

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Service Council held at 1.30pm in the Rural College and Derrynoid Centre, Draperstown on Wednesday 7 May 2003.

PRESENT:

In the Chair
Mr J McFadden

Members
Mrs B Adger
Mrs M Baker
Mr P Boyle
Mr T Creighton
Mrs I Johnston
Mr R Montgomery
Mr M Nolan
Mr I Stevenson

In Attendance
Mr N Graham
Mrs J Erwin
Dr A Linton, agenda item 9

50/03 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs Anderson, Ms Armstrong, Mrs Drummond, Mr Hamilton, Mrs L Johnston and Mrs McCambridge.

51/03 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Mr McFadden announced that Mrs Crawford had tendered her resignation.
Mr McFadden commented upon his attendance at meetings of the NHSSB and United Hospitals Trust Board and on Mr Hamilton's attendance at a Sargent Cancer Care event.

52/03 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2003

The Minutes were agreed and signed.

53/03 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 2 APRIL 2003

- (i) 38/03 Review of Current Mileage Allowance Rate Mr Graham reported that a letter requesting a review of travelling expenses for members had been sent to the DHSSPS and copied to Mr Gowdy, Permanent Secretary. A response referred to the review of the Payment of Travelling and Other Allowances to Members Determination 1997, undertaken in 2001, which led to a fundamental appraisal of the whole travelling and subsistence expenses policy across Departmental bodies and resulted in the exercise taking much longer than previously envisaged. It is hoped that the final draft will be available for consideration in late May and that a speedy resolution will be forthcoming.
- (ii) 40/03 RNID Update. Mr Graham referred to the recent Chief Officers meeting at which the Director of RNID, Susan Reid, had been present. Ms Reid had sought to raise the profile of the organisation and to highlight the difficulties faced by deaf people. Further consideration would be given to future joint initiatives.
- (iii) 42/03 Private Nursing Home Tariffs. Mr Graham had discussed the substantial increase in fees with Mrs Thornton, Manager of the Board's Registration and Inspection Unit who had explained that the role of the R&I Unit was to regulate and inspect homes. Although aware of the increase, fees were outside their remit. The issue had also been raised with The Relatives Association. Following discussion at the Administration Committee meeting a decision had been taken to write to each Private Nursing Home in the NHSSB area and seek tariff details. Responses were awaited. Mr Graham drew attention to a request by Ms Armstrong, on behalf of the Independent Health and Care Providers to make a presentation to the NHSSC on fee structure for Private Nursing Homes at the June Council meeting. Members agreed to the request. During discussion, Mr Stevenson suggested comparing the cost of nursing home with hospital care and highlighted the significant problems faced by many Homes in recruiting staff while Mr Creighton voiced his opposition to means testing for nursing home places.

54/03 VISITING PROGRAMME

May visits

Arrangements were made for visits to the Regional Respiratory Centre, Belfast City Hospital and the Ross Thomson Unit, Causeway Hospital.

Visiting Reports

Lodge Health

Mrs I Johnston reported that during the visit the team had toured the facility and met with staff and some patients. Patients expressed their appreciation of the quality of the service, however, highlighted difficulties in getting through on the telephone. A range of clinics are provided and all waiting areas are monitored from Reception. The interior of the building is well signposted and information is provided at various points. Members welcomed the pending installation of a lift.

Day Procedure Unit, Causeway Hospital

This report would be considered at the June Council Meeting.

Antrim Adult Centre

Mrs Adger reported that the Centre provides day care for adults with a learning disability. Training and support is made available for individuals to develop and enhance their skill and ability to enable them to live within the community. Refurbished approximately six and a half years ago to cater for 50 individuals, the addition of a portakabin allows 66 individuals to be catered for. Clients attend from the surrounding areas of Antrim, Templepatrick, Crumlin, Toomebridge and Randalstown. A wide range of activities takes place in the Centre, including basic literacy and numeracy, arts and crafts, individual and group work, sports and leisure, recycling, gardening, computer skills and general life skills. Most of the individuals also avail of a range of community-based activities. Some of these are provided by further education colleges including the North East Institute Antrim Campus and also the East Tyrone Institute who provide a satellite service in the Antrim area. Some of the clients have a work placement supported by the Centre's link worker.

Visiting Response

Wilson House, Broughshane

It was noted that Homefirst Community Trust hoped to redecorate the building in the near future and was currently considering usage of magnetic name badges as an alternative to those currently used.

