

SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of the proceedings of meeting of the South Western Area Health Board held in the Board Room, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8, on Tuesday, 5th June, 2001, at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Mr. P. Aspell
Cllr. E. Byrne
Dr. M. Gueret
Ms. A. Harris
Cllr. M. Miley
Dr. B. Murphy
Cllr. C. O'Connor
Cllr. D. Tipping
Cllr. J. Wall, T.D.

Dr. S. Barry
Cllr. T. Cullen
Dr. K. Harkin
Cllr. C. McGrath
Ms. M. Mooney
Mr. M. Murphy
Cllr. J. Reilly
Sen. S. Ó Fearghail

Observers

Mr. G. McGuire

Ms. N. Harvey

Apologies

Ms. M. Hoban

In the Chair

Cllr. C. O'Connor

Officers in Attendance

Mr. P. Donnelly, Chief Executive
Ms. B. Clarke, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. S. O'Brien, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. P. Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. H. Kane, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. D. Lyons, Director of Finance
Mr. R. Mitchell, Director of Communications
Mr. R. Kavanagh, Senior Manager, Operations
Ms. C. Cuffe, Senior Manager, Operations
Mr. R. Healy, A/Senior Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Ms. A. Farrell, Administrative Support, Chief Executive's Office
Ms. P. Dempsey, Administrative Support, Chief Executive's Office

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CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

At the outset, the Chairman welcomed Mr. Séamus O'Brien, Assistant Chief Executive, who had resumed duty following a period of Sick Leave. He then proceeded to advise members of the following:-

1. *Condolences*

I am sure members will join with me in expressing sincere sympathy to those whose names have been included on the list of condolences which has been circulated to members.

2. *Annual General Meeting*

The Protocol and Procedures Committee has recommended that our Board's Annual General Meeting take place after the E.R.H.A. Annual General Meeting. This Annual General Meeting will now be held in the Board Room, Dr. Steevens' Hospital on 10th July, 2001, at 6.00 p.m. The monthly Board Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month will take place as scheduled at 2.00 p.m. on 3rd July, 2001, at St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy, Co. Kildare.

3. *September Board Meeting*

Following conversations with Dr. Seán Daly, Master of the Coombe Hospital, Dr. Daly has agreed to make a presentation to the Board at our September meeting in St. Mary's, Naas.

4. *Travellers Unit Report*

I would like to notify members that the launch of the first Travellers Unit Report will take place in the Ashling Hotel, Parkgate Street, on Wednesday, 6th June, 2001, at 11.30 a.m. The Traveller Health Unit provides a service on behalf of the three area boards.

5. *Asperger's Report*

I would also like to notify members that the launch of the Asperger's Report will take place in City West Hotel, Saggart, at 11.00 a.m. on Friday 8th June, 2001. This report reviews the needs and services for children and young people with Asperger's Syndrome in the Eastern Region.

6. *Global Movement for Children*

At the request of a fellow Board Member documentation has been distributed today regarding the Global Movement for Children. It is intended that the documentation will be sent to all South Western Area Health Board Offices. Notices are to be displayed in public offices and Pledge Forms will be available for signing. These in turn will be collected and forwarded to UNICEF. I would ask that members would support this very worthwhile and just cause.

7. *Order of Business*

At a recent meeting of the Protocol and Procedures Committee the Order of Business at Board Meetings was again discussed. Following on from previous work done by the Committee, and to get through all items on the Agenda by the close of the meeting, it was recommended that the revised Order of Business circulated at a previous Board Meeting should be adhered to and that a time schedule should now be allocated to items on the Agenda.

I therefore propose to assign the following times to the Agenda before you today:-

2.15 p.m.	Minutes from previous meetings
2.20 p.m.	Questions to the Chief Executive
2.25 p.m.	Urgent Property Item
2.45 p.m.	Report on Services for Older Persons
3.15 p.m.	Chief Executive's Report
3.35 p.m.	Matters for Mention/Matters arising from minutes, if any
3.40 p.m.	Progress Reports
3.45 p.m.	Notices of Motion
3.55 p.m.	Correspondence/Notices of Visit/Next Meeting

In future the times will be on the Agenda forwarded to you in advance of the Board Meeting.

