



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 4 December 2020, 2:30 pm via videoconference facilities.

Members Present: Yvonne Traynor (Chairperson), Sarah McLoughlin, Fiona Tierney, Bernie O'Reilly

Apologies: Aogan Ó Fearghail

In attendance: HSE Executive Members: Philip Crowley (National Director Quality Improvement Division), Anne Marie Hoey (National Director Human Resources), Edna Hoare, Pat O'Boyle (AND HR) (Item 4), Prof John Higgins (item 7), Grainne O'Connell (item 7), Niamh Drew, Hannah Barnes.

1. Governance and Administration

The Chair commenced the meeting. No conflicts of interest were declared. It was agreed that the minutes of the 2nd October would be considered at the following Committee meeting.

The Committee considered the Draft Committee Workplan for 2021 and agreed the following:

- a meeting is to be scheduled to facilitate a focused meeting on recruitment and the HR Dashboard in January
- a meeting on the NSP 2021 be added to the Workplan for November 2021
- Services (eg. CHO, Hospital groups) will be invited to the August Committee meeting and this meeting will also have the Committees view of prep for the NSP as an agenda item.
- An agenda item on the number of Specialists not on the Specialist Register is to be added to the February meeting and also to the 2021 workplan.
- a discussion on the HSE Staff Survey which will be undertaken in 2021 is to be added to the work plan for review in Q3.
- Values In Action programme progress is to be added to the work plan for Q2 and Q4. It was noted the VIA team have been redeployed in 2020 due to COVID.

Actions:

- Committee workplan to be updated with changes approved at the Committee meeting

2. Quality Assurance

The ND QID provided an overview of the Impact of COVID – Response from a Health Service Perspective paper which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Committee noted the key trends and changes over the past number of weeks in COVID incidences within Ireland. The ND QID also updated the Committee on how the HSE has dealt so far with the pandemic and provided an overview of changes that have been seen within the Health Service.

The Committee noted that during the pandemic, development of quicker decision making through both centralised and decentralised decision-making process had been taking place simultaneously. This has been a positive cultural shift.

In response to questions regarding flu season pressures the ND QID informed the Committee that this year saw the largest take up of the flu vaccine and that services are currently trying to enhance care over the Christmas period so that demand is not suppressed in January.

3. National Director HR Update

The ND HR provided an overview of the Bi Monthly ND HR Report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. She highlighted that the theme of the report is Capability and Talent and the importance of prioritising teams as the core unit of service delivery. She also highlighted Learning and Development can contribute to intensify supports to ‘intact and multidisciplinary teams’ in order to deliver integrated care, enable collaborative practices and to bring about evidence-informed service improvements.

It was noted that the VIA team is due to return from redeployment and in collaboration with Quality Improvement, have co-designed a collaborative culture programme for health managers and staff to develop their practice, performance and workplace culture. This programme will offer structured facilitation from experienced HSE practitioners in workplace culture change and organisational development. Their initial communication with services has commenced and the trials for this programme will commence in early 2021.

It was noted that with regards to the Flu vaccination programme there has been a number of initiatives undertaken to increase the vaccination uptake. One such initiative was Swiftqueue which was contracted for the HSE to rollout this programme to all health agencies for the duration of the flu season. The national flu consent form was built into the appointment system and communications

issued nationally to advise that the flu vaccine was available for free to all healthcare workers. The Swiftqueue system went “live for appointments” on the 2nd October 2020, with varied level of participation amongst hospital groups and CHOs. The Committee noted that key learnings will be generated for future vaccination programmes, specifically the forthcoming Covid-19 vaccination plans.

Reflecting the commitment of HSE Staff during the pandemic the HSE have been awarded winner of the 2020 Public Sector Award - Excellence in Business - Human Resources Award. This was awarded in recognition of the contribution of Health Service workers in the fight against COVID-19 and the work of the staff in the HSE.

The ND HR noted the results of the research into staff experiences of COVID-19. She outlined the results under the headings of Staff Recognition, Health & Wellbeing, Workplace Culture, Communication & Information Sharing, Involvement in Decision Making, and ICT supports. The Committee were informed that there will be ongoing promotion of the learnings and suggestions for improvement which will be tracked by the Staff Engagement Team.

The ND HR proceeded to also provide an update on the Disability Technical Group (DTG) who have undertaken a census to understand more information in relation to the HSEs response to staff with a disability. 3000 staff members responded with 16% reporting that they had a disability and 8% reporting that they had a substantial restriction in their capacity to carry on in their occupation. The ND HR informed the Committee that the results of this survey reflected the results of the CSO survey in 2016. It was noted that there is a workstream for working with staff with a disability and there is an action plan which is still being worked through.

