

SOUTH WESTERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

**Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the South Western Area Health Board held
in the Council Chambers, Kildare County Council, Naas, Co. Kildare,
on Tuesday, 4th September, 2001, at 2.00 p.m.**

Present

Mr. P. Aspell	Dr. S. Barry
Mr. G. Brady	Cllr. C. Byrne
Cllr. E. Byrne	Cllr. T. Cullen
Dr. K. Harkin	Ms. A. Harris
Ms. M. Hoban	Cllr. M. Miley
Ald. M. Mooney	Dr. B. Murphy
Mr. M. Murphy	Cllr. C. O'Connor
Cllr. J. Reilly	Sen. T. Ridge
Cllr. D. Tipping	Cllr. J. Wall, T.D.

Observers

Mr. G. McGuire	Ms. N. Harvey
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Apologies

Cllr. C. McGrath

In the Chair

Cllr. C. O'Connor

Officers in Attendance

Mr. P. Donnelly, Chief Executive Officer
 Ms. B. Clarke, 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. T. McMahon, Director of Human Resources
 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
 Mr. P. Dempsey, Administrative Support, Chief Executive's Office

At the outset, the Vice-Chairman, Sen. T. Ridge, advised members that the Chairman was delayed. She proposed, and members agreed, to defer Chairman's Business until the Chairman was present.

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 3rd JULY, 2001, ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 10th JULY, 2001, AND SPECIAL BOARD MEETING ON 10th JULY, 2001.

The minutes of the proceedings of the meetings held on 3rd July, 2001, and 10th July, 2001, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. D. Tipping, seconded by Cllr. M. Miley.

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QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

On a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly, seconded by Cllr. J. Wall, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged.

1. Dr. Kieran Harkin

“Could the C.E.O. please advise of the number of patients awaiting treatment for drug addiction at the Aisling Centre. Could the C.E.O. please advise of what duration the average patient may expect to wait to receive treatment once placed on the waiting list? Could the C.E.O. please advise how the present waiting list compares to that 12 and 24 months ago respectively?”

Reply:

At present there are 301 clients currently in treatment in the Aisling Clinic in Ballyfermot. This clinic covers a catchment area of Ballyfermot, Clondalkin, Inchicore, Palmerstown and Lucan.

Currently there are 105 clients on the waiting list for the Aisling Clinic. This is based on a validated waiting list figure at 28th August, 2001. Following assessment, clients are placed on the waiting list and are commenced on treatment on a clinical basis. Currently, clients can be on the waiting list for anything between one day and up to 7/8 months. At July 2000 there were 265 people in treatment and 85 persons on the waiting list.

It should be noted that additional numbers presenting to the waiting list may be as a result of:-

- (a) Increased and improved Outreach Services
- (b) Board's Education Officers and Education Policies
- (c) Additional Outreach and other services being provided through the Ballyfermot/Clondalkin Drugs Task Force
- (d) The commencement of Medical Services in the prisons obliges the Board to continue services for prisoners on discharge

The Board's Engineering Department is finalising refurbishment of Inchicore Health Centre which will allow us to increase treatment places there. It is anticipated that this work will be finalised within a fortnight. It is anticipated that work will commence on Fonthill Rd., Clondalkin, on the building of a treatment and aftercare rehabilitation centre within the next two weeks. This project, which has been under negotiation and discussion over the last 2/3 years, has now come to fruition. This is a joint venture between the Board and the Clondalkin Addiction Support Programme. Both of these projects will help ease the waiting list in the Aisling Clinic. The Board has identified the need to build a major Addiction Centre in the North Clondalkin area and is currently trying to procure an appropriate site for same.

2. **Dr. Siobhán Barry**

Re: Inter Country Adoption

“Could the C.E.O. comment on:

- The waiting time for completion of assessment of potential adoptive parents in the South Western Area Health Board area from the time of an initial application being submitted in 2001.
- Whether this is an improvement on last year?”

