

## **NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Council held at 1.30pm in The Rural College and Derrynoid Centre, Derrynoid, Draperstown on Wednesday 5 September 2007.

### **PRESENT:**

**In the Chair:** Mr Tom Creighton

<b><u>Members:</u></b>	Mrs Beth Adger	Mr Sam McClelland
	Mr Jim Brown	Mrs Kate McEldowney
	Mrs Irene Johnston	Mr Tommy Nicholl
	Prof George Kernohan	Mr Mark Nolan
	Mr John Millar	Mr Tony Quinn
	Mrs Janet Montgomery	Mr Andrew Wilson
	Mrs Rae Morrison	

**In Attendance:** Mr Noel Graham  
Mrs Jacqui Erwin

### 75/07 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mrs Anderson, Ms Armstrong, Mrs L Johnston, Mr Kinahan, Mrs McClelland, Mr Stevenson and Mrs Swain.

### 76/07 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting. He referred to his attendance at a meeting with the Health Minister and to responsibility for the Patient and Client Council having transferred from Dr Bernie Stuart to Mrs Linda Devlin at the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

### 77/07 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2007**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

### 78/07 **MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 6 JUNE 2007**

#### **67/07 Roadshow re: Development of the new Women's and Children's Hospital on the Royal Hospital site in Belfast**

Members noted that the total project cost was £364,604,000 and that the hospital was scheduled to be operational in 2014.

## **70/07 Joint Council Event – 23 May 2007**

Mr Graham updated members on NHS Dentistry and the Review of Public Administration.

### **NHS Dentistry**

Health and Social Services Councils had been invited by the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety to make a written submission to The Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. Since an issue within this related to dental services two Council Chief Officers had presented the report from the Joint Council Event and had spoken on other issues relating to the Bill.

At the meeting of Chairmen and Chief Officers with the Health Minister in August the opportunity had been taken to request a separate discussion on issues of concern relating to health and social care and a meeting was subsequently arranged for the morning of 7 November 2007 to discuss NHS dentistry.

Mr Graham referred to recent media coverage concerning the resignation of an Orthodontist in the Northern area. A number of complaints were being investigated by the Northern Health and Social Services Board. The matter, however, had drawn attention to the small number of Orthodontists in the Northern area, an issue which would also be raised with the Minister. Members suggested the need for further information concerning the number of children on waiting lists in the Northern area, the number of children accessing services outside the Northern area and details of how Orthodontists are supervised and regulated.

### **Review of Public Administration**

A follow-up letter to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister which outlined Council members' concerns that a disparity existed between the establishment of the Health and Social Care Authority and the Patient and Client Council had been passed to the Health Minister for reply.

In his reply the Minister referred to the meeting Council Chairmen and Chief Officers had held with Dr McCormick, the Permanent Secretary, and reiterated the information given there about the legislation and appointments to the Patient and Client Council. He referred to the suggestion that a meeting be hosted by the NHSSC and stated that a meeting had already been arranged with Council

Chairmen and Chief Officers to discuss the future role of the Patient and Client Council.

This meeting, held on 6 August 2007, was attended by the Health Minister and Dr Bernie Stuart and Mrs Linda Devlin from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the opportunity was taken to outline Health and Social Services Council work and concerns around the establishment of the Patient and Client Council.

The Minister had referred to his short time in office and to the size of the health and social care portfolio. He pointed out that while he was considering the recommendations in relation to the Review of Public Administration and health and social care they were the views of a previous Minister. He indicated that he wished to keep the structures simple and that he would carefully consider the legislation for the new structures over the summer and announce his decision in the autumn.

### **73/07 Mileage Rates**

Mr Graham confirmed that mileage rates currently paid had been effective since 2004. The issue had been raised at a meeting of the Executive Committee of Health and Social Services Councils and the Chief Officer would write to the Permanent Secretary requesting a revision of travel rates.

### **73/07 Northern Health and Social Services Board Ambulance Liaison Committee**

Members noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 30 October 2007. Mr Millar felt the meeting should be sooner.

## **79/07 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

### **Advocacy Project**

Mr Graham referred to the well attended event held on Wednesday 13 June 2007 when the findings of the joint Councils/Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority Advocacy Project were presented. Comments from a graffiti wall and round table discussions had also fed into a draft report which had been produced. The Health Minister had been approached about writing a foreword and the final report was expected to be launched in November/December 2007.