The Committee received an update on the increased engagement with the change management team as staff members return from redeployment and work in services which have to adapt to the ongoing COVID environment. Additionally, the Committee were informed about the EAP and Me national campaign which will aim to normalise the use of the EAP services, build trust and confidence in EAP, motivate staff to self-refer, increase awareness of services offered and increase usage rates and referrals to EAP Services.

The Committee noted that since the beginning of the year, Employment has increased by over 4800 staff members. It is anticipated by year end employment will have seen a net increase of >6000 this year. The ND HR noted that increases in staff figures in October are masked by the movement of 4th yr Staff student nurses moving out of the student system. In response to questions on staffing targets

the ND HR confirmed that Service plan discussions over recent weeks provide for an overall increase in staff by the end of 2021 of 16000. She noted that a lot of the 6000-year end net staff increase from this year will be part of that 16000. In acute services there is almost 3000 additional staff and work is ongoing currently to align where the staff have come in with the initiatives approved in the service plan. Other increases in 2020 are associated with COVID response; and 2020 development posts. It was noted that there is also a large increase in swabbers and contact tracers and that the HSE will be on target for yearend projections for these roles.

In relation to the roll out of the COVID Vaccine the ND HR said that the cross Governmental group are currently working on the plan to be presented to Cabinet.

The ND HR was asked to provide an update on Public Health Doctors serving strike notice. The Committee were told that public health doctors have indicated plans for a number of strike days in January. Planning around this will involve contingency planning and engagement with the Public Health Doctors on their request for consultancy status.

With regards to discussion around the request for student nurses at all levels to receive remuneration the ND HR noted that in a nursing degree there are placements within the first three years which are unpaid however 4th year students receive a payment for their placement. In spring of this year as a response to COVID the HSE offered all student nurses contracts as Health Care Assistants and their academic clinical placements ceased. These students are now back in academics and these arrangements have stopped as previous clinical placement arrangements are back in place. Implementations for remuneration the cohort of student nurses has to be looked at in a wider pay policy context and inline with government pay agreements and DPER recommendations.

The HR dashboard was discussed in detail with new metrics noted. The committee asked for consideration of targets to be added to certain metrics where possible to enable tracking of progress.

4. Learning, Education & Talent Development

The AND HR provided an overview of the Leadership, Education, and Talent Development function in the HSE. The Committee were informed about Staff Development within the organisation and the five

different levels at which training programmes may be disseminated from. The Committee noted that YTD spend on Training and Education for 2020.

The AND HR provided an overview of the Health Service Leadership Academy and the three different Flagship Programmes which are accredited by UCC. She noted that key leadership principles run through the Health Service Leadership Academy's flagship programmes. These key principles define what high quality leadership should look like in today's Health Service. The Committee were briefed on the 2020 Our Public Service Leadership Academy which was Commissioned by Department of Public Expenditure & Reform and the Department of Education with the Purpose of supporting organisations in the development, review or planning of a leadership development programme in the Public Service. The HSE's aim is to create and support a network of effective leaders.

The AND HR also provided an update on HSELand stating that to date there have been an additional 41 new programmes made available to staff members on the online learning platform.

The Committee were then given an overview of the functions and learning and education opportunities under the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Director, National Doctors training and Planning and the Health and Social Care professions Office.

5. Communications

It was agreed that the update on Internal Communications would be deferred to the next Committee meeting.

6. Excellence Awards

Professor John Higgins presented to the Committee on the CUMH Gynaecology Waiting List Initiative which was the winner of the Improving Patient Experience Category. The project saw a unique approach to tackle waiting lists being put into practice which resulted in 0 women being on the outpatient Gynaecology waiting list in March 2020 and an average waiting time of 10 weeks per patient for their first time appointment.

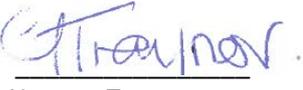
The Committee congratulated Prof J Higgins on the initiative and noted his enthusiasm and passion for the project. The Committee enquired about the possibilities of replicating the success of this initiative in other areas and Prof Higgins highlighted that it would be possible, but the key is leadership. He also highlighted that the SSW Hospital Group was pivotal in the project's success as they allowed the initiative to develop and gave Prof Higgins the necessary hands on control.

7. AOB

Agenda items in relation to Recruitment; and the update Report on Implementation of the People Strategy were deferred to the next meeting.

It was agreed that a date in January will be sought to organise an additional meeting of the People and Culture Committee to focus on Recruitment and the Dashboard.

Meeting concluded at 17:20.

Signed: 
Yvonne Traynor
Chairperson

05/02/2021
Date