



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

HSE Safety and Quality Committee Meeting

Minutes

A meeting of the HSE Safety and Quality Committee was held on Wednesday, 17 June 2020 at 10.00am via teleconference

Committee Members Present: Prof Deirdre Madden (Chair), Prof Fergus O’Kelly, Dr Yvonne Traynor, Ms Anne Carrigy, Dr Cathal O’Keeffe, Dr Chris Luke, Ms Margaret Murphy

HSE Executive Attendance: Dr Colm Henry (CCO), Mr Patrick Lynch (ND QAV, Items 2 and 4), Dr Philip Crowley (ND, QID, Item 3), Dr Jennifer Martin (Item 3), Ms Niamh Drew, Ms Rebecca Kennedy

1. Governance and Administration

The Committee met in the absence of management at the start of the meeting

D Madden took the Chair at 10.20 am and welcomed members of the Committee and the Executive to the meeting.

The following items were discussed and noted:

- Minutes of the Meeting on 21 May 2020 were approved subject to amendment.
- No conflict of interest was declared.

2. CCO Update

2.1 Update with regards to the resumption of both COVID and non-COVID Services

The CCO presented a paper on the Service Continuity in a COVID Environment Programme which had been circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. The paper highlighted that purpose of this programme is to guide the reintroduction of services that were suspended or reduced as a result of COVID19.

It notes that services will need to be resumed on a phased basis, based on an analysis of demand, priorities, risks and benefits, and guided by the infection prevention and control strategies required in a COVID environment. To date, the programme has developed several key deliverables based on inputs from internal and external stakeholders which include Principles, Guidelines, and Key Requirements; a Service Continuity Roadmap; and the Strategic Framework for Service Continuity.

The CCO noted that detailed risk and mitigation plans are being developed at the workstream and programme level with regards to the reintroduction of services. The risk management process is, and will continue to be, actively governed and managed by the Service Continuity Oversight Group, with escalations to the EMT as and when required.

A guiding principle of this programme of work is to ensure an enhanced focus on integrated working at both a local and national level. The governance structure of this programme ensures that key stakeholders are represented in the Service Continuity Oversight Group, including clinicians, staff from the HSE Centre, Hospital Groups and Community Healthcare Organisations, and patient representatives.

The Committee questioned the CCO in relation to COVID19 in nursing homes and requested that new figures be provided in relation to instances of the virus in HSE residential facilities by comparison to privately-owned settings. They also sought assurance from the CCO that the risk of reopening nursing homes to visitors has been appropriately considered. The CCO advised that there was risk involved with the re-opening, but it will be closely monitored and the negative impact on resident's lives from the restriction on visitors must also be considered. The Committee noted this point but stressed that opening guidelines will need to be very clear to protect the residents and also queried whether there is an investigation ongoing into the high level of the virus in nursing homes. The CCO referred the Committee to the fact that the Oireachtas Special Committee on Covid 19 has been established and the Minister has commissioned an Expert Group in relation to residential settings.

The Committee sought information in relation to the level of virus transmission among healthcare staff. P Lynch said that National HR are working with the State Claims Agency to ensure instances of transmission of COVID 19 to healthcare workers in the workplace is reported on the National Incident Management System [NIMS] which should help to create a clear picture of the transmission. The Committee welcomed this work and queried whether a similar gathering of data could be completed for service users contracting the virus in a care setting and P Lynch confirmed that COVID 19 reporting will be included in the same way as other healthcare associated infections are reported. The CCO also confirmed to the Committee that testing for COVID19 prior to hospital access for some elective patients is being considered as part of overall continuity of services plan.

An update was sought by the Committee with regards to resumption of service in a number of different areas, in particular cancer screening services. The CCO advised that the safeguards necessary to provide appropriate infection prevention and control measures will have an impact on how services are provided. He confirmed that screening services may need to be reintroduced in an incremental way. Further updates will be provided at each committee meeting in the coming months.

2.2 Update on recent case of Freeney v HSE

The CCO provided an update on the case of Freeney v HSE as well as other legal matters relating to the National Screening Service. These included CervicalCheck High Court cases, the CervicalCheck Tribunal, CervicalCheck Non-Disclosure ex-gratia Scheme, Diabetic Retinopathy Cases and the impact of the Morrissey Supreme Court ruling. The Committee requested a further update be provided by the CCO on these matters at its next meeting.

The CCO updated the Committee on a current issue relating to a gynaecology service review undertaken following concerns raised in relation to possible delayed diagnoses of endometrial cancer. The CCO will bring a further report once the review process has been completed.

