

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TOIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 2025 AT 2:00PM

IN THE BOARDROOM, HSE OFFICES, BECTIVE STREET, KELLS, CO. MEATH
& VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members Present (*in person*)

Cllr. Kieran Dennison

Cllr. Mary McCamley

Cllr. Shane McGuinness

Members Present (*online*)

Cllr. John Paul Feeley

Cllr. Michelle Hall

Cllr. Deirdre Heney

Cllr. Tom Kitt

Cllr. Fiona Mhic Conchoille

Cllr. Edel Moran

Cllr. Cat O'Driscoll

Cllr. Ejiro O'Hare Stratton

Cllr. Supriya Singh

Cllr. Áine Smith

Apologies

Cllr. Christy Burke

Cllr. Eimear Carbone-Mangan

Cllr. Padraig Coffey

Cllr. Donna Cooney

Cllr. Alan Lawes

Cllr. Caroline O'Reilly

Cllr. Sarah Reilly

Cllr. Trevor Smith

Cllr. John Stephens

Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Not in attendance

Cllr. Séamus Coyle

Cllr. Bronagh McAree

Cllr. Gayle Ralph

HSE Representatives Present (*in person*)

Ms. Sara Long, REO, HSE Dublin and North East

Ms. Mellany McLoone, IHA Manager, Dublin North City & West

Mr. Robert Kidd, IHA Manager, Dublin North County

Mr. Paddy Clerkin, IHA Manager, Louth Meath

Ms. Dervila Eyres, IHA Manager, Cavan Monaghan

Ms. Gráinne Hannon, Regional Director of Finance, HSE Dublin & North East

Ms. Gillian Ledwidge Dunne, Regional Director of People, HSE Dublin & North East

Ms. Rosaleen Harlin, Communications Lead, HSE Dublin & North East

Mr. Liam McHale, Communications and Parliamentary Affairs, IHA Dublin North City & West

Ms. Josephine Collins, General Manager, Primary Care, IHA Cavan Monaghan

Dr. Tahira Saad, Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist, Cavan Monaghan Primary Care Services

Ms. Stephanie Dunne, Hospital Communications & Public Affairs Manager, HSE Dublin & North East

Ms. Katherine Kellett, Regional Health Office – HSE DNE

Ms. Lorraine Timmons, Regional Health Office – HSE DNE

Cllr. Kieran Dennison chaired the meeting.

1. Adoption of minutes of meeting held on Monday, 25th November, 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 25th November, 2024 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. Mary McCamley and seconded by Cllr. Deirdre Heney.

2. Health Service Executive Updates

Mr. Liam McHale gave a report to the meeting which dealt with the following:

- HSE publishes 2025 National Service Plan;
- HSE CervicalCheck initiatives improving access to screening for more women;
- HSE launches new campaign to address HIV stigma in Ireland;
- 263 organ transplants as a result of organ donations in Ireland in 2024.

The following outlines comments and queries raised by members and responses from HSE representatives:

- **Request to extend age profile for free BreastCheck and CervicalCheck screening**
BreastCheck currently invites women aged 50-69 years for free screening every two years. CervicalCheck provides screening to women aged 25 to 65. Both programmes are part of the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) and follow international guidelines for screening. In general, those aged 50 to 69 have been identified as the optimal age group for BreastCheck screening. Guidelines and recommendations are constantly reviewed. A presentation on screening programmes will be organised for a future meeting.
- **BreastCheck screening invitations not being received by women in early 50s, despite having registered at the age of 50**
As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, BreastCheck was paused for a time, resulting in women's invitations for routine screening being delayed. A formal response will be provided.
- **Comparison of organ donation figures to previous years**
Statistics are in line with the five year average, but are, however, less than last year.

The report was noted by the Forum.

3. Presentation from Senior Leadership of HSE Dublin and North East

Ms. Sara Long, REO, HSE Dublin and North East, introduced IHA Managers – Ms. Mellany McLoone (Dublin North City & West), Mr. Robert Kidd, (Dublin North County), Mr. Paddy Clerkin, (Louth Meath) and Ms. Dervila Eyres, (Cavan Monaghan), and members of the Senior Leadership Team, Ms. Gráinne Hannon, Regional Director of Finance, Ms. Gillian Ledwidge Dunne, Regional Director of People, and Ms. Rosaleen Harlin, Regional Director of Communications and Public Affairs.

