



SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of the One Hundred and Fourteenth Meeting held in Quaker Buildings on Tuesday 21 January 2003 at 10.00 am

114/1 PRESENT: Mrs Roisin Foster, Chairman
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Patrick Brannigan
Mrs Lynne Cairns
Mrs Nazy Harris
Mr Clive Henning
Mr Brendan Montague
Mr Peter Murray
Mr John McArdle
Mr Adrian McKinney
Mr Charles Rollston

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Delia van der Lenden, Chief Officer
Mrs Nancy Downard, Office Manager
Ms Karen McCoy, Research Officer [part of the meeting]
Mrs Maria Wright, Contracts Manager and
Mrs Lesley Leeman, Patient Information Manager, CAHGT [part of the meeting]
Dr Marshall Garvin, Secretary, Local Medical Committee [part of the meeting]

APOLOGIES: Mr John Coulter
Mrs Mary Ferris
Mr Wilfred McFadden
Mr David Simpson

114/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting, which were circulated, were agreed and signed.

114/3 MATTERS ARISING

1 113/3.3 Green Park Healthcare Trust

The Chief Officer informed members that no further correspondence had been received from Green Park Healthcare Trust regarding papers for Trust Board meetings. It was agreed to send a brief reminder to the Trust.

2 113/5.1 NI Ambulance Service Trust

The Chief Officer reported that she had been in contact with Ambulance Personnel regarding the implications for the Ambulance-led Pre-hospital cardiac service because of the poor mobile phone coverage in the Newry and Mourne area. She was informed that the problem was not significant since paramedics mostly used the landline from the patient's home to transfer data to the hospital. However, she said the Ambulance Service had expressed great concern about the situation in the Ballygawley area since the phone mast had been cut down. At present the Ambulance Service had limited radio contact in the area and this created problems especially when an ambulance driver required directions for a night time call. It was hoped that a local agreement could be reached to have the mast re-erected for radio communication.

114/4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

1 Speakers

The Chairman advised members that, although an earlier agreement had been made to have only one invited speaker at Council meetings, the rule had been departed from on this occasion. The arrangement was to only have Dr Garvin attend the meeting but Craigavon Area Hospital was eager to have the Council's views on a new outpatients' appointment system being introduced shortly. Maria Wright, Contracts Manager and Lesley Leeman, Patient Information Manager would be in attendance to make a presentation.

2 SHSSB Chairman's New Appointment

The Chairman expressed good wishes to Mr Bill Gillespie, the Southern Board's outgoing Chairman who had been appointed as Chairman of the Fire Authority. A letter of congratulations and good wishes had been sent to Mr Gillespie.

3 SHSSB Appointment

The Chairman also expressed good wishes to Mrs Mairead McAlinden who had been appointed as Director of Planning and Performance Management at the Southern Board.

4 Standing Orders

The Chairman sought members' approval to have the Council's Standing Orders amended in order to change the timing of the Annual General Meeting from May to September. The amendment was proposed by Mr Henning and seconded by Mr McArdle.

5 Visits

Members were reminded of their visits to Craigavon Area Hospital on 23 January 2003 and Edenvilla Children's Home, Banbridge on 10 February 2003.

6 Report back from SHSSB Meeting

The Chairman reported on her attendance at the meeting on January 14th and outlined the main issues discussed. The March Board meeting has been rescheduled to Wednesday 19th.

7 Council Meetings

The Chairman advised that Council meetings for the next 3 months were normally held in external venues and she asked District Council representatives to check if any of the Councils would be in a position to host the meetings.

8 E-mail addresses

The Chairman asked members who had access to a computer to provide the Council with their e-mail address on the form provided. The purpose of this was for ease of communication.

114/5 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Work Programme 2003/04

The Chief Officer informed members that work on the development of the Council's work programme for 2003/04 would begin shortly. The Council had previously agreed to form a sub-group to work with staff on drawing up the programme. A sub group comprising Mrs Foster, Mrs Cairns, Mrs Harris and Mr McKinney was agreed. Other members were asked to consider projects for inclusion in the programme.

2 Learning Disability Project

Members who agreed to be involved in the Learning Disability Project would be contacted shortly to arrange a meeting in order to take the project forward.

