

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

Chairperson,
Cllr. John Buttimer

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MINUTES - MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

Thursday 18th of September, 2014 @ 2pm
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNTY HALL, CORK

Present:

Cllr. Liam Brazil
Cllr. James Brown
Cllr. Mary Butler
Cllr. John Buttimer
Cllr. Timmy Collins
Cllr. Henry Cremin
Cllr. John Joe Culloty
Cllr. Davy Daniels
Cllr. Mary Rose Desmond
Cllr. Michael Doyle
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald
Cllr. Denis Foley
Cllr. Breda Gardner
Cllr. Imelda Goldsboro
Cllr. Joe Harris
Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan
Cllr. Mike Kennelly

Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley
Cllr. Joe Malone
Cllr. Michael McCarthy
Cllr. Rachel McCarthy
Cllr. Louise McLoughlin
Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Bobby O'Connell
Cllr. Aaron O'Sullivan
Cllr. John Pender
Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Damian Quigg
Cllr. William Quinn
Cllr. Bob Ryan
Cllr. John Sheehan
Cllr. Frank Staples
Cllr. Joe Sullivan
Cllr. Tom Wood

Apologies:

Cllr. Deirdre Forde

In Attendance:

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer, CEO, South/South West Hospital Groups
Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE, Cork and Kerry Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services,
Mr. Tony McNamara, CEO, Cork Hospital Group
Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services,
Ms. Angie O'Brien, Area Communications Manager, HSE South
Mr. Michael Norris, Operations Performance Manager, National Ambulance Service
Ms. Sinéad Byrne, Manager, Regional Health Forum, South

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 10th of July, 2014

At the proposal of Cllr. Bobby O'Connell, seconded by Cllr. Liam Brazil, the Minutes of the Forum Meeting held on Thursday the 10th of July, 2014 were approved and adopted by Members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr. John Buttimer, Chairperson, welcomed the Members and Managers to the meeting. Members were asked to turn off their mobile phones as these interfere with the Audio System in the Chambers.

Cllr. Buttimer advised that the next meeting of the South West Committee which comprises of Cork and Kerry Members will be held on Tuesday 21st October 2014 in Tralee. The meeting of South East Committee, whose membership is made up of Forum Members from Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Wexford and Waterford, will be held on Thursday 23rd October. He advised that the venues for both meetings will be circulated to Members shortly.

In terms of Emergency Motions, Cllr. Buttimer advised that these Motions need to be raised firstly through the Party Whip and then by the Whip directly with the Chair. He confirmed that the Chair will make a decision on whether the Emergency Motion is accepted and added to the Agenda.

The Chairperson asked Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer, Group CEO, South/South West Hospital Groups, if he would like to update Members on the Integrated Service Area Review Report that is due to be published shortly.

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer advised that ISA Review Report is due to be published imminently. It has been forwarded to Department of Health and HSE Management Team and it is likely to be released next week; the Regional Health Forum office will notify Members in due course. Mr. O'Dwyer updated members on the transition from RDO to RDPI following announcement of new structures and he confirmed that the RDPI role will be phased out. Mr. O'Dwyer confirmed he has the Lead for the Regional Health Forum in the HSE South and that Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, together with Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager will continue to work with Members on the Forum.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. O'Dwyer for his update and introduced Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, as she wished to inform Members of the upcoming Health Management Institute Awards.

Ms. Lanigan updated members on the National Awards and advised that future Committees would receive presentations by the Groups involved.

Ms. Lanigan also raised the very tragic incident at St. Otteran's Hospital in recent days; Ms. Lanigan advised that staffing levels were not at issue and that there are no concerns in relation to the safety of all other residents. She confirmed that there is a full review underway and members would be informed of the outcome of this review.

Cllr. John Buttimer offered his congratulations to Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer on his appointment as President of the European Hospital Managers Association.

