

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Regional Health Forum, Dublin Mid
Leinster held on Tuesday 17th February 2015 at the Boardroom, HSE
Area Office, Arden Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.**

Present:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Cllr. W. Aird | 18. Cllr. C. King |
| 2. Cllr. P. Brady | 19. Cllr. J. King |
| 3. Cllr. V. Casserly | 20. Cllr. A. Larkin |
| 4. Cllr. T. Cullen | 21. Cllr. R McHugh |
| 5. Cllr. M. Dalton | 22. Cllr. T. McKeigue |
| 6. Cllr. M. Devine | 23. Cllr. S. O'Brien |
| 7. Cllr. M. Dollard | 24. Cllr. K. O'Connell |
| 8. Cllr. P. Doran | 25. Cllr. C. O'Connor (Chairperson) |
| 9. Cllr. K. Feeney | 26. Cllr. D. O'Donovan |
| 10. Cllr. E. Fitzpatrick | 27. Cllr. G. O'Neill |
| 11. Cllr. P. Fleming | 28. Cllr. P. O'Toole |
| 12. Cllr. P. Hand | 29. Cllr. T. Redmond |
| 13. Cllr. I. Winters | 30. Cllr. P.J. Reilly |
| 14. Cllr. V. Jackson | 31. Cllr. P. Ward |
| 15. Cllr. F. Keena | 32. Cllr. M. Duff |
| 16. Cllr G. Kelly | |
| 17. Cllr. B. Killeavy | |

Apologies:

Cllr. Dermot Lacey
Cllr. Brendan Weld
Cllr. Catherine Martin
Cllr. Paul Gogarty
Dr. Phil Jennings, Director of Public Health, Dublin Mid-Leinster

In attendance:

Mr. Joseph Ruane, Area Manager, HSE DML - Midlands Area and Interim Lead,
Regional Health Forum DML
Mr. David Walsh, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation 7, South
Dublin/Kildare/West Wicklow, Health Service Executive
Ms. Martina Queally, Chief Officer, CHO Area 6, Dublin South East / Wicklow
Mr. Pat Bennett, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation 8, Longford
/ Westmeath/Laois/Offaly/Louth/Meath
Mr. Kilian McGrane, Deputy Group CEO, Ireland East Hospital Group
Dr. Susan O'Reilly, CEO, Dublin Midlands Hospital Group
Ms. Eilish Hardiman, CEO, Children's Hospital Group
Ms. Dymphna Bracken, Communications, Dublin Mid-Leinster
Ms. Debbie Keyes, Regional Manager Consumer Affairs, HSE Dublin Mid-
Leinster,
Ms. Helen Stokes, Dublin Midlands Hospital Group

15:01:01

Deputation from the Genetic & Rare Disorders Organisation (GRDO).

Cllr. O'Connor, Chairperson proposed that Standing Orders were suspended for ten minutes, in order to facilitate members wishes to ask questions following the deputation. This was seconded by Cllr Larkin. All members present were in agreement and standing orders were duly suspended.

Cllr. O'Connor welcomed Ms Anne Lawlor and Ms Patricia Towhey from the Genetic and Rare Disorders Organisation to the Forum meeting. Both Ms Lawler and Ms Towhey addressed the meeting in relation to their organisation and the needs of their members and thanked the Chairperson and the Forum for the opportunity to address the Forum.

As ten minutes had elapsed Cllr Mick Duff proposed that the Standing Orders were suspended for a further ten minutes. The proposal was seconded by Cllr O Toole.

Members acknowledged the value in hearing the voice of the patient and the importance of genetic testing.

