



(d) Review of Good Medical Practice Tenders – GMC/EHSSC in McKelvey House on 02 July 2007

The Council along with the GMC had sought to appoint a consultant to provide a patient perspective GMC's guide to Good Medical Practice. The tender was not awarded, as the key requirements were not met. The Chief Officer and staff were looking at an alternative proposal involving general practice Patient Participation Groups.

(e) Meeting with Dr George O Neill, Chair of Belfast Local Commissioning Group, at The Square, Dublin Road, Belfast on 17 July 2007

Mr Richard Dixon, Chief Officer and the Chair met the Belfast Local Commissioning Group Chair, Dr George O'Neill. This was an initial meeting with the aim of establishing regular contact with Eastern LCG Chairs.

(f) Meeting with Minister for Health in Stormont Hotel on 06 August 2007

The aim of the meeting was to inform Minister Michael McGimpsey of the current role of health and social services councils and to outline the Councils' views on the Patient Client Council (PCC). Councils expressed concern regarding slippage in the timescale for establishment of the new PCC. The Minister is reviewing the decision of the Review of Public Administration (RPA) on a new HSC Authority and the establishment of a PCC.

It was emphasised the four Councils are currently in a difficult situation as there is no definite timescale for their abolition. The Minister was unable to give any clarity on this.

The Chief Officer expressed concern to Members at the lack of urgency in resolving the uncertainty of timescales for establishment of the Health and Social Care Authority. He emphasised that the delay in reforms is creating a vacuum for patients whereby there is a lack of involvement in priorities and planning. Also, the delay in establishing the HSC Authority raised concerns over appropriate accountability for the Trusts.

(g) EHSSB Meeting in Champion House on 09 August 2007

The Chair gave a report on the August Board meeting of the EHSSB. It was also noted that the September meeting discussed the provision of health care for prisoners. This meeting was attended by the Chief Officer. From 1 October 2007, key elements of responsibility for the commissioning and provision of prison healthcare issues would be transferred to the EHSSB and relevant Trusts. The change in responsibility for the provision of health care for prisoners was noted.

(j) South Eastern HSS Trust Board Meeting in The Great Hall, Downshire Hospital on 15 August 2007

The Chair noted the Mental Health Report included in the South Eastern HSS Trust Board papers. The Chair highlighted its comprehensiveness in outlining of clinical

risk management and assessment, the importance of note taking and privacy of correspondence and which also included a glossary for lay people.

(k) Meeting with Castlereagh Borough Council on 23 August 2007

The Chair and Chief Officer gave a presentation at this meeting on the current and changing role of the EHSSC and what the future holds. The Chief Officer informed Council that members of Castlereagh Borough Council perceived Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) to be merely consultation and focused on the public's cynicism. However, his presentation sought to explain that PPI is significantly more than consultation.

(l) EHSSB SMT Meeting on 29 August 2007

Discussion focused on the future development of service framework programmes. Presently the following regional priorities have been identified: cardiovascular, health and wellbeing, respiratory health and wellbeing, cancer prevention, treatment and care, and mental health. Networks are continuing to develop well and the EHSSC are involved in the cardiovascular group.

The Chief Medical Officer is seeking feedback on the priorities for the next tranche of frameworks for a 17 October 2007 meeting. Trusts have therefore been asked to make submissions on possible priorities. The following priorities were highlighted in discussion; addiction; children; care for the elderly; palliative care; training; elective surgery; pharmaceutical provision and primary care provision.

(m) Visit to Muckamore Abbey Hospital, Antrim on 30 August 2007

Members were provided with a copy of the visit report. The Chair reported the visit as an enlightening, but emotionally draining day led by a stimulating lucid panel. Members on the visit heard about the difficulties of recruitment and retention of staff and resourcing concerns. Dr Bernie Stuart, Director of Disability Policy at the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety outlined various challenges and proposed actions for Learning Disability, which were dependent on financial restrictions. An important element of the visit was meeting the Patient Forum who clearly expressed their issues of concern. Council Members present at the visit confirmed they would respond to the key themes and present these arguments to the decision makers and senior management within Health and Social Care. It was noted that the Chief Officer had already written to the Minister requesting a meeting on Muckamore Abbey and a similar letter would be sent to the Assembly Health Committee. It was noted further, that the Chief Officer would represent the four Councils on the Resettlement Board – the Departmental Committee charged with overseeing the implementation of Ministerial targets.