Reply:

There were 444 applications on the waiting list for 1st assessments on 30th June, 2001. Based on current staffing levels and the projected number of withdrawals/deferrals, the projected waiting time for 1st assessments for the last application received on 30th June, 2001, is 36 months.

In relation to 2nd assessments, the number on the waiting list on 30th June, 2001, was 52. Based on current staffing levels and the projected number of withdrawals/deferrals, the projected waiting time for 2nd assessments for the last application received on 30th June, 2001, is 15 months.

In June 2000, the projected waiting time for 1st assessments was 36-42 months and the projected waiting time for 2nd assessments was 18 months.

The above statistics indicate that there has been some improvement in the length of the waiting period despite the continued increase in the number of applications and the number of vacant social work posts. In 1999, 250 people applied, in 2000, 370 people applied and up to June 2001, 182 people had applied. Also despite ongoing targeted recruitment campaigns, 50% of the approved social work posts are vacant. The South Western Area Health Board is continuing to seek to fill these posts and advertised again last month.

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PRESENTATION BY DR. SEÁN DALY, MASTER, COOMBE WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

Dr. Seán Daly, Master, gave a presentation to members on services which are provided for women and infants by the Coombe Women's Hospital.

Areas covered by the presentation included:

- History of the Hospital
- Range of Services provided
- Financial Allocation
- Corporate Plan – current issues and anticipated needs

The Chairman and members thanked Dr. Daly for his presentation. Discussion followed to which Sen. T. Ridge, Cllr. E. Byrne, Cllr. J. Reilly, Dr. K. Harkin and Mr. M. Murphy contributed and to which Dr. Daly responded.

The main areas addressed included:- increased patient throughput and resource implications; increase in numbers of non-national patients; staff shortages; proposed developments re computerisation and library facilities; waiting list and early discharge policy; services for infants with intellectual disability.

Dr. Daly concluded by extending an invitation to members to visit the Coombe Women's Hospital in the future which members welcomed.

95/2001

CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Members were invited to join with the Chairman in expressing sincere sympathy to those whose names were included on the list of condolences which was circulated to members.

The Chairman then proceeded to advise members of the following:-

1. *Presentation by Dr. Seán Daly, Master, Coombe Women's Hospital*

I would like to thank Dr. Seán Daly, Master of the Coombe Women's Hospital, for his presentation to our Board Meeting today and look forward to taking him up on his invitation to members to visit the hospital in the future.

2. *Homeless Service – Charles Street*

I would like to inform members that I have expressed my concern to the Chief Executive at the recent closure of the offices at Charles Street which provided the regional administration service to Homeless People.

The Chief Executive will be updating members on the situation in his report later on in the meeting today and he has assured me that myself and other members will be given a full opportunity to discuss this matter immediately after his report.

3. *Review Day*

Having had a discussion with the Vice-Chairman and the Chief Executive, we are now proposing a second half day workshop to review further progress to date by the Board. As members will be aware from the last workshop this is a very important piece of work for the Board and it is essential that all members would attend.

This workshop will be held on Monday, 24th September, 2001, at 2.00 p.m. at City West Hotel, Saggart, with lunch being served in the hotel's main restaurant from 1.00 p.m. onwards.

4. *Information Session on the National Drugs Strategy*

I wish to inform members that an information session on the National Drugs Strategy 2001 to 2008 will be held in the South Western Area Health Board area from 3.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 26th September, 2001, at the Green Isle Hotel, Naas Road. Prior registration is not required.

5. *AGM – Community Services and Continuing Care Standing Committee*

I wish to inform members that, at the request of Cllr. Tommy Cullen, the AGM of the Community Services and Continuing Care Standing Committee has been deferred to Thursday, 27th September, 2001.

This meeting will be held at the usual time of 11.00 a.m. Members will be notified in advance of the venue and other details.

