

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TOIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 26TH JULY, 2021 AT 2:00PM

By Microsoft Teams

Members Present

Cllr. Tom Behan
 Cllr. Aiden Fitzpatrick
 Cllr. Sean Kelly
 Cllr. Ray McAdam
 Cllr. John Sheridan
 Cllr. Gillian Toole

Cllr. Mary Callaghan
 Cllr. Michelle Hall
 Cllr. Howard Mahony
 Cllr. Kevin Meenan
 Cllr. Trevor Smith

Cllr. Kieran Dennison
 Cllr. Adrian Henchy
 Cllr. David Maxwell
 Cllr. Patricia Roe
 Cllr. Emer Tóibín

Not in Attendance

Cllr. Daryl Barron
 Cllr. Craig Lovett
 Cllr. Aisling O'Neill

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

Cllr. Deirdre Heney
 Cllr. Eoghan O'Brien
 Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Apologies

Cllr. Christy Burke
 Cllr. Colm O'Rourke

Cllr. Brigid Manton

Cllr. Brian McKenna

Officials Present

Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County
 Mr. Des O'Flynn, Chief Officer, Midlands Louth Meath CHO
 Mr. Joe Ruane, Head of Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO
 Mr. Cathal Hand, Network Manager, Monaghan Primary Care Services
 Mr. Ken Fitzgibbon, Group Strategic Director of Organisation Development and Transformation, IEHG
 Dr. Augustine Pereira, Director of Public Health & Medical Officer of Health, HSE North East
 Dr. Miriam Owens, Director of Public Health, CHO Dublin North City and County
 Ms. Karen Judge, Business Manager, Office of the Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County
 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 Annual Meeting of the Forum, which was being held via Microsoft Teams, and outlined the process in terms of making contributions throughout the meeting.

1. Election of Chairperson

Cllr. Adrian Henchy, Chairperson, sought nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Forum.

Cllr. Kieran Dennison was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell.

Cllr. Adrian Henchy was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. Howard Mahony.

Cllr. Kieran Dennison thanked Cllr. Maxwell for his nomination, however he outlined that he would like Cllr. Henchy to remain as Chairperson for another year and withdrew his nomination.

Cllr. Maxwell seconded Cllr. Howard's nomination.

Cllr. Henchy was declared re-elected as Chairperson.

2. Election of Vice Chairperson

Cllr. Adrian Henchy, Chairperson, sought nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson of the Forum.

Cllr. David Maxwell was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. Kieran Dennison and seconded by Cllr. Howard Mahony.

Cllr. Michelle Hall nominated herself for the position.

Cllr. David Maxwell withdrew his nomination and proposed the nomination of Cllr. Michelle Hall. Cllr. John Sheridan seconded the nomination of Cllr. Hall.

Cllr. Hall was declared elected as Vice Chairperson.

3. Adoption of minutes of meeting held on Monday, 22nd March, 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 22nd March, 2021 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. Gillian Toole and seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell.

4. Health Service Executive Updates

A report was circulated which dealt with the following:

- International Nurses Day 2021;
- International Day of the Midwife;
- World Maternal Mental Health Awareness Day;
- Social Prescribing has the potential to transform the lives who are marginalised and disadvantaged within communities;
- START campaign encourages families to take a break from treats and re-start healthy habits;

- HSE National Cancer Control Programme and Healthy Ireland - new skin cancer awareness campaign;
- Check In, Check Up and Check It Out - Men's Health Week 2021.

The report was noted by the Forum.

5. Presentations on Covid-19

Dr. Augustine Pereira, Director of Public Health & Medical Officer of Health, HSE North East and Dr. Miriam Owens, Director of Public Health, CHO Dublin North City and County gave presentations to members on Covid-19.

