

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Council held at 1.30pm in the Manor House Lodge, Moneymore on Wednesday 5 March 2008.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Professor George Kernohan

<u>Members:</u>	Mrs Beth Adger	Mr Sam McClelland
	Mrs Maureen Anderson	Mrs Kate McEldowney
	Mrs Liz Johnston	Mr Tommy Nicholl
	Mr John Millar	Mr Tony Quinn
	Mrs Noreen McClelland	Mrs Kate Swain

In Attendance: Mr Noel Graham
Mrs Jacqui Erwin

14/08 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ms Armstrong, Mr Brown, Mr Creighton, Mrs I Johnston, Mrs Morrison, Mr Nolan and Mr Stevenson.

15/08 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

Professor Kernohan welcomed everyone to the meeting and members joined him in wishing the Chairman, Mr Creighton, a speedy recovery.

He referred to his attendance at a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Board and to Mr Nicholl's attendance at the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Board Meeting. Mr Nicholl informed the meeting that he had taken the opportunity to raise the condition of Ahoghill Health Centre and felt confident that progress in this regard was being made. He also reported that the Clostridium Difficile outbreak within the Trust appeared to be under control.

16/08 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2008**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

17/08 **MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 6 FEBRUARY 2008**

5/08 Clostridium Difficile (C Diff)

Mr Graham updated members on the situation in relation to the outbreak of C Diff within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area and reported that experts in infection control from across the United Kingdom had been appointed to take forward the Independent Review into the outbreak. He also shared details of the second audit report into environmental cleanliness which was carried out by consultants KPMG and showed significantly improved levels of environmental cleanliness.

Several contributory factors were highlighted. These included the hospital visiting policy, staff dress code, staff turnover and the emphasis placed on meeting targets. Mr Graham assured members that he would continue to liaise with the Trust through his membership of the Trust's Infection Control and Environmental Hygiene Committee. The subject would also be raised at the joint meeting with the Trust.

6/08 The Bridge Association, Antrim

Mrs Adger reported that she and Mr Nicholl felt that a follow-up meeting, to which they had been invited, had been very positive. She suggested that the Bridge Association premises be used for a NHSSC meeting affording members an opportunity to view activity there.

7/08 Joint NHSSC/NHSSB Meeting – 8 February 2008

Members welcomed the opportunity to exchange views with the Board. Mrs Anderson, however, felt that Board plans were often idealistic and sometimes misleading since finance did not always match their aspirations resulting in the public feeling betrayed. She specifically highlighted the situation in the Larne area where people are furious that beds are being reduced at Inver House and the lack of progress on the development of a Health and Care Centre. The Chief Officer was asked to seek an update from the Northern Health and Social Services Board. Other members, however, commented upon the importance for the Board to plan in advance, to cost proposals and to bid for funding and Mr Nicholl commended the Board's responsible approach in this regard.

8/08 Joint Council Event – 27 February 2008

Members commented positively on the event which had provided an opportunity to hear about work currently being undertaken by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in working towards a Patient Client Council and to further explore its structure

and function. Mr Graham indicated that feedback on the day was being collated by the Western Health and Social Services Council and would be shared with those present.

A further joint Council event was planned for 1 May 2008 when Chief Officers would feedback to members and Councils would consider if a common approach could be taken before the close of the consultation.

18/08 **CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

Review of Public Administration

Mr Graham referred to the Health Minister's proposals to transform health and social care in Northern Ireland and the need for the Council to consider them in greater detail. He explained that the joint Council event had only been the start of the consultation process in terms of responding and that the subject would also be raised with the Northern Health and Social Services Board, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, community groups and political parties. Mr McClelland suggested that members also contribute to discussions with political parties. Members agreed that an hour would be set aside at the start of the April Council for further discussion.

Presentation to Health Committee

Mr Graham reported that the presentation which he and Ms Reilly, Chief Officer of the Western Health and Social Services Council, had been invited to make to the Health Committee in relation to suicide and self harm had been postponed until 13 March 2008.

Orthopaedic ICATS Clinics Survey

Mr Graham informed members that Councils were working with the Health and Social Services Boards and the Health and Social Care Trusts to find out what patients thought about their recent visit to their local Orthopaedic ICATS clinic for assessment or treatment.

The survey, co-ordinated by the Northern Health and Social Services Board, will assist the Trusts monitor the quality of service provided and help improve ICATS for other patients.

Questionnaires would be issued to a sample of around 4000 people. These would be returned to the NHSSC who would collect them on behalf of the other Councils, the Boards and Trusts. The report would be shared with Councils and feedback published on Board and Council websites. Mrs McClelland felt that since many of the participants are likely to be elderly they may miss the feedback

if it is web based only and asked for this to be reviewed. Mr McClelland highlighted the issues of transport and timing of appointments for patients attending such appointments.

Membership

Mr Graham reported that the Health Minister had met with the Commissioner for Public Appointments in relation to membership beyond 31 March 2008 and a submission had been made by the Permanent Secretary. If a favourable response was received back then any extension to appointments would have to be made by the Minister and individuals notified.

