

**Minutes of Regional Health Forum, Dublin- Mid Leinster Meeting held
On Tuesday 21st February 2012, at the Boardroom, HSE Dublin – Mid Leinster
Offices, Block 4, Central Business Park, Clonminch, Tullamore, Co. Offaly**

Present:

Cllr. D. O’Callaghan (Chairperson)
Cllr. P. Belton
Cllr. B. Brennan
Cllr. P. Burke
Cllr. T. Cullen
Cllr. M. Devine
Cllr. P. Doran
Cllr. P. Hand
Cllr. I. Keatley
Cllr. S. Langan
Cllr. C. NiDhalaigh
Cllr. G. O’Connell
Cllr. D. Mitchell

Cllr. W. Aird
Cllr. V. Blake
Cllr. F. Browne
Cllr. C. Byrne
Cllr. A. Davitt
Cllr. M. Dollard
Cllr. M. Duff
Cllr. G. Horkan
Cllr. C. King
Cllr. T. McKeigue
Cllr. K. O’Brien
Cllr. P.J. Reilly

Apologies:

Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne
Cllr. V. Jackson

In attendance:

Mr. John Cregan, Director, RHO, Dublin – Mid Leinster.
Mr. Gerry O’Dwyer, Regional Director of Operations, Dublin – Mid Leinster.
Mr. Jim Curran, Assistant National Director of Estates, HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster.
Ms. Mary Gorry, Assistant National Director of Human Resources.
Mr. Declan Lyons, Assistant National Director of Finance.
Mr. Gerry O’Neill, Integrated Services Area Manager.
Ms. Martina Queally, Integrated Services Area Manager.
Mr. David Walsh, Integrated Services Area Manager.
Ms. Dymphna Bracken, Communications Manager, Dublin – Mid Leinster.

12:01:01 Adoption of minutes of meeting of the Regional Health Forum,
Dublin – Mid Leinster held on Tuesday, 15th November 2011.

On the proposal of Cllr. P.J. Reilly, seconded by Cllr. W. Aird, the
minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th November 2011 were
adopted.

12:01:02 Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr. D. O'Callaghan, Chairperson, advised members that a meeting between the four Forum Chairpersons and the Minister for Health scheduled to take place on Monday 23rd January 2012 was cancelled. Cllr. O'Callaghan also stated that he will advise members when the meeting is rescheduled.

Cllr. D. O'Callaghan, Chairperson stated that, at the request of Cllr. K. O'Brien and Cllr. W. Aird, he had accepted a petition from Shaen Hospital Action Group with a covering letter addressed to Mr. Joe Ruane regarding the closure of the Hospital. The Chairman then handed the petition to Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer, Regional Director of Operations.

Cllr. D. O'Callaghan, Chairperson, informed the meeting that he had been advised by Wicklow County Council that Cllr. Derek Mitchell had replaced Cllr. John Ryan on the Dublin – Mid Leinster Regional Health Forum.

Members expressed concerns regarding the centralised system for applications for medical cards and, following discussion, it was agreed that a representative of the Primary Care Reimbursement Unit would be asked to make a presentation to the Joint Committee meeting scheduled to take place on 20th March 2012.

12:01:03 Noting of Regional Health Forum, Dublin – Mid Leinster Annual Report 2011.

Members noted the above report

12:01:04 Noting of report of Joint Committee Chairperson for the Acute Hospital Services and Population Health and Primary Community and Continuing Care Committees.

Members noted the above report.

12:01:05 HSE Update: Service Plan 2012

The Integrated Services Area Managers presented reports on various aspects of the Service Plan 2012 as follows:

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer, Regional Director of Operations – Overview and Acute Hospital Services

Mr. Declan Lyons, Assistant National Director of Finance – Finance.

Ms. Mary Gorry, Assistant National Director of HR – Human Resources.

Ms. Martina Queally, Integrated Services Area Manager – Primary Care Services.

Mr. Gerry O'Neill, Integrated Services Area Manager – Disability Services, Mental Health Services.

Mr. David Walsh, Integrated Services Area Manager – Older Persons Services

Mr. Jim Curran, Assistant National Director of Estates – Capital Plan.

Following the above presentations members raised the following issues:

- Bed Closures

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that seasonal bed closures will take place as in previous years. Bed closures will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and members will be updated in this regard.

- Orthopaedic Surgery – Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that there is now a national orthopaedic plan and it is expected that previously encountered problems with orthopaedic surgery will not recur.

- National Rehabilitation Unit, Dun Laoghaire.

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that a national rehabilitation programme is currently being rolled out and that it is planned to provide more rehabilitation units throughout the country in order to alleviate demand on the National Rehabilitation Unit, Dun Laoghaire. Mr. O'Dwyer also stated that a presentation on the National Rehabilitation Plan will be placed on the agenda of a future Forum meeting.

- Charges for private beds in acute hospitals

Mr. Declan Lyons stated that private patients using acute hospital beds will be charged in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions.

- Future of Forum

In relation to the future of Forums, Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer referred to the meeting due to take place between the Minister for Health and Chairpersons of the four regional foras.

