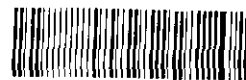
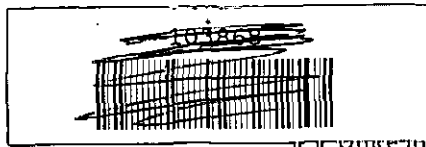


Office   
for  
Health   
management 

*Annual Report 1997*

Facilitating management development  
for the health services in Ireland





## Introduction

The national health strategy, 'Shaping a Healthier Future', recognised the need to strengthen the management capacity throughout the health and personal social services. It contained an explicit commitment to review recruitment procedures and management development programmes in order to produce a strategy for developing the required management capacity over the next decade.

A steering group was established by the Department of Health in 1996 which commissioned Drs Maureen Dixon and Alison Baker of Healthcare Risk Solutions Limited to prepare a strategy document for consideration by the group. They completed their work and the Minister for Health launched the *Management Development Strategy for the Health and Personal Social Services in Ireland* in March 1997. He gave a commitment to implement the more than 50 recommendations it contains.

The strategy is a comprehensive and valuable document. It can be obtained through the usual channels at your place of employment or directly from the Office for Health Management.

## Key Recommendations

Some of the key recommendations contained in the management development strategy are:

- specific and immediate action should be taken to overhaul recruitment and selection procedures to make them more open and flexible
- each employer should have in place good systems of job analysis and description and person specification
- individual and organisational performance review systems should be introduced
- there should be a clear relationship between personal development, management development and organisational and service objectives
- training budgets should be devolved to department or service level and managers should be held accountable for using these budgets in a way which demonstrably improves organisational performance
- health employers should introduce positive action programmes for women, ranging from recruitment and selection to flexible working arrangements and career development
- initiatives to support management development for professional and clinical staff should be pursued
- health employers should direct their spending on management development at programmes and courses which have been developed in close consultation with the health services
- managers at various stages in their career who can demonstrate the potential to move on rapidly should be able to access individually tailored career plans and related development programmes
- an office should be set up to begin the implementation process.

353.6

## Role of the Office for Health Management

The Office for Health Management was established to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations in the strategy, particularly those that relate directly to management development.

The Office is located at 26 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. Its staff are listed on page 8. It commenced full time operation in June 1997.

In our first newsletter we set out a number of guiding principles for our activities.

These were:

- The Office exists to facilitate management development in the Irish health services in order that patients will receive a better service, and that health and social gain will be maximised.
- The Office will seek to achieve this through developing managers who see this as their primary purpose.
- The Office belongs to all of the health service - Department of Health, health boards, voluntary hospitals and other providers of healthcare and all ancillary health agencies. Its mission is to add value to management development for the health services and not to duplicate the work of existing agencies.
- The Office will seek to break down barriers and promote understanding and communication across the different parts of the health services.
- The Office will actively seek to foster equal opportunities in the health services and achieve a more equitable gender balance in senior posts.
- The Office will seek to promote a positive managerial ethos throughout the health and personal social services, one that supports the goals in the national health strategy of equity, quality and accountability.

We see our primary role as being to facilitate management development for the health and personal social services. Our role is to act as a catalyst, moving the management development strategy forward. As our resources are limited, we must focus on certain priorities. Not all of the recommendations in the management development strategy fall within our domain. Some are the responsibility of employers, and some rest with the Department of Health.

The Office will concentrate, at least initially, on management development and not on management education, which is already well provided for. We will act as a commissioner of management development services. We intend to act also as a central resource and source of advice for employers on the use and practice of management development. We hope to identify best practices and provide information on such practices through our newsletter. In particular, we shall try to ensure that employers establish a clear link between the personal learning objectives of their staff and organisational/service objectives in their commissioning of management development initiatives. This is a key goal of the national management development strategy.

The Office has a role in influencing policy makers on management development issues through its participation in groups such as the Commission on Nursing and the Expert Group on Paramedics. We have been requested by the Department of Health to take on the responsibility for the commissioning of management development initiatives to increase the involvement of hospital consultants in management which will be facilitated through the implementation in 1998 of the new consultants' contract.

