

**MINUTES - MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 @ 2.00pm  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNTY HALL, CORK**

**Present:**

Cllr. Liam Ahearn - **Chairperson**  
Cllr. Pat Burton  
Cllr. John Buttimer  
Cllr. John Carey  
Cllr. Catherine Clancy  
Cllr. Pat Cody  
Cllr. Timmy Collins  
Cllr. John Coonan  
Cllr. Tom Cronin  
Cllr. Danny Crowley  
Cllr. Dr. Patrick Crowley  
Cllr. John Joe Culloty  
Cllr. Declan Doocey  
Cllr. Wayne Fennell  
Cllr. Matt Griffin  
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan  
Cllr. Denis Kennedy  
Cllr. Michael Kinsella  
Cllr. Tim Lombard

Cllr. Tom Maher  
Cllr. Breeda Moynihan-Cronin  
Cllr. Martin Murphy  
Cllr. Barbara Murray  
Cllr. Dr. Sean McCarthy  
Cllr. Arthur McDonald  
Cllr. Michael O'Brien  
Cllr. Bobby O'Connell  
Cllr. Frank O'Flynn  
Cllr. Laurence (Cha) O'Neill  
Cllr. John O'Sullivan  
Cllr. Hilary Quinlan  
Cllr. Seamus Ryan  
Cllr. Jerry Sullivan  
Cllr. Jim Townsend  
Cllr. Ted Tynan  
Cllr. Gillian Wharton-Slattery

**Apologies:**

Cllr. Sean Lonergan  
Cllr. Mary Shields

**In Attendance:**

- Mr. Pat Healy, Regional Director of Operations - South
- Mr. Richie Dooley, Area Manager, HSE Waterford/Wexford
- Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork
- Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry
- Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, HSE Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary
- Mr. Barry O'Brien, Assistant National Director HR, HSE South
- Ms. Angie O'Brien Area Communications Manager, HSE South
- Ms. Raymonde O'Sullivan, Assistant National Director of Finance
- Ms. Sinéad Byrne, Manager, Regional Health Forum, South
- Regional Health Forum Office staff

### **1. Adoption of the Minutes of meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

The Minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011 were approved by Cllr. Liam Ahearn, Chairperson and adopted by members.

### **2. Chairperson's Correspondence**

Cllr. Liam Ahearn, Chairperson welcomed members and managers to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Dr. Elizabeth Keane who was unable to attend. Cllr. Ahearn welcomed Cllr. Ted Tynan who has been nominated to the Regional Health Forum, South by Cork City Council in place of Cllr. Mick Barry.

Cllr. Ahearn advised Members that as there was a lengthy agenda to be followed that members refrain from asking Service Plan related Questions until after each Manager had completed their presentation. Members were also advised that with reference to the circulated responses to the Notice of Motions and Questions submitted that these would be taken as read, and if any member had further queries in relation to the responses, they could contact either the Regional Health Forum Office or the relevant Area Manager.

Members were informed that the usual local Forum briefings following the publication of the Regional Service Plan will again be taking place over the next number of weeks and members will be notified of the dates by e-mail.

### **3. Presentation and Report from HSE Management on Service Plan 2012**

Mr. Pat Healy opened the presentation outlining that following publication of the National Service Plan 2012 on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012, the HSE South Regional Service Plan has been prepared within this overall framework translating the national plan to regional and local levels. He highlighted that the Regional Service Plan was prepared in the context of the challenges faced by the health services this year in terms of reduced staffing levels and a reduced budget combined with an increasing demand for services and outlines the actions being taken across the region to address these challenges.

The Regional Service Plan sets out the type and volume of service the HSE South will provide directly, or through a range of funded agencies, during 2012. The Plan is consistent with the national policies, frameworks, performance targets and standards and resources.

Mr. Healy acknowledged the contribution of staff at all levels during 2011; the HSE South was the only region which successfully achieved its Service Plan targets within approved funding levels by also delivering a significant change agenda. The budget allocation for the HSE South in 2012 is €1.689bn; this reflects a reduction of €208m on 2011 budget. Of this figure €142m relates to non-service impacting changes e.g. Fair Deal now being dealt with centrally in Tullamore with the region recouping funding on a monthly basis. Mr. Healy highlighted that there will be an extra €14m of funding for the HSE South with €10m for Children's services and some contingency funding to fill critical posts. There is overall €80m reduction which will be service impacting. When the deficit and service pressures from 2011 amounting to €25m are taken into account the overall challenge for 2012 amounts to €115m.