6. *Heart Foundation Strategy*

Recently I received from the Chairman of the Irish Heart Foundation Council on Stroke, a copy of the Council's blueprint for the development of services for people with stroke in Ireland, as submitted to the Minister for Health and Children, for inclusion in the consultative process of the new National Health Strategy. At my request the Chief Executive has circulated a copy of this initiative for your information with the Agenda papers for this meeting.

As this is a very worthwhile organisation I would encourage members to read this initiative and support the Irish Heart Foundation wherever possible.

7. *People of the Year Awards*

Copies of Nomination Forms for the People of the Year Awards 2001 have been distributed today for members' attention. This year has been designated as the International Year of Volunteers by the United Nations and the organisers of the People of the Year Awards for 2001 are keen to have nominations from this area.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Chief Executive read Report No. 12/2001 to members (copy filed with official minute):

Areas covered in the report are set out below:-

1. Homeless Service – Charles Street
2. Queen Mary Building
3. Update on Medical Cards for the Over 70s
4. Meningitis "C"
5. National Influenza/Pneumococcal Vaccination Campaign 2001/2002
6. Assistant Chief Executive Portfolios

7. Kildare/West Wicklow Mental Health Services
8. Tobacco Control
9. Allocation for Cancer Services
10. Children Act 2001
11. Mobile Drugs Clinic – Tallaght
12. Naas General Hospital Development
13. Staff Appointments

Discussion followed to which Cllr. C. O'Connor, Dr. S. Barry, Cllr. J. Reilly, Sen. T. Ridge, Dr. K. Harkin, Cllr. C. Byrne, Mr. G. McGuire, Cllr. E. Byrne, and Ms. M. Hoban contributed. Issues to which the Chief Executive responded included the following:-

- Homeless Service:- Members were informed that this will remain a regional service for the moment, however, the relevant Assistant Chief Executive will pursue a meeting between the 3 Area Health Boards and the Homeless Agencies to discuss current issues of concern. Members will be kept informed of the outcome of such discussions.
- Kildare/West Wicklow Mental Health Services:- Members were advised that a policy proposal on mental health services in the Kildare area will be brought to members following a review of these services to be carried out with the Health Research Board. If approved by members, this will then be submitted to the Eastern Regional Health Authority. If additional urgent services need to be put in place before the finalisation of the next Provider Plan, this will be addressed.
- Smoking on School Buses: Members were informed of a number of initiatives being put in place by the Environmental Health Service in this regard.
- Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Services: Members were informed that the South Western Area Health Board is contributing to a review of this area undertaken by the Eastern Regional Health Authority.
- New Area Headquarters: The Chief Executive advised members that a visit will be arranged for them to the new Area Headquarters building in Millennium Park in October.

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/Matters Arising from the Minutes.

98/2001

PROGRESS REPORT FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

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

On a proposal by Cllr. J. Reilly, seconded by Ms. M. Hoban, the progress report from the Primary Care and Acute Services Standing Committee was adopted.

On a proposal by Dr. B. Murphy, seconded by Sen. T. Ridge, the progress report from the Joint Standing Committee was adopted.

99/2001
NOTICES OF MOTION

The following motion was proposed by Dr. K. Harkin, and seconded by Cllr. E. Byrne:-

“That this board is committed to offer all patients presenting to drug treatment services in the year 2002 appropriate treatment within a 3 month period and the board shall prepare and present a strategy for the achievement of such a target before the end of this year.”

Discussion followed to which Cllr. E. Byrne, Dr. S. Barry, Ms. N. Harvey, Ms. M. Hoban, Cllr. J. Reilly, and Cllr. C. O'Connor contributed and to which the Chief Executive responded.

Motion was agreed.

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CORRESPONDENCE

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

101/2001
SCHEDULE OF VISITS FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2001)

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

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DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 2nd October, 2001 at 2.00 p.m. in Kildare County Council Chambers, Naas, Co. Kildare.

CORRECT: **P. DONNELLY**
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHAIRMAN