

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM - DUBLIN NORTH EAST

FÓRAM RÉIGIÚNACH SLÁINTE - BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS AN TÓIRTHUAISCEART

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 22ND JULY, 2024 AT 2:00PM

IN THE BOARDROOM, HSE OFFICES, BECTIVE STREET, KELLS, CO. MEATH
& VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members Present (*in person*)

Cllr. Winston Bennett
Cllr. John Paul Feeley
Cllr. Mary McCamley
Cllr. Cat O'Driscoll
Cllr. Áine Smith

Cllr. Christy Burke
Cllr. Deirdre Heney
Cllr. Shane McGuinness
Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon

Cllr. Padraig Coffey
Cllr. Alan Lawes
Cllr. Edel Moran
Cllr. Sarah Reilly

Members Present (*online*)

Cllr. Eimear Carbone-Mangan
Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Ejiro O'Hare Stratton

Cllr. Kieran Dennison
Cllr. Fiona Mhic Conchoille
Cllr. John Stephens

Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Caroline O'Reilly

Apologies

Cllr. Donna Cooney
Cllr. Supriya Singh

Cllr. Ruth Coppinger
Cllr. Gillian Toole

Cllr. Gayle Ralph
Cllr. Aoibhinn Tormey

Not in attendance

Cllr. Michelle Hall

Cllr. Tom Kitt

HSE Representatives Present (*in person*)

Mr. Liam McHale, Communications and Parliamentary Affairs, CHO Dublin North City & County
Ms. Katherine Kellett, Regional Health Office – HSE DNE
Ms. Lorraine Timmons, Regional Health Office – HSE DNE

HSE Representatives Present (*online*)

Ms. Mellany McLoone, Chief Officer, CHO Dublin North City & County
Mr. Joe Ruane, Head of Primary Care, Midlands Louth Meath CHO
Ms. Rosaleen Harlin, Communications Lead, HSE Dublin and North East
Ms. Grace Larkin, Communications Officer, Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo

Mr. Liam McHale, Communications and Parliamentary Affairs, CHO Dublin North City & County, opened the first meeting of the newly elected Forum by congratulating members on their recent election success and welcoming both new and previous members.

Each Forum member introduced themselves and HSE representatives introduced themselves to the members for the benefit of the meeting.

1. Election of Chairperson

Mr. Liam McHale sought nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Forum.

Cllr. Kieran Dennison was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. Deirdre Heney and seconded by Cllr. Winston Bennett.

As there were no other nominations for the position of Chairperson, Cllr. Dennison was declared elected as Chairperson.

Cllr. Dennison then took the Chair and thanked the members for electing him.

2. Election of Vice Chairperson

Cllr. Kieran Dennison, Chairperson, sought nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson of the Forum.

Cllr. John Paul Feeley was nominated for the position on the proposal of Cllr. Deirdre Heney and seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell.

As there were no other nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson, Cllr. Feeley was declared elected as Vice Chairperson.

3. Adoption of minutes of meeting held on Monday, 25th March, 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 25th March, 2024 were adopted by the Forum on the proposal of Cllr. David Maxwell and seconded by Cllr. Deirdre Heney.

4. Health Service Executive Updates

Mr. Liam McHale gave a report to the meeting which dealt with the following:

- MMR Vaccine is the only protection against measles;
- HSE supporting thousands of COPD and asthma patients closer to home;
- New state-of-the-art HSE drug trends laboratory opens;
- HSE launches new person-centred planning resources to support the independence and decision-making of people with a disability;
- New HSE online tool 'My Mental Health Plan' will improve access to support;
- HSE launch 'Let's Talk About Suicide' - a new online suicide prevention training programme;
- Safe Harbour - a new, free illustrated story book for children bereaved by suicide;
- Wherever your holidays take you this year, reduce your risk of melanoma skin cancer;
- Be tick aware, keep you and your family safe from Lyme disease.

The following outlines comments and queries raised by members and responses from HSE representatives:

Request for awareness campaign on the dangers and negative effects of Lyme Disease

The Health Protection and Surveillance Centre run awareness programmes and the HSE also produce a calendar of events on an annual basis. A response on the specifics of what is being done in relation to Lyme disease will be provided.

Need for campaign to raise awareness of available mental health resources

Presentation on Mental Health to be arranged for a future meeting.

