

**THE MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING DISABILITY REVIEW
(NORTHERN IRELAND)**

**EIGHTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, TUESDAY 26th AUGUST 2003
IN THE LAGAN VALLEY ISLAND CENTRE, LISBURN**

Present:	Professor David Bamford (Chair)	Mr Brian Dornan
	Professor Roy McClelland	Dr John Owens
	Mrs Martha McClelland	Master Brian Hall
	Mr Colin Beck	Dr Fred Browne
	Miss Maureen Dodd	Mrs Mary O'Boyle
	Dr Paschal McKeown	Ms Siobhan Bogues
	Dr Oliver Shanks	Mrs Moira Davren
	Ms Marie Crossin	Mr Mark Timoney
	Rev Trevor Williams	Mrs Maureen McCartney
	Miss Joanne McDonald	Mr Michael Kelly
	Mr Clive Gowdy	Miss Katie Doran

Apologies:	Professor Tony McGleenan	Ms Eileen Sherrard
	Mr Brendan Mullen	Dr Diana Patterson
	Dr Raman Kapur	Professor Alan Ferguson
	Dr Walter Boyd	Mr Patrick Convery
	Mr Winston McCartney	Det S/tend Andrew Bailey
	Mr Martin Daly	Mr Leslie Frew
	Dr John Hunter	Professor Geoff Shepherd
		Mr Roy Keenan
		Ms Vikki Greenwood

Welcome and Introductions

1. Professor McClelland chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone to this eighth meeting of the Steering Committee. He extended the Committee's congratulations to Maureen Dodd and Moira Davren on their recent engagements. He also welcomed Mr Clive Gowdy, Permanent Secretary, DHSSPS, and thanked him for his interest and the Departmental support for the Review.

Workforce Issues in Mental Health and Learning Disability

2. Mr David Bingham, Director of Human Resources, DHSSPS, was welcomed and asked to give his presentation to the Committee on the Department's work on Human Resources. By way of background, he pointed out that there are currently 60,000 people working in health and personal social services in Northern Ireland. This represents around 1 in 9 of the working population. There are a number of professional groups which are regulated i.e. they require professional qualifications and are required to maintain registration. Shortage of staff is a large problem which is being addressed in a number of ways, including bringing in staff from other countries. Requirements such as Working Time Directive and family friendly employment put more pressure on maintaining adequate staffing levels. There is difficulty in retaining

local graduates. Early retirement is another factor to be taken into account. Present figures show 40% retire early due to occupationally related ill health.

3. A comprehensive Review of Workforce Planning is under way. This exercise is to project staffing needs and take appropriate action. The DHSSPS commissions training in co-operation with the 2 local universities. The Review is drawing out a lot of issues and involves all the medical professions, training institutions, Trade Unions and Departmental representatives. To date this work has been done in relation to individual staff groupings, such as nurses, social workers, etc. The Department has now decided to embark on a similar exercise on a programme of care basis and, bearing in mind the current review, has decided to start with mental health. Mr Bingham indicated that Professors Bamford and McClelland had already made representations to him to include learning disability and undertook to seek Departmental endorsement for this.
4. Professor McClelland thanked him for his presentation. He was encouraged that the Review is affecting Departmental thinking. Members then asked questions covering areas such as non-regulated staff, support workers and the impact on staffing of the voluntary and private sector. It was agreed that the review would need to work closely with the Department on the proposed Departmental exercise, but it was recognised that the review Committee would have to reserve the right to make other recommendations relating to workforce as they saw fit.

Note of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising

5. The note was agreed without change.
6. Maureen Dodd and Eileen Sherrard informed members that work was progressing and that they were meeting on Thursday 11th September to discuss their paper on Autistic Spectrum Disorder. They intend to have it finalised and available for comment within 7 days of their meeting.
7. Brian Dornan's letter to Professor Bamford dated 18th August regarding the establishment of a Needs and Resources Working Committee was tabled. Professor McClelland advised that he and Brian Dornan had met to discuss the remit, priorities and proposed membership. The proposed membership has a regional coverage plus Departmental involvement. Members were advised that it was proving difficult to obtain a DHSSPS economist due to their current heavy workload. Mark Timoney advised that he had agreed to provide pharmaceutical advice to the Committee as and when required. Members agreed that user/carer representation would be required in due course. A decision on inviting a voluntary sector representative has still to be made.

Update on the Review (Paper SC 31/03)

8. Professor Bamford reported that he and Professor McClelland had an interesting meeting with Dr Joe Hendron, SDLP, former Chairperson of the Assembly Health, Social Services and Public Safety Committee.
9. Professor Bamford had attended a seminar by Peter Bicknall, South Australia's Social Exclusion Board, and advised that there was no fresh thinking to report.

