EASTERN HEALTH BOARD MEETING

Minutes of proceedings of Monthly Meeting
held in
the Boardroom, Dr. Steevens’ Hospital,
on Thursday 6th July, 1995 at 6 30 p.m.

Present

Mr. P. Aspell
Mrs. B. Bonar
Cllr. B. Briscoe, T.D.
Cllr. I. Callely, T.D.
Cllr. J. Connolly
Cllr. T. Cullen *
Sen. J. Doyle
Dr. J. Fennell
Dr. D.I. Keane
Mr. G. McGuire
Cllr. O. Mitchell
Cllr. D. O’Callaghan
Cllr. C. O’Connor
Dr. J. Reilly
Sen. D. Roche
Cllr. R. Shortall, T.D.
Cllr. D. Tipping
Dr. M. Wrigley
Cllr. M. Barrett
Cllr. G. Brady
Cllr. E. Byrne, T.D.
Cllr. B. Coffey
Cllr. L. Creaven
Cllr. A. Devitt
Cllr. K. Farrell
Cllr. C. Gallagher
Cllr. T. Keenan
Cllr. M. McWey
Ms. M. Nealon
Cllr. Dr. W. O’Connell
Cllr. J. Reilly
Cllr. T. Ridge
Cllr. K. Ryan
Dr. C. Smith
Cllr. M. Whitty

In the Chair

Cllr. M. Barrett

Officers in Attendance

Mr. P.J. Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Mr. M. Walsh, Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care
Mr. S. O’Brien, A/Programme Manager, General Hospital Care
Ms. M. Kelly, Personnel Officer
Dr. B. O’Herlihy, Director of Public Health
Mr. J. Curran, A/Technical Services Officer
Mr. M. McGahern, A/Finance Officer
Ms. M. Browne, Communications Director
Mr. M. O’Connor, Secretary
85/1995
CONDOLENCES

On the proposal of Deputy Callely, seconded by Cllr. Reilly, votes of sympathy were passed with

- Cllr. Joe Connolly on the death of his brother, James
- The wife and family of Senator Sean Fallon, Cathaoirleach of An Seanad
- Mr. Jim Finnegan, Nursing Officer, St. Ita's Hospital, on the death of his sister

86/1995
CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman read the following report which was noted by the Board:-

"Special Meeting - Health Strategy

Further to our discussion with the Minister for Health on the occasion of his visit to our Headquarters on 15th June 1995. I wish to advise members that a special meeting of our Board will be held on Friday, 4th August 1995 at 11 a.m. in the Boardroom, Dr. Steevens' Hospital to consider the Health Strategy and the proposed reorganisation of the health services in our Board's area."

Following discussion, it was agreed that the meeting would be held on 27th July 1995.

87/1995
CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 1ST JUNE 1995

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on 1st June, 1995, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Aspell.

[a] Matters arising from the minutes

Deputy Byrne referred to item no. 73/1995 regarding the disposal of property at St. Clare's Home, Griffith Avenue Extension. His proposal that the Chief Executive Officer should write to the firm of Solicitors whose letter dated 11th May, 1995 in relation to the St. Clare's land had not been received in our Headquarters until 26th May 1995, seeking clarification as to why the letter had not been posted until 25th May, was seconded by Cllr. Brady and agreed unanimously.

Cllr. Ridge referred to the reply to Question no. 5 on page 90 and asked that the review of the Disabled Persons Maintenance Allowance Regulations should be pursued with the Department of Social Welfare.

88/1995
QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Cllr. Reilly, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged:-
Cllr. D. O'Callaghan

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to state with regard to a person in a private nursing home who would not have a spouse or children, whether or not there would be a statutory obligation on a member of the person's extended family (i.e. sister, brother) to pay any difference between the weekly cost of the nursing home and the subvention being paid by the Eastern Health Board"

Reply

There is no statutory obligation on the extended family of a person who is in receipt of private nursing home care to pay any difference between the weekly cost of the nursing home and the subvention being paid by our Board.

However, as the decision to avail of a private nursing home facility is reached between the resident and/or his/her family and a particular private nursing home, the extended family may make arrangements to contribute towards the weekly cost of care as a matter of choice.

