

**Minutes of Meeting of the Regional Health Forum West, held on
Tuesday, 24th May 2011 at 2.00pm in Room 1,
Education Centre, HSE Offices, Merlin Park, Galway**

Miontuairiscí cruinnithe an Fhóiraim Réigiúnach Sláinte, ar an Mháirt, 12 Bealtaine 2011, ag 2.00 .i.n, sa
an tIonad Oideachais, Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, Páirc Mheirlinne, Gaillimh.

Chairperson/Cathaoirleach

Councillor Pádraig Conneely

Members Present/Comhaltaí i Láthair

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cllr Liam Blaney | Cllr Joe Cooney | Cllr Gerry McLoughlin |
| Cllr Declan Bree | Cllr Ger Fahy | Cllr Tom McNamara |
| Cllr Rose Brennan | Cllr Laurence Fallon | Cllr Gerry Murray |
| Cllr Tim Broderick | Cllr Mary Hoade | Cllr Annie May Reape |
| Cllr Ciaran Brogan | Cllr Michael Hourigan | Cllr Austin Francis O'Malley |
| Cllr Richard Butler | Cllr Gordon Hughes | Cllr Gerry Reynolds |
| Cllr John Carroll | Cllr John Kennedy | Cllr Jerome Scanlan |
| Cllr Catherine Connolly | Cllr Frank McBrearty Jr | Cllr Tony Ward |
| Cllr Tom Connolly | Cllr John 'Rocky' McGrath | Cllr Seamus Weir |

Apologies/Leithscéalta

Cllr Sean McGowan
Cllr Brian Meaney
Cllr Paul Murphy
Cllr Kevin Sheahan

Absent/As Láthair

Cllr Shaun Cunniffe
Cllr Michael Crowe
Cllr Bernard McGuinness
Cllr Malachy Noone

In Attendance/I láthair freisin

Mr John Hennessy, Regional Director of Operations (RDO)
Mr Tony Canavan for LHM, Galway PCCC
Dr David O'Keeffe, Clinical Director for Acute and Continuing Care, Galway & Roscommon
Ms Chris Kane, Regional Co-ordinator for Acute Services
Ms Marie Kennedy, Parliamentary Affairs West
Ms Caitriona Meehan, Communications
Mr Liam Minihan, Asst National Director, Finance
Mr Joe Molloy, Estates Manager
Ms Shirley Murphy, Parliamentary Affairs West
Mr Francis Rogers Asst National Director, Human Resources

333/33/11 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 12th April, 2011 were proposed by Councillor John Carroll, seconded by Councillor Ger Fahy and adopted.

334/33/11 Matters Arising

Travel and Subsistence Claims

Cllr Declan Bree referred to a previous discussions and query raised by Cllr Brian Meaney, regarding circulation and publication of HSE Senior Managers' Travel Expense Claims.

L Minihan advised that this information is available on the HSE Web.

Agreed: Details of HSE Senior Managers' Travel Expense Claims, as posted on the HSE Web, will be circulated to all members.

Non-attendance at Meetings

Cllr Richard Butler acknowledged that he was listed as a Member who has not attended three consecutive Forum meetings.

He outlined for Members reasons for his non attendance and thereafter withdrew from the meeting to allow Forum Members an opportunity to consider his position. He requested a response on the decision made, by email, post or phone.

Carraroe Water Contamination

Cllr Catherine Connolly acknowledged receipt of a response to her query from the previous Forum meeting, however, requested an update as a result of a meeting held by Galway County Council with engineers, as referred to in Dr O'Donovan's response to her.

Agreed: Any update available will be forwarded to Cllr Connolly.

Property rented by the HSE / rented to third parties by the HSE

Cllr Declan Bree acknowledged receipt of partial response to his previous Forum Questions in relation to properties rented by the HSE or rented to third parties by the HSE. He acknowledged that he was advised that some of the information sought was commercially sensitive and could therefore not be released. However, he requested a response to his Forum Question as follows:

'W31Q708 – That the Forum be provided with a list of properties *which the HSE is renting to third parties in Sligo and Leitrim*, including the names of the companies / individuals who are renting the properties and the details of the rent received for each property'.

