some areas.

The Minister indicated that he expected to be in a position to finalise the 1990 allocation in November concerning which he proposed to convene a further meeting with the Chairmen and Chief Executive Officers.

3. December meeting of Board

With the members' agreement it is proposed to hold the December meeting of our Board on Thursday 14th December, 1989 at 6 p.m. The Special Hospital Care Programme Committee meeting will be held on 7th December, 1989 at 11 a.m.

4. Meeting of Budget Working Group

A meeting of the Budget Working Group will be held on Wednesday 15th November, 1989 at 10.30 a.m. to consider the Report of the Commission on Health Funding and other matters. A further meeting of the Group will be held on Wednesday 6th December, 1989 to continue consideration of the Report of the Commission on Health Funding.

5. Special Board Meeting

It is proposed to hold a special meeting of our Board on Thursday 16th November, 1989 at 6 p.m. to consider reports on (a) Board property and (b) Cheeverstown.

Members will, in due course, receive the usual notices regarding these meetings.

6. Request for deputation re. development of Naas General Hospital

We have been maintaining contact with the Department of Health regarding a date for reception of this deputation by the Minister and current indications are that it will be arranged for a date in December.

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CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 5TH OCTOBER, 1989

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on 5th October, 1989, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Cllr. Carroll.

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CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENTS

At the request of the Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer referred to recent developments regarding Child Care legislation and stated that a Children's Bill was being drafted which would be put to both Houses of the Oireachtas during the following week. In the meantime the status quo would obtain. Further Fit Persons Orders would not be sought pending the enactment of the proposed legislation.

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QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Dr. Hawkins, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged.

(i) *Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne*

"Does the Eastern Health Board consider itself to be a non-denominational body?"

Reply

It is my dear understanding that the Eastern Health Board considers itself to be a non-denominational body with statutory responsibility for the provision of health and welfare services to all the people resident in its functional area.

(ii) *Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne*

"Could the Chief Executive Officer explain to members of the Eastern Health Board the policy implemented re. the use of hospital and Board property for a religious ceremony of one particular denomination, and say whether permission would equally be granted to minority religious denominations such as Hare Krishna or Jehovah's Witness."

Reply

Our Board provides services for persons of various religious denominations, and appropriate arrangements are made to facilitate the practise of these religions during periods of hospital or residential care. This includes religious ceremonies in designated areas. Apart from this, permission may be granted for the holding of special religious ceremonies from time to time following due consideration of the merits and circumstances in such situations.

(iii) *Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne*

"Could the Chief Executive Officer say what arrangements can be made with the area community care team to provide speech therapy for the pupils of St. Augustine's Special School."

Reply

St. Augustine's Special School recently decided for budgetary reasons not to replace a post of Speech Therapist. Their consequent request to the Director of Community Care in Area 1 to supply them with a Speech Therapist from his team could not be met as the two therapists available to his team already have long waiting lists and are fully committed.

(iv) *Cllr. I. Callely, T.D.*

"Can the Chief Executive Officer advise what services are provided in the catchment area of North Dublin for Child & Adolescent services, especially in Child Psychiatry, what are the demands on the service, at what locations are the services being provided, what are the referrals rate and waiting period for children in need of :-

1. Residential care in the community
2. Speech therapy
3. Child study centres/day schools and pre-school units
4. Crisis intervention units
5. Training facilities for children and for related family problems."

Reply

The information requested can best be given by way of a report on the Child & Family services provided on behalf of our Board by the Mater Hospital, through its Child Guidance Department

In the last two months the Special Hospital Care Programme Committee has reviewed the child psychiatric services provided directly by our Board and by the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God on our Board's behalf. It is proposed to review the services provided by the Mater Hospital at the January meeting of the Committee.

(v) *Cllr. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick, T.D.*

- (a) "What is the present status of drug addiction treatment in the Eastern Health Board area?"
- (b) "What happens patients who are suffering from withdrawal symptoms and how can they be treated as a matter of urgency?"