Cllr. D. O'Callaghan

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to state what steps the Eastern Health Board would take in the event of a family member of a patient in a private nursing home withdrawing from paying any difference between the weekly Eastern Health Board subvention and the weekly amount charged by the private nursing home"

Reply

The amount of subvention paid in respect of a resident's stay in a Private Nursing Home is calculated in accordance with the Nursing Home (Subvention) Regulations 1993 taking full account of the means and circumstances of each individual resident. Any difference between the amount of the subvention determined by our Board and the weekly amount charged by the private nursing home is a matter between the nursing home proprietors and the resident and his/her family.

However, in the event of a resident's means and circumstances changing for whatever reason, further application may be made seeking a review of the amount of subvention being paid.

Cllr. R. Shortall, T.D.

"Will the Chief Executive Officer report on the proposed Day-Care Centre for Finglas and provide full details of the proposed services and size of the facility"

Reply

The planned day facility for the elderly in Finglas will be provided on a site which Focus Housing are prepared to give our Board (i.e. Holy Faith Convent site). This will provide much needed day care and respite for carers for the Finglas area. It will accommodate up to 20 elderly persons per day.
The centre will be approximately 2,500 sq. feet in size and the following services will be provided in the centre:-

- Rehabilitation
- Occupational Therapy
- Meals.
- Speech Therapy
- Chiropody
- Washing/Bathing
- Hairdressing
- Laundry

An application for the capital and revenue funding required to enable the project to be proceeded with was submitted to the Department of Health in December, 1994.

**Cllr. I. Callely, T.D.**

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to list the contracted dental practitioners in Areas 7 and 8 where medical card holders can avail of treatment."

**Reply**

The private practitioners who are contracted to provide dental services for medical card holders in Area 7 and 8 are listed hereunder:-

**AREA 7**

1. Dr. J. Canavan, 86 Griffith Ave., Dublin 9.
2. Dr. C. Carr.
3. Dr. F. Dunlea, 41 Castel Grove, Clontarf, Dublin 3.
4. Dr. C. Fagan, 63 North Strand Road, Dublin 3.
5. Dr. P. Hayes, 173 Ballymun Road, Dublin 9.
6. Dr. B. Jones, 21 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.
7. Dr. G. Kilroy, 51 Henry St, Opposite Arnotts, Dublin 1.
8. Dr. R. Lappin, 35 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3.
9. Dr. F. Lavelle, 64 Upper Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9.
10. Dr. C. Lynn, 44 Upper Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9.
11. Dr. A. Machensey, 224 Collins Ave., Whitehall, Dublin 9.
13. Dr. A. McDermott, 51 Henry Street, Dublin 1.
14. Dr. G. McGann, 18 Annesley Road, Fairview, Dublin 3.
15. Dr. C. Molloy, 222 Swords Road, Santry, Dublin 9.
17. Dr. V. Nolan, 7 Maypark, Malahide Road, Donnycarney, Dublin 5.
18. Dr. J. Nolan, 37 North Strand Road, Dublin 3.
19. Dr. J. O'Loughlin, 175 Howth Road, Killester S.C., Dublin 5.
20. Dr. C. Scanned, 8 Uppr O'Connell Street, Dublin 1.
21. Dr. T. Somers, 44a Henry St., Dublin 1.
22. Dr. R. Swanwick, 89 Upper Dorset Street, Dublin 1.
23. Dr. M. Tier, 173 Ballymun Road, Dublin 9.
AREA 8

3. Dr. P. Cunningham. Mary's Cottage. Main St. Rush, Co. Dublin.
4. Dr. P. Cunningham, 58 Main St., Swords, co. Dublin.
5. Dr. E. Gilmartin. 402 Tonlegee Road, Raheny, Dublin 5.
8. Dr. J. McAleese, 5 Asgard Road, Howth, Co. Dublin.
9. Dr. J. McDonnell, Rathlin, Dublin Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin.
12. Dr. D. McHugh, Main St. Rush, co. Dublin.
15. Dr. J. Murphy, 3 Ross Tee, New Street, Malahide, Co. Dublin.
16. Dr. J. O'Byrne, Strand House Clinic. Strand Street, Skerries, Co. Dublin.
17. Dr. J. Sheehy. 7 Castle Tee., Malahide, Co. Dublin.

Cllr. I. Callely, T.D.

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to advise of the position regarding Area 7 headquarters accommodation, the initiatives that have been taken to ensure the provision of suitable accommodation, the time scale associated and will he make a statement on the matter."

