



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 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 9am via videoconference facilities.

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

**HSE Executive Attendance:** Ms Anne Marie Hoey (ND Human Resources); Ms Theresa Heller (AND HR); Ms Niamh Drew (Deputy Corporate Secretary); Miss Hannah Barnes (Secretariat).

**Joined the meeting:** Mr Patrick Lynch (CRO); Mr Tom Malone (Interim ND IA), Dr Lynda Sisson (National Clinical Lead – Workforce Health and Wellbeing), Dr Gráinne McNally (Specialist OH Physician).

### **1. Governance and Administration**

The Chair welcomed all and commenced the meeting. The minutes of the People and Culture Committee meeting from the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022 were approved.

No declarations of interest were declared.

### **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 HR briefed the Committee on the ongoing discussions in relation to the introduction of a new Consultant Contract with the Department of Health and HSE, noting that engagement with the representative bodies is as yet to resume in 2022.

The ND HR informed the Committee that as part of the rollout of Sláintecare, the HSE is receiving funding for the delivery of services in 2022 and beyond. To augment work underway in relation to recruitment, the HSE is developing a robust Resourcing Strategy to meet the current and future needs of the organisation. The Resourcing Strategy will be anchored in the principle of planning with multiple stakeholders to ensure a sufficient domestic supply of health care staff, maximising self-sufficiency within the Irish state for the resourcing and delivery of publicly funded health services for the future.

The Committee noted that the Team will be responsible for research, development and implementation of talent, attraction and retention strategies to maximize the workforce both nationally and internationally. In response to questions the ND HR confirmed that this development will enhance work with the education sector, regulatory and statutory bodies to support the resourcing strategy for health. The committee asked for a follow up paper on the strategy for retention of staff and innovative ways to attract new employees.

The ND HR spoke to the Committee about the HSE Employee Assistance Programme which is a free confidential independent service that supports employees with psychosocial issues which may be personal, or work related and affecting their job performance or home life. The Committee received an update on the uptake of services provided through this programme for Quarter 4 of 2021. The Committee discussed the top presenting issues identified at EAP client assessments and asked that further comparative details and information on the analysis of trends for 2019 / 2020 / 2021 and year to date 2022 be provided for the Committees next meeting.

A discussion was held on the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Training Statistics 2021 outlined within the ND HR's report. The ND HR advised in relation to statutory OSH training with requirements set nationally, it is the duty of the local Responsible Person/Line Manager to ensure, staff are provided with and undertake the training. The HR function promotes, where possible, a blended training approach, incorporating e-learning and, if necessary, face-to-face elements for delivery by internal trainers or external contract training providers. It was noted that a pioneering blended training approach has been undertaken in relation to manual handling. Committee members discussed the available statistics for completion of the course and were advised that as this training should be repeated every three years, it would be expected that around a third of staff would complete the module annually, which is approximately 45,000 staff members per year. The Committee welcomed the collection of data for completed manual handling modules. The Committee discussed with the ND HR the benefits of compiling data and having a metric for staff training, but in particular, statutory and mandatory Training, noting the benefits of having thorough staff training records. NDHR noted that the HSE do not at this time have one central system for recording of training at the level of each employee. The Committee also asked that data is presented against targets and benchmarks in order to provide context and to provide further reassurance that the HSE is meeting its duty to provide training under the safety and welfare act 2005.

The ND HR informed the Committee of the various activities which have been ongoing to promote diversity and inclusion within the organisation. The ND HR said that she had led a productive and collaborative meeting with the National Disability Authority. Additionally, it was noted that the HSE had celebrated International Women's Day 2022 and that a video was promoted via Twitter and HSE News. The Committee were informed that the newly-reconvened Reach Out Network for HSE staff

who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex has met twice this year so far and is planning a major relaunch later in the year which will include a HSE presence at Pride 2022. The Committee noted that equality-proofing of major HR policies and procedures has commenced. This project will include reviews of the revised Dignity at Work policy and the HSE's recruitment processes.