(n) Interviews for General Practice Appraisers at NIMDTA, Beechill House, Belfast on 06 September 2007 and Central Board of Management at NIMDTA, Beechill House, Belfast on 13 September 2007

Mrs Rosemary McGrotty and the Chair were members of the interview panel which proved to be a successful process. Council member Patricia McGrogan has also

contributed to the panel. The GP Appraisers Annual Report is available for Members on request.

It was noted that NIMDTA expressed concern about the current process of employment under RPA which places restrictions on recruitment of administration and clerical staff to support doctors and other clinical staff. The NIMDTA Human Resources Manager addressed the Board of Management on this issue.

(o) Acknowledgement of 15 years of work in Northern Ireland by Meningitis Research Foundation in The Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Belfast on 18 September 2007

The host was the Reverend Robert Coulter and attended by the Minister for Health, Michael McGimpsey. The Minister stated his concern on the issue and the valuable contribution of the Meningitis Research Foundation.

(p) South Eastern HSS Trust Board Meeting in Bangor on 19 September 2007

This was the First Annual General Meeting and the fifth monthly Meeting of the South Eastern HSS Trust Board. Issues discussed at the meeting included:

- The Performance Management Framework, proposing a user centred approach.
- Trolley wait reporting. Waits will be reported using the Red, Amber, Green colour coded system.
- Discharge targets and compromised care.
- The specific issue of adolescents with Mental Health problems and target delivery.

Mr Graham thanked the Chair for her commitment and energy. He passed comment on the slowness of the decisions being taken to advance the Patient Client Council. He expressed concern that health and social services councils are marginalised since the Non-Executive Directors of Trusts and Local Commissioning Groups have already been appointed. Despite some Council Members extending their membership, some monthly meetings are awaiting a quorum due to Members' disinterest, feeling of disengagement and lack of involvement with new structures on behalf of the public.

The Chair acknowledged Mr Graham's comments. There are several reasons for the delay in moving forward with the Patient Client Council:

- Trusts did not need primary legislation unlike the HSCA and the PCC
- NI devolution has further delayed the process due to the new Local Assembly minister wishing to review the RPA decisions regarding the Health and Social Care Authority.
- The invitation by the Permanent Secretary for a HSSC Chair to sit on the high level Reform and Modernisation Project Board – charged with implementing the remaining RPA decisions on Health and Social Care – was taken as an example of recognition of the Councils' continuing role in current structures and the importance of Patient and Public Involvement in key processes.

Mr Graham proposed that a letter be sent to the Minister, including an appendix of individual signatures of EHSS Council Members, highlighting their current concerns and asking assurance on timescales, role and function of the PCC, future lay and public representative involvement and the support for the continuing role of Council members between now and dissolution.

Mr Graham suggested that elected representatives on the EHSSC should be formally lobbied and the letter should be copied to Mrs Iris Robinson, Chair of the Assembly Health Committee and the Health Spokesperson in each of the political parties.

Mr Meredith suggested that Council Members should lobby their own MLAs. Mr Graham agreed that Members could do this individually, but stated that it would be preferable to do this collectively as a collegiate body of Council Members.

The Chief Officer concurred that Mr Graham's concern is widely shared throughout health and social care staff including Executives.

The Chief Officer stated that the EHSSC are lobbying constantly on these matters.

Cllr Leslie suggested that the Chief Officer, Chair and Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager compile a letter to the Minister, setting out concerns that the Trusts are six months ahead of PCC schedule to date, and the Chief Executive Designate of Health and Social Care Authority was appointed one year ago. The letter should seek an urgent response to the following questions:

- When is the debate on legislation to take place or take forward?
- When is it therefore hoped the PCC will be established?
- What will be the make-up of the PCC?
- How will PCC Members be appointed?

Cllr Leslie further suggested that the letter be forwarded to all MPs.

The Chair agreed that the process should be to issue a draft letter to members for comment.

Mr Graham emphasised that Council's frustration should be expressed in the letter by individual signatories, not just the Chair.

The Chief Officer agreed that this would ensure the whole membership of the EHSS Council is visible to the Minister regarding a shared concern.

#### **74/07 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 21 June 2007 were agreed as an accurate record, signed by the Chair and witnessed by the Chief Officer.