Reply

- (a) Our Board employes a total of ten Drug Counsellors. They hold clinics by appointment and on a wait-in basis. They link with Community Organisations, schools, parents and G.P.'s in their area and liaise with the statutory and non-statutory agencies who provide treatment services.

We also provide a drop-in service at Baggot Street Hospital where counselling is available. Outreach Workers cover areas of north, south inner city and Ballymun and it is proposed to extend this service in areas of perceived needs within the next few weeks. A second drop-in service is at present being planned for the north side of Dublin.

The Counsellors and outreach staff work in close co-operation with the Drugs Advisory & Treatment Centre in Trinity Court where a methadone maintenance programme is in operation for over 100 addicts. Trinity Court has access to detoxification beds in Beaumont Hospital.

Our Board also grant aids organisations providing addiction services e.g. Coolmine Therapeutic Community, Mater Dei, Ballymun Youth Action Project, Community Action Against Drugs and the Ana Liffey Project.

Services provided for the treatment of alcoholism by the Psychiatric Services Programme have been the subject of a recent report

- (b) Patients suffering from drug withdrawal symptoms can be referred to the Consultant Psychiatrist, Drugs Advisory and Treatment Centre at Trinity Court, Pearse St., Dublin where a decision on appropriate treatment will be made. Trinity Court has beds allocated in Beaumont Hospital for detoxification of clients. This service is available on a seven day week basis.

(vi) *Mr. G. McGuire*

"Can the Chief Executive Officer outline the reasons for the inordinate delay (8 months approx.) in having the elevator, which services four (4) upper wards at St. Ita's Hospital repaired, and can he give a specific date as to when the lift will be back in service?"

Reply

The elevator referred to has had ongoing service problems over the years. This mainly arose from the fact that the lift plant was located in the liftwell rather than alongside the lift shaft or in the attic. In order to overcome this problem the manufacturer proposed installing the lift plant alongside the lift chamber. This proposal gave rise to major problems with our insurers which have only recently been resolved. There will be some delay in the delivery of the new equipment. It is expected that the elevator will be fully commissioned and operational in early January.

(vii) *Mr. G. McGuire*

"Will the Chief Executive Officer advise as to the number of residents from St. Ita's Hospital availing of the services at Maryfield and how does this compare with the numbers that were projected when this service was set up, also if the Chief Executive Officer would outline the costs involved in transporting patients from St. Ita's to Maryfield?"

Reply

The number of persons attending the Day Service at the Maryfield complex is as follows:-

From the community -	47
From Maryfield -	8
From Balbriggan Hostels -	5
From St. Ita's -	4

In addition some of the residents from the Rathbeale Hostels also attend but the number varies from time to time.

Those attending from the Maryfield and Balbriggan hostels were former residents of St. Ita's. There has also been a movement of persons from the Mental Handicp service in St. Ita's to Ballyboden and other services in line with their rehabilitation and personal development.

The 4 people attending Maryfield from St. Ita's are transported by the hospital bus which also picks up the people from Balbriggan at Donabate station and transports the 47 people from the community, mainly from Swords, to Maryfield.

The annual cost is £10.000 approx."

126/1989

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer read the following report which was noted by the Board :-

1. *Orthodontics*

I wish to advise the Board that a letter has been received from the Department of Health advising, that a sum of £90,000 is being made available in the current year to meet the cost of treating priority cases from our orthodontic waiting list.

Arrangements have been made to commence treatment of 150 cases immediately and our aim will be to cater for a total of 200 cases from this allocation.

2. *ENT Services*

I wish to advise the Board that arrangements have been made for the provision of some special ENT sessions at James Connolly Memorial Hospital aimed at getting rid of the backlog of cases in the hospital's catchment area and Kildare by the end of this year or by early 1990.

3. *Women's Aid*

In accordance with the new agreement concluded with Women's Aid, arrangements have been made for the deployment of a member of our Board's staff to take over management of the refuge at Rathmines.

The agreed transfer of staff at the refuge to the employment of our Board will be completed by the end of this week.

