



**EASTERN REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of proceedings of Special Board Meeting  
held in the Board Room, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8  
on Tuesday 23rd October 2001 at 6.00 p.m.**

*Present*

Dr. S. Barry	Cllr. C. Byrne
Cllr. E. Byrne	Ald. I. Callely T.D.
Mr. M. Cowley	Cllr. T. Cullen
Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne	Mr. J. Dolan
Cllr. P. Doran	Mr. J. Fallon
Ms. A. Harris	Ms. N. Harvey
Ms. M. Hoban	Mr. P. Ledwidge
Cllr. M. Miley	Dr. M. Molloy
Dr. B. Murphy	Mr. M. Murphy
Dr. P. O'Connell	Cllr C. O'Connor
Cllr. D. Tipping.	Mr. L. Tuomey
Cllr. Jack Wall	

*In the Chair*

Ald. I. Callely T.D.

*Apologies*

Cllr. L. Creaven	Ald. Sen. J. Doyle
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*In Attendance*

Mr. Donal O Shea	
Mr. Pat McLoughlin	Ms. Fionnuala Duffy
Mr. Martin Devine	Mr. Liam Woods
Ms. Sile Fleming	Ms. Eileen O'Donovan
Ms. Orlagh Devine	Ms. Helen Stokes

**01/10/80 Chairman's Business**

- The Chairman informed members that following a meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Protocol Committee and Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Area Health Boards and the Authority, it was agreed that Ms. Helen Stokes would be responsible for co-ordinating a Central Diary of visits for the Authority and three Area Health Boards.
- The Chairman welcomed Ms. Sile Fleming, recently appointed as Director of Human Resources to her first meeting of the Board.
- The Chairman proposed that the November meeting of the Board be changed to Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2001 at 6.00 p.m. in the Board Room, Dr. Steevens' Hospital. This is due to the fact that neither he nor the Vice-Chair will be available on the 1<sup>st</sup> November. This was agreed.
- The Chairman reported that a recent meeting of the Protocol Committee had decided to reschedule to the 30<sup>th</sup> November the visit to the ACAD Centre in Middlesex. The Committee also decided to defer to early 2002 the visit to Plymouth and North Devon. Any members interested in participating in the visit to the ACAD Centre should contact Ms. Helen Stokes.

**01/10/81 Report 24/01 (a) Maternity Services in the Eastern Region & Report 24/01 (b) Update on Report 24/01 (a) of 18<sup>th</sup> October 2001 on Maternity Services in the Eastern Region**

Mr. McLoughlin presented the abovenamed reports on Maternity Services in the Eastern Region (copies appended to official minute).

Following the presentation of the Reports a lengthy discussion took place to which the following members contributed, Dr. P. O'Connell, Dr. M. Molloy, Ms. M. Hoban, Mr. P. Ledwidge, Mr. J. Fallon, Mr. M. Cowley, Cllr. E. Byrne, Dr. S. Barry and the Chairman.

Among the issues raised were

- The dependability of projections of the number of births as set out in Report No. 14/01 which was presented to the Board in May 2001 and the need to continually monitor the trends in the number of births.
- The decision of the Masters of the three Dublin Hospitals regarding mothers of 32 weeks gestation.
- The ability to ring-fence special allowances to midwives.

- The possibility of the Maternity hospitals recruiting midwives overseas.

Mr. McLoughlin responded to issues raised as follows:

The figures in Report 14/01 are based on research carried out by the Small Area Health Research Unit at the Department of Community Health, Trinity College Dublin and were given to the Board in May 2001. We will continue to monitor trends and problems.

It has been made quite clear to the maternity hospitals that the Authority have a role and responsibility for maternity services policy in the eastern region.

All three hospitals have approval for capital developments.

Staffing levels are affected by issues such as the number of caesarian sections and other invasive procedures carried out.

The current number of vacancies for permanent midwives for the three hospitals is 100; of which 50 are filled by general nurses.

The Masters of the three Maternity Hospitals decided some months ago that in the case of women not normally resident in this country, those over 32 weeks gestation should remain in the Eastern Region until delivery. This led to a huge concentration of births in the Dublin hospitals. This decision has now been reviewed and pregnant women will be treated like all others unless there are medical or clinical reasons for continuing their care in Dublin.

Mr O Shea advised that in relation to the recent interview on Morning Ireland, he said that the interview broadcast was part of a 45 minute long interview. Only a snippet of the interview was played on Radio. By 9.30 a.m. that morning Mr O Shea had arranged a teleconference with the three Area Chief Executives and issued a statement by 11.30 a.m. that morning.

The three Masters of the Maternity Hospitals later issued a press statement in which they wished to reassure patients and staff of their confidence in the development of a solution to the current midwifery problem in conjunction with the ERHA.

**CORRECT**  
**Donal O Shea**  
**Chief Executive**

  
**ALDERMAN IVOR CALLELY TD**  
**Chairman**

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**DATE**