Reply

In July 1984, Our Board entered into a 35 year lease agreement with the Gaelic Athletic Association to rent 4,600 sq. ft. of office accommodation for the Area 7 Headquarters at Aras Daimhin, Croke Park, Jones's Road, Dublin 3.

To enhance the customer services aspects of the accommodation, interview facilities were provided on the ground floor for members of the public who cannot attend the offices on the second floor. Efforts are continuing to have accommodation improved within the constraints of the building. Due to increases in staff numbers in recent years, it has not been possible to locate all the additional staff at Aras Daimhin. However, additional accommodation was secured in Amiens Street in July 1993 which facilitated the relocation of four Community Welfare service staff and freed up three offices which enabled us to improve the accommodation for the head-quarters staff. Efforts to secure further additional accommodation are continuing.

There are major contractual issues in relation to die lease agreement which would have to be resolved for our Board to arrange alternative headquarters accommodation at this time.

Cllr. I. Callely, T.D.

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to advise of the complications that may arise when people swim in polluted waters, can the Chief Executive Officer indicate the quality of water in the traditional swimming locations in the Dublin area and is the Chief Executive Officer concerned that only one traditional swimming location was award the Blue Flag status."
Swimming in polluted water carries some risk of contracting infections, including various forms of Gastroenteritis.

Frequent sea water samples are taken from a number of locations in the Dublin area particularly between April and September. Overall, the quality of sea water in traditional swimming places, with the exception of the half-moon inner harbour where people are advised not to bathe, is satisfactory for swimming.

The European Blue Flag Award is given annually and is valid for one year. It requires compliance not only with water quality, as defined by the EU bathing water directive, but with the standard of facilities on the beach, including cleanliness, provision of toilets, and parking, which are the responsibility of the local authorities.

7. **Cllr. C. O'Connor**

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to confirm the situation regarding the establishment of a new Eastern Health Board facility at the recently opened Social Welfare offices at the Square in Tallaght detailing the services being provided."

**Reply**

The new Social Welfare Offices in Tallaght include offices, waiting area, interview rooms etc. for our Board's five Community Welfare Officers who provide services in the Tallaght area.

In addition, it is planned to establish a joint Department of Social Welfare/Health Board Customer Services/Information facility in the new offices.

8. **Cllr. C. O'Connor**

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to detail the action he is taking to correct the poor impression being created of the Eastern Health Board arising from the operation of the rent supplement scheme and will he please make a general statement on the matter."

**Reply**

Our Board administers the Supplementary Welfare Allowance scheme (which includes rent supplements) on behalf of the Department of Social Welfare. A rent supplement is paid to persons who qualify for such a supplement under the scheme. Persons who are in receipt of rent supplements in the main arrange to rent accommodation themselves and also enter into an agreement with the owner of the accommodation they propose to rent. Our Board does not have the authority to prevent any individual from renting a house in any particular area. Our Board has an obligation to ensure that the size of the accommodation is reasonable for the persons making the application and that the rent being charged is also reasonable.

It is accepted that there is a widely held belief that our Board is renting directly houses where the occupants are in receipt of rent supplements. Our Board has clarified, and will continue to clarify, our precise role in the administration of this scheme with the media and other enquirers.
Cllr. C. O’Connor

"To ask the Chief Executive Officer to update the Board on his plans for the further development of Eastern Health Board services in the general Saggart and Rathcoole areas of South County Dublin."

Reply

Our Board's allocation for 1995 includes additional funding for the development of services in a number of specific areas. These include Child Care and Family Support services, services for persons with a physical disability, services for the elderly, Dental Services, Women's Health/Family Planning services, AIDS/Drugs services, mental health services and services for persons with a mental handicap.

Services are being developed under each of these headings throughout all of our Board's area, including Saggart and Rathcoole.

Mrs. B. Bonar

(i) "Do Well Woman Centres and the Irish Family Planning Association receive funding from the Eastern Health Board?"

(ii) (a) What is/was the extent of the funding?

(b) In view of the fact that all their services are already available from General Practitioners and Pharmacists, most of whom are Health Board contractors, what is the reason for funding them?"

Reply

(i) The Community Care Financial and Services Plan for 1995 and proposals for the further development of family planning services, both of which have been approved by our Board, include two pilot projects in the Coolock and Tallaght/Clondalkin areas for the provision of a comprehensive, measurable range of services for women, including family planning services. The Coolock project involves a number of general practitioners and the Dublin Well Women Centre. The Tallaght/Clondalkin project involves a number of general practitioners and the Irish Family Planning Association.

