



EASTERN REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY
Minutes of proceedings of Board Meeting
held in the Board Room, Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8,
on Thursday 6th March 2003 at 6:00p.m.

Present

Mr. Paddy Aspell
Cllr. Christy Burke
Cllr. Catherine Byrne
Mr. Martin Cowley
Mr. John Dolan
Cllr. Andrew Doyle
Dr. John Fennell
Cllr. Tony Fox
Ms. Noeleen Harvey
Dr. Marie Laffoy
Cllr. Colm McGrath
Dr. Michael Molloy
Dr. Bernard Murphy
Cllr Eamonn O'Brien
Mrs. Catherine Quinn
Cllr. Don Tipping

Dr. Siobhan Barry
Cllr Laurence Butler
Cllr. Eric Byrne
Cllr. Tommy Cullen
Cllr. Pat Doran
Mr. Joe Fallon
Cllr. Dr. Dermot Fitzpatrick
Cllr. Pat Hand
Cllr. Deirdre Heney
Mr. Paul Ledwidge
Mr. Gerry McGuire
Alderman Mary Mooney
Mr. Michael Murphy
Cllr. Dr. William O'Connell
Cllr. James Reilly
Cllr. Larry Tuomey

In the Chair

Cllr. Larry Butler

Apologies

Alderman Joe Doyle; Cllr. Jane Dillon Byrne; Dr. Kieran Harkin; Ms. Anne Harris;
Dr. James Reilly; Cllr. Dermot Murray; Cllr. Thérèse Ridge

In Attendance

Mr. M. Lyons Mr L Woods, Mr J Breslin, Mr M Devine, Ms A Fitzgerald,
Ms M Browne, Mr D Beaton, Ms. S. Fleming, Dr. M. Laffoy, Ms. M. Clarke,
Ms. A. O'Flynn, Ms. R. Ryan, Ms Helen Stokes, Ms C Ivory.

Opening Prayer

03/03/18 Chairman's Business

Agenda Item No. 1

The Vice-Chairman advised the members that correspondence had been received from South Dublin County Council confirming that, at their meeting on the 10th February 2003, Cllr. Jim Daly was nominated to replace Cllr. Charlie O'Connor TD as South Dublin County Council's representative on the Eastern Regional Health Authority. The Vice-Chairman invited Cllr. Daly to join the meeting.

Forthcoming Meetings:-

- The next meeting of the Acute Hospitals & Primary Care Committee is scheduled for Monday 24th March 2003 at 6.00p.m. in the Board Room, Dr Steevens' Hospital.
- The next meeting of the Continuing Care & Social Services Committee is scheduled for Monday 7th April 2003 at 11.00 a.m. in the Board Room, Dr Steevens' Hospital.
- The next meeting of the Board of the Authority will be held on Thursday 3rd April 2003 at 6.00 p.m. in the Board Room, Dr Steevens' Hospital.
- **Special Board Meeting** – At a recent meeting of the Protocol Committee, it was agreed that a Special Board Meeting be held on Friday 28th March at 11.30 a.m. to discuss Mental Health.

Other Items:

- On his own behalf and on behalf of the members, the Vice-Chairman extended best wishes for speedy recovery to Cllr Therese Ridge.
- **Association of Health Boards** – the Vice-Chairman advised members who intend to attend the Association of Health Boards AGM on the 21st and 22nd March in Kilkenny to contact their Area Health Board as soon as possible.

Statement:

In recent weeks there has been some public interest regarding the expenses claimed by Members of Health Boards and Local Authorities and the Deputy Chairman clarified the situation as follows:

- Expenses are paid only in accordance with national agreed rates set by the Department of Finance
- The rate of expenses paid is not intended to reimburse Members for out of pocket expenses incurred in attending meetings. They are a contribution to meet some of the costs incurred.
- Expenses are only paid to Members when they have been validated by the relevant Health Board Executive.

To put this in context the annual expenses paid to Members of the ERHA is infinitesimally small and as a percentage of the Authority's annual budget would be .006%.