A significant challenge for the service in 2012 will be the overall reduction in staff numbers. Over 400 staff are due to leave the service by end February 2012; this is in addition to the 1,000 staff who left in 2011. The preparation of contingency plans commenced in October last year to ensure arrangements are in place to deal with this staffing deficit. There will be an escalation of the pace of change under the Public Sector Agreement this year ensuring key posts are filled through redeployment or by service reorganisation. The HSE South are currently working with the Trade Unions to ensure this work is continued. This will include implementing changes in Surgery and

Emergency Departments; reducing the Average Length of Stay for patients to better utilise beds; workforce planning is well under way; targeted rostering and skill mix.

The strategy across acute hospitals in the service plan is to mitigate the impact of budget and staff reductions through rigorous implementation of the clinical programmes particularly in Acute Medicine, Emergency Department and Surgery within the hospitals, in an accelerated way. The capacity in the system is being tailored to available funding and staff resources to ensure a sustainable model of service delivery.

### **Briefing from Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, HSE Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary**

Ms. Lanigan outlined details of services at St. Luke's Hospital and Kilcreene with the focus on the implementation of the National Clinical Programmes. There are a number of planned Consultant appointments for 2012 and construction will commence on the major capital development the ED, Acute Medicine Unit and the Susie Long Day Services unit. There will be a seasonal closure of 10 medical beds in St. Luke's hospital and it is planned to structure annual leave for Consultants to eliminate the need for locum cover.

South Tipperary General Hospital (STGH) has been selected as a pilot site for the Diabetes Management Integrated Care Model and also the Joint Accreditation Group accreditation site for Endoscopy services. To improve resource management work is continuing to eliminate unrostered overtime and Agency costs; maximise rosters, structured annual leave; non-pay savings and a focus on improving income generation through maximising the utilisation of private beds. A business case for endoscopy service development is being prepared.

Ms Anna Marie Lannigan outlined that with regard to mental health services in Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary that the implementation of the reconfiguration of services in line with Vision for Change will continue with the further development and enhancement of the community mental health services. The intention is that all community based services will be in place by the end of March 2012 and this is the target date for St. Michael's to close. No services will cease until alternative community based services are in place. This target will be kept under close review through the governance framework within the HSE, with the Mental Health Commission, DOH and the Ministers office to ensure quality and safe outcome at all time.

Services for Older People will see a reduction of 4.5% in Home Help hours with the focus on low level dependency hours whilst maintaining high level dependency services. There will be 60 bed closures in the Long and Short stay units (all of which are currently vacant) with increased Consultant Geriatrician Clinics in Primary Care settings and the further development of Alzheimer's services.

Disability Services are working on the revision of rosters and the change model of day service provision at Damien House with a 3.7% reduction in payments to Voluntary Agencies. A further five Primary Care Teams will be established along with a Community Intervention Team in association with Caredoc. The 2-day Community Infusion Unit will be extended to 5 days helping prevent admissions to the acute hospitals.

The Chairperson and members thanked Ms. Lanigan for her presentation which was followed by a Question and Answer session with the following queries and comments responded to:

- Beds remaining in the District Hospitals and staffing arrangements
- Reduction in beds in St. Patricks Hospital
- Redevelopment of Our Lady's Hospital Cashel
- The target opening date for the Crisis House
- Outreach OPD services
- Suzie Long Services
- Sustaining levels of services for Elderly

- Castlecomer and Thomastown bed reductions
- Primary Care Centres in Carlow/Kilkenny area

#### **Briefing from Mr. Richard Dooley, Area Manager, HSE Waterford/Wexford**

Mr. Dooley outlined the challenge facing WRH both in terms of the reduction for 2012 but also the deficit being carried forward for 2011. Mr. Dooley emphasised that over €2m revenue funding is being provided to WRH to appoint additional consultant and professional staff to implement the National Clinical Programmes, which will assist in mitigating the impact of the budget and staff reductions.

As part of cost containment measures, Mr Dooley explained that there will be closure of 2 operating theatres and closure of 25 surgical beds. Efficiencies will be achieved in Laboratories across the hospitals and the community and efficiencies in the use of high drugs cost in the acute settings with a further reduction in agency expenditure.