## Activities in 1997

### Working in Partnership

A major part of our work consists of ongoing consultation and contact with personnel and service managers throughout the health and personal social services. Thus, meetings are held with the health service employers to reflect on and to progress the implementation of the management development strategy at local level. We are endeavouring to get management development firmly on the agenda of every line manager so that it is not seen as being the responsibility of just the personnel or training manager.

We would like to see all employers translating the aims and aspirations of the national management development strategy into a local management development strategy for their own organisation.

### Consultation Mechanisms

Our first initiative was to consult with the main groups with an interest in the implementation of the management development strategy. With that in mind, we held a consultative workshop in Killiney on 5 June 1997 attended by representatives of employers, unions, providers of management development and selected experts. Based on the feedback received on that day, we drew up our plan of work for the remainder of the year.

A consultative group was also established to liaise with the Office on an ongoing basis. It comprises representatives of the health boards and voluntary agencies engaged in the provision of healthcare. It meets on a regular basis and acts as a sounding board and source of advice to the Office on its plans and activities. Its membership is listed on page 8.

A steering group was also established to advise the Office on its initiatives in relation to equal opportunities in the health services. We have also consulted with an ad hoc group of senior women managers working in the health and personal social services.

In addition meetings were held during the year with a number of individuals and groups that had expressed an interest in meeting with the Office for Health Management. These groups are listed on page 9. The groups to which the Office staff was invited to make a presentation on the role and activities of the Office for Health Management are also indicated.

We are particularly interested in forming links with the Northern Ireland health and personal social services and with that in mind we met with the cross-Border group Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) with a view to progressing this agenda. It is planned that some of the 1998 initiatives will be open to colleagues from Northern Ireland.

### Leadership Development Programmes

One of the key recommendations in the management development strategy was that a fast track register be established to identify high flyers at an early stage and provide structured development opportunities for them.

The feedback from the Killiney workshop was opposed to this proposal as being too elitist, threatening and de-motivating. It was agreed however, that action is needed to identify and unlock the potential talent within the system and ensure that barriers to advancement were removed. Any such initiatives however, have to be based on fair and transparent selection criteria and be seen as part of a package of measures directed at staff generally and not designed to create two tiers.

Bearing this feedback in mind and mindful of the need within the service for the development of strong and effective leaders at an early stage in their career, we decided, as an initial response, to commission two leadership development programmes for younger managers, aged under 35. A call for applications went out in August 1997. Two programmes were advertised, one for nurses with an interest in becoming nurse leaders and one for everyone working in the health and personal social services.

Over twenty providers of management development services throughout Europe were invited to submit proposals for this leadership development initiative. Following a rigorous selection procedure in which representatives of all parts of the health and personal social services participated, proposals were accepted as follows:

#### Nurse Leadership Development Programme:

To be provided by a partnership led by the Centre for Nursing Policy and Practice, University of Leeds, with the Institute of Public Administration and University College Cork.

#### General Management Leadership

##### Development Programme:

To be provided by the University of Birmingham's Health Services Management Centre and the Royal College of Surgeons.

Each programme will commence early in 1998 and will conclude in mid 1999. The programmes will involve day release from work for up to 20 days. Each participant will prepare a personal development plan that will form the basis for further personal development initiatives which participants will have to negotiate with their employer. These may include periods of shadowing, secondment, formal study, etc. Participants will also be assigned a personal mentor who will be a senior manager other than his/her line manager.

Applicants for these programmes had to make a case for their selection based on their record as a leader in either a work or non-work setting, their work-related achievements, and their potential as a health leader of the future. Leadership competencies were identified with the help of a selection agency and in consultation with a range of representatives of the health and personal social services. The selection process included the completion of behavioural rating scales by applicants and their line managers and group and individual interviews. Over two hundred applications were received for the approximately fifty places on offer between the two programmes. The selection process was nearing completion by the end of the year.

## Master Classes

Master Classes are typically a one day workshop led by a senior manager, usually from another system, who gives a presentation on some management issues and then works with the participants on their own issues and problems. Participation is by invitation only. In the autumn of this year we launched a series of Master Classes.

