

MINUTES **MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

Thursday, 22nd September 2022 at 2pm
Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, Co Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern*
Cllr Audrey Buckley
Cllr Declan Burgess*
Cllr Cathal Byrne
Cllr Peter Cleere
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Michael Doran*
Cllr Pat Dunphy
Cllr Pat Fitzgerald*
Cllr Michael Foley*
Cllr Pat Hayes
Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Donal Kenny
Cllr Garry Laffan

Cllr Eileen Lynch
Cllr Susan McCarthy
Cllr Arthur McDonald
Cllr John McDonald
Cllr Conor McGuinness
Cllr Richie Molloy
Cllr Norma Moriarty*
Cllr John O'Donoghue*
Cllr Sean O'Donovan*
Cllr Jody Power
Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Apologies:

Cllr Damien Geoghegan
Cllr Niall Kelleher
Cllr Michael McCarthy
Cllr John Sheehan
Cllr Ted Tynan

Ms Kate Killeen White, Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare

In Attendance:

Dr Ger O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group
Mr Michael Fitzgerald, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Kate Cassidy, General Manager Covid Lead, South East Community Healthcare
Mr Gearóid Rennicks, Senior Press Officer, Ireland East Hospital Group
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

Cllr Mikey Sheehy Chairperson, opened the meeting and welcomed Members and Management. At the outset, a vote of sympathy was proposed for Cllr James Tobin (RIP), RHF South Member who sadly passed away on the 4th July 2022. Cllr Tobin was actively involved in the Regional Health Forum, a committed Member of Waterford Council as well as other local organisations. Cllr Tobin was a dedicated member of the GAA. Cllr Tobin was a strong community supporter and advocate for his constituents for many years. A number of Councillors' joined in the vote of sympathy and paid tribute to the former member. A minute's silence was observed and the meeting was adjourned for 5 minutes as a mark of respect for Cllr Tobin.

A vote of sympathy was proposed on the sad passing of Annette Geoghegan, Mother of RHF Member Cllr Damien Geoghegan.

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 23rd June 2022

On the proposal of Cllr Arthur McDonald seconded by Cllr John McDonald, the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 23rd June 2022 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

3. The next Committee Meetings will take place on:

- South East Committee Meeting held on 18th October 2022 in Kilkenny
- South West Committee Meeting held on 20th October 2022 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

(a) Cllr Jody Power moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the South/South West Hospital Group publish forthwith the findings of the UHW Archus Report that was completed last November 2021 and promised to public representatives of the South East Region within weeks by the Minister but still not available."

A written response from Mr Gerry O'Dwyer, Chief Executive Officer, South/South West Hospital Group was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Power outlined his concerns in relation to the Archus Report and when it may be available. Cllr Power cited a number of ongoing issues in relation to UHW including staffing, services and also the helipad. There are further pressures on the hospital given the increased population across the South East. In response Dr Ger O'Callaghan advised that the Archus Report is currently being finalised with Management. It will provide an evidence base for what is needed in Waterford. On finalisation of the report, UHW will work with SSWHG and HSE Estates to make the relevant Capital Submissions for new developments that are required.

Members asked when Public Representatives might have sight of the Report and whether there are any repercussions for not meeting the Report timeframe.

Dr O'Callaghan advised Members that a Prioritisation and Implementation Plan are also included as part of this schedule.

(b) Cllr Declan Burgess moved the following Motion, standing his name:

"To ask HSE Management to outline any progress to the planning application for the proposed residential unit at St Patrick's Hospital Cashel. I am aware that it remains on HSE Capital Plan."

A written response from Ms Kate Killeen White, Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Burgess acknowledged the response but is seeking further information and specific updates on this proposed development. Cllr Roger Kennedy in support of this Motion also requested further information. Ms Kate Cassidy advised the Members that she would bring their issues to the attention of the relevant personnel in South East Community Healthcare Services for Older People and HSE Estates.

(c) Cllr Audrey Buckley moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"As discussed at the Regional Health Forum Meeting held on the 23rd June 2022, I am requesting that the members can discuss changing the start time at our Regional Health Forum Meetings which are currently held at 2pm to the new time of 11am."

A discussion was held in Chambers, followed by a vote taken as follows:

Vote To Change time of Meeting from 2pm to 11am			
Surname	First Name	For	Against
Ahern	Ann Marie	✓	
Barden	Pat		
Buckley	Audrey	✓	
Burgess	Declan	✓	
Byrne	Cathal		✓
Cleere	Peter	✓	
Clune	Declan		
Collins	Danny		
Coonan	John	✓	
Cronin	Caroline		
Doran	Michael	✓	
Dunphy	Pat	✓	
Fitzgerald	Pat		
Fitzgerald	Mark		
Foley	Michael		✓
Geoghegan	Damien		

Hayes	Pat	✓	
Kavanagh	Joe		
Kelleher	Niall		
Kennedy	Roger	✓	
Kenny	Donal	✓	
Laffan	Garry	✓	
Linehan Foley	Mary		
Lynch	Eileen		
McCarthy	Michael		
McCarthy	Susan		
McDonald	Arthur	✓	
McDonald	John	✓	
McGuinness	Conor		
Molloy	Richie	✓	
Moriarty	Norma	✓	
O'Donoghue	John		
O'Donovan	Sean	✓	
O'Flynn	Ken		
Power	Jody		✓
Sheehan	John		
Sheehy	Mikey	✓	
Tynan	Ted		

The proposal was subsequently carried. HSE Management present accepted this outcome. Dr Ger O'Callaghan advised Members that overnight expenses could not be provided.