With regard to Wexford General Hospital, Mr. Dooley outlined new additional posts as part of the development of the National Clinical Programmes including Acute Medicine, Elective Surgery and implementation of the Stroke Programme. There will be accreditation of the Endoscopy Suite under the NCCP program and installation of a National ICT system as part of this program. A business case will be prepared for a special initiative – models of care for a short stay unit. Installation of a new Radiology System National Integrated Medical Imaging System (NIMIS) will take place during Q3 2012.

Development of the A/E Department and the New Delivery Suite and Obstetric Theatre for Wexford General Hospital will commence Q1 2012. Planned in-patient activity for 2012 is 14,890 with day case activity of 9,300. As part of resource management and employment control measures, Mr. Dooley explained that efficiencies will be made in general rostering, management of activity in line with budget and efficiencies will also be made through the implementation of the National Clinical Programmes.

With regard to Services for Older People, Mr. Dooley explained that the focus is on the maintenance and enhancement of the provision of Home Care Packages, increased provision of intermediate care beds and implementation of innovative models of care for people requiring Home Care. Mr. Dooley outlined that the 6 short stay beds closed in St. Patrick's Hospital, Waterford and the 16 short stay beds closed in Dungarvan Community Hospital in October of last year would be re-opened on a phased basis in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2012. However, as a result of staff retirements in Dungarvan due to the grace period etc, he explained it will be necessary to reduce the number of long stay beds provided by 13 beds. This will be achieved through the re-organisation of existing services Dunabbey House and an overall reorganisation of the beds in the area. The shortfall in long-stay beds will be compensated over the coming months with the opening of Private Nursing Home beds in Waterford. With regard to resource management there is a 4.5% reduction in home help hours on the 2011 outturn and efficiencies will be made in aids and appliances through practice review.

Mental Health Services will see the continued implementation of a Vision for Change by including transfer from old long stay institutions to community based facilities and full year commencement of the Psychiatric Liaison service in the Emergency Department in Waterford Regional Hospital. There will be further development of high support residences to support community infrastructure with the development of 3 High Support Residences in Wexford currently under construction and due for completion in Quarter 4 2012. Construction of a 50 bedded Community Nursing Unit based on the grounds of Wexford General Hospital will be completed.

As part of resource management Mr. Dooley explained to members that a review will be undertaken of non-pay expenditure in areas of training, development and office expenses. Pay savings will be achieved through service restructuring and reconfiguration of services across Waterford and Wexford with reduction in overtime through review of rostering.

With regard to Primary Care Mr. Dooley informed members that a Community Intervention Team will be introduced in Waterford and 4 further Primary Care Teams will be established in Waterford/Wexford. A back pain physiotherapy initiative will be introduced in Wexford for GP referrals and a new Primary Care Centre will open in Tramore in Quarter 1 2012. In the area of Child Care, support will be given for the implementation of a change programme and cost management required to reduce cost base.

The Chairperson and members thanked Mr. Dooley for his presentation which was followed by a Question and Answer session with the following queries and comments responded to:

- Timeframe for the appointment of Consultant Posts in Waterford Regional Hospital
- Completion date for the Specialist Inpatient Palliative Care Unit, Waterford Regional Hospital
- Budget outturn figure for Waterford Regional Hospital 2011 V 2012
- Concern regarding no mention on the development of the Community Nursing Unit, St. Patrick's Hospital, Waterford
- Assurance on availability of funding for the appointment of the Consultants Posts and support staff in Waterford Regional Hospital
- Current status of the Pain Management Services in Waterford Regional Hospital
- Regret from members on the closure of 25 surgical beds and 2 operating theatres
- Conversion of 10 long stay beds to convalescent beds in Gorey
- Concern surrounding the reduction of 13 long stay beds in Dungarvan and impact on patients
- Clarification on the Breast Cancer waiting times in Waterford Regional Hospital
- Opening of 28 new beds in Mooncoin Nursing Home

#### **Briefing from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork**

Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork outlined for members the delivery of the Service Plan using the Change Programmes as follows: -

