

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TOIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2020, AT 2:00PM

By Microsoft Teams

Members Present

Cllr. Daryl Barron
Cllr. Mary Callaghan
Cllr. Aiden Fitzpatrick
Cllr. Deirdre Heney
Cllr. Brigid Manton
Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. John Sheridan
Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Cllr. Tom Behan
Cllr. Séamus Coyle
Cllr. Michelle Hall
Cllr. Sean Kelly
Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Eoghan O'Brien
Cllr. Trevor Smith

Cllr. Christy Burke
Cllr. Kieran Dennison
Cllr. Adrian Henchy
Cllr. Howard Mahony
Cllr. Ray McAdam
Cllr. Patricia Roe
Cllr. Gillian Toole

Apologies

Cllr. Aisling O'Neill

Cllr. Colm O'Rourke

Cllr. Emer Tóibín

Not in Attendance

Cllr. Craig Lovett
Cllr. Niamh Souhan

Cllr. Séamas McGrattan

Cllr. Ruairi Ó Murchu

Officials Present

Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County
Ms. Aoife O'Sullivan, Lead Manager, Regional Health Office
Ms. Gemma Brennan, Health Promotion & Improvement Lead, CHO Dublin North City & County
Mr. Cathal Hand, Network Manager, Monaghan Primary Care Services
Mr. Joe Ruane, Head of Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO
Ms. Anne-Marie Keown, Chief Operating Officer, IEHG
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 first 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, 27th July, 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 27th July, 2020 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. Howard Mahony and seconded by Cllr. Christy Burke.

2. Health Service Executive Updates

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

- New HSE posters in schools remind children and teenagers about hand hygiene;
- Recruitment of Dementia Advisers and Coordinator Post;
- Launch of the Irish Dementia Café Network;
- IEHG Launches Drive-Through Facility for Glaucoma Patients at Citywest;
- HSE and Diabetes Ireland urge people with diabetes to seek professional healthcare advice if experiencing symptoms;
- Mater Launches Vocera Project.

Members raised the following issues:-

- i. Timeframe for the recruitment of the Dementia Advisers and Coordinator Post;
- ii. Clarification on whether the Glaucoma Clinic includes Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda as eye clinics seem to be cancelled.

Management responded to the queries from the members as follows:-

- i. A response will be provided on the timeframe for the recruitment of the Dementia Advisers and Coordinator Post;
- ii. The Glaucoma Pressure Testing initiative was set from the Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) and is an initiative between the Royal Victoria Eye & Ear Hospital, the Mater Hospital and St. Vincent’s Hospital. The aim was to provide a service to patients who were on the waiting list and missed their glaucoma pressure testing. At present, it does not include RCSI Hospitals. The IEHG are happy to share their experience and knowledge in order that this innovation could be rolled out nationally.

The report was noted by the Forum.

3. Presentation on Flu Immunisation Campaign

Ms. Gemma Brennan, Health Promotion and Improvement Lead, Health & Wellbeing, CHO Dublin North City & County, gave a presentation to members on the Flu Immunisation Campaign.

Members thanked Ms. Brennan and commended her on a very informative and comprehensive presentation. A discussion took place where members raised the following issues:-

- i. Confirmation that a person cannot contract the flu following vaccination;
- ii. Efforts to capture and analyse reported illness / side effects;

- iii. Number of vaccines that have been ordered this year;
- iv. Statement that vaccines are being provided to GPs later than normal this year and that they are receiving smaller batches than other years;
- v. Request for notification when flu campaign materials are available on the HSE website;
- vi. Suggestion that sportspersons could assist with national campaign and proposal of Dublin football manager;
- vii. Number of additional people expected to avail of the vaccine, due to the vaccine now being available to over 65s and children;
- viii. Burden on general practice and pharmacies, who are already under pressure - procedures put in place to support. Challenges in meeting need;
- ix. Concerns that large number of people may underestimate symptoms of the flu and therefore, believe that they do not need the vaccine;
- x. Reason why the vaccine for children is a live vaccine;
- xi. Cost of vaccine to member of the general public, i.e. those not in the at-risk categories;
- xii. Current vaccine covers four strains of flu - potential to pick up separate strain;
- xiii. Clarification on whether the vaccine has to be administered yearly to be effective;
- xiv. Importance that people can differentiate between the symptoms of a cold and the flu. Useful resource from the Irish Pharmacy Union during the Summer – table outlining the difference between a cold, hay fever and Covid-19. Perhaps something similar for Winter – differences between cold, influenza and Covid-19;
- xv. Need for sign-off on the change in legislation to allow GPs and pharmacists to administer the vaccine outside their practices;
- xvi. Notices for schools in English and Irish – need to be in other languages also, e.g. Eastern European languages.