Increase in cocaine use and lack of affordable residential addiction treatment beds

The HSE do fund addiction treatment beds, although they are not purchased in the same manner as capacity in the acute sector; it is very much preformed on a needs basis. In terms of criteria, clients need to be engaged in HSE services or at least have been assessed.

Comments will be forwarded to the relevant service for response.

Request for update on monies owed by the HSE to Dublin County Council Ambulance Service

An update will be provided for members.

Need to invest in sport and recreation, particularly in the inner city area

HSE mental health services and health promotion and improvement services carry out a huge amount of work in this area and through the implementation of Healthy Ireland. Services collaborate very closely with both Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council. The HSE implementation of Healthy Ireland is advanced and very active and the extension and expansion of the plan from 2025 onwards is currently being examined.

A presentation on Healthy Ireland will be arranged for a future meeting.

The report was noted by the Forum.

5. Presentation on Regional Health Forum Legal Framework

Mr. Liam McHale gave a presentation to members on the Regional Health Forum Legal Framework.

The following outlines comments and queries raised by members and responses from HSE representatives.

Discussion took place in relation to the new HSE Health Regions and members raised concerns in relation to costs of this restructuring. Members stated that previous structural changes resulted in the addition of lots of admin and senior positions, while much needed frontline healthcare staff did not increase. It was expressed that the anger of frontline staff has to be considered as they are constantly dealing with staff shortages while six new Regional Executives have been appointed. It was stated that the HSE has more funding than ever before, but it could be argued that all these new senior positions with their extraordinary salaries are eating up a lot of the funding.

Members expressed outrage at the types of salaries and extra positions and asked that in future, the HSE restructure in a way that provides extra frontline staff to support the patient that comes in the door to the hospital, not the boardroom.

A request was made for clarification on the numbers and grades of positions that have been added to the system with the new regional structure.

Senior Management clarified that the only new senior manager posts are the six REOs and that the remainder of posts required will be taken from already existing resources. It was outlined that there are currently nine CHOs and six Hospital Groups and that existing teams will be reassembled to service the 20 new IHA areas. Senior Management also informed the meeting that restructuring will not affect the majority of frontline staff and services and they will continue to do their jobs in their normal way, particularly those in hospitals.

It was outlined that no new or additional posts have been approved by either the Department of Health or the Department of Expenditure and Reform, and the HSE has had employment control measures in place since May 2023; there have been no additional management or admin posts recruited during that time. The intention is that changes will take place on a cost neutral basis.

Management suggested that in the interest of balance, it might be helpful if a breakdown of staffing over the last number of years was issued to members, noting there has been an equally significant increase in the number of nursing, medical and all Allied Healthcare Professionals and healthcare assistants and home support. It was agreed that HR would be requested to provide this information by geographical area and by hospital.

Management also directed members to recent Oireachtas Health Committee meetings and presentations by Damien McCallion and Robert Watt which outline an increase in staff over the last ten years.

Clarification on IHAs and voluntary organisations

It was confirmed that all voluntary providers will be integrated within the within the 20 Integrated Health Areas (IHA). This includes hospitals such as the Mater, Beaumont, Cappagh, Rotunda and also St. Francis Hospice Avista, St. Michael's House, Brothers of Charity voluntary organisations.

Delays in ambulance transportation of patients from rural to major acute hospitals in Dublin

The National Ambulance Service will be requested to provide a response on this matter.

Lack of inpatient mental health services in County Monaghan and developments for Monaghan in line with new health regions

The new structures will see a single manager responsible for Cavan and Monaghan. A national capital plan is currently being developed for mental health services. A response will be provided on developments for Monaghan.

List of past presentations and suggestions for future presentations

A list of presentations over the past term of the Forum will be forwarded to members. Members may also submit topics for future presentations.

6. Regional Health Forum – Annual Report 2023-2024

The report was noted by the members.

7. Consideration of Committee(s) of Forum

It was agreed that the Forum would continue with one Committee.

8. Motions

There was no business under this item.

9. Questions

There was no business under this item.

10. Chairperson's Correspondence

There was no business under this item.

11. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum - Dublin North East will take place on Monday, 23rd September, 2024.

Signed:

_____ **Chairperson**