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer wished to allay members concerns over the continued services at Emergency Departments in the Region. He confirmed that the Emergency

Departments in the South/South West Group which include Kerry General Hospital, , Cork University Hospital, University Hospital Waterford, Wexford General Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital Kilkenny and St. Tipperary Hospital are open 24 hours a day and there are no plans to reduce services. He confirmed that Bantry, Mallow and St. Mary's Orthopaedic will continue to provide Local Injuries Unit services as is currently the position.

Cllr. Buttimer advised that he wished to make a declaration under the Standards in Public Office; he is a member of the COPE staff and member of Board of Mercy University Hospital.

The Chairperson reminded Members that there is no debate on Questions and that it is only the Member who asked the Question may speak to it.

4(a) Cllr. Tom Wood moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

"That plans be drawn up for the proposed 40 bed Community Nursing Unit at Saint Patrick's Hospital, Cashel without further delay in order to ensure its provision as quickly as possible"

A written response from Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr. Tom Wood queried the possible development of Community Nursing Unit in Cashel; he stated it was not clear in the Response that issued. Cllr. Wood asked if Ms. Lanigan would come to Cashel to address issues to patients and staff advocates. He said he did not want to see the Rehabilitation Unit moved as it is the heart of St. Patrick's Hospital.

Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan acknowledged the work and services in St. Patrick's Hospital were of a very high standard. She confirmed that she is a regular visitor to Cashel and has met staff there on a number of occasions including last week. The group she met recently included members of staff and various other stakeholders and Ms. Lanigan stated that she was more than happy to address any issue. The Elderly Mentally Infirm Unit is a new development for Cashel and will be an improvement on the current services provided there. There is ongoing consultation with the HSE Estates Department and a commitment for funding is required before a date can be given as to the commencement of the project. Ms. Lanigan stated that all work will be done in consultation with HIQA with a view to continuing to improve services to the elderly in Cashel.

The Chairperson advised that as Notice of Motion 4 (b) and Question 5 (g) related to the same subject matter they would be taken together.

4(b) Cllr. Damian Quigg moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

" To ask this Forum, why is it taking such a lengthy period of time for the renewal of Medical Cards and Medical Card Applications here in Kerry, this is leaving people who are very sick without cover for the said period."

5 (g) Cllr. Henry Cremin put forward the following Question:

"Is it possible that members of this Forum could have more access to medical card applications, in order to inform their constituents directly of

their current status, therefore relieving our TDs of some of the work load, and also assisting the Independent Councillors who would not have a link to any TDs without party affiliations?"

The combined written response to the above 4(b) Notice of Motion and 5 (g) Question from Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Service was circulated and referred to.

Cllr. Damian Quigg raised his concerns with regard to medical card applicants in the Kerry area and specifically cases where patients suffering from terminal cancer were waiting from 6-8 months for a medical card. He raised the issue of patients with MS and seriously ill children on medications not covered on Drug Refund Scheme. Cllr. Quigg advised that personal pleas had been made to Minister and no action had yet resulted.

Cllr Hilary Cremin seconded Cllr. Quigg's submission and sought support for his own motion.

Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan responded to members concerns; she acknowledged the challenges and frustrations and stated that there has been an improvement in the performance of PCRS. She advised that she will relay all information back to PCRS from this meeting. Ms. Lanigan added that in most cases information missing from application was what causes delays. Ms. Lanigan asked names from specific cases to be given to her and she will follow up on each case. She advised that this is no dedicated number for the Regional Health Forum members to call with queries. She will however issue an invitation to PCRS to attend a future Committee Meeting to discuss these issues further.

Cllr. John Buttimer stated that there is a clear consensus in relation to a dedicated contact number for Forum Members; he suggested that a letter should be sent to the Minister for Health and PCRS in this regard.

4(c) Cllr. John Buttimer moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

"That the HSE South would publish details on funding allocated to service providers in intellectual disability and/or autism to enable people to transition from congregated settings to community settings since 2012; that the report would include details on the number of people supported to transition in 2012,2013 and 2014 and the number of people expected to be supported move from congregated to community settings in 2015 and 2016; the report might also comment on the relationship between the HSE, Department of Health and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government with respect to meeting the housing need of people with disability in community settings."