Agreed: Any outstanding replies will issue to Cllr Bree as soon as possible.

Apology re Travel Expenses

The RDO West, Mr John Hennessy offered apologies to Cllr Seamus Weir for the issuing of incorrect Travel Expenses Claims 2010 for Forum West members, to the Roscommon Herald, which resulted in the publication of incorrect information in relation to Cllr Weir's Travel Claims.

Mr Hennessy advised that the Travel Expense details were corrected and reissued to the Roscommon Herald, along with a published apology and a personal apology to Cllr Weir.

Cllr Weir accepted the apology and complimented the HSE on their immediate response to the issue. He advised that he had been subjected to incorrect radio and print media reports, which affected his good name.

335/33/11 Chairman's Business

Apologies

The Chairman noted apologies from Councillors Sean McGowan Brian Meaney, Paul Murphy and Kevin Sheahan.

New Member

The Chairman advised that Cllr Shaun Cunniffe would replace Cllr Colm Keaveney who was recently elected to the Dáil. Cllr Cunniffe was not in attendance at the meeting.

Congratulations

The Chairman, on behalf of all Forum Members, congratulated the successful candidates to the Seanad, namely Cllrs Jimmy Harte, Imelda Henry, John Kelly and Michael Mullins. He advised that replacements for these Forum Members would be nominated by local County Councils in the coming weeks.

Regional Health Forum Chairpersons Meeting

The Regional Health Forum Chairpersons Meeting took place on 20th April, 2011. Matters discussed included:

Forum Committees

Members are asked to consider options in relation to the composition of Forum Committees as health services are now 'Integrated' and no longer regarded as specifically PCCC or Acute. Options include:

- 1) reverting to One Forum Committee to cover all services
- 2) based on locality / region (i.e. split HSE West into two areas)
- 3) retain the current Committees, i.e. PCCC and Acute

Many Members agreed with regionalising the Committees, i.e. split HSE West into two and for those two Committees to cover all services for those areas.

Members were advised that unfortunately there is no scope with the Regulations to form three Committees, which would have been the ideal composition.

Agreed: The two Committees will be formed on a geographic basis, to cover all health services in their respective areas.

Agreed: Eight Forum Members were nominated to convene before the next Forum meeting, to discuss and agree on the composition of the Committees, i.e. which counties per Committee, and the locations of the meetings. The eight members nominated were: Cllrs John Carroll, Mary Hoade, Michael Hourigan, Tom McNamara, Gerry Reynolds, Jerome Scanlan, Tony Ward and Seamus Weir. Members will not be paid Travel Expenses by the HSE for this meeting, but will arrange the venue and co-ordination of the meeting.

Letter to RHF West Members re suggestions/comments on the Future of the Fora

Members were circulated in advance of the meeting, correspondence requesting their views on the future role and function of the Fora.

No views were submitted by RHF West Forum members.

RHF West Standing Orders

As agreed at the previous meeting, Standing Orders are to be discussed / debated at today's meeting.

Members were circulated correspondence in advance of the meeting. Standing Orders discussed included:

8 Attendance at Meetings

8.1 Apologies

Members discussed this and it was agreed that this Standing Order was not adhered to in the past, however it will be enforced from this point forward.

It was further suggested that members would send an apology if they were unable to attend a meeting for viewing by the Chairperson. Therefore there is no change to Standing Order 8.1.

10 Order of Business: Not discussed, no change.

23 Motions: Not discussed, no change.

25 Questions

25.1 Number of Questions asked – not discussed, no change.

25.2 Content of Questions – not discussed, no change.

25.3 Every question should be received **ten (10)** clear days before the Forum meeting

Agreed: Proposed by Cllr Tony Ward and seconded by Cllr Declan Bree. Cllr Bree agreed to remove one of his Motions submitted today (W33M....) and replace it with a Motion to Change the Standing Orders accordingly.