#### **Cork University Hospital (CUH)**

- Over 30 Whole Time Equivalents have been assigned for the implementation of the National Clinical Programmes with continued ongoing implementation of the Acute Medicine Programme
- Average length of stay reduced in 2011 from 12 to 6 days
- The Acute Medical Assessment Unit opened in January 2011 with an increase in Acute Physicians from 2 to 4

As part of cost management and employment control measures Mr. Reaney outlined that 2012 would see the following: -

- Closure of 35 surgical beds
- Reconfiguration of 35 beds from 7 day to 5 day
- Opening Day of Surgery admission lounge
- Implementation of elective surgery clinical programme thereby reducing length of stay and increased admission on the day of surgery
- Seasonal closure of 8-10 beds from 7 day to 5 day in Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH). There will also be re-deployment of 16 midwives which Mr. Reaney outlined will have minimal impact on service users.

With regard to the Emergency Department CUH, Mr. Reaney explained that two additional Consultants have been assigned to support the implementation of the Emergency Medicine Programme. Focus is also on the implementation of 4 Clinical Directorates which will strengthen clinical leadership. Other Clinical Programmes to commence implementation are Epilepsy, Stroke and COPD. There will also be focus on the Neurology Programme which will target the reduction of OPD waiting lists and on the Acute Coronary Syndrome Programme which will ensure timely and appropriate care for cardiac patients.

#### **Mercy University Hospital (MUH)**

With regard to the Mercy University Hospital, Mr. Reaney outlined that significant progress is being made with the opening of a Short Stay Medical Unit and the development of an Acute

Medical Assessment Unit. On the surgical side he explained that the Surgical Programme will focus on increasing productivity in theatres by implementation of The Productive Operating Theatre (TPOT) and increased day of surgery admission and day surgery. As part of cost management there will be closure of 1 theatre, 12 surgical beds and 6 paediatric beds.

Mr. Reaney outlined the development of infrastructure for a regional Gastroenterology Service with a new consultant appointed in 2011. He explained the Stroke programme will be implemented with the establishment of an acute Unit with additional posts assigned to support this programme linked to Cork University Hospital and the opening of its unit in quarter 2 of 2012. An Urgent Care Centre will open on St. Mary's Health Campus in April of this year.

### **South Infirmary/Victoria University Hospital**

Mr. Reaney provided information with regard to the South Infirmary/Victoria University Hospital (SIVUH) as follows:

- Consolidation of the Orthopaedic Service
- Recommencement of the Paediatric Orthopaedic Service
- An outline on the implementation of relevant Clinical Programmes
- Transfer of Ophthalmology in-patient and day surgery from Cork University Hospital
- Transfer of non cancer Gynaecology Services from Cork University Maternity Hospital
- Completion of the regional Pain Medicine Unit

Mr. Reaney also informed members that reorganisation of the SIVUH Emergency Department will conclude following the completion of work by a city-wide clinical Group led by Dr. Colm Henry which report will be signed off by the Regional Management Team including input from national clinical leads and SDU. He outlined the successful re-organisation of services in Cork City to include Orthopaedics, Cardiology and other relocations. The implementation of the small hospital framework was outlined in respect of Mallow and Bantry General Hospitals with the transfer of day-case activity to reduce pressure on Cork University Hospital and maximise services in both of these hospitals. He outlined the re-organisation of Surgical Services in the Cork Hospitals under the leadership of Mr. Denis Richardson. There will also be complete consolidation of Cancer Services to the Cork University Hospital Cancer Centre to include pancreatic, prostate, rectal, gynaecology and upper GI cancer surgery.

With regard to Services for Older People, Mr. Reaney explained that the Home Help service will be reduced by 4.5% but will continue to support older people to live at home and will be targeted to those with the most complex needs. Developments of CNU's will see the Ballincollig unit operating on a full year basis in 2012. In addition Heather House and Farranlea Road Community Nursing Units will be extended to full capacity Mr. Reaney outlined that there will be a reduction of 22 beds in Community Hospitals – 8 in Kanturk Community Hospital and 14 in Midleton Community Hospital where beds are already vacant. He explained that it is proposed to close 10 welfare home type beds in St. Francis Welfare Home, Fermoy with the staff in this facility transferring to Fermoy Community Hospital, ensuring no bed closures for Fermoy Community Hospital in 2012. As part of this proposal consideration is being given to the development of an Alzheimer's day service for two days per week while continuing to develop the building for community based services with a consultation process to begin immediately in relation to this overall proposal. With regard to Clonakilty Community Hospital, Mr. Reaney outlined that provision was made in the 2011 service plan to close 16 beds as part of the overall re-organisation of services in the hospital. These beds are currently vacant in the hospital and it is intended to permanently close these beds in 2012.