A written response from Mr Ger Reaney, Area Manager, Cork and Kerry Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr. Buttimer thanked Mr. Reaney for his response and confirmed that he is happy with same.

4(d) Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

“To ask that more frontline staff be provided to Kerry General Hospital as they are understaffed”

A written response from Mr T.J. O'Connor, General Manager, Kerry General Hospital, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae informed Members that patients from other areas are being treated in Kerry General Hospital and this is resulting in more pressure on frontline staff. He called for the moratorium on recruitment to be relaxed due to the unprecedented overcrowding in Kerry General Hospital.

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer, CEO, South/South West Hospital Group outlined that a recruitment process has commenced for medical and nursing staff in the HSE South.

4(e) Cllr. Henry Cremin moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

“Can I have an explanation of the current system in place for weekend/bank holiday home helps?”

A written response from Mr Ger Reaney, Area Manager, Cork and Kerry Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr Henry Cremin questioned what the HSE policy is in relation to the replacement for Home Helps when they take leave.

Mr. Ger Reaney advised that it is practise that clients are assessed individually based on their need and if a replacement Home Help is required every effort made to replace them.

4(f) Cllr. James Browne moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

“That this Forum and the HSE call on the Department of Health to recognise the unique needs of people suffering from Ichthyosis and supports the inclusion of those suffering from this genetic skin condition onto the Long Term Illness Scheme and requests the HSE to comment on the proposal and to explain its current exclusion. Ichthyosis is an incurable lifelong genetic disorder affecting the skin. In its severe forms it can be both acute and chronic and requires daily monitoring, treatment and full time care. It is debilitating for both the suffers and their carers’.”

A written response from Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr James Browne referred to his motion and said he was calling on the Minister to include Ichthyosis under the Long Term Illness Scheme. It was agreed that a letter would issue to the Minister in this regard.

5. Questions

5(a) Cllr. Tom Wood put forward the following Question:

“Is it possible to provide additional staff and facilitate and longer opening hours at the Registration Offices for Births Deaths and Marriages in Clonmel, Carrick-on Suir and Cashel?”

A written response from Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr Tom Wood noted the response of Ms. Lanigan.

5(b) Cllr. John Sheehan put forward the following Question:

“With regard to the significant computer laboratory failure recently in Cork University Hospital can the HSE management please explain:

- 1. Why did the computer system fail to such a catastrophic extent?**
- 2. Were there back-up systems and if so why did they fail?**
- 3. What is being done to rectify the problem?**
- 4. What systems are being put in place to make sure that this does not happen again?**
- 5. Was the failure due to lack of investment in ICT structures?”**

A written response from Mr. J.A. McNamara, Chief Executive Officer, Cork University Hospital, was circulated and referred to.

Mr. McNamara said there was a significant failure in the system and work is ongoing to resolve the issue. He acknowledged the support of General Practitioners to reduce the number of tests. There is a new IT equipment ordered and should be delivered in the coming weeks.

Cllr. John Sheehan acknowledged the work of Laboratory Staff and questioned whether the exact cause had been identified.

Mr. McNamara advised that a group was established to conduct a root cause analysis to determine the exact cause of the failure. He advised that any learning from this review will be shared.

The Chairperson advised that as Question 5(c) and 5 (e) related to the same subject matter they would be dealt with together.

5 (c) Cllr. Damian Quigg put forward the following Question:

“What is the current position with the hospital in Dingle regarding respite care, the building is not being used for the purpose of which it was built, it is now servicing primary health care resulting in no beds being made available for respite care when many families are in grave need of this service. It is my understanding that a full wing of the hospital was never opened.”

5 (e) Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae put forward the following Question:

“Is it the HSE’s intention to move staff, currently in a rented building in Dingle, into bed spaces in Dingle Hospital? I am concerned that bed spaces are being taken up with office space in Dingle Hospital.”