Five Master Classes were held in 1997. Two of these were held for the directors of nursing of the larger acute hospitals. The first was led by Wilma MacPherson, Director of Nursing and Quality at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Trust, London. She spoke of the strategic challenges facing nurse leaders and enabled the group to identify their own development needs. The Office for Health Management agreed to set up a series of further Master Classes for the group. Thus a second Master Class provided an update on current thinking in relation to clinical directorates and had speakers from UK and Irish hospitals with experience of clinical directorates.

Sister Elizabeth Davis, Chief Executive of St John's Healthcare in Newfoundland, Canada led three other Master Classes for different groups of managers. She challenged managers to become leaders of healthcare and to shape the future of healthcare in Ireland.

Further Master Classes for different groups of senior managers are planned for 1998. They will address topics such as managing professional services, change in the acute sector, nurse leadership in community-based services, and cost reduction through quality.

## Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities was an issue highlighted in the management development strategy and in particular the fact that, while women make up almost 75% of health service workers, only 7% of senior managers are female.

No overall consensus emerged from the Killiney workshop as to how this issue might be addressed. There was a strong feeling against anything that hinted of tokenism or discriminating in favour of women purely on the basis of their gender. Instead, it was argued, more could be achieved through more open and rigorous selection methods and greater flexibility in employment practices. The introduction of more family-friendly work practices would benefit both men and women. It was said that women tended to be put off by what was perceived as a 'macho' management culture and that this too needed to change.

To explore this issue further, a Master Class was held for woman managers in November. Employers were invited to nominate women to attend who had a managerial role or experience of introducing change. In the event, over sixty women from across the health service attended the Master Class that was given by Sister Elizabeth Davis, a leading Canadian healthcare chief executive, on the topic of 'One Woman's Experience of Managing Change'.

In the light of the feedback received from the Master Class and subsequent discussions with our consultative group, an invitation will be issued in the first newsletter of 1998 to women interested in forming women's regional networks to contact their personnel officer. We shall then assess the interest in forming such networks.

## Newsletters

We use our newsletters to communicate with employers, staff who have an interest in management in the health and personal social services, staff associations, and the universities, colleges and institutes that provide management development services. Newsletters are circulated to all employers in the health and personal social services in Ireland and, through them, to their staff with managerial responsibility. In all, approximately 10,000 copies of each newsletter are circulated. Four newsletters were produced during 1997.

The first newsletter introduced the Office for Health Management, explained its role and introduced its staff. The second newsletter reported on the findings of the consultative workshop held in June on the management development strategy. The third newsletter focused on the topic of leadership in the health and personal social services and invited applications for the leadership development programmes. The issue of women in management was addressed in the final newsletter of 1997 and included articles by three leading women managers on their experiences.

## Liaison with Providers

We have also started to establish contacts with providers of management development both in Ireland and elsewhere. This is to enable us to commission programmes and to examine the extent and variety of what is currently being provided.

Thus in 1997 meetings were held with a number of providers of management development and consultancy services. A database of information on interested providers is being compiled which health service employers can access. A number of management development initiatives from different providers may be commissioned on a pilot basis and evaluated during 1998.

## Planned future work

At the end of 1997 planning work was undertaken for two projects to be completed early in 1998. One of these we are calling the Acorn Programme on the basis that we hope that it will lead to significant management changes in the future.

The programme centres on a management simulation exercise that the Office for Public Management has carried out successfully in the UK and the US.

The programme is designed to have impacts on several levels. It aims to enable participants enlarge the range of managerial styles they use and to get immediate and practical feedback on their managerial performance in a non-threatening setting. We shall also be writing it up as a research exercise that will be circulated as giving some evidence of managerial styles and issues in the Irish health service. Finally, we see it as being a demonstration project that should raise consciousness throughout the system on issues pertaining to the differences in managerial style across gender and professional/disciplinary background.

We have commissioned the Office for Public Management to carry out this programme for us in Tullamore in February 1998.

