

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TOIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2021 AT 2:00PM

By Microsoft Teams

**Members Present**

Cllr. Daryl Barron  
Cllr. Mary Callaghan  
Cllr. Michelle Hall  
Cllr. Howard Mahony  
Cllr. Ray McAdam  
Cllr. Patricia Roe  
Cllr. Gillian Toole

Cllr. Tom Behan  
Cllr. Kieran Dennison  
Cllr. Adrian Henchy  
Cllr. Brigid Manton  
Cllr. Brian McKenna  
Cllr. Trevor Smith  
Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Cllr. Christy Burke  
Cllr. Aiden Fitzpatrick  
Cllr. Deirdre Heney  
Cllr. David Maxwell  
Cllr. Eoghan O'Brien  
Cllr. Emer Tóibín

**Not in Attendance**

Cllr. Séamus Coyle  
Cllr. Séamas McGrattan  
Cllr. Niamh Souhan

Cllr. Sean Kelly  
Cllr. Ruairi Ó Murchu

Cllr. Craig Lovett  
Cllr. Aisling O'Neill

**Apologies**

Cllr. Colm O'Rourke

Cllr. John Sheridan

**Officials Present**

Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County  
Ms. Aoife O'Sullivan, Lead Manager, Regional Health Office  
Ms. Fiona Murphy, CEO, National Screening Service  
Dr. Caroline Mason Mohan, Director of Public Health, National Screening Service  
Mr. Joe Ruane, Head of Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO  
Ms. Elaine McGuinness, Service Feedback Manager, CHO Dublin North City & County  
Ms. Katherine Kellett, Regional Health Office – HSE DNE  
Ms. Lorraine Timmons, Regional Health Office – HSE DNE

Cllr. Adrian Henchy, Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting of the Forum, which was being held through Microsoft Teams, and outlined the process in terms of making contributions throughout the meeting.

**1. Adoption of minutes of meeting held on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2020 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. Howard Mahony and seconded by Cllr. Ray McAdam.

**2. Health Service Executive Updates**

Ms. Aoife O'Sullivan, Communications Manager, Regional Health Office, gave a report to the meeting which dealt with the following:-

- HSE and Age Action launch older-age friendly guide to COVID Tracker App;
- Cavan Monaghan Covid-19 Community Assessment Hub;
- HSE Q4Digital Academy - Showcase of new disruptive technologies and Digital Health Living Labs;
- Organ Donation Saves Lives;
- Research shows 4 in 5 people who smoke intend to Quit;
- HSE launch ADHD in Adults National Clinical Programme Model of Care;
- Health Matters.

Questions and Answers:

- **Proposal that information from the staff magazine Health Matters be produced into a public publication.**

Suggestion to be fed back to relevant department.

- **The relocation of addiction service from Navan to Drogheda.**

There has been a challenge in relation to sourcing appropriate accommodation in Navan and the HSE have explored all options in this case. To ensure that the service was maintained, an appropriate, fit for purpose building was located in Drogheda.

- **Possible premises sourced by Meath Alcohol Drug and Alcohol Team which may be mutually beneficial.**

This would be welcomed. Councillor agreed to liaise with Head of Service directly.

The report was noted by the Forum.

## **Updates on Covid-19**

Mr. Joe Ruane, Head of Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO and Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County gave verbal updates on Covid-19, testing and vaccinations in their respective CHO area.

Questions and Answers:

- **Antibody testing to be considered whilst awaiting vaccine supplies.**

Robust serial testing is already in place in respect of nursing homes and meat plants, and is also due to commence in disability services.

- **Details on any increase in frontline staff since March 2020.**

There has been a significant increase in frontline staff. A breakdown was provided to members.

- **Rollout of vaccinations for Dublin fire fighters and the National Ambulance Service (NAS).**

Dublin Fire Brigade are being considered for vaccination as they also provide an ambulance service. There are very clear sequencing guidelines for vaccine rollout.

- **Vaccinations for Br. Kevin and the Capuchin community who provide essential meals to the homeless.**

CHO DNCC have highlighted nationally the importance of their inclusion in the rollout.

- **Request for clarification on numbers permitted to physically meet in addiction services.**

A response will be provided.

- **Concerns from frontline staff of a possible delay in the administration of the second dose of vaccine.**

Staff can be assured they will receive their second dose of vaccine.

- **Issues around medicalcard.ie – difficulties in obtaining documentation due to current restrictions in place, contact with the service and lack of feedback.**

Issues will be followed up with PCRS.

- **Ventilation in nursing homes.**

The majority of nursing homes are very new modern buildings with single rooms for residents ensuring adequate supply of fresh air.