(d) Cllr Michael Foley moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"What actions is the HSE taking to resolve the issue of the current shortages of staff for Home Support."

A written response Mr Michael Fitzgerald, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and Ms Kate Killeen White, Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Foley thanked HSE Management for the comprehensive reply. He asked whether the HSE were working on rosters to try and improve terms and work conditions for Home Support Workers. Michael Fitzgerald advised that the challenges in recruitment and retention of Home Support Workers is not just within Cork and Kerry but across the

country. He advised Members than in addition to a significant recruitment campaign for Home Support Workers across Cork and Kerry and the South East, there is ongoing work including the review of job eligibility criteria requirements to try and encourage greater number of applicants and to attract more people to the Home Support role. Cllr Foley asked about whether HSE Home Support Workers are guaranteed their weekly hours. Cllr Lynch raised the issue of numbers of people approved for hours and those who were in receipt of their full allocation of home support hours. Cllr Richie Molloy stated that non-government organisations should receive greater funding supports to enable them to pay their staff mileage. Cllr Dunphy stated that the RHF South East meeting held in July gave a useful insight into Home Support Services and the ongoing challenges for service provision. Cllr Cleere advised that as ETB Chairman he would work with the HSE to facilitate any work in relation to course/qualifications.

(e) Cllr Norma Moriarty moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

“That all relevant agencies join together to form a Taskforce akin to the Road Safety Authority with a view to combating the misuse of drugs and the very worrying normalisation of their use throughout society.”

Cllr Norma Foley thanked Management for the written reply. Mr Michael Fitzgerald confirmed that the Drug and Alcohol Taskforce is in situ and that this is the multi-agency response and organisational structure where we are all engaged to seek to address issues relating to substance misuse in the region and to develop and implement National Drug Strategy in County Cork & Kerry.

A discussion was held in Chambers. Cllr Moriarty stated that she would like to see the work of the Taskforce more visible and particularly in relation to drug use and drug driving.

(f) Cllr Eileen Lynch moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

“Can the HSE please outlines the new District Health nurse (DHN) area in Cork County and confirm that service users have been notified of same.”

A written response Mr Michael Fitzgerald, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Lynch thanked Management for the written reply.

Michael Fitzgerald outlined that this is part of the implementation of Slaintecare and the restructuring of community services for a population based needs model. The planned development of Community Healthcare Networks is essential to this. Enhancing community services is essential for continuity of care and seamless service. The CHN Learning pilot site will inform the phased implementation and work of the CHNs. As outlined in the written reply, Mr. Fitzgerald advised that PHN/RGN staff remain as before and patients have access to the same services. The contact numbers for the PHN service in the area remain unchanged. Families with complex care needs have been informed directly in relation to the changes.

5. Questions

(a) Cllr. Norma Moriarty put forward the following question:

“What are the HCA(Health Care Assistant) levels in UHK in comparison to all other hospitals in the South, South West Area and are there measures in place to ensure that this essential role is in place to the level required?”

A written response Mr Gerry O'Dwyer, Chief Executive Officer, South/South West Hospital Group was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Norma Moriarty acknowledged the written response. She stated that the role of HCA is essential for patient care on hospital wards. Dr Ger O'Callaghan stated that he was in agreement with Cllr Moriarty on the need for HCAs and their provision of support role to registered nurses in order to maintain a safe and quality service delivery to our patients.

(b) Cllr. Eileen Lynch put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE please outline the number of occupational therapist and Speech and Language therapist positions in Cork County in CDNT4 and CDNT5 and the number of these positions that have been filled."

Cllr Lynch asked a number of follow-on queries in relation to Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs). Mr Michael Fitzgerald in response outlined that there has been significant work that went into the implementation of Progressing Disability Services. It is a major change programme and a different model of work for Disability Services and as part of the implementation there is a "bedding-down" period. The vacancy rate is not related to funding, rather it is a people issue and there are challenges in recruiting allied health professionals and other staff. This is not unique to Cork and Kerry, it is a national issue. There are ongoing recruitment campaigns and work to attract and retain staff. Younger staff in many disciplines are more likely to move to other areas for work opportunities or abroad.

Mr Fitzgerald outlined to Members under Progressing Disability Services children with non-complex needs will be offered services through Primary Care and children with complex needs will be offered services through the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT). The CDNTs are under pressure at present with significant demand for services.

Cllr Lynch asked in relation to Integrated Information Management System for Disability and Primary Care Services - Mr Fitzgerald confirmed that work is ongoing to develop community ICT systems.

6. Date and Time of next meeting – 24th of November 2022 at 2pm. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Hall, Co Cork.