Mr Reaney informed members that a large programme of change will take place in Mental Health Services expediting the implementation of 'A Vision for Change'. One Senior Manager has been appointed for the Cork area to integrate services between North Lee, North Cork, South Lee and West Cork. The focus is to improve and develop community-based mental health services, reduce hospital admissions and length of stay. Staffing rosters and management structures will also be revised to allow the release of staff to Community Mental Health Teams. There will also be a reduction in overtime and agency expenditure.

With regard to Primary Care Services, Mr. Reaney explained that the opening of Mahon Primary Care Centre will be completed. Macroom and Schull will also be opened. 2012 will also see significant development at St. Mary's Health Campus. He outlined that 56 Primary Care Teams in total have been established with ongoing work taking place on the establishment of the final 7. Discussions are also ongoing with SouthDoc on the further enhancement of a Community Intervention Team for Cork City. In the area of Children and Families, Mr. Reaney outlined that a review of rosters will take place to reduce agency expenditure and a standardised approach will be developed for payments to children over 18 emerging from care. He informed members that Disability Services will see the commencement of the redevelopment of Grove House 28 bedded Residential Service. A further 6 residents currently on the St. Raphael's campus will be relocated to more appropriate purpose built unit on the grounds. There will also be a reduction in expenditure for aids and appliances.

In conclusion Mr. Reaney acknowledged the work of HSE staff over the last year. He re-iterated that 2012 will be a very challenging year and acknowledged the co-operation he has received to date from staff.

The Chairperson and members thanked Mr. Reaney for his presentation which was followed by a Question and Answer session with the following queries and comments discussed. Members also agreed that if further information was not readily available today they were happy to discuss any outstanding issues at the local forum briefings:

- Impact for staff/patients following closure of 8 beds in Kanturk Community Hospital
- Future of St. Francis Welfare Home, Fermoy and the impact following the closure of 10 beds
- Clarification on the development of a proposed Alzheimer's Unit, St. Francis Welfare Home
- Permanent closure of 16 beds in Clonakilty Community Hospital
- Personal answering of phone lines rather than a recorded message
- Standardised payment to over 18's emerging from care
- Clarification on the provision of the Pain Service in the South Infirmary/Victoria University Hospital
- Arrangements for Cancer patients requiring re-admission due to illness following treatment – could they be admitted directly to the Cancer Unit rather than via A/E?
- Redeployment of staff following the closure of 14 beds in Midleton Community Hospital
- Large waiting lists for MRI scans and the number of hours per day the MRI scanner is operational in CUH
- Management of the impact on the closure of 35 surgical beds in CUH and 12 in MUH
- Disappointment with the loss of 128 community beds in HSE South
- Compliments and acknowledgement of the success of the Acute Medical Assessment Unit in CUH
- Development of St. Mary's Campus
- With the move of activity to Day Case, more dependency on patients to rely on the provision of Primary Care Teams
- Timeframes for the filling of Acute Medicine Posts in Cork University Hospital
- Update on the commencement of the PET CT Service in Cork University Hospital
- Concern regarding the 7% reduction in gross funding in Mental Health Services
- Reduction of 25 beds in line with 'A Vision for Change' and whether or not there will be an increase in community residential beds
- Lack of vision in the Disability Service Plan and concern regarding lack of provision of respite care
- Capacity of Cork City Hospitals to provide Emergency Services
- Average length of time spent on trolleys in A/E Departments
- Breakdown of staff employed grade by grade
- Comparative numbers of Consultants in place 2011 V 2012
- Welcome on the opening of Farranlea Road Community Nursing Unit

Cllr John Buttimer referred to the re-establishment of the Reconfiguration Forum under the Chairmanship of Professor John Higgins and previous commitment that the Minutes of the Non-Executive Advisory Board meetings would be forwarded to members on a regular basis.