The following issues were discussed:

- Level of resources available for the service. Ms Hardiman acknowledged that additional resources were required for the service and she briefed the meeting regarding the national group that was in place to develop a plan for the genetic service.
- The process in relation to genetic testing for adoptees and access to information relating to their parents. Ms Towhey advised that if a patient has a date of birth it may be possible to trace birth parents' information, however normally genetic testing is carried out only when symptoms are present.
- Access to records. Ms Hardiman advised that hospitals offer routine access to files as required.
- It was suggested that the GRDO may wish to submit motions for the forthcoming Annual Conferences of the Nursing Unions and other representative bodies.
- In response to queries regarding the level of screening which takes place, Dr O Reilly advised that the National Cancer Control Programme had a strong focus on genetic testing and the NCCP in partnership with Prof Greene had doubled the level of testing.
- Concern was expressed regarding, removing 'National' from the name of the genetic service. Members agreed to write to the Minister for Health requesting that National be retained in the name of the service.

- Members queried whether or not there was a private service given the two year waiting list for the public service. It was clarified that the service provided in Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin was a public service however some private hospitals provide genetic testing.
- Concerns were also raised regarding the Chairmanship of Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin (OLCHC) Board by the Archbishop of Dublin, particularly in relation to ethical issues relating to the genetic service. Ms Hardiman stated that this issue had already been addressed by the CEO of the hospital. It was agreed that the CEO of OLCHC would be asked to formally respond to the Forum in this regard.
- Members agreed to discuss an issue relating to restricted parking at Our Lady's Hospital Crumlin due to building works. The Order of Malta in Drimnagh can no longer park their ambulances in the grounds of OLCHC due to the ongoing works and they required access to parking at the Blind Craft Site on the Davitte Rd, Drimnagh. Ms. Hardiman advised that Dublin City Council are working with OLCHC and the Order of Malta to make appropriate arrangements.

15:01:02 Adoption of Minutes of the Regional Health Forum Dublin Mid Leinster Annual Meeting held on 18th of November 2014.

On the proposal of Cllr. Reilly, seconded by Cllr. O' Toole, the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th of November 2014 were then adopted.

As there were a number of changes to the Executive Team the members were introduced to the Forum.

15:01:03 Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr. O'Connor read the response received from The Tanaiste and Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton T.D. in relation to the process involved in moving from Domiciliary Care Allowance to Carer's Allowance, acknowledging correspondence received and advising that it was receiving attention.

Cllr. O'Connor acknowledged Cllr. Casserly's request for a presentation.

He also acknowledged correspondence received from Wicklow County Council regarding the replacement of Cllr. Vincent Blake by Cllr. Irene Winters. Cllr. O'Connor thanked Cllr. Blake for his service and he also welcomed Cllr. Winters to the meeting.

15:01:04 Noting of report of Joint Committee Chairperson for the Acute Hospital Services and Population Health and Primary Community and Continuing Care Committees.

Cllr. McKeigue proposed and Cllr. Redmond seconded the noting of the report.

15:01:05 Noting of Regional Health Forum, Dublin – Mid Leinster Annual Report 2014.

Cllr Mick Duff proposed and Cllr Doran seconded the noting of the 2014 Annual Report.

15.01.06 HSE Update – Service Plan 2015.

Community Healthcare Organisation 7

Mr David Walsh, Chief Officer, made a presentation to the Forum in relation to Community Healthcare Organisation 7, South Dublin, Kildare and West Wicklow. He also provided members with a copy of the Area Plan for Community Healthcare Organisation 7 for 2015. Members raised a number of queries and Mr Walsh requested that they review the document which contained a substantial amount of information and if members had queries he would be happy to answer them at the next meeting or by email in the meantime.

Cherry Orchard Hospital

Members complimented the services provided on the Cherry Orchard campus and Mr Walsh thanked the members and agreed to relay their kind words to staff.

Primary Care Centres

Members queried whether or not Primary Care Centres were planned for Athy and Tallaght. Mr Walsh advised that the Tallaght Primary Care Centre was due to open in the near future and he agreed to check the position in relation to Athy and respond directly to the member.

Home Help Services and Home Care Packages

Members raised concerns regarding Home Help Services and Home Care Packages available in the area. Mr Walsh advised that there are a number of initiatives being implemented across hospital and community to improve service provision including Tallaght, St Vincents and St James Hospitals.

