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REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TÓIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2022 AT 2:00PM

via Microsoft Teams

**Members present**

Cllr. Daryl Barron  
Cllr. Mary Callaghan  
Cllr. Deirdre Heney  
Cllr. Kevin Meenan  
Cllr. Emer Tóibín

Cllr. Tom Behan  
Cllr. Kieran Dennison  
Cllr. Howard Mahony  
Cllr. John Sheridan  
Cllr. Gillian Toole

Cllr. Christy Burke  
Cllr. Adrian Henchy  
Cllr. Brigid Manton  
Cllr. Trevor Smith

**Apologies**

Cllr. Aiden Fitzpatrick

Cllr. Brian McKenna

**Not in attendance**

Cllr. Séamus Coyle  
Cllr. Craig Lovett  
Cllr. Séamas McGrattan  
Cllr. Colm O'Rourke  
Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Cllr. Michelle Hall  
Cllr. David Maxwell  
Cllr. Eoghan O'Brien  
Cllr. Patricia Roe

Cllr. Sean Kelly  
Cllr. Ray McAdam  
Cllr. Aisling O'Neill  
Cllr. Niamh Souhan

**HSE representatives present**

Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County  
Mr. Liam McHale, Communications and Parliamentary Affairs, CHO Dublin North City & County  
Ms. Ellen O'Dea, Head of Health & Wellbeing, CHO Dublin North City & County  
Ms. Mary O'Hare, General Manager, Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO  
Mr. Cathal Hand, Network Manager, Monaghan Primary Care Services  
Mr. Gearóid Rennicks, Communications & Press Officer, Ireland East Hospital Group  
Mr. Darragh Gallagher, Communications and Parliamentary Affairs, 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 members to the meeting.

### 1. **Election of Chairperson**

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

Cllr. Adrian Henchy was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. Howard Mahony and seconded by Cllr. Deirdre Heney.

As there were no other nominations for the position of Chairperson, 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. Michelle Hall was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. Deirdre Heney and seconded by Cllr. Howard Mahony.

As there were no other nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson, Cllr. Hall was declared re-elected as Vice Chairperson.

### 3. **Adoption of minutes of meeting held on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. Kieran Dennison and seconded by Cllr. Gillian Toole.

A number of queries and issues were raised in relation to the May Minutes as follows:

Update on request for presentation on Connecting for Life in respect of Louth Meath  
An update will be provided.

Update on request for information on GP trainee placements in respect of Louth Meath  
An update will be provided.

Accessibility of GPs operating from Primary Care Centres to private patients  
Even if a GP operates from a Primary Care Centre, the GP is still an independent contractor.

Concerns in relation to incidence, diagnosis and treatment of Lyme Disease  
Agreed that presentation on Lyme Disease would be organised.

### 4. **Health Service Executive Updates**

Mr. Liam McHale, Communications and Parliamentary Affairs, CHO Dublin North City & County, gave a report to the meeting which dealt with the following:

- Paul Reid to step down as CEO of the HSE;
- Counselling in Primary Care “Changing Lives for the Better”;
- Minister for Health launches ‘My Health, My Language’;
- HSE encourage Men to accept a Mission during Men’s Health Week 2022;
- Cross border project improves the health and wellbeing of thousands of people in border counties;

- HSE National Ambulance Service & Dublin Fire Brigade staff wear Rainbow Badges;
- National Ambulance Service launches new national campaign for Community First Responders.

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

Men's Health Week 2022 – possibility of health checking being brought to men in the workplace

A response will be provided.

Counselling in Primary Care – consideration that counselling be reimbursable for private patients under the Med 1 scheme

A response will be provided.

Request that members be notified of relevant HSE news items – option of Press Releases being circulated

To be explored.

Request for further details on publicity of National Ambulance Service campaign for Community First Responders

Details to be provided.

Details of local ambulance delay

Councillor to submit details to RHO.

Funding issues between Dublin Fire Brigade and the National Ambulance Service

A response will be provided.

The report was noted by the Forum.

## 5. **Presentation on Health & Wellbeing**

Ms. Ellen O'Dea, Head of Health & Wellbeing, CHO Dublin North City & County, gave presentations to members on Health & Wellbeing.