**Briefing from Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry**

Mr. Michael Fitzgerald outlined details of service developments at Kerry General Hospital with the focus on the implementation of the National Clinical Programmes and to reach targets set out by the Special Delivery Unit. Clinical Divisions will be developed and considerable work has been done in the development of Endoscopy Services towards achieving the required accreditation for colonoscopy screening in Kerry General Hospital. The Emergency Department will see the transfer of existing ED staff to the new unit. A stroke Unit will be developed with additional nursing and Speech and Language Therapy resources. A new IT Radiology system, National Integrated Medical Imaging System (NIMIS) will be rolled out and the opening of CNU on a phased basis.

As part of resource management there will be a reduction in Medical overtime and reduction on the reliance of agency cover with revision of rosters and skill mix across a number of disciplines. There will be seasonal bed and theatre closures, efficiencies will be achieved in non pay costs and income generation will be maximised.

With regard to Services for Older People, Mr. Fitzgerald explained the focus will be to continue to implement the integrated model of care for older persons across hospital and community with ongoing support for the provision of a wide range of day services. Priority will be to maintain Home Care Packages at 2011 levels to support those with complex needs to live at home. He informed members that construction of the 40 bedded Unit in Kenmare Community Hospital will continue and will be completed in 2013. There will be a move to a new day care centre accommodation at Tobar Naofa, in Tralee.

As part of resource management, Mr. Fitzgerald informed members that Home Help Hours will be reduced by 30,000 hours in line with the national 4.5% reduction on the 2011 outturn. There will be a reduction in 31 community hospital beds, 17 in Listowel, 11 in Killarney and 3 in Tralee. Community nursing services will be reorganised to meet the core needs of the area within the available resources. There will be ongoing discussions with staff representative associations, reviewing rosters and skill mix.

Mr. Fitzgerald outlined that with regard to Mental Health Services the ongoing closure of St. Finan's Hospital will progress with 10 female beds closed there since the end of January and the appropriate relocation of residents. Community Mental Health Teams will be developed and supported by the relocation of staff following on from the closure of a 12 bedded high support hostel in Caherciveen and the reduction of 6 beds in the acute unit in Kerry General Hospital. Mr. Fitzgerald also explained that there is a requirement to change roster arrangements and introduce skill mix to ensure the continuity of services following staff retirements in early 2012. It will also be necessary to reduce the reliance on overtime and support the redeployment of staff to Community Mental Health Teams. He outlined that a new 4 bedded Close Observation Unit in Tralee and a 40 bedded residential unit in Killarney will be developed subject to Ministerial approval. The Jigsaw project, a teenage mental health well-being promotional service will continue to be supported and a country-wide suicide response will be co-ordinated in conjunction with statutory and voluntary providers.

Mr. Fitzgerald explained that there will be continued development of Primary Care Teams and also the development of a Community Intervention Team for Kerry in association with SouthDoc. Disability services will progress with the re-organisation of children services in the county with the establishment of a local consultative forum. Child Care Services will support the implementation of a change programme and resource management required to reduce cost base.

The Chairperson and members thanked Mr. Fitzgerald for his presentation which was followed by a Question and Answer session with the following queries/comments responded to:

- From the 101 vacant residential beds proposed for closure, how many of these are in Kerry?
- Timeframe for the appointment of the Consultant Rheumatologist to Kerry General Hospital
- Clarification on the funding for the Endoscopy Unit, KGH
- Update on the re-opening of the beds in Dingle Community Hospital
- Reason for the closure of beds in St. Columbanus's Home in Killarney and plans in place to re-open these beds
- Up to date situation regarding Valentia Island Community Hospital
- Development of Palliative Care Unit, Kerry
- Tribute to frontline staff and compliments to those who retired and challenges going forward
- Move to Tobar Naofa, Moyderwell, Tralee
- Provision of funding for Jigsaw project and other voluntary groups
- Clarification on seasonal bed closures
- Reduction in Home Help Hours
- From the €35m provided to Mental Health Services nationally, what percentage has been allocated to Kerry?
- Re-organisation of Community Nursing situation in Kerry going forward
- Welcome from members on the closure of St. Finan's
- Rise in the number of suicides particularly in rural areas

4. Reports by Chairpersons of
- (a) Acute Hospitals Services and Population Health Committee
  - (b) PCCC Committee
- both held Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 in Cork.