4. *Housing Act 1988*

Following consideration by the Communtiy Care Committee of the detailed lists of requirements for homeless categories, these have been submitted to the various housing authorities for inclusion in their assessment of need under the terms of the Housing Act.

Arrangements will now be made for the deputation to meet with the Dublin housing authorities as agreed by our Board at its August meeting and the selection of members for this deputation will be on the agenda for the December meeting of our Board.

5. *Subvention of Beds in Private Nursing Homes*

With the agreement of the members I would like to make a statement which I hope will clarify the position regarding the payment of subventions to persons in Private Nursing Homes. The situation is that the number of beds being subverted by our Board has been increasing consistently during the past few years. The number of bed days subverted in 1989 is 389,000 which represents a 10% increase over the number subverted 3 years ago (356,000). During the first half of 1989 we experienced a very heavy demand for subventions which resulted in a net increase of 180 in the number of new cases approved up to 30th June. The approval of these additional 180 cases necessitated redeployment within our fixed budget of an additional £200,000, the full-year cost of which next year will be £0.5m. £2.2m was originally allocated to this service for 1989 as against £2.1 m spent in 1988. It will now cost £2.4m in 1989. As a result of the unprecedented growth in the number of new subventions approved in the first half of the year it was necessary for us to restrict the rate of approval of new subventions since July. Where special circumstances exist e.g. physical risk or hardship a small number of new subventions (14) have been approved since then. We still have a backlog of some 50 cases which are currently being reviewed in the light of the criteria which I have mentioned.

I should mention also that, during the last two years, the numbers of private Nursing Homes in our area have increased by 30, representing an additional 600 places.

It is quite dear that the numbers in need of and seeking subventions are increasing. There have been no cutbacks in this area; in fact, we are spending more on this element of our services for the elderly this year than in 1988. We do, however, have a restriction in our capacity to accept every new application received for this subvention which is a discretionary payment"

During a discussion to which Mrs. Clune, Cllr. Murphy, Dr. Corcoran, Deputy Dr. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. Hynes, Cllr. Dunne, Cllr. Glenn, Dr. Keane, Deputy Callely, Dr. Hawkins, Deputy Flood, Deputy Roche, Deputy Durkan, Dr. Masterson, Dr. O'Boyle, Cllr. Reilly and Cllr. Carroll contributed and to which Mr. Hickey, Chief Executive Officer replied the following points were made:-

- * The developments in relation to the ENT Services at James Connolly Memorial Hospital were welcomed.
- * The allocation of £90,000 in the current year to meet the cost of treating priority cases from our Orthodontic waiting list was welcomed.

- * Families who are able to and can manage to ketep their elderly relatives at home should receive the maximum possible support.
- * The increased demand for subventions in private nursing homes is due to a number of factors:-
 - (a) The ageing structure of the population In our area
 - (b) The changing family structures
 - (c) The pressure from the acute hospital system for alternative accommodation for the elderly
 - (d) The opening of 600 additional private nursing home beds in the last two years.
- * A proposal that portion of £15m additional allocation should be made available for nursing home subventions had not been successful.
- * The full economic cost of maintenance in private nursing homes is greater that the cost of maintenance in our welfare homes.
- * The need for communication with nursing home proprietors to clarify the present position was accepted.

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HEALTHY CITIES PROJECT CONFERENCE - NOMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES

The following report no. 26/1989 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted.

"At the October meeting of our Board, I reported that Dublin's application to be included as one of the network of European Cities participating in the W.H.O. Healthy Cities Project had been accepted and that Dublin had been requested to host a Conference involving the six new participating cities.

Mr. F. Donohue, Chairman of the Officer Working Group, was requested to explore further the question of our Board's representation at the plenary session of the Conference on Wednesday 22nd November, 1989 in Jury's Hotel, Dublin.

It has now been indicated that 15 representatives from our Board can be accommodated and it is likely that up to a similar number may be nominated by some of the local authorities. It would, of course, be important to avoid any dual nomination."