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

Request for public campaign on Diabetes testing

There is no specific programme for routine type 2 Diabetes testing across the population at present. Diabetes is often picked up during routine blood testing in GP practices. Also, through chronic disease management, GPs are funded to provide a number of visits per year to medical card patients with chronic disease, such as Diabetes.

The request will be forwarded to the National Clinical Programme to provide a response.

Request that HSE provide Diabetes testing for staff

Request noted.

Education on Diabetes

The HSE deliver a number of education programmes for Diabetes and also provide funding to Diabetes Ireland for the delivering of education programmes in respect of Type 2 Diabetes.

Details on how to access programmes will be provided.

#### Integration with local groups in Dublin Inner City

In terms of the Healthy Communities Programme, the HSE work closely with local groups in the area such as Northwest Partnership, the Family Resource Centre and Young Ballymun, and with colleagues in Social Inclusion in relation to drugs and alcohol issues. County Councils are also funded for Local Development Officers to support Healthy Communities.

#### Increase in addiction to prescription drugs in Dublin Inner City

HSE Health & Wellbeing work very closely with the Drug and Alcohol Task Forces in the Inner City. Also, as part of the new Community Healthcare Networks, particular communities will be examined in relation to their specific needs.

Comments will be brought back to the colleagues in the relevant areas.

#### Clarification on resourcing of Chronic Disease Hubs

Recruitment is taking time and not all teams are currently filled at present. There are between 35 to 50 personnel on each team and positions such as dietitians are particularly hard to fill. International recruitment is also being explored.

#### Access to Chronic Disease Hubs by people with Lyme Disease

Living Well is an evidence-based self-management programme for adults with long-term health conditions. Over six weeks, participants develop practical skills and confidence to better manage their health in order to live well with their health condition.

Information on the programme and how to access it will be circulated.

#### Response times to representations and queries and possibility of sending directly to HSE representatives

While the HSE acknowledge that councillors may be anxious to seek timely responses to their queries and representations, there are strict guidelines in relation to the governance, processing and provision of information.

It is recommended that members continue to refer any queries or representations through the Regional Health Office.

#### List of programme contacts

To be provided.

#### Number of Community Health Networks for Louth and Meath

Details to be provided.

#### Reason for low delivery of Living Well programs in Louth and Meath

Details to be provided.

#### Breakdown of staff (by discipline) that participated in Making Every Contact Count training programmes

Details to be provided.

Details on locations of Healthy Food Made Easy courses in Louth and Meath and how to access in other areas

Details to be provided.

Social Prescribing plans for Louth and Meath

Details to be provided.

Need for Triple P and Parent Plus programmes in South Meath towns

Programmes such as Triple P and Parent Plus, Social Prescribing and Healthy Food Made Easy are already in place in many areas. Additional programmes have been rolled out Cavan, Ballymun, Darndale and Finglas / Cabra as part of Sláintecare Healthy Communities.

SICAP (Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme) areas were examined nationally and 19 areas with the most disadvantaged and youngest populations were chosen.

It is hoped to extend programmes to additional areas during the year with a focus on supporting and reducing health inequalities in areas of disadvantage.

Comments to be relayed to Midlands Louth Meath CHO.

Budget for Healthy Communities programmes

The budget for the rollout of the Healthy Communities programmes is approximately €200,000 per area.

Concerns in relation to duplication and dilution of funding as HSE partner with various organisations

The HSE work very closely with partner funded organisations in chronic disease such as the Irish Heart Foundation and Diabetes Ireland. However, with Chronic Disease Teams, the delivery of immediate supports in terms of accessing a specific service is carried out through the HSE, with additional supports and education through the partner organisation.

Assurances were given that where the HSE provides funding to an organisation, there are robust governance and very clear service arrangements in place which quantify the reason for funding, the level and quantum of service that is expected from the organisation and staffing resources required to deliver the service. Self-Management Support Groups are also in place with partner organisations and engagement takes place on a regular basis with all parties working together to ensure information is shared between organisations.

It was also pointed there are some instances where duplication is actually required and it does not lead to dilution - it actually leads to reinforcement. This may be where a service needs to be delivered through a wide range of places to ensure that all of the people who could potentially benefit from the service have an opportunity of interacting with it.