25.4 Ruling of the Chairperson on the admissibility of a question – not discussed, no change.

25.6 No discussions other than supplementary question – not discussed, no change.

26 Order of Debate – not discussed, no change.

Next Meetings

The next meeting of the **Regional Health Forum** will be the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** and will be held on Tuesday, 21st June, 2011 at 2.00pm in Room 1, Education Centre, Merlin Park, Galway.

The next meeting of the **Committees** will take place in Room 1, Education Centre, Merlin Park, Galway, as follows:

- PCCC Committee, Tuesday 6th September, 2011 at 2.00pm
- Hospital Committee, Tuesday 13th September at 2.00pm

336/33/11 Finance Update

Mr Liam Minihan, Asst. National Director for Finance outlined for Forum members the current financial position in the HSE West as at 30th April, 2011.

Members raised the follow queries / commented, as follows:

- Are smaller hospitals suffering as a result of over expenditure in bigger hospitals?
- Are Galway & Roscommon being regarded as one hospital unit?
- Despite best efforts of staff in the Roscommon Hospital, in particular to adhere to HIQA standards and not being able to appoint more nursing staff, the overspend in Galway could have a huge impact on Roscommon Hospital.
- HSE should not be employing Agency Staff, at five times the rate in wages compared to its own staff, they should be appointing Nursing Staff. There seems to be no issue with appointing Managers.
- What portion of the Galway Roscommon ISA figure relates to Roscommon only?
- Will Fair Deal be reinstated? Has a decision been made in relation to payback of 100m spent by HSE? What impact will this have?
- If smaller hospitals, like Ennis General, live within their budgets and perform well, they should be rewarded.

- What measures are proposed to balance the budget?
- There are huge concerns in relation to €100m being pulled from Fair Deal.
- Professor Drumm agreed with keeping people in their own homes for as long as possible; the HSE must continue to provide Home Care Packages to Older people.
- It is worrying that only 1/3 into the year there is such an overspend, considering the reduction in staff as a result of the Exit Schemes and posts not being filled. Are there more proposals for another Redundancy Package?
- Income collection has been on the Agenda for over two years, with no significant results. What proposals are now in place to deal with this?
- As part of reconfiguration in the Mid West some facilities were due for improvement; are there now any plans to complete these improvements/facilities?
- What effect will this overspend in Mid West have on that region? Who / what will suffer?
- What progress has been made on the backlog of Insurance Claims since this time last year, 2010 versus 2011?
- The Income Collection project is welcomed; where is it at present, are there any resolutions? Are the Insurance companies benefitting from the public purse?
- Are there Insurance Claims over 12 months old, if so, how old are they?
- Can GUH waiting lists be dealt before any further cutbacks? Business cases submitted to appointed senior managers at GUH, but no 'Health Cases'. The budget restrictions are imposed by Government.
- What have been the affects of reconfiguration in the Mid West? Have services, resources, access, etc. improved?
- Junior Doctors do not want to work in some MW hospitals, due to the lack of resources / poor conditions.
- What are Professional Services? Are any savings being made?

John Hennessy advised that high expenditure in the first quarter of the year reflects the trend of activity over the winter period; the pressure on acute hospitals and community services. There is a tendency for this position to recover over the summer period. This reflects the same trend experienced last year which caused the same debates at Forum meetings in the middle of 2010.