Ms. Long gave a presentation to members on the HSE Dublin and North East and expressed hope that this was the beginning of a long and constructive dialogue between the region and the Forum.

Each IHA Manager also gave a brief outline of their respective area.

The following outlines comments and queries raised by members and responses from HSE representatives.

- **Insufficient GP services in Dundalk South due to increased housing developments in the area and rapidly expanding population – request that HSE link with Council planners**
Concerns in terms of population growth are acknowledged. IHA Louth Meath have engaged with a number of GP Forums on such issues and the provision of adequate primary care services is a priority for the HSE as this is often the first point of contact for many people. The HSE are eager to provide any solutions including attracting GPs to work in the area. A formal response will be provided.
- **Current status on rollout of Primary Care Centres in the region**
HSE Dublin and North East are progressing the rollout of Primary Care Centres (PCC) in the region, with the majority of high priority projects delivered. Areas where PCCs have not yet been established has been due to the availability of suitable site/premises/car parking facilities. An update per IHA will be provided.
- **Liaison with County Councils in identifying suitable sites**
HSE Estates maintain a good working relationship with the County Councils in this area.
- **Provision of services in areas of deprivation in Drogheda**
IHA Louth Meath are certainly aware of social deprivation around Drogheda and are working towards a number of programmes to meet the healthcare needs of those communities.
- **Waiting lists for Dermatology and Ophthalmologist in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda**
Overall, waiting lists for various specialities have improved in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. However, Dermatology and Ophthalmology remain two of the most challenging services. A recruitment campaign in respect of Dermatology is being examined at present. Ophthalmology services are currently being provided from the Mater Hospital and efforts are being made to develop an in-house Ophthalmology team within Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital.
- **Request for information on waiting lists per hospital**
Waiting list statistics are published on the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) website <https://www.ntpf.ie/waiting-list-data/>. The site outlines all waiting lists across the country including in-patient, outpatient and day cases.
- **Request for clarification on statistics provided at a meeting in relation to a proposed IPAS Centre in Coolock**
This matter will be examined and a response provided.

4. Motions

To ask the HSE to provide improved Ophthalmology Services for the people of County Cavan.

Cllr. Áine Smith

Cllr. Áine Smith proposed her Motion.

Cllr. Smith outlined that she had received a response from the HSE but that her concern related largely to children's ophthalmology services.

She referred to the very long waiting list for children attending the Cavan Ophthalmology department and that it had recently come to her attention that some clinicians are now having to perform admin duties also.

In relation to the percentage of people not taking up appointments, referred to in the response, Cllr. Smith stated this could possibly be linked to the fact that patients may not be able to get through to somebody to let them know that they are unable to attend appointments, as clinicians are having to do some of the admin duties.

She outlined the importance of early intervention for children, particularly if they have something wrong that could be dealt with in earlier years.

Cllr. Smith requested that the issue of clinicians performing admin duties be resolved and they return to their own workload.

Dr. Tahira Saad introduced herself to the meeting as the Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist for Cavan Monaghan.

Dr. Saad reported that, unfortunately, clinicians were doing some administrative duties due to lack of administrative staff but despite that, there were significant improvements in service delivery since she took up post 15 months ago.

Dr. Saad outlined progress in the area over the last 15 months including children's waiting list coming down from 1045 to 322, due to progress in modernised care pathways, and the lowering of the cataracts waiting list.

Cllr. Kieran seconded the Motion.

The Motion was adopted by the Forum.

That the HSE initiate improvements to the patient experience in Beaumont A&E with immediate effect.

Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Cllr. Tormey was not in attendance so the Motion was not moved.

5. Questions

There was no business under this item.

6. Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr. Kieran Dennison updated members in relation to the following:

- General Elections
Councillors Gillian Toole, Ruth Coppinger and David Maxwell were successful in the recent General Elections to Dáil Éireann and the Regional Health Office have requested representatives from the respective councils.
- Appointment
Cllr. Trevor Smith, Cavan County Council, has been nominated to the Forum in place of Cllr. Winston Bennett.

7. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum - Dublin North East will take place on Monday, 24th March, 2025.

Signed:

Chairperson