Preparations for flu season and promotion of the vaccine

There is some evidence from Australia on increased rates of flu this year, and typically, cases in Ireland will prove similar.

Planning is well underway to ensure adequate resources and availability of the vaccine to healthcare staff, older people, children and those at risk.

Community pharmacies will be very much utilised along with HSE peer vaccination to ensure that the vaccine is delivered to as many people as possible within the at-risk categories.

There will be a huge focus on managing presentations to Emergency Departments and ensuing patients are discharged as quickly and safely as possible. CHOs are also working closely with hospital colleagues on timely access to services and reducing waiting lists.

Presentation on Winter Planning to be organised for October Committee meeting.

#### Evidence that increasing the cost of tobacco is a deterrent on reducing the incidence of smoking

Evidence has shown that price does influence behaviour. It is known that within disadvantaged communities, rolled tobacco is more prevalent. Access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy is available for medical card holders, however, it does need to become more widely accessible.

One initiative, at present, is offering Nicotine Replacement Therapy directly to people wishing to quit, through local pharmacists, as an interim measure.

Recent data is showing that there are less people smoking, but there is more vaping, especially young people.

The HSE are working with all stakeholders and organizations to try and make as many spaces as possible smoke free and support people to give up where they can.

#### Possibility that Dementia be classified as a Chronic Disease

There are many more chronic and enduring illnesses other than those focused on in terms of the Integrated Care Specialist Teams for Chronic Disease. The Integrated Care Team for Older People focus a lot on people with Dementia and supporting older people with frailty, in particular. Generally, many people over 50 years of age present with multi-morbidities.

The HSE work on the basis that "There is no wrong door" and that everyone can access services.

#### Evidence of presentations of Long Covid in Chronic Disease

Long Covid is definitely presenting and is being managed mainly through the acute hospitals at the moment in terms of services. However, this may end up being managed under respiratory care in the Chronic Disease Hubs over time.

## **6. Regional Health Forum – Annual Report 2021-2022**

The report was noted by the members.

## **7. Consideration of Committee(s) of Forum**

Cllr. Adrian Henchy, Chairperson, gave a report to the meeting outlining the provisions for Committees as set out in Statutory Instrument No. No. 797 of 2005, structures of previous Committees of the Forum and the current arrangements in place.

The Chairperson asked members if they were happy to continue with one Committee – the Health Services Committee.

Cllr. Gillian Toole suggested that consideration be given to reverting back to two Committees - the Acute Hospitals and Population Health Committee and the Primary, Community and Continuing Care Committee based on Sláintecare and the Community Health Networks. She acknowledged that Committee presentations, while excellent, were quite general and may be more applicable to full Forum meetings, where more specific presentations could be tailored to individual Committees.

Cllr. Toole questioned why the previous two Committees were ended and management outlined that the reason was due to poor attendance at both Committees.

Cllr. Adrian Henchy, Chairperson, stated that it was his view that current arrangements best suit the needs of the members and he hoped that when the Forum returns to meeting in person, the current format would work better as members will have access to managers to raise any individual topics. He also stated that he, and probably most of the members, already have a quite full schedule with Council and sub-committee meetings. Cllr. Henchy outlined, however, that it was a decision for the members.

Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, joined the conversation adding that as the HSE move to Regional Health Areas, there will be a huge focus on integration and one of the principles of Sláintecare is the integration of services on a geographical basis. She raised concerns, therefore, that members may not benefit from separate hospital and community Committees. Ms. McLoone also made the observation that the majority of managers that attend meetings are community based and subsequently would not be in attendance at hospital Committee meetings as they would have no remit in that regard.

Cllr. Howard Mahony raised concerns in relation to fragmenting the Forum and stated that while he is generally, overall, happy with the current structure, he would prefer to see Acute Hospitals present to the Committee instead.

Cllr. Toole further suggested that the current format of the Committee be maintained, with the content of alternate Committee meetings being alternated between Acute Hospitals and Population Health Committee and the Primary, Community and Continuing Care Committee.

Cllr. Tom Behan supported Cllr. Toole's proposal and stated that, in particular reference to primary healthcare facilities, he would welcome sitting on a committee and having the opportunity to voice concerns related to community issues.

