

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TOIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2015, 2014 AT 2:00PM

IN THE BOARDROOM, HSE, BECTIVE STREET, KELLS

Members Present

Cllr. Philip Brady	Cllr. Adrian Henchy	Cllr. Paddy Meade
Cllr. Christy Burke	Cllr. Deirdre Heney	Cllr. Claire O'Driscoll
Cllr. Jack Chambers	Cllr. Eithne Loftus	Cllr. Ciaran O'Moore
Cllr. Mark Dearey	Cllr. David Maxwell	Cllr. Darren O'Rourke
Cllr. Kieran Dennison	Cllr. Mary McCamley	Cllr. Noeleen Reilly
Cllr. Wayne Forde	Cllr. Paddy McDonald	Cllr. Tomás Sharkey
Cllr. Robbie Gallagher	Cllr. Séamas McGrattan	Cllr. Gillian Toole
Cllr. Gary Gannon	Cllr. Peter McVitty	

Not in Attendance

Cllr. Tommy Byrne	Cllr. Declan Flanagan	Cllr. Lorna Nolan
Cllr. Richie Culhane	Cllr. Brian McKenna	

Apologies

Cllr. David Costello

Officials Present

Ms. Rosaleen Harlin, Lead Manager, Regional Health Office - HSE DNE
Mr. Martin Collum, Area HR Manager – Cavan Monaghan
Ms. Cornelia Stuart, Regional Quality and Patient Safety Manager - HSE DNE
Ms. Margaret Swords, Chief Operating Officer, RCSI Hospitals
Mr. Ken Fitzgibbon, Hospital Manager, Our Lady's Hospital Navan
Mr. Gordon Dunne, CEO, Cappagh Hospital
Mr. Gerry O'Neill, Chief Officer, Area 9 Community Healthcare Organisation
Mr. Enda Doody, General Manager, Area Manager's Office – Dublin North
Ms. Fiona Murphy, General Manager - Louth Primary Care
Ms. Ann Coyle, General Manger, Area Manager's Office - Louth Meath
Ms. Rose McCaffrey, General Manager, Area Manager's Office – Cavan/Monaghan
Ms. Martina Brennan, Manager, Resource Management and Pensions Unit – HSE DNE
Ms. Ann Martin, Press Officer, Area Communication Manager's office – HSE DNE
Ms. Katherine Kellett, Regional Health Office - HSE DNE
Ms. Lorraine Timmons, Regional Health Office - HSE DNE

1. Adoption of minutes of meeting held on Monday, 24th November, 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 24th November, 2014 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. Christy Burke and seconded by Cllr. Eithne Loftus.

2. Health Service Executive Updates

Ms. Rosaleen Harlin, Lead Manager, Regional Health Office, gave a report to the meeting which dealt with the following:-

- New National Policy on the Protection of Vulnerable People from Abuse published;
- At risk groups urged to get vaccinated for flu;
- Environmental Health Service 2013 Review;
- Sale of HARI Clinic;
- Official Opening of the Family Bereavement Room and launch of the Tree of Remembrance at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital;
- Launch of Cavan Monaghan Healthy Families.

Update on Emergency Departments overcrowding

A report on Emergency Departments overcrowding was circulated to the meeting. Ms. Margaret Swords, Chief Operating Officer, RCSI Hospitals, outlined the situation within the RCSI Hospitals Group. Mr. Gordon Dunne, CEO, Cappagh Hospital, outlined Ireland East Hospitals Group and Mr. Ken Fitzgibbon, Hospital Manager, Our Lady's Hospital Navan, gave an update on Our Lady's Hospital Navan.

A discussion took place where members raised the following issues:-

- Recent radio coverage in relation to Emergency Departments winding down around the Christmas period due to nursing staff holidays;
- Nurses and midwives refusing to pay the recent increase in registration fees and will be removed from the Nurses and Midwifery Board of Ireland register;
- New dynamic on resources for Our Lady's Hospital Navan with the new Hospital Group structures;
- Delays in discharges may be caused by many factors including waiting on reports, waiting on the local authority to install proper facilities, waiting on appliances, etc.;
- Delays in Fair Deal process, along with complex application forms;
- Premature discharges - families being encouraged to take patient home before they are ready;
- Fair Deal budget for 2015;
- High percentage of nurses retiring this year. Efforts to recruit additional staff;
- Clarification on cancellation of all elective orthopaedic surgery in Our Lady's Hospital Navan for two weeks in January;
- Case of 83 year old gentleman receiving 30 minutes Home Help twice weekly. The gentleman has been hospitalised a number of times. Belief that this would not occur had he been receiving adequate hours;
- Breakdown of bed shortages in the area;
- Plans to deal with the increased demand in the future for nursing home beds as the elderly age population increases;

