

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Council held at 1.30pm in Ballyearl Arts and Leisure Centre, Newtownabbey on Wednesday 1 June 2005.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Mr T Creighton

Members: Mrs B Adger Mr J Millar
Mrs M Anderson Mrs J Montgomery
Ms R Armstrong Mr R Montgomery
Mrs I Johnston Mr T Nicholl
Prof G Kernohan Mr M Nolan

In Attendance: Mr N Graham
Mrs J Erwin

49/05 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mrs Baker, Mrs Drummond, Mrs L Johnston, Mrs Morrison and Mrs McCambridge.

50/05 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

Mr Creighton advised that as there had not been a quorum at the May Council meeting all business had been deferred to today's meeting.

Mr Creighton commented upon his attendance at various events including a meeting of United Hospitals Trust Board.

He commended the speaker at the Joint Council Infection Control Workshop Dr Smyth, Consultant Bacteriologist and Infection Prevention and Control Doctor, The Royal Hospitals and Director, NI Healthcare-associated Infection Surveillance Centre.

Mr Creighton congratulated those members who had been re-elected as Councillors in local District/Borough Council elections. He extended good wishes to those who had been unsuccessful.

51/05 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 APRIL 2005**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

52/05 **MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 6 APRIL
2005**

39/05 Avian Flu

The multidisciplinary group currently considering avian flu and its impact on the health and welfare of the population was scheduled to meet again on Tuesday 14 June 2005. Mr Millar would represent the Council at this meeting and enquire if any further user representation would be sought.

39/05 Sudan 1

Mrs I Johnston had enquired about what assurances were being given to the public that food is now completely safe and free from Sudan 1. Mr Graham had written to both Professor Watson, Director of Public Health, NHSSB and the Food Standards Agency. The Food Standards Agency response had already been shared with members. In a response from Professor Watson he explained that the Board would not routinely have any role in implementing decisions of the Food Standards Agency in relation to product recall. If a response was required from the Board, in addition to the action by District Council Environmental Health Officers, the Board would only act in response to a direct request from the Agency.

40/05 Childhood Immunization

Following Dr Devine's presentation at the last Council meeting a media release was issued supporting Dr Devine's work in terms of promoting the importance of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccination.

47/05 Eating Disorders

Ms Armstrong had drawn attention to media coverage in relation to the withdrawal of funding for a Belfast eating disorder drop-in centre. The Council had since established that the centre had been a 3 year project funded 75% by the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety and 25% by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board. During 2004/05 the four Health and Social Services Boards were allocated £1m to recruit 18 adult specialist practitioners in eating disorders. The Eating Disorder Association was in receipt of Departmental funding up until the 31 March 2005. A

further funding application has been made, however, a response is still awaited. The drop-in centre remains open with voluntary funding. Ms Armstrong requested that she be kept updated.

53/05 **TO CONSIDER AGENDA ITEMS FOR JOINT MEETINGS WITH CAUSEWAY TRUST BOARD AND NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD**

The meeting with Causeway Trust Board will be held on Monday 27 June 2005 at 10.45am in the WS Tweed Room, Robinson Hospital, Ballymoney. Suggested agenda items included accountability of Trust Board, to include patient safety, quality of care and staff welfare, outcome of Trust Nursing Review, unallocated social work caseloads, mental health services, particularly out-of-hours provision and elderly care and children's services.

The meeting with Northern Health and Social Services Board will be held on Wednesday 22 June 2005 at 2.00pm in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Ballymena. Suggested agenda items included access to acute specialist services, delayed discharges, to include the outcome of the Capita review, the monitoring of suitability and capacity of service provision, accountability role of Board in monitoring service provision, the funding position, voluntary/community sector funding, progress in implementation of Developing Better Services and an update on the GMS Contract.

54/05 **VISITING**

Visiting Reports

Elderly Care Wards, Whiteabbey Hospital

During the visit members visited the Day Rehabilitation Unit and Wards 3, 9 and 10. Members noted that in Ward 9 visitors were discouraged from sitting on the beds and that use of gel for hand washing is encouraged, however, it was felt that there needed to be more notices. The Team was informed that staffing in this ward has been an issue for some time and that there is a strong reliance on student nurses. A further issue highlighted was the irregularity of ambulance transport for those patients attending appointments in the main block, resulting in missed appointments.

The Team commended the outside garden sitting area at Ward 10 and would congratulate staff on raising funds to help with the project. In this ward shortage of staff is a cause for great concern especially as there are two permanent patients.

Overall the Team commended the standards of the Day Rehabilitation Unit and Ward 3 and would like to see Wards 9 and 10 on a parallel in terms of staffing, IT equipment, space and décor.

Issues highlighted would be raised with United Hospitals Trust.

Glenmona Resource Centre, Cushendun

With the final content now agreed this report would be forwarded to Causeway Trust.

Mountfern Adult Centre, Coleraine

This is a specialised Centre providing day support services for adults with learning difficulties.

The Visiting Team found the Centre to have a wonderful atmosphere and to be a hub of activity. A wide range of activities are provided including sports and recreation, rehabilitation, education and training and therapeutic and sensory stimulation.

The Centre is supported by a wide range of other professional services such as dentistry and psychology and these can be accessed as and when required.