He stated the budget overrun is of major concern and there are no provisions for overspend in 2011. There are control plans in place; the objective remains clear: to maintain clinical activity to the same level as 2010 as set out in the Service Plan 2011. He advised that non pay is 1/3 of the overall budget and there are measures to reduce this spend, including a national project looking at reduction in Procurement costs and progressing with the Income Collection project. Some of this income is 12 months old, €1.3m worth of the Claims are more than 1 year old and a minority are up to four years old. The process involves the HSE doing the administration for the Insurance Companies. The HSE gather the bills and collate the 'bundled' forms, which are a complicated Clinical Form, with Consultant sign off. Clinical Directors are working closing with Consultants to progress with speedier collection.

J Hennessy advised that hospitals performing well, in terms of budget, are acknowledged and not penalised. There is no risk of Roscommon Hospital being subsumed into Galway hospitals; they will maintain their independence. Galway, Roscommon and Portlincera are regarded as a hospital network which supports each other. A hospital's budget is allocated on an activity/per case basis. If activity increases, this increases revenue to the hospital. The preference is to not have to use Agency Staff but to appoint fulltime staff, unfortunately the Moratorium prevents this.

There will be a lot of measures during the year that will reduce this over expenditure; these are projections. A detailed briefing will take place next week for public representatives in relation to Mid West; this will deal with lessons learned from reconfiguration. The substantial part of the overspend attributed to the Mid West relates to

the Reconfiguration Project. Capital expenditure in Nenagh and Ennis is now not possible to look at separately, as the Mid West is now a single entity. There has been substantial progress in relation to Ambulance Services and Capital developments as a result of reconfiguration.

The National Procurement project has made significant gains in 2010 in relation to Drugs and Medicine and they continue to be obvious targets. Office expenses include cost drivers such as ICT, Telecommunications and Stationery, and there were savings of €5.6m already this year. Professional Services relate to for example, external Radiotherapy, external Dialysis Services, Residential Child Care, Legal Fees, Chiropody, Psychology and Counselling services, etc. There is also a new National Legal Services Contract.

There has been no further information to date in relation to further redundancies. As addressed a recent briefing to public representatives in Galway, Limerick and Galway hospitals are the busiest with Galway seeing 205,000 outpatients per annum. Unfortunately there is a deficiency in relation to appointing more staff therefore an increase in clinics to address current waiting lists is a challenge. Demand continues to rise in the hospitals.

Agreed: A breakdown of Galway and Roscommon financial position, at 30th April, 2011, will be circulated to Forum members.

Agreed: A presentation on Procurement will take place at a future Forum meeting.

Agreed: Mid West Forum members will be invited to attend an Oireachtas Briefing, on Monday 30th May.

Agreed: Cllr John Kennedy will provide specifics in relation to a Speech Therapist post, to J Hennessy for examination.

Agreed: Forum members will be kept up to date on financial progress throughout the year.

337/33/11 Questions

Questions and Responses Document is available on: http://www.hse.ie/eng/About/Who/Regional_Health_Forum_West.html

It was agreed after some discussion that **Standing Order, No. 10 Order of Business** would be adhered to and that Questions would be dealt with as the next item on the Agenda.

Agreed: The Order of Business will be adhered to for future Forum meetings; Presentations will not take place until Questions and Motions are dealt with.

District Hospitals

The Chairman allowed Cllr Annie May Reape to raise an urgent query in relation District Hospitals. She asked if District Hospitals are under threat as she believes an emergency meeting of management was called this morning in a local District Hospital.

Frank Murphy, ISA Manager for Mayo advised that District Hospitals are not under threat, they provide a crucial service to local areas. He advised that the meeting was called to address resource/staff issues.

The following matters were raised by members:

W33Q723 – Cllr Ciaran Brogan – Rheumatology Services LGH

Cllr Brogan queried if Rheumatology Services would be returned to LGH sooner than stated?

Mr Joe Molloy, Estates Manager advised that the timescales issued are an accurate reflection; once the new Emergency Department and Medical Unit are opened, an outpatient clinic will be re-established at LGH. It is anticipated that remaining works on the Emergency Department and Medical Unit will take up to 12 weeks and that equipping, etc. will take up to 8 weeks.