- Clarification on whether the €5m for Home Care Packages is additional funding;
- Request for feedback on additional €25m;
- Clarification on organisational structures, including level of mobility;
- Reduction in budget for equipment in Cappagh Hospital resulting in a significant number of elective procedures being cancelled.

The issues and comments raised were responded to as follows:-

- A full nursing staff compliment is in operation in hospitals throughout the year with the exception of four days during the Christmas period where no outpatient appointments or elective surgery takes place. Many patients do not wish to be admitted for elective procedures over the Christmas period. This period allows hospitals to focus on Emergency Departments as well as not utilising overtime, agency, etc.;
- The Registration of nurses is not a matter for the HSE. However, HSE Directors are working with nurses and midwives where possible in relation to payment options;
- Our Lady's Hospital Navan will now come under the remit of the Ireland East Hospital Group. The hospital will continue to be managed through the Louth Meath Group until due diligence and safe transfer arrangements are in place. The integration process and patient pathways with Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda will not be affected;
- Contingency arrangements are in place for appliances to aid discharge to home. During the Christmas period, an emergency stock was available. Louth Meath Community Care and Hospitals Forum liaise on these matters;
- If requested, HSE staff engage with patients and families on the completion of Fair Deal applications. The process normally takes up to 18 weeks. There is a deficit in the North East of Nursing Home beds, therefore, often a form is processed and approved but no bed is available. Other factors also have to be taken in to account such as travel to the Nursing Home, etc;
- The process around discharges is multidisciplinary. The standard length of stay in hospital is 5.4 days;
- The Fair Deal budget for 2015 is €30m. An additional €5m will also be provided for Home Care Packages;
- The recruitment of nurses and frontline staff is not affected by the current moratorium. A National recruitment drive is currently in place as well as efforts to source nurses from India. Each Hospital Group recruit locally also. Multiple recruitment drives took place in 2014;
- There are 29 beds in the Orthopaedic Department, Our Lady's Hospital Navan. On 6th January, a decision was made to cancel elective orthopaedic surgery in order to provide capacity to address overcrowding in both Our Lady's Hospital Navan and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda. It was also decided that six theatre nursing staff would be available to work in the Orthopaedic Theatre of Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda. On 12th January, 12 beds were opened in the old Emergency Department and one theatre for urgent elective orthopaedics. It is hoped that the second theatre will be operational from the first week in February;
- Case of elderly gentleman and allocated Home Help hours to be examined;
- Breakdown of bed shortages in the area will be provided;
- The structures within the HSE have been changing rapidly over the past number of years which has made long term planning difficult. The HSE are responsible

for the implementation and delivery of Government policy. The Department of Health set the strategic vision;

- The €5m for Home Care Packages is additional funding;
- Information on additional €25m to be provided;
- Presentation on organisational structures to be arranged for a future meeting;
- The cumulative effect of a reducing allocation, cessation of NTPF funding and reduction in income has limited surgical capacity at Cappagh Hospital. For 2015, there is an increase of €4m in allocation.

The report was noted by the Forum.

3. Presentation on Pressure Ulcers Collaborative

Ms. Cornelia Stuart, Regional Quality and Patient Safety Manager - HSE DNE, made a presentation to members on the Pressure Ulcers Collaborative (copy appended to the official minute).

Members thanked Ms. Stuart for her presentation and a discussion took place where members raised the following issues:-

- Large number of complaints from family members in Connolly Hospital were from Pressure Ulcers concerns;
- Cost of packs;
- Entire cost of project;
- Sustainability and extent of project;
- HIQA monitoring.