- **Collection of Covid-19 data on areas such as social deprivation and ethnicity.**

A request will be made for the Health Intelligence Unit to present to the Forum at a future date.

- **Update on vaccination of carers, childcare providers, frail and elderly at home and other groups.**

A clear sequencing document has been produced on vaccination rollout with the top priorities being nursing home residents, healthcare workers and over 70s. The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) has recently had its membership extended to enhance the clinical expertise in infectious disease.

- **Clarification on whether daily SARS COV2 death figures include people dying from cancers, cardiac conditions and other health conditions.**

A response will be provided.

### 3. **Presentation on Screening Programmes**

Ms. Fiona Murphy, CEO, National Screening Service and Dr. Caroline Mason Mohan, Director of Public Health, National Screening Service gave a presentation to members on Screening Programmes.

Questions and Answers:

- **Additional mobile units for North Inner City and request that this area be prioritised for a mobile unit once BreastCheck recommences.**

The service aims to place units in areas of high footfall, such as shopping centres, etc. Funding has been approved for two new mobile units - one to be near the Mater Hospital.

- **Need for public to be aware that screening is not diagnostic - plans to communicate this message to the public.**

The message is outlined in invitations and consent documentation, however, the NSS are exploring alternative communication methods and public awareness campaigns.

- **Breast screening for over 65s and concerns that this group often believe there is no risk to older women.**

Screening is now available for women up to 70 years of age. Concerns raised will be brought to the service and examined.

- **Clarification on the change to the HPV vaccination.**

As NSS are not responsible for the HPV vaccination programme, clarification will be sought from the National Immunisation Office (NIO).

- **Concerns that those who have received the HPV vaccine may be less likely to attend screening appointments.**

Work is ongoing to inform women that have already received the vaccine that it is still important to get screened. NSS are exploring methods to reach this demographic.

- **Details on how psychological distress from negative results is managed.**

The process starts with good communication and ensuring the client has a good understanding of what is involved and the risks involved.

- **Comparisons internationally in terms of what is screened for.**

Other cancers considered for screening include prostate, lung and ovarian cancers. As yet, there is no test available which meets the necessary criteria for these. However, some pilots are taking place in targeted groups. The WHO recommend that all countries be aligned in terms of the implementation of lung cancer screening and not to 'go it alone'.

- **Levels of uptake in areas of social deprivation where the uptake may be less.**

The NSS do not collect information on patient's social demographics, therefore it is difficult to produce accurate statistics. The service is due to commence a piece of work with the Individual Health Identifier (IHI) and over time, this may be able to be matched up with geographical data.

- **Suggestion of using Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programmes to disseminate information.**

The idea of Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programmes is good. The NSS also link with health promotion teams across the country in relation to health promotion initiatives.

- **Request for breakdown on male HPV vaccine uptake and how successful it has been.**

Details on the uptake of the male HPV vaccine would be available from the National Immunisation Office. A response will be sought.

- **Difficulties in sourcing information on when screening would resume and levels of operation.**

Definitive answers are difficult to give due to the pandemic. Cervical, Bowel and Diabetic screening are continuing and women that are due for Cervical screening are being encouraged to make their appointment anyway. It is hoped to be back to full screening by Q2.

- **Follow up on 'no-shows'.**

Notices are placed on the website where a person can check if they are due for screening. Notices are also placed on the website and in GP surgeries and pharmacies. Another initiative has been the implementation of a text alert which has resulted in greater uptake.

- **Potential to operate screening 24/7 at any point in the future following the pandemic – early morning, evening and weekend appointments would be welcomed.**

Some extra capacity will be available. The service is however restrained by staffing capacity and the shortage of radiologists.

- **Social media comments concerning Department of Health personnel and past CervicalCheck events.**

No screening test is diagnostic or 100% accurate. Improvements have been made on emphasising the limitations as well as the benefits.

- **Proposal for a targeted BreastCheck campaign in respect of older women.**

This matter will be relayed to the NSS.

- **Dissemination / distribution of information via network of community pharmacies and request for updated resources.**

A pilot was undertaken approximately 2-3 years ago to examine the positive impact pharmacists could have on the uptake of BowelScreen. Further work was impacted due to the pandemic but it is hoped to recommence this piece again in the future. Pharmacists in the community are a great resource and it is known that these professionals, along with GPs and nurses, have great influence with patients in making healthy choices. Updated resources and documentation will be issued.

- **Possible training module through Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU).**

Learning module welcomed and will be explored.

#### **4. Motions**

There was no business under this item.

#### **5. Questions**

There was no business under this item.

#### **6. Chairperson's Correspondence**

There was no business under this item.

#### **7. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum - Dublin North East will take place on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2021.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**