19/08 **VISITING**

March/April Visits

Arrangements were made for visits to Holywood Arches Health Centre, Belfast and Cherry Lodge Shortbreaks Unit, Randalstown.

It was suggested that Magherafelt Day Centre and Barn Court Children's Home, Carrickfergus be included in future visiting programmes.

Professor Kernohan suggested increasing the number of visits per month, however, Mr Graham felt service specific presentations to all members may be more beneficial.

20/08 **JOINT NHSSC/NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST MEETING**

Members would meet Northern Health and Social Care Trust Board members in April 2008. Suggested agenda items included child and maternal deaths at Antrim Hospital, Clostridium Difficile, mental health, rehabilitation of patients from Muckamore Abbey Hospital, efficiency savings, respite care and staff areas of responsibility.

21/08 **DHSSPS CONSULTATION – PROPOSALS FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE REFORM**

On 18 February 2008 the Health Minister launched a full public consultation on his proposals to reform health and social care in Northern Ireland. The main elements of the proposals are a streamlined Regional Health and Social Care Board, dynamic Local Commissioning Groups, a smaller Department, the establishment of a common services organisation, a new Regional Public Health Agency, action to reinforce the independence of Health and Social

Services Councils and increased democratisation through local government representation on key bodies and improved partnership working. As already outlined in the Chief Officer's report the proposals will be considered in greater detail by the Council and discussed with a range of bodies.

22/08 **DHSSPS CONSULTATION – GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PRODUCTION OF HOSPITAL VISITING POLICIES**

This document describes the principles and guidance relating to visiting in hospital wards and departments and states that all Trusts are required to ensure that the principles outlined are reflected in their local visiting policies. Members welcomed the Guiding Principles in light of the emphasis on the control of infection. Mrs McClelland stressed the need for visiting times to be clearly defined and Mr McClelland called for visitors to be provided with visiting times while Mr Quinn voiced scepticism about full implementation of the policy by staff.

23/08 **CONSULTATION ON DRAFT NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES ESTATES STRATEGY FOR INVESTMENT PRIORITISATION 2004/2010**

Members noted the content of the Northern Health and Social Services Board's Strategy for Investment in General Medical Services Premises. The Board annually invests in practices owned or rented by GPs. The strategy document outlines the current state of play with practice premises and identifies the key drivers for change. It also identifies the funding situation for practice premises developments. Together these help identify key priorities for future practice premises schemes should the necessary funding be available to the Board. It is recognised that some practices require significant investment, however, the Council would be particularly interested to find out about the implications for facilities such as Health and Care Centres should funding become available. The Strategy would be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Primary Care/NHSSC Forum.

24/08 **REPORTS:**

Regional Out of Hours Workshops – 13 and 28 February 2008

Mr Millar reported on his attendance at the regional out of hours workshops where there had been an opportunity to consider the model of service, standards, service pressures, performance management, staff utilisation and innovative options.

Launch of Cancer Services Directory for Patients, Carers, Families and Friends – 26 February 2008

Mrs Adger attended the launch and commended the production of the cancer services directory. The pocket size directory aims to highlight the range of services available to individuals affected by cancer as well as to point them to the appropriate services when they are most needed. Several copies would be issued to the Council.

General Medical Services Information System (GMSIS) Stakeholder Workshop – 26 February 2008

Mrs Swain and Mr Millar attended the workshop, the purpose of which was to share details of the proposed new information system and to discuss the issues around access to patient information. The GMSIS project seeks to collect anonymised information from GP computer systems and use it to provide better understanding of the health of the population here. This information will then be used to assist in the planning and delivery of health services. The project sounded good in theory, however, Mrs Swain and Mr Millar felt that funding may be an issue and while they welcomed the opportunity to break into discussion groups they felt it inappropriate that GPs were all together in one group.

NHSSB Scheduled Care Consensus Event – 29 February 2008

The purpose of the Scheduled Care Consensus Event was to discuss, in a multi-stakeholder forum, the challenges facing the commissioning of elective services for 2008/2009 and to agree priority actions to improve access times. Mrs Adger and Mr Nicholl attended the event and had the opportunity to join with others to examine changes that could be made to services to improve efficiency and access, to consider how to develop best practice and how to increase support for healthcare professionals. The planned outcome was an agreed action plan for 2008/2009 that could form part of the Northern Board's response to the Health and Wellbeing Investment Plan.

25/08 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The correspondence list had been circulated with the agenda.

Mrs Adger, Mr Millar and Mr Nicholl expressed an interest in membership of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Patient Experience Steering Group. Mr Graham would write to the Trust to ask if more than one representative could be nominated.

Members noted the Institute of Public Health in Northern Ireland Evaluation of Healthy Living Centres in Northern Ireland Summary and wondered why there were no such Centres in the Northern Board area. The Chief Officer would follow this up with the Board.

26/08 **OTHER BUSINESS**

Dental Surgery

Mrs Adger informed members that a planning application submitted by Mr Kennedy for a dental surgery off the Lisnevenagh Road had been approved. Council hoped this would increase access to NHS dentistry.

27/08 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Council Meeting would be held on Wednesday 2 April 2008 in the Antrim Borough Council area.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm.

Chairman

Secretary

Date