Following Chairman's Business, Dr. Siobhán Barry requested clarification regarding the arrangements for the Kildare/West Wicklow out of hours GP service (KDoc) when a mentally ill patient requires certification. The Chief Executive indicated that he was not aware of any particular difficulties in this area but agreed to follow up any specific details in this regard and have findings reported back to a future Standing Committee meeting.

Mr. G. McGuire, Mr. P. Aspell and Cllr. M. Miley expressed dissatisfaction regarding arrangements at a recent function concerning St. Brigid's Hospice, The Curragh, which was attended by Cllr. J. Reilly. They perceived that insufficient cognisance was taken of Cllr. Reilly's role as representing the Chairman of the South Western Area Health Board. The Chief Executive acknowledged the members' views in this regard. He informed the group that our Board was not directly involved in the organisation of this function, although there had been some communication/co-operation with the organising body beforehand. Nonetheless, he agreed that there were some gaps in protocol in this area and confirmed the need to develop a protocol for members attending functions arranged by outside organisations who receive Health Board funding.

Finally, the Chief Executive indicated to members that official notification regarding a forthcoming function in Kilcullen will be forwarded to members shortly.

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD MEETINGS HELD ON 24th APRIL, 2001 & 1st MAY, 2001

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting held on 24th April, 2001, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Mr. P. Aspell, seconded by Cllr. M. Miley.

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting held on 3rd April, 2001, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly, seconded by Ms. A. Harris.

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QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

On a proposal by Cllr. D. Tipping, seconded by Dr. S. Barry, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged.

1. Dr. Siobhán Barry

“Which obstacles currently hinder the South Western Area Health Board from operating a Child Care Policy compatible with the Eastern Regional Health Authority Child Care Strategy?”

Reply:

The Eastern Regional Health Authority and the three Area Health Boards are working together on the preparation of a regional childcare strategy. This board is also preparing it's own childcare strategy and there will obviously be close co-ordination between our operational objectives and the Authority's regional strategy.

This collaborative process is working well and difficulties which have arisen such as recruitment and retention will be addressed on a joint basis.

2. Dr. Kieran Harkin

“With regard to the waiting list for the drug treatment services in the South Western Area Health Board could the Chief Executive:

- (i) Please comment upon the apparent increase in the numbers awaiting treatment and the apparent increased length of time these patients must wait.
- (ii) Please outline the barriers to expanding the service in existing centres to facilitate patients on the waiting list, with particular reference to Aisling and Fortune House.
- (iii) What obligations does the Chief Executive believe the board has towards our patients on our waiting list? In particular, does the Chief Executive believe that the board may have a particular responsibility towards patients who acquire additional illnesses, deteriorate or die as a result of being unable to access treatment while on our waiting list?
- (iv) Could the Chief Executive please set a target date whereby patients will be offered appropriate treatment within a 4 week period of applying to the service, as proposed in the National Strategy?”

Reply:

The waiting list for the South Western Area Health Board is concentrated predominantly in the Tallaght and the Clondalkin/Ballyfermot areas. Waiting times for commencement of treatment in our clinics at James' Street, Old County Road, Castle Street, Drimnagh, Cork Street and Rialto are approximately one to four weeks. While the waiting lists in Tallaght/Clondalkin/Ballyfermot areas have increased, the number of clients in treatment in our Board's area has also increased from 2,049 to 2,225.

In relation to the Tallaght area we have, in partnership with the Jobstown Assisting Drug Dependency (JADD), opened a new Addiction Centre in the Jobstown area. The Mobile Bus will commence treatment on site at Tallaght Hospital on 2nd July, 2001. We are currently in discussion with two other local community projects around the provision of addiction services in CARP, Killinarden and in the St Dominick's Project in Millbrook. There has also been a significant increase in the number of Level I and Level II G.P.s in the area and this will further decrease the waiting list in Tallaght in the coming weeks. While we have encountered difficulties in the

acquisition of a site in the area, our Board is actively seeking a site and is in discussion with the relevant parties for a treatment centre in the Tallaght area.

In relation to Ballyfermot/Clondalkin area, our Board, in association with the CASP Programme, has recently been granted planning permission for the provision of a new premises that will allow for on-site dispensing for all the clients of the CASP Programme in the Clondalkin area. The Board is also in discussions around the purchase of a potential site for an addiction centre in the Clondalkin area. The Board has also recently opened an Addiction Centre in Inchicore.

