



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

HSE People and Culture Committee Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the HSE People and Culture Committee was held on Friday 03 December, 10.00am via videoconference facilities.

Committee Members Present: Dr Yvonne Traynor (Chairperson), Mr Aogan Ó Fearghail, Mr Brendan Whelan, Ms Bernie O'Reilly, Dr Sarah McLoughlin,

Apologies: Ms Deirdre Cullivan.

HSE Executive Attendance: Ms Anne Marie Hoey (ND Human Resources); Ms Theresa Heller (AND HR); Mr Mark Brennock (ND Comms); Ms Niamh Drew (Secretary); Mr Pat Galvin.

Joined the meeting: Ms Emma Finn (Head of Internal Comms); Mr Patrick Lynch (ND G&R); Mr Declan Hynes (CHO Area Head of HR); Ms Anne Curley (CHO Area Head of HR); Ms Roseanne Killeen (IEHG Head of HR)

1. Governance and Administration

The Chair welcomed all and commenced the meeting. The minutes of the People and Culture Committee meeting from the 08 October 2021 were approved.

No declarations of interest were declared.

The Committee held a discussion on the proposed draft work plan and requested that the area of Culture and also a benchmarking exercise on workforce against international norms be added.

2. National Director Bi-Monthly Report

ND HR gave the Committee a High-Level update, on a number of topics, by means of the Bi-Monthly Report including;

The ND informed the Committee that with regards to Consultant Contract that discussions in relation to the introduction of a new Consultant Contract continue with the Department of Health and HSE engaging with the Representative Groups. The Committee asked about the progress of the contract negotiations, the current work practices, Trade Union involvement and the fact that private hospitals are being portrayed as more efficient than the public hospitals. In answer to these questions ND HR informed the Committee that the Contract discussions are progressing and is taking longer than

expected to conclude. Regarding the hospitals, one of the key differences is that Private hospitals undertake planned work in a more scheduled manner, whereas a Public hospital is subject to responding to emergency and urgent cases which can impact scheduled work.

Resourcing Strategy 2022 – The Workforce Resourcing Strategy plan has been submitted as part of the NSP to Department of Health. The target for nett growth to support development initiatives is 5,500 on top of the churn rate which is approx. 9000 staff, with the strategy setting out the actions to achieve that. The Committee questioned staffing ratio's and asked about the ratio of Frontline staff versus Administration staff, as they felt certain areas are lacking resources. ND HR advised that no breakdown is currently available on this at the meeting, but she will revert with further information, whilst explaining that advancements in technology and automation over the last number of years, have cut down on the reliance on staff to carry out some tasks. ND HR also advised that it is essential that services are supported with the appropriate skill mix including administrative staff undertaking appropriate roles. In addition, some services differ and need a high level of Management / Admin staff, such as Corporate functions; Contact Tracing etc

The issue of Vaccinated staff was raised by the Committee, asking the question is there an HSE Policy relating to unvaccinated staff. ND HR advised that whilst there may be a moral obligation on people to get vaccinated to protect patients, colleagues etc, there is no mandatory obligation to get vaccinated. There is, however, a mandatory Risk Assessment for unvaccinated staff working in a clinical area. Whilst some staff may feel uncomfortable working with unvaccinated staff, it is something that is addressed by management in each area.

People Strategy Priorities – A review of the People Strategy has been carried out across the organisation and the findings have endorsed that the current priorities are appropriate and reflect the current environment.

Change Guide -Management have successfully engaged with RCSI and this programme will now attract CIPD points going forward.

Staff Survey Results 2021 - ND HR provided a high-level summary of the findings of the staff survey noting that overall results show staff are enthusiastic and highly motivated compared to other large organisations. The vast majority feel their work makes a difference to patients and service users. The main suggestions to make the Health Service a better place to work in the future were; improving workplace culture and equal treatment, increasing frontline staffing numbers and more flexibility in working conditions.

The Committee questioned the process for implementation of recommendations at a National and hospital level following the staff survey. ND HR explained that the survey date is reflective of staff

dealing with Senior Management in their department and National HR will take the lead for implementation of recommendations at a national level and other departments take responsibility for their department's implementation process. The Survey score of 57% participation was discussed and the process as to how this can be benchmarked against other companies; the Committee were advised that comparisons were used throughout the report and benchmarking was applied.

Analysis by Staff Category - ND HR provided the Committee with an analysis of the feedback received highlighting the following;

Mid Point Review of 2021 – 2024 HSE People Strategy (Analysis of Feedback from Senior HR Leaders in the HSE) - ND HR informed the Committee that based on engagement with the HSE People & Culture Committee, she surveyed Senior HSE HR leaders across the HSE on the 2019-2024 People Strategy. This exercise was conducted as the HSE continued to work in the most challenging period in the history of the health services following the HSE response to COVID -19 and the cyber-attack on the HSE systems. The aim of this exercise was to seek feedback from Senior HR staff to establish if the 2019-2024 People Strategy proven to be fit for purpose, if the strategy was resilient and purposeful for the challenges faced in the post COVID-19 working environment and to ensure alignment with the new 2021-2024 HSE Corporate Plan.