A second initiative will be a stock taking of managerial skills and talents in the health service. We believe there is a pressing need within the health and personal social services in Ireland to develop a better knowledge of the existing skills and talents of staff. This will enable employers to make better use of staff, facilitate personal development and help us in the Office for Health Management to identify future development needs.

Accordingly, we are asking employers to collaborate with us in a novel venture in 1998. Interested staff will be asked to participate in this exercise. Participation will involve completing a short questionnaire giving details of their skills and qualifications. This information will then be computerised and will enable each employer to identify the skills and talents of their employees. It is intended that this will facilitate the formulation of personal development plans for those who desire them.

This information will represent the first systematic analysis of the skills and qualifications of health services staff.

## Conclusion

We have been very heartened by the enthusiasm with which the management development strategy has been greeted throughout the service. We are also most grateful to those who have collaborated with us during the short time we have been in existence.

There is only so much however that the Office can achieve by itself and it is dependent on the collaboration and support of those working within the system. We will be acting in partnership with all of the players in the health and personal social services in implementing the strategy. We all have a part to play. As stated in the management development strategy, "most needed is the will to change".

## In Memory

During the year we learned with great sadness of the death after a short illness of Dr Maureen Dixon, joint author of the Management Development Strategy for the Health and Personal Social Services in Ireland. We hope that we can do justice to the major contribution that Maureen made in devising the strategy which stands as a testimony to her energy and commitment.



## Office for Health Management staff

Director: Denis Doherty

Deputy Director: Laraine Joyce

General Manager: Alan Smith

Administrative Assistants: Claire Moyles and Patricia Brazil

## Members of consultative group

Larry Bane, Personnel Officer, Midland Health Board

Pat Bruen, Personnel Officer, Mater Misericordiae Hospital

John Byrne, Personnel Officer, Mid-Western Health Board

Noel Cassidy, Personnel Officer, St Vincent's Hospital, Elm Park

Denis Fenton, Personnel Officer, Southern Health Board

Pat Gaughan, Personnel Officer, North Western Health Board

Mary Kelly, Personnel Officer, Eastern Health Board

Michael O'Hagan, Personnel Officer, St James' Hospital

Dermot O'Neill, Personnel Officer, Beaumont Hospital

John Pepper, Personnel Officer, Hospitaller Order of St John of Gods

Mairead Shields, Personnel Officer, Adelaide and Meath Hospital incorporating National Childrens Hospital

John Sullivan, Personnel Officer, Western Health Board

Vivienne Tegg, Personnel Officer, South Eastern Health Board

Larry Walsh, Personnel Officer, North Eastern Health Board

In addition, three representatives of the Association of Hospital Chief Executives and two representatives of the Disability Federation of Ireland attend.

## Meetings with providers of management development

Centre for Nursing Policy and Practice, University of Leeds  
Chrysalis Management Solutions Ltd.  
Converge  
Coverdale  
Department of Nursing Studies, University College Cork  
Dublin Institute of Technology  
Faculty of Health Sciences, Trinity College, Dublin  
H Training  
Hay Management Consultants Ltd.  
Healthcare Management Centre,  
Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland  
Health Services Centre, University of Birmingham  
Institute of Public Administration  
King Fund Management College  
MAS Partnership  
National College of Industrial Relations  
Open University  
Pacific Institute  
Resource Management Associates  
Trinity Institute  
University of Limerick

## Presentations to and meetings with groups on the role and activities of the Office for Health Management

Academy of Medical Laboratory Science  
Association of Hospital Chief Executives  
Chief Ambulance Officers  
Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT)  
Department of Health  
Disability Federation of Ireland  
Hospital Pharmacists Association, Ireland  
Irish Association Sterile Services Managers  
Irish Health Services Management Institute (Cork)  
Irish Health Services Management Institute (Dublin)  
Irish Nurses Organisation  
Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland  
Staff Nurse/Midwife, Development Course Programme,  
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda

26 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 | Tel: 01 475 4044 | Fax: 01 475 4066 | email [ohm@tinet.ie](mailto:ohm@tinet.ie)