

AMENDED 14TH FEBRUARY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH FUNCTIONS
PROJECT TEAM
3rd FEBRUARY 2006
10.30 – 13.30
C3.18, CASTLE BUILDINGS

Attendees

Dr E Mitchell (Chairperson)
Dr B Smyth
Dr A M Telford
Mr M Donaldson
Dr B Gaffney
Ms E Doherty
Mrs A McLernon
Dr R Smithson
Mr W Francey
Dr J Little

In Attendance

Mr D Martin
Mrs D Kenny
Dr C Harper
Dr N Chada
Mr N McMahon
Mrs P Osborne
Mrs S Tallentire
Mrs J Todorov (Secretariat)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Dr Mitchell welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Review of Public Health Functions Project Team. Following introductions, Dr Mitchell thanked everyone for agreeing to be members of the Team. She advised that members were chosen for their knowledge and expertise in Public Health and that the goal of the Project Team should be to strengthen the Public Health Function within the revised structures and arrangements created as a result of the Review of Public Administration (RPA).

2. Review of Public Health Functions: Implementation sub-group reports

Dr Chada gave a short presentation summarising the key points emerging from the Review of Public Health Implementation sub-group reports. Dr Chada presented the proposals made by each of the sub-groups and highlighted the

main points made in each report. He emphasised the importance of the reports informing the current process and it was suggested that the sub-group members could play a role within the stakeholder engagement process.

It was agreed that the interim reports should be made available on the Department's website. Dr Little stated that the report which had been circulated on workforce planning was not in its final format and suggested that it would be important to ensure that the final version of this report was obtained before placing it on the website.

ACTION POINT: JACQUI TODOROV TO LIAISE WITH DR LITTLE TO OBTAIN THE FINAL VERSION OF REPORT ON WORKFORCE PLANNING.

DAMIEN MARTIN TO MAKE INTERIM REPORTS AVAILABLE VIA DEPARTMENTAL WEB-SITE.

3. Reform of the Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS) Project

Mrs Heather Robinson, Reform Unit, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, tabled a paper which outlined the proposals/timeframe for the reform of the HPSS. She also provided members with some background information on the Reconfiguration Programme Board, which has been established to manage the reform programme, and on the programme structure. In addition, Mrs Robinson provided members with an overview, of how the reform of the HPSS would change the way in which services are developed, organised and delivered.

Members of the Project Team highlighted the following issues:

- The potential for the shadowing arrangements for the Health and Social Services (HSS) Trusts and LCGs prior to their go-live date, to create confusion.
- During the transition phase it will be important to ensure that organisations are adequately prepared to handle a communicable disease outbreak or emergency incident.
- The degree of discretion that might be available to the Chief Executives of new organisations and the impact that this might have on the implementation of robust systems for public health.
- The recommendations from the Project Team should clearly define both public health roles and responsibilities and accountability systems.

- Effective communication between each Project Team will be vital. The Public Health Functions Project will need to inform the work of a number of the other Project Teams and cross membership of Project Teams could be beneficial.

It was agreed that a copy of the consultation on regulations to establish the new HSS Trusts should be circulated to Project Team members for consideration.

ACTION POINT: DAMIEN MARTIN TO CIRCULATE THE REGULATIONS TO PROJECT TEAM MEMEBRS

Mrs Robinson informed members that a web-site was currently being developed by the Programme Board and this will provide information on all the Reform Projects. Information on the Public Health Project Team could then link to this site.

Mrs Robinson indicated that a meeting would be held shortly involving members of the Programme Board and the Project Chairs and Managers.

4. Discussion of Draft Project Initiation Document (PID) PAPER 1/06

Following discussion, amendments to the PID were suggested to:

- clarify the role of the Project Team in both making and supporting the implementation of its recommendations;
- ensure that the PID reflects exactly the wording of the Ministerial statement on the RPA in relation to the Health Promotion Agency;
- make it clear that the Local Commissioning Groups (LCGs) are local offices of the Strategic Health and Social Services Authority (SHSSA);
- more clearly recognise HSS Trusts as structures that are part of the reform;
- reflect the need for action to maintain the quality of public health advice and services during the transition period;
- reflect the importance of workforce training and development;
- reflect concerns, within the preliminary risk register, that the recommendations of the Project Team might not be implemented, even if accepted by the Programme Board.

In addition, a number of other specific amendments were suggested and it was agreed that the PID would be revised to take account of these suggestions before being forwarded to the Programme Board.

Members of the Project Team also highlighted the need to clarify how new HPSS structures would interface with local government and to define the boundaries of the Project.

ACTION POINT: DAMIEN MARTIN TO AMEND PID AND FORWARD TO PROGRAMME BOARD

5. **Ways of Working** **PAPER 2/06**

- **Expectation of Project Team Members**
Members discussed the paper and agreed that it was very helpful. It was suggested that a similar paper should be prepared for the Project Support Group.

ACTION POINT: DAMIEN MARTIN TO DEVELOP GUIDANCE ON THE ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE SUPPORT GROUP

- **Process** **PAPER 2(i)/06**
Dr Harper tabled a paper outlining the proposed process to develop a new model for Public Health. Members were asked to consider the paper and provide comments.
- **Engagement and Communication** **PAPER 2(ii)/06**
Damien Martin spoke to the tabled paper on engagement and communication. It was agreed that the Public Health Project Team would need to develop its own plans for communicating and engaging with key stakeholders. Members were asked to consider their role in communicating with stakeholders and also when and how the project should seek more direct engagement with stakeholders.
- **Quality Assurance**
Project Team members were asked to put forward suggestions in relation to person(s) who could assist in quality assuring the proposals developed by the Project Team.

ACTION POINTS: MEMBERS TO CONSIDER AND COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED MODEL, ENGAGEMENT WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS, AND ON SYSTEMS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

6. **Dates of Future Meetings**

Dr Mitchell thanked everyone for attending and asked that they note the dates of future meetings:

- 10:00 am 14 February 2006, Stormont Hotel
- 10:00 am 21 February 2006, Dunadry Inn
- 10:00 am 28 February 2006, Dunadry Inn