Our facilities at Aisling Clinic are currently operating at capacity. Waiting lists for access to G.P, detox and the Young Persons Programme in Fortune House are being managed successfully. A significant factor in addressing the maintenance programmes in the Ballyfermot area has been the poor uptake by local general practitioners under the Methadone Protocol. Whilst a number of G.P.s have patients under the Protocol, the numbers in most cases are less than ten.

In regard to our Board's obligations towards clients, it is important to note that a clinical assessment is carried out on all clients prior to being placed on a waiting list. If particular relevant issues arise during this assessment which would prioritise the individuals, these issues are brought to the clinic team meeting for a decision regarding commencement of treatment.

The Sector Management Team of the Addiction Services in the South Western Area Health Board is currently in the process of reviewing and implementing the National Drug Strategy 2001/2008. When the review has been carried out, we will then be in a position to set a target date regarding the provision of treatment. I will keep the Board members informed of all developments in this regard.

3. Cllr. Catherine Byrne

“Could the Chief Executive please outline what steps (besides advertising in national papers) are being taken to provide urgently a Speech and Language Therapist for Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot Health Centres?”

Could the Chief Executive outline whether any renovation or painting will take place to the Parnell Road Health Centre?”

Reply:

(a)

The resolution to the current difficulties associated with the recruitment/retention of Speech & Language Therapy staff for the Ballyfermot/Cherry Orchard area continues to be actively pursued by local and Area Health Board management. It should be recognised that recruitment/retention difficulties are not unique to Dublin West but indeed extend right throughout the Health Service and across a wide range of disciplines, including Speech & Language Therapy. The approach of our Board in overcoming these problems is by way of positive and pro-active intervention. We are at present developing an overall strategy to ensure that current and future staff requirements can be achieved in order to maintain continuity in the delivery of a quality service delivery throughout our Board. The development of a strategy for recruitment/retention will be based on a consultation process with interested parties

including staff, managers, staff association/unions, professional organisations, etc. Notwithstanding the above, other initiatives have been taken or are at an advanced stage of introduction.

These initiatives include the following:

- (i) Review of current advertisement arrangements, i.e. content, coverage, focus, appeal to prospective applicants and overall presentation.
- (ii) Advertisements in overseas newspapers, journals, professional bulletins, local newspapers, periodicals, etc.
- (iii) Further enhancement of already established contacts with the schools, colleges and professional bodies.
- (iv) Discussions in regard to increasing the number of training places in Third Level Colleges.
- (v) The question of sponsorship of students is currently being examined.
- (vi) Further overseas recruitment drives will be directed towards a range of disciplines including Speech & Language Service Staff.

In conclusion, it is anticipated that the above initiatives will assist our Board in overcoming existing difficulties relating to staff recruitment/retention. It is in this context that the recruitment of staff for the Speech & Language Service in the Ballyfermot/Cherry Orchard area is being addressed.

(b)

This matter is being followed up by the local General Manager in consultation with the Engineering Department.

64/2001

RE: ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY – HOUSE AT MONASTERY ROAD, CLONDALKIN

(Taken as Item No. 5)

Mr. Hugh Kane, Assistant Chief Executive, gave a report to members regarding a property at 96 Monastery Road, Clondalkin, which he recommended to the Board for acquisition [copy filed with official minute].

A brief discussion followed to which Cllr. D. Tipping, Cllr. E Byrne, Cllr. C. McGrath, and Mr. M. Murphy contributed and to which Mr. Kane and Mr. Donnelly responded.

On a proposal by Cllr. C. McGrath, seconded by Sen. S. Ó Fearghail, the purchase of this property was approved by the Board.

65/2001**REPORT 8/2001 - SERVICES FOR OLDER PERSONS IN THE SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD**

(Taken as Item No. 4)

Report 8/2001 [copy filed with official minute] was presented to members by Mr. Pat Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive (Planning & Development).