The synopses of the Reports of the previous committee meetings held in Cork on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011 were taken as read.

#### 4.1 Reports from Committees

- Update Report on Hearing Screening for Newborn Babies, Waterford Regional Hospital/Wexford General Hospital – Mr. Richie Dooley, Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford
- Update Report on Community Intervention Teams, Carlow/Kilkenny – Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary

The above reports were noted.

#### 5. Notice of Motions

**5(a), 5(k), 5(l) and Q6(e)** Cllr. John Joe Culloty, Cllr. Catherine Clancy, and Cllr. John O'Sullivan submitted the following Notice of Motions with the subsequent Question submitted by Cllr. John Coonan.

##### **5(a) – Cllr. John Joe Culloty**

**“As the Medical Card application back-log appears to be increasing causing real hardship to those in need of vital medication, that the HSE South calls on both the Department of Health and the Minister to urgently review procedures with a view to speeding up the volume of claims being processed.”**

##### **5(k) – Cllr. Catherine Clancy**

**“Recognising the scale and the magnitude involved in the centralisation of the Medical Card Scheme, that the HSE at local level would ensure that some staffing levels are maintained to deal with any residual problems that may arise in the transfer of these services”**

**5(l) – Cllr. John O’Sullivan**

**That the HSE South discuss the change-over to the centralized processing of medical card applications and provide data on the numbers processed, average time taken to complete applications and provide an overview of the process**

**Cllr. John O’Sullivan**

**6(e) – Cllr. John Coonan**

**“What is the up to date position regarding the unacceptable and totally unsatisfactory new centralised operation for medical card applications and the HSE’s view on this?”**

A written response was circulated to members from Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, HSE Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary and was noted.

**5(b) Cllr. Danny Crowley submitted the following Notice of Motion:**

**“That the HSE South and the Minister for Health and Children would recognise Macroom Community Hospital as an essential high dependency health care facility for older residents/patients in mid Cork and surrounding areas and that a statement of intent with regard to the future of Macroom Community Hospital would be made available to this Forum.”**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**5(c) Cllr. Frank O’Flynn submitted the following Notice of Motion:**

**“That the HSE South outlines its future plans for the ongoing provision of services for Older People in St. Francis Welfare Home, Fermoy”.**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**5(d) Cllr. Jerry Sullivan submitted the following Notice of Motion:**

**“That the HSE South would provide an update on the future plans for Castletownbere Community Hospital, bearing in mind its unique location and the service it provides for the local people. These services include day care and respite care”.**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**5(e) Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan submitted the following Notice of Motion:**

**“That the HSE South clarify the current position with regard to the ‘Cluain Arann’ Welfare Home in Tipperary Town. Please advise what plans are in place with regard to admissions and has this procedure changed in recent times?”**

A written response was circulated to members from Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, HSE Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary and was noted.

**5(f) Cllr. Matt Griffin submitted the following Notice of Motion:**

**"That HSE South would advise why the matching funding for the refurbishment of the Endoscopy Department of Kerry General Hospital for the roll out of the National Cancer Screening Service (NCSS) for Colon Cancer is not forthcoming and has been diverted to another facility in the HSE South."**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry and was noted.

**5(g)** Cllr. Pat Cody submitted the following Notice of Motion:

**"That the HSE should end the Moratorium on front line staff recruitment, which has had a detrimental effect on staff moral, in light of the major staff reductions visited on the Acute Hospitals, Mental Health Services and Disability and Community Sectors in Wexford and throughout the HSE South in recent years."**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Barry O'Brien, Assistant National Director, HR, HSE South and was noted.

**5(h)** Cllr. John Coonan submitted the following Notice of Motion:

**"That the HSE South endorses the view that a letter be written to the Minister for Health requesting procedures to be put in place to enable Health as a curriculum subject be prepared, developed and introduced as a matter of important priority to our educational system."**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Andy Walker, A/Health Promotion Manager, HSE South and was noted.

**5(i)** Cllr. Barbara Murray submitted the following Notice of Motion:

**"That this forum insists that before any directive be issued, to reduce beds in any Community Hospital that a root and branch evaluation take place in each facility covering areas such as**

- Activity levels**
- Current Demands**
- Staffing ratio"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry and was noted.