(ii) (a) Funding of £150,000 per project is being provided to the participating general practitioners and the two Agencies.

(b) The Health Strategy stated that general practitioners should continue to play a central role in the provision of a wide range of family planning services. The Strategy also stated that if the services needed to be complemented in the interests of patient choice or because of a lack of access to comprehensive family planning services, this should be achieved by the establishment and maintenance either by the health boards or by other bodies acting on their behalf of designated family planning clinics in urban areas.
The guidelines recently issued by the Department of Health for the development of family planning services include the following:-

- each Health Board should ensure that an equitable, accessible and comprehensive family planning service is provided in its area.

- the role of the general practitioners in providing family planning services is recognised and that this role will be developed and strengthened.

- a broadly based programme, involving family planning clinics provided by the Health Board and/or service providers, will be developed to ensure that services are within easy reach and that choice of services provided is available.

Cllr. E. Byrne, T.D.

"Will the Chief Executive Officer please outline the waiting list and the average waiting time for patients seeking physiotherapy at the Naas Hospital and what plans he has to improve the delivery of this service in order to shorten the waiting period."

Reply

Patients requiring physiotherapy service at Naas General Hospital are prioritised as follows:-

(i) in-patient treatment
(ii) out-patient - urgent
(iii) out-patient - routine

In-patients and out-patients requiring urgent physiotherapy treatment are seen without any delay while the average waiting time for a routine out-patient appointment is approximately 7-8 weeks. The current waiting list for routine out-patient treatment is 208.

Interviews have recently been held to fill on a permanent basis, two Physiotherapist posts which have been vacant since late 1994. The successful candidates will be taking up duty in the near future and their appointment will enable us to make significant reductions in the waiting list and waiting times for routine out-patient physiotherapy treatments.

Cllr. E. Byrne, T.D.

"Will the Chief Executive Officer please outline his plans for the building of a new clinic in Celbridge. If he will outline the time frame envisaged in bringing this clinic on-stream and if he will further outline the services which it is intended to provide from the clinic."

Reply

A full brief ie. schedule of accommodation, etc. has been prepared and submitted to the Department of Health for approval. Subject to Departmental approval issuing promptly at each stage of development, our time schedule for this development envisages planning permission being sought in the Autumn, appointment of a contractor in the Spring of 1997, with completion and handover scheduled for early in 1997.
The brief for the Centre provides for accommodation for the full range of community based services including Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Public Health Nursing, Home Help Services, Dental Services, Area Medical Services, Social Work Services, Community Welfare Services, Environmental Health and Child and Adult Psychiatric Services. An information and customer services facility will also be provided in the new centre.

89/1995

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

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

"1. Minister for Health's visit to our Board on 15th July, 1995.

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting copies of letter dated 28th June, 1995 from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health conveying the Minister's appreciation of the warm welcome and hospitality which he received on the occasion of his meeting with our Board on 15th June, 1995 and requesting that the Minister's thanks be conveyed to all concerned.

2. Respite Care Grant Scheme, scheme of grants to voluntary organisations and National Lottery grant scheme.

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting copies of letter dated 21st June, 1995 from the Department of Health, advising that funding for the respite care grant scheme and the scheme of grants to voluntary organisations had been transferred from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Health and that the Minister had decided that responsibility for the administration of these schemes should be transferred to the health boards as an extension of the National Lottery grant scheme for voluntary bodies operated by the Health Boards.

Our Board's allocation for these schemes for 1995 is £817,000 as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Respite care grant scheme</td>
<td>£185,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Scheme of grants to voluntary organisations</td>
<td>£312,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Additional National Lottery funding</td>
<td>£320,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£817,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conditions under which the schemes should be distributed by our Board are set out in the Department's letter.

I have also circulated a copy of the press release issued by the Minister for Health regarding these revised arrangements.

Details regarding the individual allocations being made by our Board will be advised to the members as soon as possible.

3. Laryngectomy Patients

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting copies of Department of Circular no. 16/1995, dated 19th June 1995, advising that it had been decided that Laryngectomy patients should be provided with a voice prosthesis and related products through the Drug Cost Subsidisation Scheme.
4. **Allocation to ACCORD**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of Department of Health letter dated 13th June 1995 conveying approval to the payment of £50,000 to ACCORD in 1995 in respect of their family planning services.