Disability Services

Members referred to the needs of persons with disabilities in particular the changing needs of older persons with intellectual disability. The variability in service provision in relation to access to early intervention teams was also highlighted. Mr Walsh advised that disability services were continuing to evolve and that families needed to be included in the process to develop solutions to meet the needs of patients and carers.

Homeless Services

Members expressed concern regarding recent issue relating to Aungiers Street Service. Mr Walsh was aware of the issue and confirmed that nobody was satisfied with the outcome and that the HSEs intention was to centralise homeless services for the greater Dublin area.

Drugs Task Forces

Mr Walsh agreed to respond directly to members who raised issues in relation to Drugs Task Force.

GP Out of Hours Services

In response to queries relation to funding of GP Out of Hours Services Mr Walsh stated that PCRS provided some funding in relation to infrastructure and paid special type consultation fees in relation to patient consultations. He also advised that feedback in relation to services was positive.

Community Healthcare Organisation 6

Ms Martina Queally, Chief Officer, made a presentation to the Forum in relation to Community Healthcare Organisation 6, South Dublin South East / Wicklow. She also provided members with a copy of the Draft Area Plan for Community Healthcare Organisation 6 for 2015.

Sexual Health Strategy

In response to a query regarding the publication of the Sexual Health Strategy, Ms Queally advised that she would check the date and revert to the member directly. She further stated that once the strategy was published any gaps in service would be identified and funding would be sought to address the need.

Engagement with Local Authorities with regard to Domestic Violence

Ms Queally informed the meeting that the HSE engaged with local authorities regarding specific issues in relation to domestic violence. She had a good meeting recently with the County Managers.

Waiting times for assessment in relation to Autism

In response to a question in relation to waiting times for assessments Ms Queally advised that assessments and intervention may involve a team assessment rather than just a Clinical psychologist. She agreed to respond directly to members in relation to specific queries.

Suicide Prevention

Members sought clarification regarding support for people under severe financial strain particularly in their dealings with financial institutions.

Ms Queally acknowledged the members concerns however she advised that the HSE did not engage directly with the financial institutions. She further stated the HSE works with local partnerships and national groups in relation to suicide prevention.

Community Healthcare Organisation 8

Mr Pat Bennett, Chief Officer, made a presentation to the Forum in relation to Community Healthcare Organisation 8, Longford Westmeath, Laois, Offaly, Louth, Meath. He advised members that a copy of the Area Plan for Community Healthcare Organisation 8 for 2015 would be issued to them. Members thanked Mr Ruane for his hard work and commitment as Area Manager and they welcomed Mr. Bennett to his new post.

Abbeyleix and Shaen Hospitals

Members voiced their concerns regarding the future of Abbeyleix, Shaen and Mountmellick Hospitals. They were of the view that the hospitals made a valuable contribution and should remain open. Mr Bennett replied that the services at Abbeyleix, Shaen and Mountmellick were under ongoing review and no decision had yet been made on their future. All three hospitals faced challenges in relation to compliance with the HIQA standards.

Cllr Aird proposed that the meeting extend beyond 5pm and this was seconded by Cllr Waters.

Mental Health Services

Members queried if the increase in size of the area would present a challenge particularly in relation to Mental Health Services. Mr Bennett advised that service integration can be challenging but will also provide opportunities and services will be reviewed on an ongoing basis with a view to overall service improvement.

St Vincent's Care Centre and Hospice.

In response to a specific query regarding the hospice service in Athlone Mr Bennett advised that even though the patient in question was not accommodated in Athlone an alternative service was provided for the patient. He further stated that the service needed to be reviewed with a view to maximising the use of available resources.

Homecare Packages

Members were concerned about the level of Home Help and Homecare Packages available in the area particularly in light of the pressure on Emergency Departments. Mr Bennett acknowledged the importance of patients being cared for in the appropriate setting with appropriate supports. He also advised that there was close cooperation with Hospital colleagues and every effort was made to facilitate early discharge of patients.