Ms. Stuart responded to the questions and comments from the members as follows:-

- The engagement of patients and family members on this matter is very important. It is about empowering, not only the staff, but patients and families also;
- The costs involved were minimal as all design was done in-house. The only cost involved was the printing;
- The total cost of the project was approximately €40,000. This is in contrast to the €19,000 cost of treating one pressure ulcer;
- Meetings have taken place with a view to sustaining the project past September. Numbers will be reported on from now on and over time it will be possible to monitor the prevalence of Pressure Ulcers. The project is taking place in the community as well;
- At present, it is a mandatory requirement to report Grade 2 or above Pressure Ulcers.

4. Regional Health Forum Annual Report 2014

The report was noted by the members.

5. Motions

I, Gillian Toole, on behalf of the parents and educators of preschool children with special needs, request that the HSE North East, specifically regarding County Meath, guarantee a continuation of funding for 2015 - 2017 inclusive and a raise in the provision of hours for Special Needs Assistants, in line with budget increases, to coincide with the child's allocated hours from the ECCE Scheme.

Cllr. Gillian Toole

Cllr. Gillian Toole stated that she was not happy with the response. Cllr. Toole updated the meeting on the background to her request and stated that €1 spent now per child will save €7 per child long term. Cllr. Toole informed the meeting of legislation and the rights of the child and requested certainty that the service can continue, at least until 2017. Councillors Darren O'Rourke, Mark Dearey, Wayne Forde and Paddy Meade supported Cllr. Toole's Motion.

Ms. Fiona Murphy, General Manager - Louth Primary Care, informed Cllr. Toole that a preschool assistant subsidy was available at present and that Meath Disability Services are currently reviewing their budget allocation for 2015. A final decision should be announced in February. Ms. Murphy stated that information on the number of children concerned would need to be sought and that the relevant manager has offered to meet the parents. She stated that this service is unique to County Meath and that a forthcoming national policy will hopefully give direction. Ms. Murphy agreed to keep Cllr. Toole updated of progress.

2014 saw the launch of the Irish Dementia Strategy. That this Health Forum calls on the HSE to explore the feasibility of a strategy which identifies the broader needs of people with autism and suggests actions which may be taken subject to funding to improve the educational, health, social and employment potential of those with the condition.

Cllr. Claire O'Driscoll

Cllr. Claire O'Driscoll raised concerns in relation to the long wait for diagnosis and the need for a national strategy. Councillors Peter McVitty, Kieran Dennison, Paddy McDonald and Wayne Forde supported Cllr. O'Driscoll's Motion.

To ask the HSE to facilitate exploratory talks between the Fingal County Council Housing Department and a suitable voluntary housing body to look at ensuring that the vacant houses on Portrane Avenue, St. Ita's Hospital can be repaired and brought back in to use and let out to tenants.

Cllr. Adrian Henchy

Cllr. Adrian Henchy stated that he was satisfied with the response.

6. Questions

If I was to put down a Motion which received the full support of elected members at our next HSE Forum meeting calling for long term planning for our hospitals, would the HSE respect the members wish?

Cllr. Paddy Meade

Cllr. Paddy Meade stated that the response to his Question was incorrect and he requested a simple yes or no answer. He informed the meeting that the current situation is a 'no' response.

Mr. Gerry O'Neill updated the meeting stating that the HSE has restructured, as per Government policy. He stated that his new role now covers Dublin city and county. He informed the meeting of bi-annual planning that should take place for hospitals and the merit of planning ahead 20 years may be as risky as not planning at all. He referred to changes in the demographic of the population and while a Service Plan was available nationally, each area also implements their own yearly Operational Plans. He stated that it was important to refocus on planning for two to three years ahead and perhaps five years ahead. He assured the meeting that this form of planning will take place when the structures are more embedded.

7. Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr. Kieran Dennison, Chairperson, updated members in relation to concerns raised at the October 2014 Committee meeting where the issue of staff shortages, staff leave and difficulties in recruiting staff was raised. It had been agreed at the meeting that a letter would issue, on behalf of the Forum, to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to request that the current moratorium on recruitment be lifted, particularly in respect to areas of priority. Cllr. Dennison informed the meeting that a copy of the response from the Minister's office had been circulated for information.

8. Date and time of next meeting

The next meetings of the Regional Health Forum - Dublin North East are as follows:-

- Committee: Monday, 23rd February, 2015 at 11:00am;
- Forum: Monday, 23rd March, 2015 at 2:00pm.

Signed:

Kieran Dennison,
Chairperson.