Cllr. Kieran Dennison spoke as Chairperson of the current Health Services Committee and said that while he acknowledged that it is very useful to review the structure of the Committee(s) at the Annual Meeting of the Forum, topics for presentations are a matter for members and that if any member had suggestions for presentations, he would be happy to facilitate. He echoed comments from Ms. McLoone stating that it might be helpful to wait until new Regional Health Area structures are in place before deciding whether there is a need for additional meetings. Cllr. Dennison also stated that when meetings are held in person again, members will most likely not wish to take on extra travel. He suggested that the matter be reviewed at the Annual Meeting of the Health Services Committee in October.

Ms. Mary O'Hare, General Manager, Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO, agreed with comments that going forward, meetings in person will be more beneficial.

Mr. Cathal Hand, Network Manager, Monaghan Primary Care Services, reminded members that while Forum meetings take place every second month, with six in total yearly, Committee meetings only take place four times per year and he would question

the further sub-division of those four dates. Mr. Hand agreed with Cllr. Dennison on his suggestion that it might be best to review the situation at the Annual Meeting of the Committee. He also emphasised the point, both in terms of presentations or queries, that the current structure allows all members to bring forward requests for presentations from any service area, or queries in relation to any service area, at any time and that the Committee does not need to be sub-divided in order to make that more feasible.

Cllr. Henchy, Chairperson, welcomed the discussion and comments from members and concluded the discussion stating that he agreed with Cllr. Toole's points in relation to not necessarily holding additional meetings, but prioritising presentations within the current Committee meetings with regards to future meetings,

## 8. Motions

There was no business under this item.

## 9. Questions

The responses to the Questions were noted.

## 10. Chairperson's Correspondence

### ▪ Attendance at Forum meetings

Cllr. Adrian Henchy, Chairperson, read a letter he received from the Executive in relation to attendance of members at meetings, summarised as follows:

- Statutory Instrument No. 797 of 2005 states that *"Where a member of a Forum has not, for a consecutive period of three meetings, attended a meeting of the Forum, his or her membership of the Forum shall terminate, except where the non-attendance was due to the illness of the member or to a reason approved by the Forum before the expiry of that period"*;
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, it was agreed that the Forum would suspend implementation of the rule on attendance;
- Given public health restrictions have lifted, it is now timely to recommence implementation of the rule;
- Proposal to implement from September Forum meeting.

The proposal was unanimously agreed by the Forum.

### ▪ Letter to Minister for Health on behalf of Dublin Mid Leinster Regional Health Forum

Cllr. Henchy read a letter to the Minister for Health on behalf of Dublin Mid Leinster Regional Health Forum, summarised as follows:

- Writing to Minister in respect of Sláintecare Report and how proposed reforms may impact on structure / services and working / future of four HSE Regional Health Forums;
- Understanding that consultative process beginning in respect of Regional Health Authorities and asking how elected representatives will be included in process;
- Welcome discussion on future structure and how they could better reflect and mirror future Regional Health Authority areas;



- How Forum's legislative mandate and terms of reference could be reviewed to ensure voice of local representatives is reflected in HSE policy, structure and services.

- Resignation

Cllr. Henchy informed the Forum of the resignation of Cllr. John Sheridan as a Louth representative on the Forum. The Regional Health Office will write to Louth County Council to seek a replacement for Cllr. Sheridan on the Forum.

Cllr. Henchy thanked Cllr. Sheridan for his work on the Forum and wished him well for the future.

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

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum - Dublin North East will take place on Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2022.

Fingal County Council members informed the Executive that a Council Development Plan meeting may also be scheduled to take place on this date.

It was agreed that clarification would be sought from the Council and members updated accordingly.

During the course of discussion at the meeting members also raised the following queries and issues:

Closure of Laytown Primary Care Centre and possibility that the GP service be retained  
With the opening of Bettystown Primary Care Centre, Laytown health centre will not continue to be in operation. Bettystown is a large centre and it will provide day services for the elderly along with all primary care and disability services.

A detailed response will be provided.

Request for information on process involved in calling a special or emergency meeting of the Forum

Standing Orders of the Forum do not permit the calling of special or emergency meetings.

It was agreed that in the event of a crisis, a meeting could be organised with the agreement of a quorum of members.

It was also pointed out to members that HSE representatives are also available between meetings for any information or concerns and are happy to assist.

**Signed:**

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