The overall feedback received was that the pillars and priorities of the 2019-2024 People Strategy have enabled and facilitated HSE HR managers to respond to the demands presented by the pandemic and noted HSE staff were of critical importance in the successful management of the COVID response and continue to be so.

The Committee commented on the challenges that the workforce is facing, with Covid being ever present and new variants emerging. ND HR advised that redeployment is being kept to a minimum, so that no department is under pressure and campaigns are active in key areas to recruit staff for essential areas.

HSeLanD - HSeLanD won the award for Most Innovative Use of Technology at the 2021 HR Leadership and Management Awards. HSeLanD continues to work with the services to respond to requests to develop e-learning programmes to meet both clinical and non-clinical training needs. Work is also ongoing regarding HSeLanD system enhancement to improve the user experience and reporting facilities. The Committee congratulated the team on the achievement and commented how good it is to have such a platform available to staff for training needs.

October 2021 Staffing Levels -Employment levels at the end of October 2021 show there are 131,126.19 WTEs which is an increase of +489.9 WTEs on the September figure. The Committee discussed workforce numbers and what level is required to deal with the current waiting lists

effectively. ND HR explained that Workforce Planning is intended to give the plan and figures are available for the projected workforce needed, but Covid has put high pressure on the waiting lists. There is still a commitment from Government to fund the posts required, to have focus in the community setting. Strategic Workforce planning gives the plan and then training and education for staff is required, but there is a lot of competition for health care workers at the moment.

NISRP - The NiSRP Programme will deploy a fully integrated SAP HR & Payroll Solution with time entry and self-service functionality to HSE South by 2023, followed by HSE North East in September 2024 and HSE West in September 2025.

3. Risk Management

ND G&R briefed the Committee on the Q3 2021 CRR Review Report which was accepted by the Board at its November meeting. It was noted that the annual EMT review of the HSE's corporate risks is currently underway and a report will be presented to the EMT later in December.

ND G&R advised that the Risk Appetite Statement was considered by the Board, at their last meeting, and was approved. The Risk Appetite Statement will be an important document for the Committee to reference when viewing risks.

The Risk Appetite Statement is to be put on work plan 2022 for the Committee to use

The Committee briefly discussed the corporate Risks assigned to the Committee for oversight including Risk 10 – Workforce and Recruitment. It was noted that all actions relating to this risk are due to be completed in Q4 2021. The Committee requested that the mitigation plan be updated for 2022. The Committee also discussed current high level of absenteeism. It is anticipated that the vaccine programme and the booster programme will help reduce absenteeism rates and reduce the reliance on agency staff.

4. Communications

ND Comms advised the Committee on key updates relating to the Communications Department. A new AND has been appointed with a focus on Communication Strategies. The Committee were also updated on a new collaborative approach to Recruitment between HR and Comms. Both teams are keen to recruit abroad, using LinkedIn, to attract and retain suitable staff. A dedicated link person, between HR and Comms, will be appointed to support recruitment campaigns. ND Comms will keep the Committee updated on the progress of this project and will attend a meeting later in 2022 to provide an update.

Ms Emma Finn provided an overview of the progress of Communications projects. The final draft of the Internal Communications Strategy 2022-2025 is complete and is awaiting approval and sign-off from ND and AND Communications. Comms received notification that HSENet staff intranet will not

be restored. Comms are working on an interim solution to house mandatory documents on a password protected section of the staff website. Research will be carried out next year to see what staff will need. Internal communications supported Your Opinion Counts Staff Survey across all channels. The Committee were advised of some key campaigns that Internal Comms provided support for including Flu vaccine launch for healthcare workers, ongoing vaccine communications including launch of the booster programme for healthcare workers and Vaccine thank you communications campaign to staff, GPs, pharmacists and volunteers.

5. Deep Dive

The Heads of HR from CHO areas and Ireland East Hospital Groups (IEHG) gave a presentation on the HR activities in their respective areas.

Ms Anne Curley and Mr Declan Hynes, presented to the Committee, an overview of HR within the Community Healthcare setting highlighting the Value of HR activity within local areas/sites, Staff Engagement with a focus on workforce – local initiatives, Operating in the context of COVID and Restoration of Services and HR Insights (Overcoming Challenges). The Committee commended that regular meetings are held between National and Regional HR and they thought it good that HR leaders have a forum to communicate important issues.

Ms Roseanne Killeen, Head of HR for IEHG, gave a presentation on similar topics – Highlighting the value of HR activity within local areas, Staff engagement with a focus on Workforce, HR Insights (Overcoming Challenges) and Covid & restoration of services. The Committee discussed some of the initiatives mentioned, with the integration of all 11 hospitals for recruitment being mentioned as a good collaborative idea, as well as the development of the MyIEHG app in order to communicate with all staff as very innovative, as this was proving to be a challenge prior to the App's development.

Meeting concluded at 14.39

Signed: 
Yvonne Traynor
Chairperson

11/02/2022

Date