ACCORD is the new name which has recently been given to the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council (C.M.A.C.).

5. **Placement of German Adolescents**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of a letter dated 8th June, 1995 from the Department of Health regarding the agreement reached with representatives of a number of German child welfare organisations in relation to the arrangements for notifying the health boards of the placement of German adolescents with families in this country in accordance with the requirements of the Children Acts, 1908 and 1957.

6. **Opening of new Out-Patients Department at St Mary's Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of a press release issued on 6th June, 1995 by the Mr. Austin Currie, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Health, when he officially opened the new Out Patients' Department at St. Mary's Orthopaedic Hospital, Cappagh

The new facility will allow clinics to be held frequently and will also help the hospital to reduce waiting lists and waiting times.

Minister Currie also announced that a joint Hospital/Department of Health Project Team is to be established to prepare a planning brief covering the various elements in the development proposals which had been put forward by the Hospital authorities.

7. **Planning permission - new Dental Hospital and School**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of a press release issued by the Minister for Health advising that the Board of the Dublin Dental Hospital had sought planning permission for an extension to the existing Dental Hospital at Lincoln Place. Major alterations and refurbishment to the existing hospital and adjoining premises are also proposed as part of the development.

Construction and refurbishment are scheduled for completion by mid 1998. The Government will provide a total of £8m from the Exchequer towards the development.

8. **Waiting list initiative**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies a press release issued by the Minister for Health, announcing that the Government had committed a further £8m in 1995 to continue to reduce waiting times in a number of specialties where waiting times are considered excessive. This represents a continuation of the waiting list initiative which commenced in 1993 when the Government provided £20m to address the problem, followed by a further £10m in 1994.

Out of the total of £8m being made available, £3,822,856 is being allocated to our Board's area.
9. **New Food Safety Advisory Board**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of a press release issued by the Minister of State at the Department of Health. Mr. Brian O'Shea, T.D. announcing the establishment of the Food Safety Advisory Board.

The Board's terms of reference require it to advise on issues relating to food safety, nutrition, zoonotic diseases, food law, scientific co-operation in the area of food control systems for food processors and food outlets as well as any other matters referred to it by the Ministers for Health, Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Marine.

The Board, which has 16 members, will be chaired by Dr. Fergus Hill, Dublin Region Public Analyst.

10. **Statistical Information - Medical Card Holders**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of letter dated 27th June, 1995 from the General Medical Services (Payments) Board, showing the position regarding Medical Cards in March 1995.

The numbers of eligible persons in March 1995 as a percentage of the population range from a low of 29.88% in our Board's area to a high of 50.44% in the North Western Health Board area. The countrywide average is 36.11%.

11. **Institute of Public Administration Health Fact Sheets**

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of Health Fact Sheets 1/95 and 2-3/95 which have been prepared by the Health Services Development Unit of the Institute of Public Administration.

Information in relation to recent international trends in health expenditure is contained in Fact Sheet 1/95, while information on General Hospital Services in Ireland is contained in fact sheets 2-3/95.

12. **Dental Capital Monies, 1995**

I have circulated this evening, for the information of members, copies of letter dated 29th June, 1995 from the Department of Health, advising that the Department is making a maximum capital grant of £400,000 available to our Board for the provision of priority infrastructure developments (excluding fluoridation plant) associated with the Dental Health Action Plan.

The Department has also provided a capital grant of £50,000 towards the cost of our Board's priority fluoridation proposals.

Details regarding the projects to be funded from these welcome allocations will be advised to the Community Care Programme Committee.

13. **Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd and Supplementary Welfare Allowances**

I have circulated this evening, for the information of members, copies of Department of Social Welfare circular SWA 5/95 clarifying the eligibility position of the participants in the rural resettlement programmes run by Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd., Kilbaha, Kilrush, Co. Clare and requesting Health Boards to facilitate the work of this Organisation by assisting with S.W.A. payments when this is possible and appropriate.
14. V.T.O.S. participants - Rent Supplements

I have circulated this evening, for the information of members, copies of Department of Social Welfare circular SWA 6/95 clarifying the position in relation to the payment of rent supplements to eligible V.T.O.S. participants.