15:01:07 **Motions.**

Motion 1

That the Health Service Executive would indicate the number of women who availed of the breast check programme in Co Westmeath during 2014.

Cllr. Michael Dollard

A report was reported by Dr. Stephanie O’Keeffe. Cllr. Dollard asked when the full figures will be available. Dr Susan O’Reilly responded to Cllr Dollard’s queries.

Motion 2

We call on the Minister for Health and the HSE to recruit additional staff for the Midland Regional Hospital Mullingar so that wards can be reopened thus reducing the number of people on trollies in the Accident and Emergency Department.

Cllr. P. J. Reilly

A report on this motion was prepared by Ms Mary Day. Mr Killian McGrane responded to questions from Cllr Reilly. Members noted the report

Motion 3

We call on the Minister for Health and the HSE to give the utmost consideration to opening a number of beds at St. Joseph's Hospital Longford for use as a step-down facility with a view to alleviating the over-crowding in the Accident and Emergency Department at the Midland Regional Hospital Mullingar.

Cllr. Pádraig Brady

A report on this motion was prepared by Mr Pat Bennett. Mr Bennett and Mr Ruane responded to queries from members. Members noted the report

Motion 4

We request that the HSE restore the level of homecare packages that pertained circa 2008/2009 to enable as many of our elderly citizens remain in their homes for as long as possible (as the vast majority wish to do anyway) as with the two previous motions this would alleviate the pressure on our acute hospitals such as Mullingar and Tullamore.

This proposal has the potential to create thousands of jobs across the country and keep the majority of our highly trained social care graduates employed in their local communities and, compared to the cost of a bed in our public or private nursing homes would be very cost effective.

Cllr. Pat O'Toole

A report on this motion was prepared by Mr Pat Bennett. Mr Bennett and Mr Ruane responded to queries from members. Members noted the report

Motion 5

That the H.S.E. provide this Forum with an up to date report on the recent overcrowding of the A.&.E Departments in some of the Hospitals throughout this Region and provide a year on year comparison regards numbers attending staffing levels etc.

Cllr. Tommy McKeigue

A report on this motion was prepared by Dr Susan O Reilly and Ms Mary Day. Members noted the report.

Motion 6

That this Forum calls on the HSE to reverse its recent decision in respect of patients at Springfield Medical Centre Tallaght Dublin 24 noting that these patients wish to continue to access GP services at the practice in Springfield and not be asked to travel to another centre.

Cllr. Charlie O'Connor

A report on this motion was prepared by Mr David Walsh. Following discussion, Mr Walsh agreed to follow up directly with Cllr O'Connor with regard to his concerns regarding this service. Members noted the report.

Motion 7

That this Regional Health Forum, Dublin –Mid Leinster calls on the HSE to state their long term plans for the St. Vincent's Day Care Centre, Abbey Road, Athlone particularly following the ongoing eroding of services in the centre.

Cllr. Frankie Keena

A report on this motion was prepared by Mr Pat Bennett. Mr Bennett and Mr Ruane responded to queries from members. Members noted the report

Motion 8

That we ask the HSE to make a mobile app or application that would be easy to use and very useful for both patients and staff. Items that could be examined and placed on this could be position on the waiting lists. A checklist before going into hospital, locations of health departments and hospitals etc. This does not need to cost more than a couple of thousand euros and could be one of the most important things to happen to the Irish Health Service in years.

Cllr. Thomas Redmond

A response was prepared for the Members on this by Mr. Liam Woods.

Cllr. Casserly noticed a van parked in a disabled parking spot in the car park of this HSE building. She stated that this practice is unacceptable. Mr. Ruane agreed to review the position.

15:01:08

Questions

Responses to questions submitted were circulated to members.

The meeting was adjourned.

Signed:_____

Cllr. Charlie O'Connor
Chairperson
Regional Health Forum
Dublin – Mid Leinster

Date:_____