Ms. Brennan and senior management responded to the questions and comments from the members as follows:-

- i. The flu vaccine cannot give you the flu as it is not a live vaccine. At this time of the year other viruses are circulating and these can cause a flu like illness. The flu vaccine takes at least two weeks to be effective so one could catch flu during this period if the flu virus is circulating;
- ii. It is the responsibility of the person being vaccinated to notify of any side effects or reactions. Each batch number of vaccine administered to patients is recorded and can be crossed checked. The National Immunisation Office gather all this information for analysis;
- iii. The National Immunisation Office is responsible for the procurement and distribution of the publically funded vaccination programme. Department of Public Health provide support to CHO and hospital groups;
- iv. The initial supply of vaccine into the country was slightly small this year. This led to smaller batches being distributed. Each location is to receive a consignment every two weeks. Restrictions on storage may impact some smaller sites;
- v. Materials are available on www.healthpromotion.ie and hard copy documents will be available to order from this site next week;

- vi. The HSE would welcome any key sportspersons in assisting to promote the campaign and the football manager proposal will be followed up;
- vii. A response on the number of additional people expected to avail of the vaccine will be provided;
- viii. This depends on the infrastructure of the general practice or pharmacy and arrangements in place. Payment for provision of flu vaccines through these settings is agreed at national level, however, it is not mandatory for GPs or pharmacists to provide the vaccine. We understand that some GPs and pharmacies have extended their hours for administration of the vaccine. Concerns will be raised with Public Health and National Steering Committee;
- ix. It is possible to have the flu while experiencing only mild symptoms and to go on and spread the virus to others. The flu can be dangerous, even to people with no pre-existing health conditions (e.g. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tEZeYp_2Oc). Consequently, it is vitally important to get the vaccine;
- x. The most effective method of administration of a vaccine to children is nasally. Younger people have a better response to a live vaccine and the side effects are minimal;
- xi. The cost of the vaccine is decided locally by each facility;
- xii. This year's vaccine is quadrivalent. However, it is possible to contract a strain that is not covered. The vaccine should cover approximately 70% of the strains circulating. It does not cover Type C flu as this strain does not provoke adverse symptoms in people. We get our vaccine strains from the World Health Organisation depending on circulating flu strains in previous season;
- xiii. It is necessary to get the vaccine every year as the flu virus mutates. There are different strains each year. The vaccine provides cover for the highest risk strains;
- xiv. Table of symptoms is a great resource;
- xv. It is noted that the legislation needs to be pushed forward;
- xvi. The majority of flu resources have been translated into various languages, these are available on the HSE website.

4. **Motions**

To call on the HSE to outline the impact that the pedestrianisation of New Street, Malahide, has had on the provision of services in Malahide Health Centre on New Street, Malahide.

Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Cllr. Tormey thanked the HSE for the response, and spoke about additional difficulties constituents had shared with her, asking the Chief Officer to outline the communication process between the HSE and Councils on similar matters. Cllr. Tormey outlined she has sourced one parking space for service users that the health centre would manage.

The Chief Officer for Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHO DNCC) spoke to the Motion and emphasised the excellent working relationship between HSE and Fingal County Council. She advised Forum members of a number of examples of forums in place to discuss and progress issues of interest to both parties. The Chief Officer highlighted how the collaborative working between HSE and Fingal County Council has and continues to deliver improved public services for the community living in Fingal, and this was never more evident than during the period of Covid-19.