The ND HR noted that the reported absence rate for February 2022 stands at 7.8%, which compares to 6.4% reported for the same month in 2021, however, these figures notably include COVID-19 related absence for both periods. The Committee noted that to date this month's absence rate is lower than that reported for the previous month, reported at 9.8% which includes COVID-19 related absences.

The ND HR informed the Committee that the Performance Achievement Steering Group has been re-established and will meet in April 2022 chaired by the AND HR Corporate Partner. It was noted that there is a KPI target of 70% in the National Service plan 2022 and that quarterly reporting process are in place. As of Q4 2021, 6% of staff were recorded as completing a PA meeting. A full suite of support materials and training on HSELand has been made available across the HSE. The steering group will engage with services to increase compliance in line with targets. The committee proposed making Performance Achievement meetings mandatory.

In relation to implementation of the provisions of Building Momentum, the ND HR outlined progress which has been made in respect of a number of the Sectoral Bargaining Units and with some close to finalisation under the Public Service Agreements. The Committee were also advised that a decision by the government has yet to be made regarding the Report of the Additional Hours Body relating to additional working hours implemented under the Haddington Road Agreement in 2013 – the proposed implementation date is 1 July 2022. The ND HR confirmed that she had written to the Department outlining the impact and issues that the HSE would face if changes were to be made as outlined by the report.

The Committee were informed of developments under the eHR and Digital Transformation. The ND HR advised that since the establishment of the HSE Digital Academy to improve, the first edition of Industry Diploma concluded on 24 March 2022 and that over 1500 further clinicians are now registered with the academy.

The ND HR advised the Committee of significant milestones reached regarding the rollout of NISRP. The Committee noted that the NISRP programme has successfully deployed the Employee and Manager Self Service 'My HSE Self Service' to the HSE North West, HSE Midlands and HSE Mid-West with systems 'switch staggered' across January and February 2022. Additionally, the My HSE Self Service portal was switched on for Tusla in February 2022 with an agreed date to issue passwords to staff in February 22. The NISRP programme team continue to support staff in these areas with online

webinars and training materials available to them. The Committee noted that it has been agreed that to further support the change, the system will not be mandated for use for leave applications until the new leave year April 2022.

The Committee held discussions on a number of areas that had been highlighted by the ND HR and posed a number of questions. The Committee also discussed the overview of the incidents of Harm outlined in the ND HR Report and requested further information on the breakdown of figures for previous years to establish trends.

The Committee discussed the article in the Irish Times on the Hospital Doctor Retention and Motivation Project with the ND HR and AND HR. The AND HR confirmed that she is due to meet with the lead NCHD on the issues highlighted by the research. The Committee noted that the research was not carried out as a HSE report but agreed that a discussion with the researchers from the Hospital Doctor Retention and Motivation Project would be beneficial.

The Committee considered the HR dashboard circulated in advance of the meeting and noted its contents. The Committee discussed with the ND HR the possibility of broadening aspects covered by the dashboard. The Committee also asked that consideration be given to providing a ratio for staff numbers of management / admin staff to frontline staff and including a comparison to international benchmarks.

The Committee discussed with the ND HR the briefing note on the Procurement Specification for Accountability in the HSE. The Committee noted that the primary purpose of this assignment will be the development of recommendations where there are opportunities identified for further enhancing and augmenting accountability in the health service, building on work on this area undertaken to date. The ND HR confirmed that successful tenderer for this project must have a detailed understanding of the Irish public health services and the associated stakeholders and the regulatory environment that pertains. In response to questions the ND HR confirmed that the Committee and senior management would continue to be briefed and included on progress of this piece of work.

The Committee discussed current disciplinary processes within the HSE. The ND HR advised that a breakdown of staff members subject to disciplinary procedures is not held centrally, as operational services are responsible for the appropriate administration of the policy however, the Committee noted that further assurances could be sought in this area.

In response to a question, the ND HR agreed that SLAs for the S.38's will be checked to ascertain if performance management is noted within the agreements.