Questions and Answers:

Clarification on whether fully vaccinated close contacts need to restrict movements

Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) guidelines recommend that a fully vaccinated close contact does not need to restrict movements or get a Covid-19 test, unless symptomatic. However, where there are several cases or an outbreak in a setting, Public Health may undertake a risk assessment to determine the severity of infection, transmissibility, etc. and specific guidance may then be given, even to those fully vaccinated.

Effects of Long Covid on young people

There is some evidence from the UK which shows fatigue and longer term side effects in young individuals several weeks after infection. However, it is too soon to have adequate evidence on the likelihood of longer term consequence.

Booster vaccinations

Research is still ongoing in relation to booster vaccinations and real world evidence is required prior to any assessment of impact. The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) will provide guidance on the impact of boosters, whether they are recommended and their possible effects.

When peak of Delta variant is likely to take place

There is no estimate available as to when the peak will occur. This would also be dependent on a number of variables including how the public respond, opening up of hospitality, how the variant continues to spread and how we are able to control transmission. The course of the variant can be altered with adherence to public health advice from the population.

Number of variants identified in confirmed cases in Ireland

Data is not available at this point in time.

Fatality rate in the North East during the first wave

The fatality rate during wave 1 is likely to be an over estimate of the true rate, as during this time testing was not as widely available.

Adjustment of case numbers to take into account opening of walk-in test centres

Public Health monitor positivity rates and the impact walk-in centres have had. Figures are adjusted in the overall monitoring of disease in any particular area.

Reporting of underlying conditions and age reporting

A Positive Patient Assessment (PPA) takes place after every positive case, with an extensive assessment of age, underlying conditions and any co-morbidities. Data is collected and analysed by HPSC.

Efforts to deal with waiting lists and delays in appointments for cancer, disability, mental health services and chronic illness

The HSE are endeavouring to return all health services to normality and respond to chronic disease management and backlogs. The main focus at present is trying to drive down Covid-19 infection so that the health service has the capacity to respond to issues that arise.

Information on side effects of vaccines

The Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) provides clear evidence of side effects and are constantly monitoring data. Information is available on their website.

Research into effects of Vitamin D

Vitamin D supplementation is useful for multiple conditions, especially in winter months. It can be taken for its possible protective qualities against Covid-19.

Indoor air quality

A lot has been learned in relation to the role of ventilation in the management of Covid-19. Ventilation is very important in dealing with a virus that is highly transmissible and the focus is on keeping windows open, air conditioning systems and filters set to adequate air filtration rates.

Where to get information in relation to vaccines

The National Immunisation Office is the single best source of authoritative information on vaccines. Public Health would ask anyone that has any queries to go to this source for information on vaccines, their benefits, the impact on different age groups and populations and their side effects. The protection that vaccines have given to residential care facilities and the most vulnerable people in society is testament to the fact that vaccines work.

Homeless street cafés and volunteers

The HSE Environmental Health Service works with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to ensure the relevant food legislation is applied as necessary regarding food production and distribution. The HSE cannot comment specifically on any particular food business or inspection.

Plans for return to schools in September

The HSE have received a lot of support from the Department of Education throughout the year with school inspectors working very closely with Public Health in carrying out risk assessments on schools and crèches, identifying contacts, examining measures in place (masks, social distancing, etc.). Work has continued over the Summer months to examine plans for returning to school. It is envisaged that the vast majority of teachers will have been vaccinated by this time and although there is no definite plan to vaccinate children at present, this is being looked at in other countries and by the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC). Most schools will also have CO₂ monitors and additional air quality measures will be in place.

Rollout for 18-34 year olds through pharmacies

The HSE website includes a portal for registration and there is also now an option for vaccination through pharmacies.

6. Regional Health Forum – Annual Report 2019/2020

The report was noted by the members.

7. Consideration of Committee(s) of Forum

It was agreed that the Forum would continue with one Committee.

8. Motions

There was no business under this item.

9. Questions

There was no business under this item.

10. Chairperson's Correspondence

There was no business under this item.

11. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum - Dublin North East will take place on Monday, 27th September, 2021.

Signed:

Chairperson