The Chief Officer confirmed Malahide Health Centre has and continues to be used by primary care staff throughout 2020. Where necessary and appropriate, members of the public attended Malahide Health Centre throughout 2020 for individual clinic appointments, at their appointed time. There are also examples where primary care staff facilitated people required to cocoon or who cannot attend for other reasons with home visits.

It was noted, due to an administrative error, an incorrect response was issued to Regional Health Forum members on Friday, 25th September, 2020. This response was recalled and the correct response issued to Forum members on Monday, 28th September, 2020.

It was agreed Ms. McLoone would ask the relevant manager in CHO DNCC to contact Cllr. Tormey to clarify what measures have been agreed with the Council and to further progress the issue.

Cllr. Tormey acknowledged the excellent work done by Fingal County Council and HSE and the importance of protecting health service provision in decision making around public infrastructure.

Cllr. Eoghan O'Brien asked that a number of statements should be corrected, that Fingal County Council do not clamp vehicles and referenced the section of the response to the Motion where it stated that "Fingal County Council changed New Street, Malahide to a pedestrian street on 15th June, 2020 without any consultation or prior notice with all stakeholders". Cllr. O'Brien clarified that New Street has been pedestrianised since the end of June. Cllr. O'Brien stated that all statutory bodies, including the HSE, were written to prior to the pilot to inform them and to advise that if they required further information they could contact the Council.

Cllr O'Brien stated that no response was received from the HSE, however, following on-site contact with HSE, an e-mail was received and follow up telephone conversations were had with a view to meeting on site. Due to personnel changes, this meeting did not take place. Cllr. O'Brien read a statement that Fingal County Council follows the statutory process for road closures and provides ongoing communication with all councillors through area, committee and Council meetings. He stated that the pedestrianisation of New Street was not a road closure and the road is open to pedestrians, cyclists and businesses. It is a traffic calming measure and deliveries, drop-offs and collections can be made between 5:00am and 10:30am each morning and the pilot scheme is carried out under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act.

Cllr. O'Brien stated that Malahide Pay & Display has 672 spaces, most within a seven minute walk of New Street and that recent measurement of parking usage found capacity was not reached within the zone. The councillor asked that the HSE provide information regarding home visits due to public access issues.

Cllr. O'Brien agreed with Ms. McLoone on the need for local authorities and the HSE to work together.

Cllr. Howard Mahony welcomed Ms. McLoone's offer to speak with Fingal County Council and stated that a car park is 300m away, with age friendly parking spaces 30-40m away.

Ms. Brigid Manton stated that Malahide is well supplied in terms of car parking, and the health centre has a drop off point and nearby free parking for up to three hours.

Cllr. Christy Burke agreed with the principal of the Motion and was glad to learn that Fingal to do not clamp. Cllr Burke was contacted by HSE workers over the weekend regarding the return of clamping in Dublin City, and informed the meeting that an arrangement had been made by the Lord Mayor for provision within the city centre.

Cllr. Ray McAdam asked if the HSE can quantify the increase in reported home visits.

Ms. McLoone said she will provide figures on home visits and that the matter will be progressed with Fingal County Council. Ms McLoone outlined that the HSE's priority is to deliver health and social services to the population of CHO DNCC.

In the interest of public health and safety that this Forum write to the Minister of Health, Stephen Donnelly, and recommend that a ban on the use of e-cigarettes and vaping, similar to that of the smoking ban, be implemented immediately. This ban should include but not be limited to the workplace, public transport, healthcare and educational facilities, cafes, bars and restaurants.

Cllr. Tom Behan

Cllr. Tom Behan requested the support of the Forum on his Motion. He outlined that the matter could be resolved by amending the existing legislation to include e-cigarettes and vaping, or new legislation could be introduced to make e-cigarettes and vaping illegal in public places, cafes, bars, restaurants and public transport.

Cllr. Michelle Hall supported the Motion stating that there is no basis for asking someone to stop vaping and that it may be worse than smoking as people who vape seem to do so continuously.

Cllr. Howard Mahony also supported the Motion stating that vaping is the new scourge of society and new legislation was needed.

It was agreed that a letter would issue to the Minister for Health on behalf of the Forum.

5. Questions

The responses to the Questions were noted.

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 Tuesday, 27th October, 2020.

Signed:

Chairperson