- Delays in Emergency Departments

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that delays in Emergency Departments are being monitored on an ongoing basis and it is planned that all patients will be discharged or admitted within six hours.

- Fair Deal Scheme

Mr. David Walsh stated that it can take up to four weeks to process applications and that there is a need for step down beds to provide non-acute services to patients awaiting admission to longterm care. Mr. Walsh also stated that work is currently ongoing to create resources outside Fair Deal scheme to provide appropriate beds.

- Retirements

Mr. G. O'Dwyer stated that staff retiring from critical posts will be replaced.

- Income from Private Health Insurance

Mr. Declan Lyons stated that additional income from private health insurance is included in the allocation.

- Palliative Care Services – Wicklow area

Ms. Martina Queally stated that the provision of palliative care is a priority of Integrated Services Area in Wicklow and that HSE management are meeting with a local group regarding Palliative Care in Bray and Wicklow in the near future.

- Ambulance Services – Wicklow Area

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that ambulance services in Wicklow are currently under review and that he will revert to members when the outcome is available.

- Home Help Services

Mr. David Walsh stated that home help services are under review and that services provided in future will be focused on care rather than household duties.

- Mental Health Services

Mr. Gerry O'Neill stated that mental health services in the Midland area are moving towards care in the Community.

- Closure of Public Longstay Beds

Mr. David Walsh stated the number of bed closures will depend on the number of staff leaving the service and, also, the outcome of the consultation process at St. Brigid's Hospital Shaen, and Abbeyleix Hospitals.

- GP Out of Hours Service Tallaght and Bray.

Ms. Martina Queally confirmed that the above Out of Hours Service will include Greystones.

- Transport Services

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that transport services are currently being reviewed by the Ambulance Service and that requests for provision of transport for patients are being reviewed on a case by case basis.

- Primary Care Centre, Longford

Mr. Jim Curran stated that work is due to commence on the above Primary Care Centre at the end of March 2012 and it should be completed within three months from that date.

Any Other business

Cllr. T. McKeigue requested details regarding communication to public representatives in relation to the opening of new services within their area. Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer stated that all local managers adhere to protocol regarding opening of new facilities.

12:01:06 Confirmation of motion adopted by Joint Committee on 20th December 2011 in relation to date of compulsory compliance With HIQA nursing home standards.

Members confirmed the motion and the Department of Health is being advised accordingly.

12:01:07 Motions

Motion 1.

That the HSE provide the following information:

Budget for Midland Regional Hospital, Mullingar for 2012 and how does it compare to 2009, 2010, 2011.

Cllr. M. Dollard.

This motion was not moved as Cllr. Dollard had left the meeting.

Motion 2.

That the Regional Health Forum, Dublin – Mid Leinster asks the Minister for Health, Dr. James Reilly and the HSE to reverse the 37% cut in the Rehabilitation Training Allowance for those people who are working at the National Learning Network, Broomhill Road, Tallaght, Dublin 14.

Cllr. E. Walsh

A response to this motion was prepared by Ms. Marion Meany, lead LHM, Disabilities. Members noted the response.

Motion 3.

That the HSE give an up to date report on the present position regarding St. Brigid's Hospital, Shaen and Abbeylax Hospital.

Cllr. W. Aird

A response to this motion was prepared by Mr. Joe Ruane, Area Manager, HSE Midlands. Members noted the response.

Motion 4.

That the HSE outline its plan in County Kildare for the establishment of primary care Units and the timescale for their establishment.

Cllr. I. Keatley

A response to this motion was prepared by Mr. David Walsh, Area Manager. Following discussion Mr. Walsh agreed to contact Cllr. S. Langan regarding Kilcullen and Athy. Members noted the response.

Motion 5.

This Forum calls for the retention of St. Brigid's Nursing Home, Crooksling, as a public nursing home and expresses its grave concern at and opposition to the ongoing threat to close this and other public nursing homes and nursing home beds and the hugely negative impact this would have on the care of our older citizens.

Cllrs M. Devine and C. King

A resport to this motion was prepared by Mr. David Walsh, Area Manager. Following discussion, members noted the report.

Motion 6.

That the HSE enter into negotiations with the Minister Dr. James Reilly to ensure that the recruitment embargo on frontline staff be lifted immediately in our hospitals and, also to ensure that the Maternity Unit, Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise is fully staffed due to the retirement of five midwives and nurses.

Cllr. K. O'Brien

A response to this motion was prepared by Ms. Mary Gorry, Assistant National Director, Human Resources. Members noted the response.

Motion 7.

That this forum would call on the Minister for Health to convert the hours worked by agency staff nurses to direct employment, given that the employment of staff directly has significant cost and continuity of care benefits for the HSE and service users.

Cllr. P. Burke

This motion was not moved as Cllr. Burke was not in attendance.

12:01:08 Questions

Responses to questions submitted were circulated to members.

Signed: _____
Cllr. Denis O'Callaghan
Chairperson
Regional Health Forum
Dublin-Mid Leinster

Date: _____