Members only attend an overseas conference when it is of direct relevance and benefit to their work as Members of the Authority. Attendance at such Conferences requires approval from the Regional Chief Executive. Since the establishment of the Authority in March 2000 nine Members were sponsored to attend overseas Conferences.

03/03/19 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Agenda item No. 2

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 6th February 2003 (copy appended to the official minute), having been circulated, were proposed for adoption by Mr. Gerry McGuire, seconded by Dr. Barney Murphy and agreed.

03/03/20 Questions to Chief Executive

Agenda item No. 3

On the proposal of Cllr. Jim Reilly and, seconded by Mr. P. Aspell, the questions were moved for reply by the Chief Executive.

3.1 Dr. Siobhan Barry

Could the CEO indicate the current ERHA policy in relation to the storage & retrieval of clinical case notes within the Mental Health Services of the region, with particular reference to whether a destruction policy has been adopted in any of the mental institutions that have de-institutionalised their inpatient facility?

Reply

The storage and retrieval of clinical case notes within the Mental Health service are guided by the document "Policy for Health Boards on Record Retention Periods, including Outline of Issues in Records Management". This document was produced by the National Freedom of Information Liaison Group (Health Boards), October 1999, and is accessible on the ERHA Intranet (<http://dshins:680/>). A copy can also be made available to any Board member on request.

The Authority (ERHA) accepts this document as a guide and would expect each provider agency in Mental Health to have their own agreed policy if the document named above does not meet with all of its obligations or specific requirements, e.g. in legal, clinical, legislative or research terms.

The Authority, following request of specific information in relation to the destruction of clinical case notes, has been advised that no such procedure has taken place.

3.2 Dr. Siobhan Barry

Could the CEO explain why the outpatient psychiatric service at Usher's Island ceased within 2002, when such a service would seem to form an essential service component to assist the delivery of forthcoming Criminal Law (Insanity) legislation?

Reply

The outpatient psychiatric service at Usher's Island associated with the Forensic Service continued in 2002 and there are no plans to discontinue the service.

It is intended to look at the possibility of extending the current service to provide for "off-campus" rehabilitation opportunities for patients of the Central Mental Hospital.

3.3 Mr. Michael Murphy

The ERHA has set aside a long-standing agreement in relation to the funding of beds used by the Cluain Mhuire Service at the St. John of God Hospital. The effect of the ERHA decision is to reduce the number of acute hospital beds available to the Cluain Mhuire Service by approximately one-third. Can the CEO please comment on this situation, confirm that negotiations with the Department of Health & Children on the matter have been exhausted and give an assurance that an appropriate funding mechanism will be put in place to provide for inflationary pressures in the future? Can the CEO also indicate where the Cluain Mhuire Service may access 12-15 beds in a psychiatric hospital elsewhere in the region?

Reply

The ERHA has not set aside any agreement in relation to acute beds for Cluain Mhuire Service but has funded the increase each year (through once-off funding). The matter is subject to direct negotiation between the Authority and the Hospital and the Authority has at all times dealt equitably with St. John of God Hospital, as with other providers.

By way of background information, up to 2000, the cost of these beds only increased marginally. In 2001, they increased by €100,000; in 2002, by €500,000, and we have been notified for 2003 there will be a further increase of at least €400,000 (based on St. John of God's negotiations with VHI).

Year on year, this requires an adjustment to the base higher than inflation costs provided for by the Department of Health & Children. However, this is only part of the problem.

This is not a new service development and consequently, the Authority is required to fund the increases for these 42 beds (for public provision of psychiatric care for Catchment Care Area 1) in the same manner as it meets all its other increased costs for ongoing service due to inflation.

The Authority will seek to address the base costs and level of service to be provided in the context of provider plan discussions for 2003. Going forward, the Authority would wish to put in place a transparent funding mechanism for this service. However, the Authority must take account of the general inflationary parameters applying in the public sector. This impacts on the increased funding available for all providers for cost increases. The Authority will continue to seek a resolution of this matter on the above basis and within the overall funding available.