#### Actions:

- The Committee asked for a follow up paper on the strategy for retention of staff and innovative ways to attract new employees.
- The committee asked that data is presented against targets and benchmarks in order to provide context and to provide further reassurance that the HSE is meeting its duty to provide training under the safety and welfare act 2005.
- The Committee asked that consideration be given to providing a ratio for staff numbers of management / admin staff to frontline staff and including a comparison to international benchmarks on the HR Dashboard.

### 3. Risk Management

*National Director Governance and Risk joined the meeting.*

The Committee reviewed with the CRO the briefing on the Corporate Risk Register circulated in advance of the meeting. The CRO advised that the revised CRR was approved by the EMT on the 8th March and subsequently considered by the ARC at its March 2022 meeting and that general feedback on the Register has been provided by the ARC to each EMT member. The Committee were informed that there are now 17 risks on the revised CRR, with the previous COVID-19 risks having been consolidated into a single COVID risk. The Committee noted that following the Board's approval of the HSE's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) in November 2021, the risks on this iteration of the CRR have been aligned to it. This has allowed for the inclusion of a target risk rating for each risk, which is set at the levels included in the RAS.

The Committee reviewed the individual risk assessments for CRR 9 Health, Wellbeing, Resilience and Safety of Staff and for CRR 16 Workforce and Recruitment. The Committee noted the controls for both risks and in response to questions the ND HR advised that the new recruitment model is currently being rolled out with various aspects of it happening concurrently. Overall, the Committee welcomed the inclusion of target risk ratings for each risk.

### 4. Internal Audit

*The Interim ND IA joined the meeting at 11:05.*

The Committee considered with the Interim ND IA the NDIA Annual Report 2021, briefing on Top Control issues, and the updates on the implementation of Audit recommendations for two reports. The Committee noted that the overall opinion expressed for 2021 was one of limited assurance. The Interim ND IA confirmed to the Committee that the overall opinion is included in the HSE's Statement

of Internal Controls included with the Annual Report. The Committee discussed the level of 2021 audit recommendations that were due to have been implemented and the number which are currently outstanding. The Committee discussed with the ND IA the HR related audits which tend to be core audits on the Internal Audits annual audit workplan. The ND HR noted that an improvement in payroll related audit ratings should be seen with the implementation of NISRP which will provide further assurances. In addition, the NDHR updated the Committee in relation to the HR Pay Compliance Unit which has recently being developed.

## 5. Deep Dive

### Health Work Place Framework

*Dr Lynda Sisson and Dr Gráinne McNally joined the meeting at 11:45.*

The Committee welcomed a high-level presentation from Dr Grainne McNally on the Healthy Workplace Framework. The presentation outlined the progress to date and the next steps for the initiative. It was highlighted that the framework is not just a combination of actions, but a programme to help train, maintain, and sustain those working within the health care sector.

The Committee were provided with an overview of the many different programmes and functions associated with the framework. The Committee welcomed the progress to date noting that the operating model has been finalised and agreed upon and that the governance arrangements for the framework are now in place. These arrangements reach from a local to senior level with the establishment of local Health and Wellbeing Committees to identify, promote, and deliver health and wellbeing initiatives directly to staff, to senior management and the Board's overall oversight of the implementation of the framework. The Committee noted the remaining deliverables from each of the 5 workstreams within the delivery of the framework. In response to questions on what is required to successfully implement the next steps as outlined in the presentation, the Committee were informed that funding will be required. The National Clinical Lead for Workforce Health and Wellbeing confirmed that funding had been requested within the NSP 2022 however, this funding was not granted. It was highlighted that a lack of resources will delay progress to the implementation phase for the framework. The Committee supported the work being carried out emphasised the necessity of staff members wellbeing to ensure patient safety.

The Committee discussed communication regarding Health and Wellbeing to staff members following the results of the Staff Survey. The ND HR agreed that a communication will be planned, highlighting actions underway following analysis of the staff survey results.

## 6. AOB

No matters arose and no further issues were discussed.

Meeting concluded at 12.25



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Yvonne Traynor  
Chairperson

10<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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Date