15. Persons involved in trade disputes and entitlement to Supplementary Welfare Allowances.

I have circulated this evening, for the information of members, copies of Department of Social Welfare circular SWA 7/95 issued in response to requests for clarification on the practice in relation to Dunnes Stores and Irish Press personnel involved in trade disputes.


I have circulated this evening for the information of members, copies of Department of Social Welfare circular SWA 8/95 which has been issued in response to requests from health boards for clarification of certain aspects of the Community Employment Scheme.

17. Comhairle na nOspideal Report

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of the recent Comhairle na nOspideal Report of the Committee on Rheumatology and Rehabilitation.

The Report and its recommendations are currently being examined by the Programme Manager, General Hospital Care who will present a report to a future meeting of the General Hospital Care Programme Committee.


I have circulated this with the agenda papers for this meeting, for the information of members, copies of Department of Social Welfare booklet (SW19) containing details of the rates of Social Welfare payments for 1995/1996.

19. Employers P.R.S.I. Exemption Scheme

I have circulated with the agenda papers for this meeting, copies of Department of Social Welfare leaflet SW73 giving details of the employers P.R.S.I. exemption scheme for 1995/96 and 1996/97.

Under the terms of the scheme, employers who take on extra workers do not have to pay their share of their P.R.S.I. contributions for the first two years of their employment.

20. Health Centre developments

I have circulated this evening, for the information of members, copies of Department of Health letter dated 29th June 1995 advising that a capital grant of £150,000 will be made to our Board in 1995 as a contribution towards the replacement and/or refurbishment of the health centres in Tinahely, Co. Wicklow (£90,000) and South Earl Street in Dublin 8 (£60,000).
21. **Funding for Pregnancy Counselling and Research**

I have circulated this evening for the information of members, copies of a Press Release issued by the Minister for Health announcing that he was providing £300,000 to the organisations listed for the development of pregnancy counselling services. The Minister also announced the commissioning of a multi-disciplinary team from the University of Dublin to carry out a major study on the factors which lead to crisis pregnancy and to abortion.

I have also circulated copies of Department of Health letter dated 5th July 1995 advising that the funding of £300,000 will be made available to the organisations concerned through our Board.

22. **General Medical Services (Payments) Board Annual Report, 1994.**

I have circulated this evening, copies of the 1994 Annual Report of the General Medical Services (Payments) Board.

The Report, with a commentary on the position in relation to our Board’s area, will be presented to the Community Care Programme Committee."

90/1995
**DEVELOPING A POLICY FOR WOMEN’S HEALTH - A DISCUSSION DOCUMENT**

It was agreed, on a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Deputy Byrne, that Report no. 29/1995 (copy filed with official minute) should be referred to the Community Care Programme Committee for consideration.

91/1995
**MEDICAL COUNCIL REPORT 1989-1994**

On a proposal by Cllr. Ryan, seconded by Cllr. Reilly, Report no. 30/1995 (copy filed with official minute) was noted.

92/1995
**PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PROGRAMME COMMITTEES**

1. **Special Hospital Care Programme Committee**

On a proposal by Cllr. Gallagher, seconded by Dr. Reilly, it was agreed to adopt the report

The following matters were dealt with in the report:-

[a] Visit to St. Michael's House Training Centre and Report on services
[b] Recommendation that a request for additional funding for mental handicap services should be made to the Department of Health and that such funding be dedicated to the North city services
[c] St. Paul's Special School, Beaumont
[d] Discussions regarding the commissioning of the Acute Unit, Beaumont Hospital
[e] Discussions with St. Vincent's Hospital regarding Psychiatric Services, Area 2
[f] Report on Autism Services - deferred to a special meeting of the Committee.
2. General Hospital Care Programme Committee

On a proposal by Cllr. Reilly, seconded by Senator Doyle, it was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:

[a] Report on services in James Connolly Memorial Hospital
[b] Progress Report on development of James Connolly Memorial Hospital
[c] Development of Naas General Hospital.
[d] Wicklow Hospital X-Ray service
[e] Arklow ambulance base
[f] North city ambulance base
[g] Dublin Accident and Emergency services

In response to an enquiry from Deputy Callally regarding the Accident and Emergency services, Mr. O'Brien, Programme Manager, General Hospital Care, stated that he had reported to the General Hospital Care Programme Committee on the outcome of his 'round-table' meeting with representatives of the Acute Hospitals. The Accident and Emergency Co-Ordinating Committee, of which he is Chairman, continues to address any difficulties which arise and he will keep the General Hospital Care Programme Committee advised in this regard on an ongoing basis.