114/6 ACTION ON WAITING LISTS - CRAIGAVON AREA HOSPITAL (Presented at 10.15 am) SHSSC 03/1

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Maria Wright, Contracts Manager and Mrs Lesley Leeman, Patient Information Manager, Craigavon Area Hospital to present an update on action on waiting lists 2002/03.

Maria commenced by giving a brief outline of the initiatives being undertaken by the Trust to address the waiting lists. She referred to the 3 regional drivers in targeting a reduction in waiting lists. These included priorities for action targets, regional service improvement leader and waiting list action plan. When CAH had taken over responsibility for ophthalmology and cardiac services they had inherited a waiting list problem and these specialities contributed significantly to the overall waiting list. However, the upward trend was now under control and was starting to come down. Current actions being taken as part of a overall waiting list action plan

included continued elective work; a validation programme; transfer to other providers and other waiting list initiatives.

She said the validation exercise was designed to ensure that patients who were recorded as being on a waiting list should be there. It would also ensure patients were properly recorded so as to be treated in the right order. In order to manage the waiting lists initiative additional clerical support was being funded by the Southern Board.

Lesley Leeman explained the 4 methods of the validation programme-

- ◆ Data Quality - checking for data errors
- ◆ Primary Care - ask GPs to confirm if patients still required treatment
- ◆ Patient validation - ask patients to confirm if they still need treatment
- ◆ Clinical validation - determine if longest waiters still require treatment

She outlined the plan for transfer of patients to other hospitals for operations such as hernias, varicose veins, tonsils, urology and cardiology. By applying the waiting list initiatives over 500 additional patients had been treated so far. Other initiatives included primary targeting lists and the use of common waiting list systems.

Mr Henning joined the meeting at 10.23 am

In concluding Mrs Leeman said the 'in year plan' was to continue with waiting list initiatives; to continue with selected transfers; work to secure additional resources; work to secure elective surgery, and to improve information provided to directorates.

Following the presentation members had the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers in relation to the action plan. The Chairman thanked the speakers for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

114/7 THE FUTURE OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

SHSSC 03/2

The Chief Officer referred members to paper SHSSC 03/2 on the future of ophthalmology. She said the paper was produced to

complement the Review of Ophthalmology Services, conducted by the Regional Medical Services Consortium in 1999. The paper outlined the structure of ophthalmology in NI and recommended the development of two clinical networks to provide a high quality service for all patients. Two of the Trusts currently providing inpatient services should form the central component of each network.

The Department invited interested parties to indicate their views on the recommendations, in particular, the recommendation to offer cataract surgery at an increased number of locations throughout NI and the implications for service delivery. Views were also requested on the strengthening of specialist ophthalmology services in a regional centre and in particular the location of such a centre.

It was agreed to respond to the document, welcoming the proposals but raising the question regarding local accessible areas and how this would impact on the waiting list.

114/8 NHS WAITING LISTS FOR SUB-FERTILITY TREATMENT SHSSC 03/3

The Chief Officer drew members attention to paper SHSSC 03/3 regarding waiting lists for sub-fertility treatment. She informed members that fertility treatment in the past was only available privately but in December 2001 the Department began funding sub-fertility treatment on a temporary basis. However, there have been significant problems with the way in which waiting lists were developed. The four Health and Social Services Councils have been asked by the RVH/Regional Fertility Centre to consider undertaking an assessment of proposed changes to the ways in which the waiting lists are managed

Mrs Foster expressed the view that waiting lists should be drawn up taking into consideration the maternal age of a woman requiring treatment.

The Chief Officer said comments would be taken on board for the meeting with the Regional Fertility Centre.

114/9 SHSSB - WINTER PRESSURES 2002/03 - INITIATIVES
SHSSC 03/4

The Chief Officer referred to paper SHSSC 03/4 discussed at the Southern Board's meeting on 14 January 2003.

She said the paper outlined a range of initiatives that the Board was promoting to deal with winter pressures and waiting lists.

She advised members that Dr Telford would be in attendance at the Council's February meeting when there would be an opportunity to hear of the action on waiting lists in more detail.

114/10 LHSCGs - GP PARTICIPATION - (Presented at 11.45 am)

The Chairman welcomed Dr Marshall Garvin, Secretary, Local Medical Committee to update the Council on the issue of GP participation in Local Health and Social Care Groups.