Larne Adult Centre

Members were pleased that Homefirst Community Trust had also included the painting of the outside of the building in its maintenance programme for this year.

55/03 TO CONSIDER BUSINESS OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Administration Committee – 17 April 2003

Members noted that Miss Ashton had now resigned from her position as Research Officer and had taken up a post in England. The post had been advertised and short listing would take place in early June.

Mr Graham reported that having given a presentation on the role of the NHSSC to members of the East Antrim Local Health and Social Care Group he had now received a similar request from the Mid-Ulster Group. An invitation was extended to interested members to attend.

Comments from United Hospitals Trust on the draft Casualty Watch report were expected by the end of May. To avoid further delay the meeting agreed that a copy of the report be forwarded to NHSSB. Current trolley wait figures were noted.

There would be an opportunity to hear the detail of United Hospitals Trust Business Plan at a forthcoming meeting with the Trust's Chief Executive.

56/03 PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2003/2004

Each member had received a copy of the document. The various priorities and actions listed within it would be borne in mind when meeting with the NHSSB and Trusts. Mr Graham drew attention to those with particular relevance to the NHSSC.

Following the tea break Mr Creighton took the opportunity to present Mr McFadden with a gift in recognition of his service to the NHSSC. Appointed to the NHSSC in late 1997, Mr McFadden was nominated Vice-Chairman in June 1999, taking on the role of Acting Chairman in late 2001 before becoming Chairman in 2002. Mr Creighton paid tribute to the tremendous amount of time, effort and energy given by Mr McFadden in advancing the work of the Council and wished him well in the future. Mr McFadden suitably replied.

57/03 TO CONSIDER DRAFT NHSSC BUSINESS PROGRAMME 2003/2004

The Council is required to draw up a programme of work, share it with NHSSB and forward a copy to the DHSSPS.

The draft Business Programme 2003/2004 was discussed by members and approved.

58/03 PRESENTATION ON WHY WASTE? A REVIEW OF DRUG WASTAGE IN THE ANTRIM/BALLYMENA LOCALITY

Mr McFadden welcomed Dr Linton, Pharmaceutical Prescribing Adviser, and NHSSB to the meeting. Dr Linton outlined the findings of a study carried out over a four-week period in two pharmacies. During the period 1819 medicines were returned by 897 patients. The majority of patients for whom medicines were returned were older than 60 years of age and the majority of patients returning medicines were female. Over 30% of medicines were returned by relatives/carers of patients that had died. The total value of the medicines returned was £20,000. Central nervous system and cardiovascular medicines accounted for the greatest volume and value of returned medicines during the project period. More than half of the medicines returned had been dispensed within the previous six months.

The study highlighted the extent of medicine waste in the Antrim/Ballymena locality both in terms of cost and volume. The data collected on the type of patient, medicine returned and reasons will inform future prescribing strategy.

Plans are already in place to repeat the study in other areas within the NHSSB.

Following an opportunity for members to ask questions about the findings, Me McFadden thanked Dr Linton for her most informative presentation.

59/03 CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman referred to the correspondence list circulated with the agenda.

Members were happy that a joint Council response be prepared to the consultation document from the DHSSPS on discharge from hospital and the continuing care in the community of mentally disordered people who could represent a risk of serious physical harm to themselves or others.

Mr Graham indicated that the Equality Commission would accept a joint progress report of the first two years of implementation of the statutory duties from the NHSSB, NHSSC and the three local Trusts.

Consideration would be given to accepting an offer of a presentation from Dr Morrison, Director of Pharmaceutical Services, and NHSSB on Making it Better – A Strategy for Pharmacy in the Community.

Mr Graham referred to some additional items of correspondence:

- NISCC Registration News
- Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act 1975
- Invitation to Simon Community Conference Health and Homelessness in NI Towards Inclusive Health Services – 14 May 2003 Mrs Adger to attend
- Information pack from East Antrim LHSCG Clinical Governance Sub Group and invitation to nominate. Mr Creighton expressed an interest. Clarification would be sought on Council's position.

60/03 OTHER BUSINESS

No other business had been tabled.

61/03 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4 June 2003 in the Newtownabbey Borough Council area.

The meeting closed at 4.35pm

Chairman

Secretary

Date 4/6/2003