#### **75/07 MATTERS ARISING**

##### **(a) Minute 64/07 (a) – General Surgery Network Board**

The Chief Officer informed members that a follow-up meeting had been organised, but had to be cancelled and was not rescheduled because Dr Jackie McCall had moved from the Directorate of Public Health Medicine at the EHSSB to a new post within the WHSSB area. A new meeting is to be reconvened.

## **76/07 PRESENTATION BY CHIEF OFFICER FOLLOWING MUCKAMORE ABBEY HOSPITAL VISIT AND SUBSEQUENT ISSUE OF VISITATION REPORT**

Mr Graham asked for the opportunity to review the visit as an agenda item at the September meeting. The Chief Officer provided an update on the visit and led a discussion between Members regarding their concerns.

Council had asked the Minister if it could make representations. The responsibility to drive the learning disability agenda forward and to maintain it as a priority, lay with the Minister and the Assembly.

Of main concern to Members was the fact that Dr Bernie Stuart's presentation highlighted the fact that finances were so restricted, particularly as savings from RPA were to be reinvested in front-line patient care. Council are concerned that monies released for frontline patient care was the justification for RPA yet the benefits are not being directed to priority areas such as Muckamore Abbey.

The Chief Officer stated that it is Council's intention to visit the Orchardville Society in January 2008 to compare facilities possible for resettlement of Muckamore Abbey residents in the community and to be briefed on progress towards the targets in 2007/08. Members agreed with this approach.

The Chief Officer informed Members that he will be the Council Representation on the Resettlement Board, the first meeting of which is scheduled for Friday 21 September 2007.

Mr Graham stated that there was no comparable hospital in England to Muckamore Abbey and that a high percentage of those diagnosed with a learning disability also have mental health problems. Despite the expectation that over 600 people will be resettled as part of the overall Resettlement Programme, appropriate accommodation needs to be devised as part of a total package of care. In addition, it is planned that residents are resettled into Housing Executive provision where neighbours have no awareness of learning disability and social housing is too small an environment. Advances in medication also enables people with a learning disability to live longer, thereby creating the potential for Down's syndrome and dementia to occur simultaneously, for which a special unit in England has been established. Mr Graham added that considering the EHSSB referred to a reduction of 35% day care provision in Comprehensive Spending Review the EHSS Council should clearly be advocating for Muckamore Abbey Hospital residents.

## **77/07 REPORT FROM CHIEF OFFICER**

- (a) Complaints Activity six-month period 2006/2007 Comparison Presentation by Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager

Mr Brown provided an overview of the complaints management within the EHSSC. He highlighted a comparison of the April- September six month period of 2007 with the same period in 2006 as outlined on the next page:

## **2006/2007**

- 197 complaints per year
- 700 call received
- 700 calls made
- 128 meetings with clients

### **April 2006 – Sept 2006**

- 93 new complaints
- 306 calls received
- 300 calls made
- 71 meetings with clients
- Full time complaints manager  
+ Senior Manager

### **April 2007 – Sept 2007**

- 98 new complaints
- 300 calls received
- 300 calls made
- 25 meetings with clients
- Senior Manager + Chief Officer

Generally the number of calls being made in relation to complaints being dealt with has increased. An average of 1-2 new calls per day are received plus ongoing review of the current caseload. However, it was noted that complaints activity provision was enabled by a full-time senior manager shared with another Senior Manager during 2006 in contrast to this year when the Chief Officer and Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager have been sharing the workload in addition to their own duties. Fifty per cent of their hours are dedicated to these and this proves to be a strain on other Council activities. The Chief Officer and Senior Manager Mr Sean Brown have curtailed the opportunities to visit clients as this limits office cover and proves an unfair burden on Angela and Helen, the Office Managers.

Mr Brown then outlined a sample of calls and meetings which took place in one week, drawing attention to the fact that they were particularly related to emotionally draining, complex, sensitive and Human Rights related issues, for example, death, child custody, homelessness and suicide risk.

Mr Meredith asked for a note to be appended against the reduced number of meetings with clients in this year's six month period whereby it fell from 71 to 25, stating it was due to the strain on staff resources. Mr Brown agreed he would note this in the six-monthly report to the Department.

## **(b) EHSSC Work Programme Update April – September 2007**

The Chief Officer provided an updated on the last six months' activity within the EHSSC.

### **(i) Strategic Issues**

- Fewer consultations
- Fewer meetings
- Increased complaints workload
- Uncertainty, anxiety, fear and frustration

### **(ii) Significant Issues**

Council are driving forward the agenda of engaging users in involvement in the following areas:

- (ii.i) Complaints Consultation
  - Four Council response
  - Clear argument
  - Representation on Review and Implementation Group

Councils will be represented on the afore mentioned group by Ms Maggie Reilly, Chief Officer of the WHSSC.