Agreed: Cllr Ciaran Brogan will be kept up to date on progress.

W33Q733 – Cllr Declan Bree – Contract Work

Agreed: Response to this question is to be issued to all members, once it has been collated by Human Resources.

W33Q734 – Cllr Declan Bree – Financial Difficulties

Agreed: Further details will issue to Cllr Bree in relation to this matter.

W33Q735 – Cllr Declan Bree – Emergency Surgery

Agreed: Dr D O Keefe will provide further details/explanation as to why this surgery was cancelled; closure of theatres or medical reasons?

W33Q738 – Cllr Mary Hoade – Senior Audiological Scientist

Agreed: Tony Canavan provided a verbal response to Cllr Hoade on this matter; it was agreed that a written response would also issue.

W33Q742 – Cllr Tom McNamara – Residential Alzheimers Unit, St Joseph’s Hospital, Ennis.

Cllr McNamara stated that he was unhappy with the outcome/response.

Agreed: John Hennessy advised that it was a complex matter, however, he will look at the proposal.

W33Q743 – Cllr Tom McNamara – Alzheimer’s Day Care, Clare

Cllr McNamara queried a new proposal re Gort Glás; where is this proposal at?

Agreed: John Hennessy agreed to update Cllr McNamara on the issue after the meeting.

W33Q744 – Cllr Catherine Connolly – Tearmann Eanna

Agreed: Tony Canavan provided a verbal response to Cllr Connolly on this matter; it was agreed that a written response would also issue.

W33Q745 – Cllr Catherine Connolly – Child Development Clinics

Agreed: Tony Canavan provided a verbal response to Cllr Connolly on this matter; it was agreed that a written response would also issue.

W33Q746 – Cllr Catherine Connolly – Private Companies/Agencies

Agreed: Cllr Connolly will receive further detailed information (from HSE Financial Systems), if any, in relation to any private companies/agencies being used by the HSE West.

W33Q747 – Cllr Catherine Connolly – Operating Theatres

Agreed: Cllr Connolly will receive further detailed information in relation to surgical and medical specialties.

W33Q753 – Cllr Pdraig Conneely – Admission to A&E for Psychiatric Patients

Agreed: John Hennessy will examine the matter once details have been supplied by Cllr Conneely.

W33Q755 – Cllr Pdraig Conneely – Ghost Payments

Agreed: John Hennessy will ensure a response issues to Cllr Conneely.

338/33/11 Motions

W15M124 That a copy of the contract between the HSE and Mount Carmel Medical Group for the proposed development of a private co-located hospital on the grounds of Sligo General Hospital, be made available to the members of the Regional Health Forum.
Cllr Declan Bree
Councillor Bree asked that this Motion be deferred to the next meeting of the Forum

W33M214 That this Forum deplores the continued and unacceptable centralization of the Medical Card Application/Review Service from Galway to Dublin and calls upon the HSE West and nationally and the new Minister for Health to review this situation as a matter of urgency given the excellent service pertaining in Galway and given the repeated and unanimous calls by Health Forum West Councillors not to centralize the service and further given the existing difficulties with the service in Dublin and the backlog pertaining there even before the under 70s applications are transferred (from the 1st June).

Cllr Catherine Connolly

Proposed by Cllr Catherine Connolly, seconded by Cllr Declan Bree and agreed.

W33M215 The original Motion submitted by Cllr Declan Bree was replaced with the following, as agreed with the Chairperson, Cllr Pádraig Conneely:

Cllr Declan Bree

That Article 25.3 be amended in the Standing Orders as follows: *'Every question should be received ten (10) clear days before the Forum meeting'*.

To be deferred to the next meeting.

W33M216 I am calling on the HSE to have the Rheumatology services restored to LGH.

Cllr Frank McBrearty Jnr

Deferred to the next meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach/Chairman

Adopted at Regional Health Forum Meeting on Tuesday 21st June, 2011