3.4 Mr. Michael Murphy

Funding for many providers of services to persons with a learning disability transferred from the Department of Health & Children to the regional Health Boards in three phases: on January 1st 1998, on January 1st, 1999 and on January 1st, 2000. As part of the process of transferring the funding the Department of Health & Children identified budget base deficits at several providers especially those with older institutional type centres. Additional staff posts and extra funding were indicated as "existing service issues". Providers in the ERHA have fared badly relative to providers in all other regional Health Board areas. Funding under the "existing service issues" heading (known also as "Harmon" funding in memory of the late Tony Harmon, the consultant engaged by the Department of Health & Children to review the budget base deficit issue) has been provided as follows:

<u>HEALTH BOARD AREA</u>	<u>"HARMON" FUNDING ALLOCATED</u>
SHB, MWHB	100%
NEHB, SEHB, NWHB, WHB, MHB	85 – 90%
EHB (now ERHA)	30 – 35%

Can the CEO please comment on this situation, summarise the steps which have been taken to secure the outstanding funding from the Department of Health and Children and confirm the current status of these negotiations?

Reply

The determination of funding to address deficits in existing service levels for agencies providing intellectual disabilities services was a process undertaken by the Department of Health and Children prior to the establishment of the Authority. This process is generally referred to as the Harmon Review and the funding to address the recommendations of the Harmon Review have been released from the Department on a gradual basis. The Department is fully aware of the level of outstanding funding for agencies in the Eastern region. The Authority continues to raise the matter in its discussions with Departmental officials regarding funding for intellectual disability services. The Department has advised that the pace at which outstanding issues can be addressed is subject to resource availability. However, they have agreed to review progress to date and outstanding matters with the Authority.

3.5 Mr. Paul Ledwidge

Dr Vincent Moloney has retired recently. Although employed by the SWAHB he provided a much-needed assessment service across all three Area Health Boards to several providers of services to persons with an intellectual disability. Can the CEO please comment on the status of the recruitment process to replace Dr Moloney and confirm that his replacement will continue to provide an assessment service to the providers of services to persons with an intellectual disability? Can the CEO also explain any locum arrangements which have been put in place?

Reply

The Authority raised this matter with the South Western Area Health Board on 18 February 2003 in response to requests by voluntary agencies to ascertain the current position for appointing a replacement for this important post.

The Board has confirmed that the replacement of this post is being submitted for approval to Comhairle Na Ospideal and that the new post holder will provide the same service as Dr. Moloney. In the meantime, agencies which rely on this service have been asked to source locum cover, until such time as the post is filled. The Board will fund this cost in the interim.

3.6 Cllr. Therese Ridge

Are there any proposals for the delivery of maternity services at Tallaght Hospital given the very high number of births in the Clondalkin/Tallaght areas?

Reply

Maternity services in the Eastern Region are provided by the three Dublin maternity hospitals, The National Maternity Hospital (Holles St.) The Coombe Women's Hospital and the Rotunda. These are three large maternity hospitals providing maternity services to women and their babies in the Eastern region. They also provide a national tertiary referral service for more complex cases. In addition Mount Carmel provides private obstetric services.

Maternity services in the South Western Area Health Board region are provided by the Coombe Womens Hospital. The hospital has developed outreach services in recent years and is providing ante-natal clinics in Naas, in Deansrath and Rowlagh in Clondalkin and in Jobstown in Tallaght, with post-natal services being provided in conjunction with community services. The hospital also runs an early discharge programme. In recognition of the number of births in the Tallaght region exploratory discussions are taking place between Tallaght Hospital and the Coombe with a view to providing ante-natal services on site at Tallaght Hospital.

The management of obstetric deliveries requires the availability of consultant, midwifery and specialist back up services and equipment to provide secondary and tertiary referral services. The Coombe Women's Hospital will continue this leadership/specialist role, but with further development likely in community based ante-natal, early discharge and post-natal services. In this

regard, the Authority has established a strategic planning group jointly with the Maternity Hospitals and Area Health Board representation with a view to further developing a vision for the delivery of obstetric services into the future.

3.7 Cllr. Therese Ridge

What are the proposals, in light of extensively leaked reports, re the delivery of maternity and secondary care in the South Western Area Health Board area?