The Intensive Support Unit was the main focus of the visit due to the very complex needs of the client group and the impressive care being delivered. This unit had originally been designed for nine people but now supports eleven with ever increasing demands from Sandelford School. It is estimated that six places will be required annually for clients with complex needs who are leaving the school. It would therefore appear that a unit supporting some twenty people would be required to fulfil the demand from Sandelford. In support of the Visiting Team Council members agreed that this issue be raised urgently with the Northern Health and Social Services Board.

It was with regret that Ms Armstrong informed members that since the visit the outdoor area at the Centre had been vandalised.

Drumross Adult Centre, Newtownabbey

This report would be considered at the September Council Meeting.

Visiting Responses

Rathmoyle Resource Centre, Ballycastle

Members were pleased that Causeway Trust had taken careful note of the problem areas identified by the Visiting Team and was endeavouring to address them. Problems had related to better access for people in wheelchairs including toilet provision and wider doorways, inadequate car parking, the upgrading of toilets and the need to increase the size of some rooms.

Revised Pro-forma

Members considered and, subject to a few minor changes, agreed a draft pro-forma for visits. Ms Armstrong suggested arranging a workshop to ensure consistency in the completion of reports.

55/05 **24hour CASUALTY WATCH**

Several members and staff had participated in a 24hr casualty watch at Mid-Ulster Hospital, Magherafelt on 20/21 May 2005. Mr Graham thanked those who had participated and reported that during the period 68 patients had presented to the casualty department. The majority of patients were male and the majority were in the 31-64 age group. Of the 68 patients 49 had self-referred and 53 had been seen and discharged. 10 were admitted, 1 was to be admitted the following day and 4 left without being seen. In terms of meeting the charter standards all urgent and non-urgent cases were seen within the charter time, however, 5 in the standard category did not meet the charter time. A full report would be drawn up, shared with

members and copied to United Hospitals Board and the Northern Health and Social Services Board.

56/05 **BEST PRACTICE BEST CARE: THE QUALITY STANDARDS FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE – SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF CLINICAL AND SOCIAL CARE GOVERNANCE IN THE HPSS CONSULTATION**

This consultation paper sets out the standards that people should expect from Health and Personal Social Services organisations. The standards are being issued in draft form now so that people have an opportunity to comment on them before they are finalised later this year. Once they are finalised, the standards will apply to all HPSS organisations. They will be used by the new Regulation and Improvement Authority to assess the quality of care provided by the HPSS.

The standards appeared reasonable and members were invited to feed back comments for inclusion in the joint Council response.

57/05 **REPORTS FROM:**

Arthritis Care's Annual Conference – 13 May 2005

Attended by Mr Millar, this year's Conference focused on exploring how Arthritis Care, working in partnership with the DHSSPS, can provide services that will respond to the needs of people with arthritis. A report prepared by Mr Millar would be copied to members.

Launch of The Friends Group Report 'The Special Needs of Children and Adults with Special Needs in the Glens Area – 14 April 2005

This launch had been attended by Mrs McCambridge. A copy of the Report would be requested.

58/05 **CORRESPONDENCE**

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

Reference was made to the minutes of United Hospitals Trust Board meeting of 28 April 2005 and concern raised that difficulty was currently being experienced in the Mid-Ulster area

in obtaining GP appointments. The Chief Officer agreed to follow this up.

In response to a consultation paper from the General Medical Council members welcomed the opportunity to comment on how best the GMC can operate in Northern Ireland in the future and members supported the establishment of a dedicated staffed office in Northern Ireland.

Mrs Anderson and Mr Millar accepted the invitation to attend the Northern Trauma Advisory Panel Launch of the Directory of Trauma Support Services and Resource Pack.

Additional items of correspondence included:

- Report of Chief Medical Officer 2004
- Letter from Dr McGowan re: access to services. Members requested that a press release be issued in support of Dr McGowan's concerns
- The Children (Leaving Care) Regulations (NI) 2005 and Guidance
- Invitation from Northern Neighbourhoods Health Action Zone to Annual Conference on 16 June 2005. Professor Kernohan and Mr Montgomery to attend
- Invitation from the Nursing and Midwifery Council to a Focus Group on 29 June 2005 to have input to new nurse training initiatives on the fitness to practice of student and newly qualified nurses. Mrs Montgomery and Mr Stevenson to attend
- Letter and Report from DHSSPS re: Risk and Governance Review of Acute Hospital Services at Sperrin Lakeland Trust. A press release calling for the Report to be included on the agenda of every Health and Social Services Trust had been issued by the NHSSC
- Northern Ireland Cancer Registry Cancer Services Audit 1996 and 2001 Breast
- Invitation from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister to a public meeting to consult on services for victims and

survivors on 8 June 2005. Mrs I Johnston and Mr Stevenson to attend

59/05 **OTHER BUSINESS**

Nexus Funding

Mrs Anderson paid tribute to the Council for its support in securing funding for Nexus from the Northern Health and Social Services Board. Further information on the current funding arrangements would be requested.

Visiting Times – Mid-Ulster Hospital, Magherafelt

Mr Montgomery drew attention to a change in the visiting times at Mid-Ulster Hospital yet the public did not seem to have been informed and open visiting notices were still displayed. This would be drawn to the attention of United Hospitals Trust.

Completion of Term of Office

On behalf of members Ms Armstrong thanked Mr Montgomery for his service to the Council and wished him well in the future.

60/05 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 September 2005 in the Cookstown District Council area.

The meeting closed at 3.45pm.

Chairman

Secretary

Date