Dr Garvin thanked the Council for inviting him and proceeded to give members a brief explanation of why GPs' were not currently participating in Local Health and Social Care Groups (LHSCGs). With regard to the future of primary care he said GPs have always been in favour of the new primary care plans but they must be workable. The reason GPs were refusing to support the LHSCGs was because they felt that they were fundamentally flawed.

Dr Garvin informed the Council of a recent meeting which took place between GPC (NI) and the Minister for Health, Mr Des Browne to discuss the LHSCGs. He said that following the meeting he was cautiously optimistic that the door had been opened for further discussions. He quoted Dr Patterson, Chairman of the BMA saying after the meeting that "it was of an exploratory nature, to establish if there was any basis on which we could all move forward". GPC felt they could not take up positions in the LHSCGs because they were flawed and unable to deliver the primary care system that the people of Northern Ireland deserved.

Dr Garvin said GPs criticisms of the way groups had been set up included lack of vision; lack of local involvement - GPs favoured a bottom up ethos rather than top down approach. They were critical of the lack of resources for primary care; the timetable for devolution of secondary care commissioning; the remuneration available to

support GP participation in the groups; and the lack of action to preserve existing primary care staff.

In summing up, Dr Garvin said he believed the Department was on the wrong tracks with LHSCGs. He said GPs in England were withdrawing from comparable groups because of the top down approach. GPs in Northern Ireland were 100% behind the LMC and GPC and none had agreed to participate so far. Without their participation LHSCGs would not be able to function properly.

Following the presentation members had the opportunity to discuss a number of the issues raised by Dr Garvin.

The Chairman thanked Dr Garvin for his presentation and he left the meeting.

114/11 SHSSB - MONTHLY UPDATE ON CARE MANAGEMENT PRESSURES - November 2002 update SHSSC 03/5

The Chairman reported that the Board's monthly report on care management pressures continued to show a decline. Whilst this was to be commended she was concerned that management of the system was not consistent throughout the Trusts.

She advised members that she and the Chief Officer were involved in the review of community care and they would be urging the Director of Social Services to address the concerns expressed by members, including that of Cross Roads Care.

With respect to the figures for Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust, Mr Brannigan felt that, following the Council's meeting with the Directors, it was apparent that there were differences in the criteria used by the Trusts in relation to entry to the Care Management system and this made comparisons difficult.

The report was noted.

114/12 TRUSTS' BUSINESS

SHSSC 03/6

1 Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust board meeting 4 December 2002 and agenda for meeting 8 January 2003.

2 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust

Minutes of Trust board meeting 19 November 2002 and agenda for meeting 17 December 2002

3 Newry and Mourne HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting 15 October 2002 and agenda for meeting 17 December 2002

4 NIAS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting 28 November 2002

114/13 MEMBERS' FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

1 Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust

Mr Brannigan reported that the Trust would cease to contract catering services with SODEX from 31 March 03. This would be to the advantage of the Trust and staff management.

114/14 FOR INFORMATION

- 1 SHSSB - Minutes of Board meeting 10 December 2002
- 2 All Told - News Letter - Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust

114/15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 Pharmacy

Mrs Harris enquired if any information was available in relation to pharmacy deregulation and the extended prescribing role for pharmacists planned by Government. It was agreed to seek further information on these issues.

2 Members' Development Workshop

Mrs Harris requested a copy of the report prepared by Mrs Ferris. It was agreed to circulate it to members.

3 Public Appointments

Mr Murray referred to the CAHGT minutes regarding training for new procedures in relation to public appointments. He referred to articles in the press with regard to public appointments and the procedures used. He asked if information was available on the new procedures. It was agreed to seek further information on the new appointments procedures.

Mr Anderson left the meeting at 12.40 pm

Mrs Cairns left the meeting at 12.42 pm

4 Emergency Ambulance Calls

Mrs Harris referred to a recent media report regarding a new method of responding to medical emergencies. The Chief Officer advised that the report referred to the piloting of the Rapid Response Vehicle service. It was agreed to provide Mrs Harris with further information on the topic.

5 BBC Radio - Seven days Programme

On behalf of the Council, Mr Henning congratulated the Chief Officer on her excellent participation in the BBC Radio - Seven Days programme on Sunday afternoon 19 January 2003.

114/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 18 February 2003 at 10.00 am in Quaker Buildings.

Signed: _____

Date: _____