It was agreed that a form should be sent to each member of the Board asking them to indicate their wishes in relation to attendance at the plenary session of the conference to be held on 22nd November, 1989.

128/1989

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HEALTH FUNDING

The following report no. 27/1989 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:-

"I attach copy of letter dated 17th October and press statement received from the Department of Health in connection with the publication of the above Report.

When our Board's submission to the Commission was being prepared, a draft was first agreed by the Budget Working Group and the Board met specially as a Committee of the Whole House to agree the submission in detail.

Following consultation with the Chairman, it is recommended that a similar procedure be followed on this occasion in response to the Minister's decision to consult with interested parties and the subsequent invitation of comments on the report or any particular aspects of it.

In the meantime, I have responded to the Department's letter indicating that it is intended to comment on the report and to make a formal written submission."

The proposal contained in the Report was agreed.

129/1989

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BALLYMUN

It was agreed that this Report would be considered at a special meeting of our Board on a date to be arranged.

130/1989

BAGGOT STREET HOSPITAL

The following report no. 28/1989 from the Chief Executive Officer was submitted:-

"I would like to refer to the attached detailed report from the Community Care Programme Committee, arising from its meeting held in Baggot Street Hospital on 18th October, 1989.

As members will be aware, our Board took over responsibility for the establishment and management of a number of services at Baggot Street Hospital in January 1988 under a Licence from the Board of the Royal City of Dublin Hospital which is due to run until the end of June 1990. Day to day responsibility for the running of the services rests with the Medical Administrator and Matron. There is also a Steering Committee which has liaison and facilitatory functions, whose membership includes representatives of the Board of the Royal City of Dublin Hospital, Trinity College Dublin, the Irish College of General Practitioners, as well as representatives of hospital and service management. This Committee is chaired by Dr. Pat Quinn, D.C.C. and M.O.H., Community Care Area I.

As will be noted from the attached report, very substantial progress has been made in the development of a range of services at Baggot Street Hospital and it has now begun to fulfill a very important function as a Community Hospital. Positive working relationships have developed amongst the various interests represented on the Steering Committee. At a recent meeting with representatives of the Board of the Royal City of Dublin Hospital at which our Chairman and myself were present, they expressed their satisfaction with the manner in which the hospital is developing in its present role and with the manner in which our Board has performed its stated intentions and obligations under the current Licence arrangement.

No rent is currently payable under the terms of the Licence which is due to expire on the 30th June, 1990. Our Board has, however, had the obligation to discharge all overheads and outgoings in connection with the continued operation of the premises as a hospital including such matters as service contracts, insurances and the continued maintenance and repair of the building and its fittings and contents generally. Some internal alterations and improvements have in fact been carried out with the agreement of the representatives of the Board of the Royal City of Dublin Hospital.

The range of services established and further developed to date at Baggot Street Hospital under the current Licence arrangement has had to be funded at a time of very scarce financial resources. The initial level of expenditure has increased significantly to a position where the current cost of the various services in annual terms is £1.5m approx. This has had to be funded by a variety of means from various sources such as re-deployment of resources, relocation of a number of existing services to Baggot Street and from the National Lottery. The momentum created has been such that additional expenditure of a further £175.000 p.a. is facing us in 1990 to maintain the level of services already developed and to fund some additional services under the headings of physiotherapy, stoma care and GP clinics.

We are currently engaged in discussions with representatives of the Board of the Royal City of Dublin Hospital regarding our Board's continued involvement in the provision of services at Baggot Street Hospital after 30th June, 1990. It would be our hope that an agreement regarding our Board's continued tenure at the hospital will emerge which will not diminish our capacity to continue to finance the range of services mentioned above."

The report was noted and agreed.

