

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES  
AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

**DEPARTMENTAL BOARD**

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 25 April, in Room C3.18, Castle Buildings at 11:30.

Present:      Andrew McCormick (Chair)      Don Hill  
                 Linda Brown                                  Norman Morrow  
                 Paul Martin                                      Donncha O'Carolan  
                 Danny McCaughan                              Michael McBride  
                 John Cole  
                 Helen Roulston  
                 Martin Bradley

In attendance: Jonathan Bill and Anne Adair

**1.0 Apologies and Opening Remarks**

1.1 Apologies were received from Miriam McCarthy and Julie Thompson.

**2.0 Minutes of the previous meeting (DB/30/2008)**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2008 were agreed and approved for publication on the Department's internet site.

**3.0 Chairman's Business**

3.1 Andrew McCormick noted that an update report from the Modernisation and Improvement Programme Board (MIPB) had not been provided to the Departmental Board.

***Action Point: Secretariat to liaise with MIPB Secretariat to obtain monthly reports.***

- 3.2 Andrew advised that the RPA consultation is proceeding and that the Minister has continued to invest a lot of time in them. The deadline for completion of the consultation process is 12 May.
- 3.3 The twelve workstreams are progressing. SROs have been appointed for each and teams, including members from a range of bodies, are being put together.
- 3.4 Andrew advised that the Minister is currently devising a communications strategy for the summer. He intends to bring together efficiencies alongside capital and service developments and therefore wants clarification on capital. John Cole and Jim Livingstone are currently developing proposals.
- 3.5 John Cole advised that the gas leak at RVH site is natural gas and is significant. All construction work has stopped and the HSE have carried out a risk assessment but there has been no need to adopt emergency plans. Specialists, including geologists, are on site. Danny McCaughan asked what the cost implications would be. John advised that it was a multi-million pound project but it will not be known until next week how or when work can progress.
- 3.6 Michael McBride advised that there are now seventeen cases relating to the e.Coli 0157 outbreak. A link between cases has been established and all are well. The EHSSB are continuing to work closely with DE, HSE and Environmental Health.
- 3.7 Michael also advised that the C.difficile outbreak in the Northern Trust Is continuing so a review into the outbreak has not yet commenced.

- 4.0 Draft Cardiovascular Health and Well-being Framework – Dr Maura Briscoe/Mrs Veronica Gillen (DB/33/2008)**
- 5.0 HSC Complaints Procedures – Dr Maura Briscoe/Ms Paula McGeown (DB/34/2008)**
- 6.0 NI Arrangements for assessing and applying NICE Guidance and Scottish Medicines Consortium Evidence on New Drugs – Dr Maura Briscoe/Mrs Karen Campbell (DB/35/2008)**
- 7.0 Controlled Drugs: Role of Accountable Officers – Norman Morrow (DB/37/2008)**
- 7.1 Norman presented the paper on improving governance in Controlled Drugs. The recommendations build on current systems and will ensure a more robust system of controls for Controlled Drugs.
- 7.2 Members agreed that this should proceed.
- 8.0 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 – Paul Martin (DB/38/2008)**
- 8.1 Item deferred until June meeting.
- 9.0 Top Priorities Report – Dean Sullivan/Michael Bloomfield**
- 9.1 Andrew welcomed Dean Sullivan and Michael Bloomfield to the meeting.
- 9.2 Danny raised a query in connection with ‘Departmental Board WP Paper – PfA 2007-08 Supplementary obligations and targets progress report (DB/07/08(WP))’, asking for comment on the numbers of appropriate staff who had received training in infection prevention and

control. Dean advised that numbers of trained staff had improved and that up-to-date figures would be circulated to board members.

9.3 Michael Bloomfield presented the Top Priorities report, stating that performance overall was strong:

- The number of outpatients waiting more than 13 weeks has reduced from 22215 in April 2007 to 55 in March 2008;
- The number of patients waiting more than 13 weeks for a diagnostic test has reduced from 7649 to zero;
- The number of inpatients/ daycases waiting more than 21 weeks has reduced from 1982 to 56;
- The percentage patients treated and discharged or admitted within 4 hours in A&E has increased from 81% in April 2007 to 92% in March 2008. The Minister has highlighted this as a particular success story as there has been no additional funding - significant improvements have been made largely as a result of the introduction of new practices;
- The proportion of fracture patients receiving inpatient treatment within 48 hours has increased from 51% in April 2007 to 74% in March 2008;
- Ambulance response within 8 minutes to Cat A calls has increased from 55% in April 2007 to 68% in March 2008;
- The number of foster carers has increased by 225, exceeding the target of 175;
- Performance against the cancer care and elderly care targets will be available in the next two months.

9.4 Dean acknowledged the vital role played by the SDU under the leadership of Hugh Mullen in delivering this improved performance. Dean stated that he is confident that the new level of performance could be sustained and further improved in the next year.

- 9.5 Andrew emphasised the need to shift the agenda to safety and quality. A series of Trust accountability meetings have been planned where it will be emphasised that the Department's expectation of Trusts will be on safety and quality, access and financial balance.

Andrew thanked Michael for attending.

**10.0 Assurance to the Departmental Accounting Officer from Arm's Length Bodies – Dean Sullivan and John Allen (DB/41/2008)**

- 10.1 Andrew welcomed John to the meeting.

- 10.2 Dean presented the paper on Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs), concluding that existing arrangements are fit for purpose but recommending strengthening of procedures in some areas.

- 10.3 Members welcomed the paper.

***Action Point: Dean to draft letter to ALBs on Andrew's behalf***

- 10.4 Re 'Departmental Board WP Paper DHSSPS Corporate Risk Register 2007-08 (DB/09/08(WP))', Helen welcomed the conclusion of this version of the Risk Register and asked what the next steps would be. Dean advised that the draft Corporate Business Plan would be available soon and confirmed that this would lead to a review of the Risk Register in line with new Corporate Objectives for the Department. Helen welcomed this noting that it in turn it would allow the drawing up of a new Internal Audit plan.

Andrew thanked Dean and John for attending.

**11.0 Publicly Funded Fertility Services – David Galloway and Margaret Rose McNaughton (DB/36/2008)**

## **12.0 Media Analysis - Clare Baxter (DB/39/2008)**

12.1 Andrew welcomed Clare to the meeting.

12.2 Clare advised that:

- Further coverage of the O'Neill case is expected following the inquest later in the year;
- The C.difficile outbreak is continuing and a review will take place following the outbreak;
- The major positive story came out of the reduction in waiting times;
- A twelve week publicity drive is currently being prepared.

Andrew thanked Clare for attending.

## **13.0 AOB**

13.1 Andrew advised that the Senior Finance Director post had been advertised as Don will retire in September.

13.2 Two cases where retrospective approval for consultancy has been sought have not been given by DFP as procedures have not been followed. These should be resolved before the next Board meeting.

## **14.0 Business for Next Meeting**

14.1 The secretariat to liaise with officials responsible for scheduled items and finalise the agenda with Andrew prior to the next meeting of the Departmental Board to be held on Friday 30 May.

## FOI Statement

The following redaction has been applied to the record above:

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Redaction/Exemption Applied</b>
Item 4 – Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing framework	S35 – Formulation of government policy
Item 5 – HSC Complaints	S35 – Formulation of government policy
Item 6 – NICE Guidance	S35 – Formulation of government policy
Item 11 – Publicly Funded Fertility Services	S35 – Formulation of government policy