The Chairman thanked Mr. Bennett for his report. Discussion followed to which Dr. K. Harkin, Mr. G. McGuire, Cllr. M. Miley, Cllr. J. Reilly and Cllr. E. Byrne contributed and to which Mr. Bennett responded as follows:-

- In the absence of specific details regarding community waiting lists for nursing home beds, members were informed that the Eastern Regional Health Authority is currently examining the possibility of carrying out a needs assessment this year regarding bed capacity for older persons in the region.
- Specific details of hospital consultants' waiting lists for nursing home beds are not available although our Board is in negotiation with consultants in AMiNCH and St. James's Hospital in this regard in an effort to obtain same.
- Discussions are ongoing with AMiNCH regarding Psychiatry of Old Age and the categorisation of services in this area – whether they should be included under Mental Health or under Services for Older Persons.
- A Discharge Planner is to be appointed to Naas General Hospital and AMiNCH, Tallaght, which should assist in avoiding situations whereby families may be put under pressure to take elderly relatives home although they may not be in a position to do so.
- Difficulties regarding the placement of patients in contract beds at a distance from their normal area of residence were acknowledged.
- The correction raised by a member regarding the development of a 50 bed unit in Terenure Rd. North/Eaton Road (not Eaton Square as in the report) was acknowledged.
- Further investment and enhanced infrastructure regarding services for older persons are required.

Report was noted.

66/2001**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

The Chief Executive read Report No. 9/2001 to members (copy filed with official minute):

Areas covered in the report are set out below:-

1. Queen Mary Building
2. New Health Strategy
3. Anniversary Review Newsletter
4. Meningococcal C Immunisation Programme
5. Local Drugs Task Forces
6. Public Health Nurse Support – Coombe Hospital
7. Comforts Money – Long Stay Patients
8. Partnership Process – South Western Area Health Board
9. County Kildare Local Sports Partnership

10. New Laboratory Facilities
11. Drogheda Memorial Hospital
12. Naas General Hospital – Work to rule

Discussion ensued at which the following issues were raised and to which the Chief Executive responded:-

- The need to plan well in advance in the future for the transfer of services and staff from buildings which are required for other purposes was acknowledged.
- Details of the service/staff relocation arrangements from the Queen Mary Building were outlined.
- It was agreed to circulate the Anniversary Review Newsletter widely.
- Mr. Séamus O'Brien, Assistant Chief Executive, clarified the issues relating to the possible work to rule in Naas General Hospital on 18th June, 2001, and outlined the discussions which were currently taking place. He indicated that he will keep the Kildare/West Wicklow members informed of ongoing developments in this regard.

The Chief Executive's report was noted.

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MATTERS FOR MENTION/MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters for mention or matters arising from the minutes.

68/2001

PROGRESS REPORT FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

On a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly, seconded by Cllr. J. Wall, the progress report from the Community Services and Continuing Care Standing Committee was adopted.

On a proposal by Dr. S. Barry, seconded by Cllr. J. Reilly, the progress report from the Primary Care and Acute Services Standing Committee was adopted.

69/2001

NOTICES OF MOTION

The following motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Reilly, and seconded by Dr. S. Barry:

“That the Chief Executive will arrange for to have correspondence issued to all official school bus operators within our area reminding them of their legal obligations to ensure a total ban on smoking on buses, and, if necessary, that random inspections be carried out by our Board on these buses.”

Discussion followed to which Dr. S. Barry and Cllr. J. Reilly contributed. In response, the Chief Executive indicated support for the issues raised by Cllr. Reilly. He outlined proposals to address this issue through the Board's Environmental Health Officers, for example, through the provision of information to schools, parents and school bus providers/operators (e.g. Bus Éireann) regarding underage smoking regulations and follow-up of any complaints received about non-compliance with these regulations.

Motion was agreed.

**70/2001
CORRESPONDENCE**

Items of correspondence, as referred to in the Chief Executive's report, were noted by members.

**71/2001
SCHEDULE OF VISITS FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE
MEETINGS (JUNE 2001)**

The schedule of visits for Board Members and Standing Committee meetings for June 2001 which was circulated with the agenda papers was noted by members.

**72/2001
DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 3rd July, 2001, at 2.00 p.m. in St. Vincent's Hospital, Athy, Co. Kildare.

The Annual General Meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 10th July, 2001, at 6.00 p.m in the Board Room, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8.

The meeting concluded at 4.00 p.m.

**CORRECT: P. DONNELLY
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

CHAIRMAN