3. Community Care Programme Committee

On a proposal by Mrs. Bonar, seconded by Ms. Nealon, it was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:

[a] Report on services in Area no. 3
[b] Capital developments for people with physical disabilities
[c] Disadvantaged youth - Department of Education funding for special projects
[d] Notification between health boards and the Gardai of suspected cases of child abuse
[e] Age and Opportunity's "Go for life" programme

93/1995
NOTICES OF MOTION

1. The notice of motion in the names of Cllrs. O'Connor and Tipping regarding the Tallaght Homeless Advice Unit was, at their request, deferred to the September meeting of our Board.

2. The following motion was proposed by Deputy Callely and seconded by Cllr. O'Connor:-

"That this Board agree to establish a "Committee on the Elderly" due to the special needs and associated service requirements of our elderly population in the Eastern Health Board area."

Deputy Callely stated that a recommendation that each health board should establish a Committee on the Elderly was included in the policy document on the elderly "The Years Ahead".
Following a discussion to which Deputy Callely, Cllr. Connolly and Cllr. Reilly contributed, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, referred to the observations made by the Chief Executive Officer at the recent special meeting of our Board on services for the elderly when he stated that the monitoring and reviewing of services for the elderly in the context of the implementation of the four-year plan which had been adopted by our Board was an important matter which, he had suggested, could be dealt with by arranging three/four special meetings of our Board each year which would be devoted exclusively to services for the elderly, and which the Coordinator of the Services for the Elderly would attend.

Deputy Callely, in welcoming Mr. Fitzpatrick's comments, said that he felt that it was important that each member of our Board should have the opportunity to participate on a regular basis in an ongoing review of services for the elderly.

The following motion was proposed by Deputy Calldy and seconded by Cllr. Farrell:-

"That this Board reviews the orthodontic dental services and considers putting in place an additional option where people requiring necessary treatment could arrange the services of a private orthodontic practitioner and avail of a financial grant towards the cost, and/or recommends that consideration be given to the introduction of a scheme similar to Dental Treatment Services Scheme introduced by the Minister for Health in November 1994."

Following a discussion to which Deputy Callely, Mr. McGuire, Cllr. Reilly, Deputy Shortall and Dr. Keane contributed, it was agreed to note the motion amended as follows:-

"That this Board reviews the orthodontic dental services and requests the Department of Health to consider putting in place an additional option where people requiring necessary treatment could arrange the services of a private orthodontic practitioner and avail of a financial grant towards the cost, and/or recommends that consideration be given to the introduction of a scheme similar to Dental Treatment Services Scheme introduced by the Minister for Health in November 1994."

In noting the motion, members agreed that the Deputy Chief Executive Officer should explore the matter with the Department of Health and report on the outcome at a later date.

The following motion was proposed by Dr. Smith and seconded by Mrs. Bonar:-

"The Eastern Health Board recognises the right of conscientious objection of all its employees and potential employees, and will not discriminate against any employee or potential employee on his or her exercising or seeking to exercise the right of conscientious objection. In the recruitment of personnel the Health Board will ensure that such right of conscientious objection will be protected."

On a proposal by Cllr. Brady, who drew attention to the time (8.25 p.m.) and who said that a number of members had other engagements to attend, it was agreed to defer consideration of the motion to the September meeting of our Board.
94/1995
CORRESPONDENCE

Items of correspondence as referred to in the Chief Executive Officer’s Report were noted.

95/1995
OTHER BUSINESS

Deputy Callely asked that consideration be given to the introduction of corporate ties for men and scarves for women along the lines already existing in this regard in Dublin Corporation.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 p.m.

CORRECT: P J. FITZPATRICK
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHAIRMAN
The Minister for Health recently launched "Developing a Policy for Women's Health - A Discussion Document", a copy of which is enclosed.

The Discussion Document was developed by the Department of Health in order to focus attention on the special health needs of women. While there have been significant advances in the health of women in this country in the last forty years the life expectancy of Irish women at birth is one of the lowest in the European Union, suggesting that there is scope to add years to the lives of Irish women.


The Discussion Document will form the basis for consultation with all those interested in improving the health and welfare of Irish women. When this consultation process has been completed, the Department of Health will begin developing a comprehensive policy for women's health for adoption by Government and implementation over a defined period.