## Tuberculosis (TB) Incident, Causeway Hospital

Mr Graham reported that the Chief Executive of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust had personally briefed him on the TB incident in Causeway Hospital and he outlined how the Council had issued a press release welcoming the measures put in place by the Trust and been kept informed with regular progress reports. In the latest update Dr Flanagan, the Trust's Director of Medicine and Governance, advised that analysis of results was continuing as some people had required a second screening. However, there were no signs that anyone had developed TB from the incident. Some people had, however, been shown to have a primary infection, indicating that at some stage in their life they had come into contact with TB. As a precautionary measure, these people would have a routine follow-up. He indicated that the Health Protection Agency, London would shortly be coming over to review progress and confirmed that the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety was considering screening for all staff going abroad to high risk areas. He suggested presenting a paper to the Council in a few months time and this was accepted by members.

## Practice Registration Areas

Mr Graham informed members that two Practices had written to the Council about their application to the Northern Health and Social Services Board to reduce their geographical area of registration. He had responded from a public perspective and had compiled a summary paper for Mr Millar who sits on the Board Committee considering such requests. The issue would also be discussed at the next meeting of the Primary Care/NHSSC Forum. Mr Millar agreed to attend in place of Professor Kernohan who was unavailable.

## Breast Screening

Mr Graham reported that in the latest update from Dr Mairs, Chair of the Northern Area Breast Screening Co-ordinating Group, Dr Mairs had confirmed that the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety had accepted the recommendations of the Breast Screening Plan and had made available funding for the additional breast screening mobile unit. The rolling programme plan is now operational.

Mrs Montgomery said she was aware of women paying for a private assessment . Mr Graham indicated that there was a 3 and a half week wait for urgent referrals to the Symptomatic Clinic against a target of two weeks. To ease the immediate situation two Saturday morning clinics were planned for September.

### Equality Commission for Northern Ireland Public Authority Annual Progress Report 2006-2007

Members noted that the Public Authority Annual Progress Report 2006-2007, completed for the Northern Health and Social Services Board and the Council had been submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

A Disability Action Plan would also be produced by the Council for submission by 30 September 2007.

### Primary Care/NHSSC Forum

A meeting of the Primary Care/NHSSC Forum took place on 28 June 2007. Items discussed included changes to patient registration areas, out of hours services, treatment room services, evaluation of the benefits and public awareness of the new General Medical Services contract and access to NHS dentists.

### NHSSC Expenditure

Expenditure to the end of July 2007 was £57,480.

80/07 **VISITING**

### **Visit Reports**

#### **Robinson Hospital, Ballymoney – 11 June 2007**

Mr Millar and Mr Nolan visited Robinson Hospital in Ballymoney to specifically find out how the Essence of Care Programme was working. The Visiting Team was extremely impressed with the innovative ways in which staff ensured that patients regularly ate a range of nutritional foods and would recommend that a similar scheme be rolled out across the Trust.

It was noted that the absence of signage on main routes to the Hospital was deliberate as the Hospital did not want to draw people to a Hospital which did not have an Accident and Emergency facility.

## **Magherafelt Day Centre – 19 June 2007**

A purpose built Day Centre opened in April 2002 and provides a service for adults with disabilities ranging in age from 18 to 90 years. The Centre aims to maintain clients in the community by providing opportunities to maximise their skills, abilities and independence, while offering support and respite to carers. Particularly commended by Mr McClelland and Mr Millar were the parking facilities, disability access, the condition of the building and the wide range of information material. Several issues were highlighted including the need for smaller buses, manned by a driver/care assistant which are accessible to all who attend the Centre and the need for heating in a room used by those with dementia.

## **Visiting Responses**

### **Broadway Workshop, Newtownabbey**

It was noted that the Northern Health and Social Care Trust had taken on board the comments made by the visiting team regarding the poor condition of the building and had dealt with the rubbish on the adjacent site and the broken glass. Members welcomed the planned visit to the unit by Mr Donnelly, the Trust's new Director of Mental Health and Disability Services, to establish the suitability of the building and requested that he share his findings with the Council. It was noted that replacement of the building would be dealt with under Developing Better Services.

### **Inver 1 and 4, Holywell Hospital, Antrim**

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust confirmed that the refurbishment of Inver 2 continues to facilitate the move of Inver 1 patients to a better environment of smaller personal space, additional living space and access to an outside area. It was noted that the Trust had taken cognisance of the legislation regarding 'No Smoking' and was actively seeking out ways to address issues for those who live in hospital by access to outdoor protected areas for smokers. This would be achieved in Inver 2 during refurbishment and in Inver 4 when the garden is completed.

### **Wilson House, Resource Centre, Broughshane**

Members noted that the Northern Health and Social Care Trust would consider the replacement of worn carpets as resources become available.