**5(j)** Cllr. John Buttimer submitted the following Notice of Motion standing with the subsequent Question submitted by Cllr. Catherine Clancy:

**5(j) – Cllr. John Buttimer**

**"That the HSE South would report on the numbers of staff proposing to take early retirement or leave at the end of February 2012 by category of staff, that it would outline the measures it proposes to take to minimise impact on the delivery of front line services and in particular would outline if there are any plans in place to reassign midwives currently employed as agency staff at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) to direct HSE employees."**

**6(h) – Cllr. Catherine Clancy**

**"How many staff in the HSE South have taken up the early retirement package and in particular:**

- **What Departments were these staff employed in and what Grades?**
- **What contingency plans are in place to deal with the loss of staff?**
- **What training has been given to the replacement staff?**
- **What measures were taken by the HSE to retain the intellectual capital and experience of those leaving the service?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Barry O'Brien, Assistant National Director, HR, HSE South and was noted.

**5(k)** This Notice of Motion was responded to in conjunction with Notice of Motion 5(a), 5(l) and Question 6(e) and was noted.

**5(l)** This Notice of Motion was responded to in conjunction with Notice of Motion 5(a), 5(k) and Question 6(e) and was noted.

## **6. Questions**

**6(a)** Cllr. John Joe Culloty put forward the following Question:

**"As there is no logical reason not to do so, can the HSE South ask the Department of Health to direct the Irish Blood Transfusion Service to accept blood donations from people with hemochromatosis?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**6(b)** Cllr. Danny Crowley put forward the following Question:

**"To ask the HSE South:-**

- **What plans are in place with regard to the provision of a primary Health Care Centre for both Castletownbere and Schull?**
- **Has the HSE looked at any proposals for suitable accommodation/premises in these areas?**
- **Will the HSE consider the Community Hospitals and adjacent grounds as suitable locations for same?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**6(c)** Cllr. Matt Griffin put forward the following Question:

**"Please confirm the start date of the Consultant Rheumatologist at Kerry General Hospital as advised in May 2011 Forum."**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry and was noted.

**6(d)** Cllr. Pat Cody put forward the following Question:

**"To ask the HSE to supply the details of the total number of posts, by classification, vacated under the Moratorium and the earlier Recruitment Freeze that continue unfilled in the HSE South, with reference to geographical locations"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Barry O'Brien, Assistant National Director HR, HSE South and was noted.

**6(e)** This Question was answered in conjunction with Notice of Motion 5(a), Notice of Motion 5(k) and Notice of Motion 5(l) and was noted.

**6(f)** Cllr. Barbara Murray put forward the following Question:

**"Is there a minimum staffing ratio that the HSE uses as a template in deciding how many nursing/non-nursing staff it takes to operate residential facilities for Older People and Mental Health?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry and was noted.

**6(g)** Cllr. John Buttimer put forward the following Question:

**"To ask the HSE South what progress is being made in recruiting a Vascular Surgeon at Mercy University Hospital and has the decision to recruit a Category A Surgeon rather than a Category B Surgeon as was approved by the Consultant Appointments Advisory Committee impacted upon the speed of recruitment?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**6(h)** This Question was responded to in conjunction with Notice of Motion 5(j) and was noted.

**6(i)** Cllr. Dr. Patrick Crowley put forward the following Question:

**"What is the current status of the Pain Management Services in Waterford Regional Hospital and please include:**

- **The number of patients seen in the last two years (2010/2011)**
- **The number and type of staff**
- **The waiting list at present and its future in the HSE South East?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Richie Dooley, Area Manager, HSE Waterford/Wexford and was noted.

**6(j)** Cllr. Gillian Wharton-Slattery put forward the following Question:

**"What are the up to date plans for the staffing of the new and very welcome extension to the A/E Department at Kerry General Hospital and reassure members of on-going consultations with existing staff?"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Area Manager, HSE Kerry and was noted.

**6(k)** Cllr. John O'Sullivan put forward the following Question:

**"Please outline the following for the Month of January 2012:-**

- **What is the daily number of patients on trolleys in the A/E Department at Cork University Hospital?**
- **What number of elective procedures were cancelled by Cork University Hospital?**

**Please provide a comparison with January 2010 and January 2011"**

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork and was noted.

**7. Date and Time of next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum, South will be held on **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012** at **2pm, Council Chambers, County Hall, Cork.**