- (ii.ii) Mental Health and Learning Disability
  - Review of Policy
  - Visit to Muckamore Abbey Hospital
  - Request to Minister to make representations
  - Request to Health Committee to make representations

- (ii.iii) Advocacy in Care Homes
  - 4 Council piece of work
  - Partnership work with RQIA
  - Based on direct engagement
  - Report ready for launch
  - Current consultation with Minister on Forward & launch

This was an important piece of work producing an excellent report with clear recommendations and highlights the notice taken of minor issues. The Minister has been asked to write the foreword of the report.

- (ii.iv) User Involvement - General
  - Research
  - Documentation of research
  - Seminar
  - Training pilot

- (ii.v) User Involvement – Primary Care
  - GMC partnership proposal
  - Engagement via PPG

- (ii.vi) User Involvement - Cardiac network
  - Support for NI Cardiac Patients Forum
  - Production of poster, regional use
  - Production of Glossary, regional use

- (ii.vii) User Involvement - Chinese community – NI Chinese Patients Forum
  - Support for Steering Group
  - Date for inaugural meeting – January 2008 – Chair: Anna Lo
  - Ministerial commitment to attend

This will be an opportunity for the whole community to get together to express their concerns.

- (ii.viii) User Involvement - Stroke Patients and Carers User Group
  - Endorsement of report
  - Part funding of report

- Chairing of launch event

This report outlines the direct experiences of patients and carers as expressed to health and social care.

(ii.ix) Change Management – Internal

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Assets and accommodation
- Records Management

It was noted that the principal driver for internal change management is Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager and that the EHSSC are progressing ahead with reviews of each of the above areas in preparation for dissolution. An independent audit of all staff revealed high levels of satisfaction with the change management processes.

(ii.x) Change Management – External – practice in user involvement

- Trust engagement - good
- DHSSPS engagement - commenced
- HSCA engagement – being sought

Chief Executives are being invited to future EHSSC meetings and the Chair is attending the two HSS Trust Board meetings.

(ii.xi) Key Committees

- Resettlement Board for Muckamore Abbey
- Clinical Advisory Group – Unscheduled care
- Quality Assurance – Cardiovascular health and well-being service framework
- Belfast Trust PPI

(ii.xii) Key Events: Sept 2007-Mar 2008

- Council meetings
- Muckamore Abbey visit follow up
- Launch of Older Peoples' Advocacy report
- Follow up to PPI training event
- Launch of NI Chinese Patients Forum
- Announcement on timescale of PCC

The Chief Officer assured Members they would receive a written copy of the six-monthly report which is a pre-briefing to Dean Sullivan, Head of the Service Delivery Unit, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

## **78/07 DATES OF FUTURE COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Thursday 17 January 2008, 5.30pm in The Link Room, The Mount Conference Centre

Thursday 21 February 2008, 1.30pm in The Link Room, The Mount Conference Centre

Thursday 13 March 2008, 5.30pm in The Link Room, The Mount Conference Centre

(The Easter break week commences on St Patrick's Day and Good Friday is 21 March 2008, therefore the March meeting is a week early.)

Members agreed to the above schedule.



**79/07 CORRESPONDENCE – PAPER EC/14/07**

Paper EC/14/07 was taken as read, with no additional items being discussed.

**80/07 INPUT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- (a) Members' travel expenditure reimbursements and tax allowances  
Mr Graham stated that details of his tax-free allowance were issued to him by EHSSB Finance. He interprets that he could have a tax liability, which he objects to because he is a volunteer, not an employee with no other reimbursements, and would therefore like this matter investigated.
- (b) Declaration of Interests by Staff Members  
The Chief Officer informed Council members that he had joined the Management Board of the charity "Aware Defeat Depression" and had conducted the probity procedures required with the Eastern Health and Social Services Board.
- (c) Acknowledgement of work  
Mrs McGrotty paid tribute to the Chair and Chief Officer, Senior Manager and other staff of the Eastern Health and Social Services Council on behalf of Council Members and patients.

**81/07 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair confirmed the spring term dates and the following meeting:  
Thursday 18 October 2007 at 1.30 pm in the Balmoral Room, Beechlawm Hotel, Dunmurry.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Officer