In line with the Scally report it was also agreed that the CCO would provide the Committee with a proposal for the implementation of Scally Report recommendation (Open Disclosure) at its next meeting.

3. Quality

3.1 Data Quality Report June 2019

P Crowley / J Martin presented the paper on the HSE Quality Profile to the Committee.

It was noted that quality of care is a standing agenda item for HSE EMT. This consists of a patient and staff story and the HSE Quality Profile. The HSE Quality Profile was provided to the Committee at their meeting of 22 January 2020. The Committee had requested the inclusion of the HSE Quality Profile as a standing item on their agenda going forward. Due to staff redeployment to work on COVID19, the Quality Profile was not produced in March, April and May.

P Crowley explained that the version presented to the Committee on this occasion includes a number of key COVID19 measures, and selected quality indicators previously included in the Quality Profile.

The Committee welcomed the recommencement of the Data Quality Profile Report and raised queries about the process of identifying new data indicators that would need to be developed both in hospitals and other clinical environments that look at the impact of Covid as well as tracking ED attendance.

It was also suggested that consideration be given to tracking cancer referrals through to diagnosis and treatment as part of the quality profile report.

The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to hold a workshop in September to consider the range of indicators available to the EMT and to agree which would be reported on to the committee on a regular basis.

3.2 Patient and Staff Experience – Our Experience of Contact Tracing

J Martin presented an overview to the Committee of a family experience of contact tracing which had been featured in the HSE magazine Health Matters. It was written by a contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 outlining her experience and that of her parents as part of the contact tracing process. The Committee considered the process currently in place for contact tracers and how this could potentially be improved upon, while acknowledging that the service had been set up under unprecedented demand and enormous time pressure. The Committee suggested that calls should perhaps be recorded in future as these calls could be useful in future training. It was also recognised that telehealth is going to remain an important feature in the health service and that more training for phone engagement should be planned for.

Committee member Dr Luke referred to a nursing colleague in Cork who had developed a programme to train people on delivering sensitive news over the phone and J Martin agreed to engage with her re contact tracing training.

As part of the September workshop the Committee agreed that Patient and Staff experience should be an agenda item and that consideration should be given to the design and approaches used for the Committee to engage with patient and staff experiences.

4. Risk Management

P Lynch presented this item and reminded the Committee that as a result of the COVID19 response, the Quarterly Review of the Corporate Risk Register [CRR] was delayed by 1 month. The first stage of the quarterly review was conducted during the last week of April and first week of May 2020. The Quarterly CRR Risk Review considered the current risks on the Corporate Risk Register. The impact of COVID19 on these risks was a particular consideration and it sought to identify significant additional risks that have emerged for the health service since the emergence of COVID in Ireland. He confirmed that Risk 1259 COVID-19 has been replaced by 6 new COVID19 specific risks. These were identified and assessed for inclusion on the CRR and the remaining risks on the CRR have been reassessed to take account of the impact that COVID-19 has had on them.

P Lynch advised that a joint sub-group of the ARC and Safety and Quality Committee is being established to review the 5 new corporate risks related to COVID-19 [the new finance related risk will remain under the oversight of the ARC]. This process will be led by Board Member Fiona Ross, and it is intended that the relevant EMT risk owners will be asked to meet the sub-group prior to a report being brought back to the ARC by the end of July. The Chair proposed the appointment of Ms Margo Topham to the sub-committee as an external member. Ms Topham has held positions on the Medical Council and the Bons Secours Hospital and the Committee agreed that her skills and experience would be very beneficial. This proposal will be brought to the Board for approval. It was also agreed that C O’Keeffe and C Luke would also be members of the sub-group and that Y Traynor and Fergus O’Kelly would also be willing to participate, time permitting. P Lynch will present the Corporate Risk Register at the June Board meeting.

The Committee emphasised the importance of progressing the Patient Safety Strategy. It was acknowledged that with national staff having been redeployed to the COVID 19 response the national Programme work has been paused. It was emphasised that patient safety continues to be a focus at service level.

5. SQ Committee Workplan

5.1 Review and discussion of the 2020 Work Plan

This item was deferred to the next Committee meeting due to the diary constraints of some members. The Chair will progress work and update Committee at next meeting.

6. Any Other Business

Date of Next Meeting: 14 July 2020.

The meeting concluded at 1.25 pm.

Signed: Deirdre Madden

24/11/20

Deirdre Madden

Date

Chairperson

