

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Meeting held in Armagh City & District Council on Tuesday 15 June 2004 at 10.00 am

129/1 PRESENT: Mrs Roisin Foster, Chairman
 Mr Patrick Brannigan
 Mrs Lynne Cairns
 Mr Brendan Curran
 Mrs Mary Ferris
 Mrs Nazy Harris
 Mr Andy Moffett
 Mr Brendan Montague
 Mr Peter Murray
 Mr John McArdle
 Mr Jim McCart
 Mr Wilfred McFadden
 Mr Peter Kearns
 Mr Charles Rollston

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Delia van der Lenden, Chief Officer
 Mrs Nancy Downard, Office Manager
 Dr Vinod Tohani, Consultant in
 Communicable Disease Control, SHSSB
 [for part of the meeting]
 Mr Eddie Ritson, Director of Primary Care
 and Dr Robert Thompson, Medical Adviser
 in Primary Care, SHSSB [for part of the
 meeting]

APOLOGIES: Mr Sydney Anderson
 Mrs Annie Burrell
 Mr Clive Henning
 Mrs Pat Mallon
 Mr Adrian McKinney
 Mrs Eileen Wright

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 129th meeting including a student who was shadowing Mr Brendan Curran, a Newry & Mourne Councillor. She especially thanked Armagh City and District Council for hosting the meeting and for the hospitality provided.

129/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

129/3 MATTERS ARISING

1 Newry & Mourne HSS Trust – Update on Newry SEC

The Chairman informed members of a letter of response from the Newry and Mourne HSS Trust in relation to the Council's request for monthly updates on the situation regarding Newry SEC. She said the Trust felt that monthly updates were too frequent and agreed to provide them on a quarterly basis with the first being provided at the end of June.

Members expressed concern at the lack of progress in relation to improvements to the Newry SEC premises. It was agreed to await the first update from Newry and Mourne HSS Trust at the end of June, and if no progress was indicated to write to the DHSSPS and request the Minister for Health to receive a deputation from the Council.

2 128/3.4 Betainterferon

Referring to an issue raised at the April meeting Mr McArdle asked if there was confirmation that the person with MS was going to receive the treatment. The Chairman said the matter had been discussed at last month's meeting and the person had indicated that she would be referred on for treatment. It was agreed to provide him with an anonymised copy of the letter from the Chief Executive of the Southern Board.

129/4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

1 Resignation

The Chairman reported that Mrs Yvonne McKnight had tendered her resignation as a member of the Council. It was agreed to write a letter of thanks to Mrs McKnight. The Public Appointments will appoint a replacement as soon as possible.

2 Love for Life Programme

The Chairman referred members to a letter from Mrs Eileen Wright, a Council member and also Chairman of the Board of Governors in Banbridge Academy.

Mrs Wright was asking for assistance in highlighting the Love for Life programme which is being denied funding from the Department of Education. She asked that the Council make members aware of the matter and consider supporting it by writing to the Department of Education.

The Chairman explained that the Love for Life was a programme educating children on sexual matters and sexual behaviour which is run by a Lurgan GP, Dr Richard Barr. It provides backup to the teaching of relationships and sexuality education within the schools' programme. However, the Department of Education has decided not to fund the programme any more. Members agreed that the Chairman and Chief Officer should liaise with Mrs Wright and if they felt the programme should be supported by the Council then the Council should write to the Department of Education.

3 Craigavon and Banbridge Carers' Forum and Help for Carers

No one from the Council was available to attend the launch of a 'Guide to Accessing Services for Carers' in the Seagoe Hotel on Friday 18 June at 11.00 am.

4 Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust – Carers' Conference

Mrs Ferris agreed to attend a carers' conference which would be held in Armagh City Hotel on Wednesday 23 June from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm.

129/5 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1 Evaluation of Councils

The Chief Officer advised members that the evaluation of Councils, which was undertaken by Simon Bridge & Associates, Consultants was completed and would be discussed at the joint conference in Lusty Beg Island on 17/18 June. A copy would be circulated to members and would be included as an agenda item for the September meeting.

2 Joint HSSCs Conference

The Chief Officer said she was pleased to report that 10 members had registered for the conference. Three staff members would support them in the business of the conference. The Chairman thanked those members who had agreed to attend the conference.

3 Council meeting with the DHSSPS

The Chief Officer briefed members on the outcome of the meeting with Clive Gowdy. While the Department had agreed in principle to providing additional funding to the Councils it would be available only for in-year projects on specific programme themes determined by the Department. She said the Councils jointly would continue the discussions with the Department and members would be kept informed.

129/6 MMR VACCINE (presented at 10.00 am)

The Chairman welcomed Dr Vinod Tohani, the Southern Board's Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, to give his perspective on the MMR vaccine.

Dr Tohani provided members with a comprehensive and informative presentation on the uptake of the MMR vaccine, the issues surrounding it and details of mumps and measles outbreaks.

Dr Tohani said that since the Council raised the issue things had moved on. He said measles has been eradicated since the introduction of MMR vaccine. Complications from measles illness occur in about 1 in every 15 cases and include bronchitis, pneumonia, convulsions, encephalitis and are most common in chronically ill children. Deaths from measles are high in children under 1 year and lowest in children 1-9 years - but rise after 9 years.

Complications from mumps include pancreatitis, meningitis and encephalitis. Prior to the MMR vaccine about 1200 cases were admitted to hospital per year. To prevent mumps, two doses of vaccine need to be administered. Single MMR vaccine offers 90% protection against measles and mumps and 95% against rubella.