Reply

It is assumed that the leaks referred to relate to speculation regarding the work of the National Task Force on Medical Staffing established by the Minister for Health and Children. The Task Force will make recommendations to the Minister but the Authority understands its first report is still at drafting stage. On this basis, any comment by the Authority, in advance of the Task Force reaching conclusions and these being considered by the Minister, would be premature. The Authority understands that the Task Force is drawing up a national framework for the configuration of medical staffing. It is also understood that the Task Force has looked in detail at services and staffing in two regions - the East Coast Area Health Board and the Mid Western Health Board - but, to date, detailed examination of other regions, including the South Western Health Board, has not taken place.

3.8 Cllr. Christy Burke

To ask the CEO what services are available in Arklow for drug users? Following the death of two young people in Arklow does the CEO intend to put forward proposals for necessary services?

Reply

The services provided to drug users in Arklow include a Community Addiction Team and Outreach Workers. A range of counselling and referral services are offered and, in addition, there is a backpack needle exchange programme operating in the area which is accessible to drug users.

Proposals for the further development of services are being actively addressed with local community interests. Meetings have taken place, attended by local representatives, the Gardai, pharmacists, and general practitioners from the area.

Arising out of these meetings, the East Coast Area Health Board is currently in the process of establishing a working group to develop a range of initiatives, on a pilot basis, to address the drug problem and issues of local concern.

The East Coast Area Health Board is fully committed to this process and is actively addressing the need for the enhancement of services in partnership with the local community.

**03/03/21 Report 06/03 – Progress Report on the Implementation of the
Regional Childcare Framework
Agenda Item No. 5**

Ms. Madeleine Clarke, Consultant gave a presentation on the Implementation of the Regional Childcare Framework (*copy appended to the official minute*).

Following the presentation a discussion took place to which the following members contributed: Dr. S. Barry; Cllr. D. Tipping; Mr. J. Dolan; Mr. M. Cowley; Mrs C Quinn; Cllr. C. Byrne; Cllr. T. Cullen; Cllr. E. Byrne; Cllr. J. Reilly; Cllr. C. Burke and the Vice-Chairman and the following issues were raised:-

- Adequacy of resources for childcare services
- Staffing levels in therapy grades
- Provision of services for those with disability
- Provision of services to children of drug addicts
- Importance of parenting skills training

Madeleine Clarke responded to the issues raised and explained that the argument for additional resources would be supported by demonstrating outcomes achieved for the resources already invested. In relation to staffing she confirmed that the Area Health Boards had achieved considerable success in recruiting staff into childcare services.

On a proposal by Cllr C Burke, seconded by Cllr A Doyle, Report No. 06/03 was noted.

**03/03/22 Report 07/03 – Report from Committees of the Board
Agenda Item No. 6**

1. **Recommendation from the Protocol Committee – Appointment of Cllr C Burke as representative of the Eastern Regional Health Authority to the Board of the Drug Treatment Centre, Pearse St., Dublin 2.**
On a proposal by Mr. G. McGuire, seconded by Cllr. P. Doran it was agreed that Cllr. C. Burke would represent the Eastern Regional Health Authority on the Board of the Drug Treatment Centre, Pearse St., Dublin 2.
2. **Standing Orders – Proposed amendments to the existing standing orders.**
Report 07/03 (copy appended to the official minute) outlined the proposed amendments to existing standing orders which had been considered by the Protocol Committee at its meeting on 18th February 2003 and recommended to the Board of the Authority for its approval. On a proposal by Mr G McGuire, seconded by Mr B Murphy, the proposed amendments to the existing standing orders were agreed. It was agreed that a revised copy of the standing orders be circulated to all members.
3. **Appointment of Cllr J Daly to South Western Area Health Board.**
On a proposal by Cllr T Fox, seconded by Mr G McGuire, Cllr. Jim Daly was nominated to replace Cllr. Charles O'Connor as a representative from South Dublin County Council to the Board of the South Western Area Health Board.

4. Arrangements on committees following the resignation of Cllr. Charles O'Connor.

The arrangements as outlined in Report 07/03 and circulated to members were noted.

5. Report on the 19th Congress at the European Association of Hospital Managers, Krakow, Poland.

The report circulated with Report 07/03 was noted.