When members have had an opportunity to study the Discussion Document, it will be tabled for discussion at a meeting of the Community Care Programme Committee.
The Medical Council which has recently published its Report for the period 1989 to 1994 was established by the Medical Practitioners Act, 1978 and consists of twenty five members as follows:

- 5 appointed by the Undergraduate Medical Schools
- 6 appointed to represent medical and surgical specialities, psychiatry and general practice,
- 10 registered medical practitioners elected by the profession
- 4 other persons nominated by the Minister for Health, three of whom must be non doctors representing the interests of the general public.

The principal functions of the Council relate to:-

1. The general registration of medical practitioners and the maintenance of a register of medical specialists.

2. Standards of education and training at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

3. Questions of professional misconduct or fitness to practice.

4. The operation of EU Directives relating to practice of medicine.

1. REGISTRATION:

The Medical Council register is published every five years with annual supplements in the intervening years. Copies are available in public and hospital libraries, health board offices and teaching institutions. There were 9824 fully registered medical practitioners at the end of April 1994.
By legislation, the Council is responsible for approving temporary registration to doctors and also the hospitals in which they may practice. During 1992/1993 six doctors were detected as having presented forged documentation in support of their applications for temporary registration.

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

All medical schools in the country are represented on the Medical Council. The Council has a representative on the Advisory Committee on Medical Training of the EU and its report has been accepted and is generally available. This report does not have the binding force of a Directive, but it would be a source document should a Directive be introduced. The Council supports the present study of specialist and continuing medical education and visits to medical schools in various countries.

The Council recognises the need for greater emphasis on communication skills in training curricula.

With regard to education and training outside the European Union, the report notes the large numbers of graduates from India and Pakistan looking for training posts in Ireland. To improve the assessment of the initial level of training the setting up of an entry examination for temporary registration, such as is held in most other countries, is being explored.

In relation to postgraduate training for Interns, there are unsolved problems. The essential educational nature of the Intern year can be submerged in time consuming and trivial routine tasks. There is also the problem of exposing the Intern to clinical problems beyond the competence required and without the supervision and support. The Council is treating this matter very seriously and is reviewing each post. Work is in progress on the production of an updated version of the Council's guide on the Intern year. It will restate the objectives of the Intern year and expand on the means of achieving them.

3. FITNESS TO PRACTICE COMMITTEE:

The function of the Fitness to Practice Committee is to review complaints received and to decide on the most appropriate course of action. A total of 590 complaints were received from April 1989 to April 1994. Of this 276 required further action, 289 were no prima facie, 18 were prima facie and 7 are under consideration.

The term of office of the Committee was dominated by what has become known as the "Beaumont Enquiries", which were, in fact, enquiries into the conduct of three members of the neurosurgical staff of that hospital. The enquiries were extremely complex and time consuming. There were 117 days
of formal hearings and the whole process took over two and a half years. One Neurosurgeon was found to have no case to answer, while another was found guilty of professional misconduct on fourteen counts and a Registrar was also found guilty of professional misconduct. The Council decided on presentation of the report of the Committee to impose on the Neurosurgeon periods of suspension of twelve months to eighteen months on nine counts to run concurrently. He was also censured on fourteen counts. The Neurosurgeon appealed this decision to the High Court. The Registrar was censured.

ETHICS:

It is a function of the Medical Council to operate the EU Directives relating to the practice of medicine. It is their function generally to give guidance to medical practitioners on all matters relating to ethical conduct and behaviour.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE MEDICAL COUNCIL:

Members are elected to the Medical Council every five years. The current members hold office for the period 1994-1998 and were elected in accordance with Medical Council (Election of Members) Regulations 1978.

STATISTICS:

The Report includes statistics relating to the Fitness to Practice Committee with regard to the number of complaints received, what they are related to and their outcomes. Of 590 complaints received 11% were complaints regarding treatment, 7.5% related to professional standards, 5% related to failure to communicate/rudeness, 5.5% related to failure to supply medical records and 33% were complaints outside the remit of the Medical Council. The remainder of the complaints related to irresponsible prescribing, deputising arrangements, responsibility to colleagues, failure to attend, certification, advertising, convictions and alcohol/drug abuse, physical/mental disability.

Forty eight enquiries were set up by the Medical Council into complaints received, of which one was adjourned and ten are pending.

23rd June, 1995

K J. Hickey
Chief Executive Officer