131/1989

PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PROGRAMME COMMITTEES

(i) *Special Hospital Care Programme Committee*

On a proposal by Mrs. Clune, seconded by Deputy Callely, it was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:-

- (a) Progress report in relation to Milltown Day Hospital, the Day Hospital in Cabra and Dunshane House (Camphill)
- (b) Gheel Training Group

- (c) Presentation on St John of God Child and Adolescent Services

(ii) General Hospital Care Programme Committee

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Cllr. Carroll, it was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:-

- (a) Health (Nursing Homes) Bill. 1989
- (b) Progress Report on the development of the Psychiatric Unit/Boiler House and Ancillary Accommodation at Naas General Hospital
- (c) Discussions with the Department of Health regarding consultant Anaesthetic input into St Cohimcille's Hospital
- (d) Progress report on the extended at 24 hour Accident & Emergency Service
- (e) Cuan Aoibheann. St. Mary's Hospital
- (f) Recommendation that the Minister for Health be requested to urgently review the situation with regard to student nurse training within all disciplines of nursing
- (f) Report on services in Cherry Orchard Hospital

(iii) Community Care Programme Committee

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Cllr. Dunne, It was agreed to adopt the report.

The report related to a special meeting of the Committee held in St Vincent's Hospital. Athy, Co. Kildare on 16th October. 1989 to consider a report on services in Co. Kildare, in particular, the child & school screening service, the need for Nutrition/Budgeting Courses for Parents to ensure that school going children are receiving adequate nutrition in their diets, access to ENT beds, and the operation of the Dental Service in Co. Kildare.

(iv) Community Care Programme Committee held in Area 4, Old County Road. Crumlin on 26th October, 1989.

On a proposal by Cllr. Dunne, seconded by Deputy Callely, It was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:-

- (a) Health Promotion leaflets on alcohol
- (b) New allowances for widowers and deserted husbands

- (c) Media release from the Cystic Fibrosis Association of Ireland.
- (d) Report on services in Community Care Area no. 4.

132/1989

NOTICES OF MOTION

- (a) In the case of the following two motions In the name of Cllr. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick, T.D., it was agreed to circulate a written report to each of the members :-

- (i) *“That the Eastern Health Board furnish a report on the feasibility of setting up a staff welfare service.”*
- (ii) *“That payments under the Drugs Refund Scheme be made within 30 days of receiving proper documentation.”*

- (b) The motion in the name of Cllr. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick, T.D. regarding the setting up of a Homemaker service in Area 6 was, at his request, deferred to the December meeting.

- (c) Deputy Durkan, in moving the following motion,

“That this Board would, as a matter of urgency, endeavour to devise a system whereby patients needing ENT treatment could be given some idea as to the likelihood of obtaining this treatment within a reasonable period with particular reference to children in need of Tonsilectomy.”

thanked the Chief Executive Officer for his report outlining the arrangements which had been made for the provision of some special ENT sessions at James Connolly Memorial Hospital aimed at getting rid of the backlog of cases in the hospital's catchment area and in Kildare by the end of 1989 or by early 1990.

- (d) The following motion was proposed by Deputy Durkan and seconded by Cllr. Carroll:-

“That this Board would redefine its interpretation of the accommodation deemed necessary to accommodate disabled persons with a particular reference to the administration of the disabled persons grants.”

Following a discussion to which Deputy Durkan, Mr. McGuire, Dr. Corcoran, Dr. O'Boyle, Cllr. Dunne, Dr. O'Herlihy contributed and to which Mr. Hickey, Chief Executive Officer replied, it was agreed to carry the motion and refer it to Kildare County Council.

(e) The following motion was proposed by Deputy Durkan:-

“That the same level of funeral grants, where applicable, be paid throughout the entire functional area of the Eastern Health Board.”

Mr. Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, stated that provision existed in the Supplementary Welfare Allowances Scheme for the making of once-off exceptional needs payments to help persons with low incomes to meet particular expenses, such as funeral expenses. The level of help given is based on an individual assessment of the need in each case. He gave details of the levels of average payment in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. The slightly above average payments in the Dublin area was accounted for by the higher prices paid for plots in the cemeteries in Dublin.

The meeting concluded at 9 p.m.

**Correct: K.J. Hickey,
Chief Executive Officer.**


Chairman