6. Finance & Property Committee.

At the meeting of the Finance & Property Committee held on 21st February 2003, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Board of the Authority that the reserved function of the Board of the Authority to approve the Annual Financial Statements of the Eastern Regional Health Authority for 2002 be delegated to the Finance & Property Committee. The Committee also recommended that the Board of the Authority also delegate the reserved function to approve the audited Annual Financial Statements of the Eastern Regional Health Authority 2001.

There was a discussion on the matter to which the following members contributed:- Cllr E Byrne, Cllr D Tipping, Mrs C Quinn, Mr M Murphy, Cllr C Burke, and the Vice- Chairman and clarification was sought as to the proposal.

Mr Liam Woods clarified that the Board of the Authority could delegate its function to approve annual financial statements of the Authority to its Finance & Property Committee if it so wished and he explained the timeframes within which the annual financial statements had to be considered by the Board.

On a proposal by Cllr D Tipping, seconded by Cllr E Byrne, the Board agreed not to accept the recommendation of the Finance & Property Committee. It was agreed that the Annual Financial Statements for 2002 and the Audited Annual Financial Statements for 2001 could be considered by the Board of the Authority at its Special Meeting on 28th March 2003.

03/03/23 Report 08/03 – Annual Financial Statements 2000: approval after completion of audit

Agenda Item No. 7

Mr Liam Woods, Financial Director presented the Report No 08/03 - Audited Annual Financial Statements 2000 - to the Board. On a proposal by Mr. G. McGuire, seconded by Cllr. C. Burke, the Audited Annual Financial Statements of the Eastern Regional Health Authority, 2000 were approved by the Board.

03/03/23 Motions

Agenda Item No. 8

8.1 Dr. Siobhan Barry

That this Board asserts its right to approve Board meetings minutes, the substance of which cannot be modified, altered or executed in a manner which is at variance to that minuted.

On a proposal by Dr. Siobhan Barry, seconded by Mr. Michael Murphy, the motion was moved for debate. In speaking to the motion, Dr Barry considered that decisions taken by the Board of the Authority as documented in the minutes of the Board meetings were central to the working of the Board and that it was important that the policy decisions reached by the Board be carried out by the Executive.

In response, the Chief Executive stated that he understood the background to the motion but that the motion as framed raised questions regarding the relationship between the Board and the Executive in carrying out their functions. He explained that the motion as framed could have the effect that any Board decision would have to be implemented strictly and, in the event that circumstances required the Executive to deviate from that decision, it would require the Executive to inform the Board of any necessary deviation before taking action, thus limiting the ability of the Executive in responding to circumstances as they arise.

In light of the Chief Executive's concerns, Dr S Barry proposed the following amendment to the motion by appending the following wording to the motion "*Except in exceptional circumstances which will be brought to the attention of the Board at the earliest opportunity*".

On a proposal from Dr S Barry, seconded by Mr M Murphy, the motion as amended was agreed.

8.2 Dr. Kieran Harkin

That the CEO shall present to the April 2003 ERHA Board Meeting, a progress report outlining the findings of his investigation into the unacceptable waiting list for assessment and treatment at St. Louise's Unit at Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin.

In the absence of Dr K Harkin, his motion fell. However, the Chief Executive advised members that he would report on the matter at the April meeting of the Board.

03/03/24 Chief Executive's Report

Agenda Item No. 9

The Chief Executive's Report (*copy appended to the official minute*) was circulated. The report dealt with the following items:

- Youth Homeless Strategy – Update
- Mental Health Strategic Framework
- Minister Martin launches Clinicians' Guide to Angina
- Treatment Purchase Fund
- New information leaflets from the Dublin Dental School and Hospital

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrew Doyle and seconded by Mr. John Dolan, the Chief Executive's Report, as circulated, was noted.

02/03/17 Date & time of Next Meeting
Agenda Item No.10

The date and time for the next meeting was agreed for Thursday 3rd April 2003 at 18:00 in the Board Room, Dr. Steevens' Hospital.

The meeting concluded at 20:00

CORRECT
Michael Lyons
Chief Executive



Councillor L Butler
Vice-Chairman

DATE _____