10. A meeting has been held with Fergal Bradley, DHSSPS, who is leading on work to establish a HPSS Regulation and Improvement Authority. Early interface with this group is important and a further meeting will be held.
11. Professor Bamford reported that he is still seeking a convenor for the Mental Health Issues in Old Age Working Committee. This is proving difficult but he hopes to have a proposal to put before the next meeting of the Committee.
12. A summary report on Professor Bamford's visit to Sweden was tabled. He advised members that Dr Kent Ericsson and his wife would be visiting Belfast on 9th/10th September and suggested that some opportunity should be sought for review members to hear of their work while they are here. They are willing to make a presentation on community-based services in Stockholm. Professor Bamford has already passed documentation to Siobhan Bogues' group. He also intends to talk to Professor Alan Ferguson and Dr Graeme McDonald regarding issues of interest to their groups.

Reports from Working Committees

13. The Convenors of the four current Working Committees gave an update on their work to date:

- (i) **Learning Disability** – Siobhan Bogues

A progress report was tabled which detailed the activities of the Working Committee. 6 task groups have been established although 2 have still to arrange their first meetings. A joint seminar is being arranged for 15th October with the Promoting Social Inclusion group.

- (ii) **Legal Issues** – Master Brian Hall

Master Hall advised that the Mental Incapacity Bill for England and Wales has been published. The Office of Law Reform is keen to proceed with equivalent Northern Ireland incapacity measures. Master Hall reminded members of the Discussion Forum on Mental Incapacity being held on Friday 19th September. Representatives from England, Scotland, Wales, N Ireland and the Republic of Ireland would be attending.

- (iii) **Adult Mental Health** – Professor Roy McClelland

An Update Report was tabled advising that meetings were ongoing and a series of draft documents were being considered. Professor McClelland explained that the issue of grading of evidence had arisen and suggested that the review needed to agree a uniform approach to this. Members discussed the position over anecdotal and qualitative evidence and how they should be weighted. It was agreed that this was something that the Convenors group should look at and bring back to the Steering Committee. The next Working Committee meeting will be held on 29th September with a draft framework ready by late October.

- (iv) **Social Justice and Citizenship** – Martha McClelland

Martha McClelland reported that she is currently involved in arranging a series of user meetings across Northern Ireland. Local groups are being

contacted and invited to become involved. There is a lack of infrastructure in this area, and members were asked to help facilitate where possible. Members agreed that the involvement of users/carers is critical, but they need to be supported to help take part in the various groups. Lady Eames' Human Rights and Equality Sub Group are working through issues on mental health legislation that may have human rights implications. Tara Caul, Children's Law Centre, has presented a paper on specific issues concerning children and young people. Leslie Frew's Promoting Social Inclusion Sub Group are preparing papers on policies and procedures in each Government Department which affect the social inclusion of people with a mental health problem or a learning disability. These papers will be shared with the Learning Disability Working Committee in preparation for a joint discussion forum planned for 15 October.

Involvement of Users and Carers (Paper SC 32/03)

14. Professor McClelland asked Siobhan Bagues to introduce Paper SC 32/03. She explained that Appendix One gives details of the Carers Information Session held on 1st July. There was a large interest and over 40 carers attended, while a further 20 indicated an interest in being involved. A User Advisory Group also met on 19th August. Recommendations arising from the meetings include producing material in an accessible format, the establishment of a Freephone line to allow people's views to be recorded and the need for media activity to promote the Review. It was agreed that a communications strategy needs to be addressed and this will be looked at by the next Convenors meeting. In preparation for that discussion, the Support Team will look at the mechanics of establishing a Freephone service.

Strategic Phasing of Review's Recommendations (Paper SC 33/03)

15. Professor McClelland advised members that Paper SC 33/03 reports on comments on the initial proposals, which reflected the discussion at the recent meetings with the Minister and the Departmental Board. The 3 phase approach has been endorsed and it was agreed that this should be developed in a paper to be drafted for Minister.

Dates of next meeting

16. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30th September at 10.00am in the Magherabuoy House Hotel, Portrush.

Any Other Business

- 17 (i) Members were reminded of the Hillsborough reception on 16th September.

(ii) The Chairman thanked Mr Gowdy for attending. In reply, Mr Gowdy thanked members for their invitation. He was encouraged by what he had heard and felt the Review was in good hands. It is a fundamental and long reaching Review. It should, however, reach conclusions as soon as possible, bearing in mind that the service is keen to see the outcome of the Review.

Convenors' meeting

18. This was arranged for Monday, 15th September at 2.30pm.