### **Ballee Adolescent Unit, Ballymena**

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust confirmed that a Business Case for the replacement of Ballee Adolescent Unit had been submitted to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for consideration and that approval was awaited before proceeding to tender, and ultimately, construction of the new facility. The Business Case, if approved, will result in the construction of a purpose built unit for eight residents, which will meet the relevant building design standards and will address the deficiencies of the current building. The entrance will be relocated away from Hollybank Park towards the Seven Towers roundabout/end of the Old Antrim Road. The Trust was unable to confirm when building work would commence but indicated that it was a priority and would do its utmost to have the Business Case approved at the earliest opportunity.

### **September Visits**

Arrangements were made for visits to the Ballymena office of Women's Aid and The Hope Centre, Ballymena.

#### 81/07 **'BUGWATCH' REPORT**

Earlier in the year wards in Causeway and Antrim Hospitals had been visited and an infection control survey undertaken. Members noted that the 'Bugwatch' report had now been compiled and sent to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust for comment. An incident concerning control of infection, brought to the Council's attention by a member, had been raised with the Trust. Some issues in the response would be explored with the Trust during feedback on the NHSSC surveys.

#### 82/07 **JOINT COUNCIL EVENT**

A second joint Council event would be held on Thursday 25 October 2007 in the Seagoe Hotel, Portadown. Topics for discussion would include dental services, protecting life and regional out-of-hours service.

#### 83/07 **NHS DIRECT**

This item had been tabled by Mr Stevenson. Due to his unavailability to attend the meeting he had requested the item be deferred to the October Council Meeting.

84/07 **CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR NURSING AND RESIDENTIAL HOMES ON SUPPLEMENTARY CHARGES**

Mr Graham informed the meeting that the Independent Health and Care Providers had sought comment on its Draft Guidance for Nursing and Residential Homes on Supplementary Charges. It was hoped that development of such guidance would help provide clarity to home owners and managers on the application of charges for facilities and services not included in the standard contract terms. Mrs Montgomery outlined the background to the Draft Guidance and Mrs Morrison commended the document's presentation. She did, however, raise issues relating to standards and training of staff within Homes and these were addressed by Mrs Montgomery.

Members welcomed the Draft Guidance and would respond accordingly.

85/07 **NI ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY – INQUIRY INTO HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS**

In a letter from the Northern Ireland Assembly Health Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety the Council was invited to submit written evidence on the current strategic approach to tackling Healthcare Associated Infections.

Mr Graham outlined a submission he had prepared on behalf of the four Health and Social Services Councils which drew on observations mostly from the various 'Bugwatch' exercises.

Mrs Montgomery referred to the high financial costs to Homes for advice from the Trust on infection control and Mrs Morrison requested that mention also be made of University students when referring to staff within the submission.

86/07 **CORRESPONDENCE**

Members had already been circulated on two occasions with items of correspondence during the summer recess.

A further correspondence list had been circulated with the agenda.

- Mrs Adger accepted the invitation from the Northern Ireland Cancer Network to represent the Council on the Northern Ireland Regional Patient and Public Involvement Forum.
- Mr Nolan would attend the 2007 Complementary and Alternative Medicine Conference to be held on 10 October 2007.
- Mr Creighton, and in his absence either Professor Kernohan or Mr Nicholl, would represent the Council on the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Governance Committee.

Additional items of correspondence included:

- Invitation from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to nominate a representative to its User Feedback Committee – Mrs Montgomery accepted this invitation
- PA Consulting Group Report on Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Unit Cost Review Royal Group of Hospitals
- PA Consulting Group Report on Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Unit Cost Review Green Park Healthcare Trust
- Invitation from the Community Development and Health Network to Building the Community-Pharmacy Partnership Conference on 28 September 2007
- Northern Ireland Cancer Registry Newsletter Issue 13

## 87/07 **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Nursing Jobs in Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Wilson had drawn attention to a nursing student, nearing the completion of her studies, being placed on a recruitment waiting list by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. He had expressed surprise that there had been no immediate offer of employment given the much publicised shortage of qualified nurses in Northern Ireland and the need to recruit overseas nurses. At the meeting he reported that the nursing student had recently been offered a post, however, he requested that the matter be raised at the next meeting of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Mrs Montgomery suggested that the matter also be raised with the Department of

Health, Social Services and Public Safety Workforce Planning Department.

### Alpha 5

Mr Millar referred to the offer of a presentation on fundraising for Alpha 5, Ireland's first Helicopter Doctor Air Ambulance Service, and this was accepted by members.

### Ambulances

Mrs Adger felt it inappropriate for a large number of ambulances to be parked, at least twice a month, at the Ross Park Hotel, Kells. The matter would be raised with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service through the Liaison Committee.

### Ballymena Health and Care Centre

Mr Nicholl requested an update on the proposed Health and Care Centre to be built in Ballymena. This would be requested from the Northern Health and Social Services Board.

## 88/07 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held at 1.30pm on Wednesday 3 October 2007 in the Antrim Borough Council area.

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date