A combined written response from Mr Ger Reaney, Area Manager, Cork and Kerry Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, to the above Question 5(c) and Question 5(e) was circulated and referred to.

Cllr. Damian Quigg asked why patients are waiting on Respite Care and he questioned what action is being taken to improve the situation.

Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae expressed his concern that space originally designed to accommodate patients was now being used as offices; he requested an update on this matter.

Mr. Ger Reaney confirmed that there are 12 beds for short-term/respite use which compares well with the level available in other hospitals and communities. The HSE would like to have all of the vacant 22 such beds open, particularly for long term care. However, this is unlikely due to the new HIQA requirements. A submission will be made in the Service Plan to see if funding can be accessed to open whatever level of beds are approved by HIQA.

5 (d) Cllr. John Buttimer put forward the following Question:

"To ask the HSE South for a full and comprehensive report on plans to develop primary care centres in the South Lee area with particular reference to the Bishopstown, Togher, and Ballyphehane and if funding has been identified and ringfenced to allow a centre proceed if an agreed site is identified?"

A written response from Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, Cork and Kerry Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Cllr. John Buttimer noted the response of Mr. Reaney.

5 (e) Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae put forward the following Question:

"Is it the HSE's intention to move staff, currently in a rented building in Dingle, into bed spaces in Dingle Hospital? I am concerned that bed spaces are being taken up with office space in Dingle Hospital."

See 5(C) above.

5 (f) Cllr. Joe Sullivan put forward the following Question:

"Are the HSE going to close the Health Centre at Camolin, Co Wexford? If this is the case, what arrangements are the HSE going to put in place for people with no transport, the elderly & children. The Camolin Health Centre is currently catering for a population of over 3000 in its catchment area."

A written response from Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Ms Anna Marie Lanigan advised members that Camolin Health Centre was deemed by the Estates Department as not fit for purpose. It is therefore intended to transfer PHN service to Gorey and Domiciliary Services will continue to be delivered to people at home. It is planned to develop Primary Care Centre in the Ferns area in the longer-term.

5 (g) Cllr. Henry Cremin put forward the following Question:

"Is it possible that members of this Forum could have more access to medical card applications, in order to inform their constituents directly of their current status, therefore relieving our TDs of some of the work load, and also assisting the Independent Councillors who would not have a link to any TDs without party affiliations?"

See 4 (b) above

5 (h) Cllr. James Browne put forward the following Question:

"There is an urgent need to clarify the HSE's intention towards St. Senan's Hospital in Enniscorthy. The former hospital sits on grounds of approximately 100 acres close to Enniscorthy town. Other hospitals under the HSE's remit in County Wexford such as the old St. John's Hospital in Enniscorthy and the old Wexford General Hospital in Wexford town have been allowed to become derelict and there is deep concern among the local community that St. Senan's hospital will be allowed to fall into disrepair also. What are the HSE's proposals for the building and if the HSE has no proposals for the hospital will it facilitate and support community based stakeholders to redevelop the building for community use such as an enterprise centre, artists centre, third level facilities and PLC courses."

A written response from Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, South East Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services, was circulated and referred to.

Ms. Anna Marie Lanigan confirmed that a review of the buildings at St. Senan's Hospital is currently underway and she will report back to members once this review is complete.

5 (i) Cllr. Breda Gardner put forward the following Question:

"To ask the HSE to outline the procedures for prioritising patients on waiting lists, particularly in the area of the orthopaedic waiting list for University Hospital Waterford and how do they ensure that the most urgent patients are seen in the shortest time".

A written response from Mr. Richard Dooley, General Manager, University Hospital Waterford South East Acute Services, was circulated and referred to.

Mr. Gerry O'Dwyer informed members that the group of hospitals will be working very closely with the Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeons and the national clinical programmes over the next year.

6. Date and Time of next meeting – Thursday 20th of November, 2014 at 2pm, Council Chambers, County Hall, Cork