He reported that in 1994 an MR campaign which was carried out in schools to prevent a measles epidemic in school age children and also to reduce rubella in teenage males, was highly successful and had virtually eliminated measles and rubella in this age group. Currently it is recommended that all children should receive 2 doses of MMR irrespective of history of measles, mumps, or rubella infection. Contraindications of the vaccine included acute illness, untreated malignant disease, X-ray therapy, and high dose steroids, while non contraindications were

convulsions, chronic conditions and HIV positive. Adverse reactions to the MMR might include a fever / rash one week after vaccine, or febrile convulsion which affects 1 in 1000. Reactions after the second dose were much rarer than after the first dose and most only occur in those non-immune after the first dose.

Dr Tohani reported that research had shown good responses from the immune system to all components of the vaccine and there was no evidence of overload. The three components work at different speeds so they don't all impact on a child at once.

He referred to the outbreak of measles in the Republic of Ireland in January 2000 and said the uptake of the vaccine was much lower than here – about 74%. By September 2000 - 1500 cases had been diagnosed. This outbreak resulted in the death of 3 children. In the Netherlands 2300 cases were diagnosed as 97% of children are unvaccinated for religious reasons. Other recent outbreaks included Germany, Switzerland, Jewish community in Salford and Rudolf Steiner communities in UK.

With regard to the uptake of the MMR vaccine in the Southern Board's area he said that in the year 2000 - 97% of children had received the first vaccine by the age of 5 years. Currently within the Newry and Banbridge areas there has been an outbreak of mumps and the Board is advising GPs to recall children that had received only one dose, to receive a second dose. About 200 cases of mumps were recorded in the Southern Board from November 2003. However, there has not been an outbreak of measles in spite of the outbreak in the Republic of Ireland – which demonstrates the importance of achieving good uptake rates of MMR vaccine.

With regard to concerns expressed about the link between MMR vaccine and autism, Dr Tohani referred to a number of studies and said there was an enormous amount of research into MMR vaccines and the evidence is they are very safe.

In concluding he said the Board was using safe vaccines to prevent potentially serious disease and therefore should continue to aim for very high uptake levels of both doses.

Dr Tohani responded to a number of questions from members. The Chairman thanked him for his presentation and he left the meeting.

population. Kilkeel and Moira are not covered by the Co-op. All contacts are assessed by a GP with 50% being given advice, 40% consultation at the centre, and 10% home visits.

Objectives of the new system are to enable opt-out of GPs by December 2004; a phased approach to development; a comprehensive service; access to whole population; patient choice of centre; co-location with A&E / Minor Injuries unit and wider integration with other services.

Mr Rollston joined the meeting at 11.55 am

In terms of developing where the future sites would be and assuming that all patients could access the nearest centre across Board boundaries, six site options were explored – 3 core sites open full time hours and 3 additional satellite sites open part time hours.

An option appraisal was conducted in relation to user and staff acceptability and measured against an agreed set of criteria. A three-phase plan for the development of services is proposed. Under phase 1 the proposal is to establish services around the current sites, but with the relocation of the Moylinn service to the CAH site. The system must be up and running by 1 January 2005. Phase 2 would develop centres in Craigavon Area Hospital, Daisy Hill Hospital, and South Tyrone Hospital with a satellite centre in Armagh. Phase 3 would move towards further modernisation and integration of community services.

However, there were some concerns about access for the patients in isolated areas such as Kilkeel / Annalong, Banbridge / Dromore / Ballyward and these would be reviewed after the service was up and running for about 6 months.

The advantages of the preferred option would include access and choice, 24 hour cover, ease of communication with hospital and community services, and sites that were well known to patients.

In concluding Dr Thompson said the Board faced major challenges in relation to GP manpower, the poor condition of the current facilities, access for those isolated areas, funding and the timescale constraint.

Mr Ritson and Dr Thompson responded to a number of questions from members.

Mr McCart left the meeting at 12.25 pm.

The Chairman thanked them both for their presentation and said she looked forward to the outcome of the consultation.

Mr Brannigan rejoined the meeting at 12.35 pm

The Chairman referred members to the schedule of public meetings being held by the Council throughout the Southern Board area and encouraged members to attend one in their area. Following these a draft response would be prepared and approved at a special meeting of the Council, details of which would be circulated to members shortly.

Mr Curran and student left the meeting at 12. 40 pm

129/9 TRUSTS' BUSINESS

1 Craigavon & Banbridge Comm HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 26 April and agenda for meeting on 25 May 2004 (tabled)

2 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust

No papers were available at this stage.

3 Newry & Mourne HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 20 April 2004 and agenda for meeting on 15 June 2004 (tabled)

129/10 FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

1 Relatives' Meeting

Mrs Harris reported that she had attended a Relatives' meeting in Board Headquarters only to find out that it had been cancelled because of lack of interest. An apology was issued from the Relatives Association via e-mail.

2 NI Cancer Registry

Mrs Lynne Cairns reported that on 27 May she had attended the launch of the Comprehensive Cancer Report by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry. She said it was very worthwhile as there

were a number of very good speakers. She said that Lung cancer was the number one killer in Northern Ireland and there was ongoing work to lobby MLAs about bringing Northern Ireland into line with the Irish Republic in relation to smoking policies. She said if the Council had an opportunity it should support the initiative.

129/11 FOR INFORMATION

SHSSB – Monthly Update on Care Management Pressures – March 2004
Children’s Services Planning – News – May 2004
CAHGT – Bed Management Information

129/12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 Photographs

In response to Mr Kearns enquiry about recent photographs of Council members being used for promotion, the Chief Officer informed him that these would be used in the next Annual Report and would also be used for events where members were involved.

129/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21 September 2004 at 10.00 am in Quaker Buildings.

Signed: _____ Date: _____