

**SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

**Minutes of a meeting of the South Eastern HSC Trust**

**Finance & Performance Committee held on**

**Thursday 27 April 2023 at 1.00pm**

**in the Conference Room, Lisburn PCCC**

**and via Zoom (Link: 2421223704 Passcode: 717527)**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr M Mawhinney	Non-Executive Director (Chairman)
	Mr N Brady	Non-Executive Director
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Ms W Thompson	Director of Finance & Estates
	Mrs H Moore	Director of Planning, Performance & Informatics
	Mrs J Dunlop	Asst Dir Financial Management
	Mr J Patton	Trust Chairman
	Mrs E Hannaway	Interim Asst Dir of Performance Improvement & Commissioning (item 15/23 only)
	Mr D Brannigan	Assistant Director Adult Mental Health (item 15/23 only)
	Ms F Dagg	Mental Health Manager (item 15/23 only)
	Miss C Hughes	Personal Assistant

**11/23 Welcome**

Mr Mawhinney welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from Ms Coulter, Chief Executive.

Mr Mawhinney took this opportunity to congratulate Mr Patton on his appointment as SET Chairman. On behalf of the Committee he also congratulated Ms Thompson on completing the London Marathon on 23 April 2023.

**12/23 Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

All present confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest with any of the items on the agenda.

**13/23 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 20 February 2023**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 February 2023, which had been circulated with papers for the meeting, were approved.

**Action**

**14/23 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

**Action**

Mr Mawhinney noted that all items arising from the previous meeting were included on the agenda for the meeting.

**15/23 Performance Presentation : Adult Mental Health Issues**

The Adult Mental Health presentation had been circulated with papers for the meeting. Mr Mawhinney welcomed Mrs Hannaway, Mr Brannigan and Ms Dagg to the meeting.

Mrs Hannaway noted that pressures within Mental Health had been raised at a recent Trust Board meeting and welcomed the opportunity to provide greater detail on the issues to the Finance & Performance Committee. During review of the slides she highlighted that the Service Delivery Plan combines the new and review contacts, in 2022/23 the target was to be back to 100% of pre-covid service delivery with an anticipated target in 2023/24 of 110% of pre-covid levels. She highlighted the graph on Adult Mental Health Waits which indicated 522 clients waited more than 9 weeks for 1<sup>st</sup> assessment and 64% of patients received treatment against the 100% target at the end of March 2023. In respect of Adult Mental Health Non-Inpatient waits there were 665 reviews carried out equating to 94% of the expected trajectory. Mrs Hannaway noted that these figures do not give the full picture of the categorisation, complexity or patient profile.

During discussion Mr Brannigan outlined the staffing issues within the Directorate and noted that the North Down & Ards sector have been operating with 33% of staff unavailable for work. There has been a successful recruitment process for six staff to commence working in the Community Mental Health Team who currently support the Assessment Centre on a rotational basis. All clients referred to the Mental Health Service are initially reviewed at the Assessment Centre and, whilst these staff appointments do not increase staffing in that area, their rotational assistance will be beneficial.

Other mitigating factors included an increase of 63% of urgent and emergency referrals compared to 2016/17. He commented that an impact of delays in routine referrals has caused an increase in these clients presenting for urgent and emergency treatment. A client may be unwell for a period of time and then their mental health declines further to a stage where they are a higher level of risk and require immediate support. Ms Dagg commented that during/since Covid-19 many services were able to operate a telephone/virtual appointment process but it is very difficult

to appropriately triage a mental health patient without “face to face” contact.

**Action**

In response to a query from Mr Mawhinney regarding other support services, Ms Dagg outlined early intervention and psychological therapies provided by community and voluntary organisations. These services provide good support and some clients are re-directed to them from the Assessment Centre. However, Mr Brannigan noted that these therapy services have not reduced the rate of referrals to the Assessment Centre and are really addressing an unmet need within the current system. He outlined the services provided by a pilot scheme in the Downe Sector for Mental Health Prescribers via the roll out of Multi-Disciplinary Teams in Primary Care which has had an impact upon referrals in that area. However, there are concerns around the workforce impact as such services would be recruiting from the same staffing pool as Mental Health Services.

Ms Dagg detailed the number of clients who attend the Recovery College which provides a variety of courses to assist patients with programmes to target, for example, anxiety and building resilience. Mr Mawhinney asked if a briefing could be provided on the services and activities provided and Mrs Dagg undertook to prepare this briefing.

FD

Discussion took place regarding the Inpatient Services provided and Ms Dagg noted that there are three Wards – one on each Hospital site (Downshire, Lagan Valley and Ulster Hospitals). Occupancy levels have been running at over 100% and the only time these have dropped was during covid or infection outbreaks which resulted in ward closures. The Average Length of Stay has increased during the past year to 42.6 days – an additional 2.6 days on the 2021/22 year. Work is ongoing to improve this position including the development of a bed management protocol; a review of patient flow/delayed discharges; options for step-down beds and staff support/training. The exceptionally high occupancy levels are extremely challenging.

Ms Dagg highlighted the additional challenges of caring for Learning Disability patients within Adult Mental Health Wards. If the beds occupied by people with a learning disability were taken out from the occupancy rate information, then the numbers would reduce to closer to 100%. During detailed discussion it was noted that the Learning Disability inpatient provision for SET is commissioned via Belfast Trust via Muckamore Abbey Hospital. Whilst not closed to admissions, Belfast Trust has not been accepting referrals to the facility for some time, and

this is not anticipated to change whilst the ongoing Review of Muckamore concludes. With no other option, the Learning Disability community are currently admitted to a Mental Health bed if they require an inpatient episode. This patient profile are challenging for the Mental Health staff to nurse as their needs are very different. Mrs Moore confirmed that this issue remains a subject of discussion with the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG). Details of the last presentation slide "Priorities" were noted.

**Action**

Mr Branningan advised that a business case had been developed for a 3 to 1 Mental Health Unit (a new Unit to amalgamate the current three wards) and this is currently being updated. The current financial climate may impact progress on this development.

Mr Mawhinney noted that issues raised and asked if there was anything the Finance & Performance Committee should be escalating on this issue. Ms Thompson advised that Trust Senior Management are escalating this issue at every opportunity and managing the risk as much as possible. Mr Mawhinney noted the concerns and asked that an update be provided at the next meeting.

Mr Mawhinney thanked Mrs Hannaway, Mr Brannigan and Ms Dagg for their presentation and they left the meeting.

**16/23 Review of Terms of Reference for Finance and Performance Committee**

The current Terms of Reference had been circulated with papers for the meeting.

Mr Mawhinney noted discussion at a recent Governance Assurance Committee regarding all Committees having a point in their Terms of Reference regarding assurances. It was agreed that Ms Thompson would raise this issue with Mrs McNally, Assistant Director Risk Management & Governance Management / Board Secretary. Any generic wording would be added to the Terms of Reference as appropriate.

WT

During review Mr Brady noted a typo in item 7.3, second paragraph, and this would be amended. Also, at the end of the document, a date should be removed from the "List of Members of the Finance & Performance Committee". These amendments would be made.

Mr Patton advised that the vacant Non-Executive Director role on the Committee would now be filled by Mrs Helen Minford. Mrs Minford will join the Committee at the next

meeting and thus provide continuity for the membership when Mr Mawhinney and Mr Brady reach the end of their tenure in February 2024.

**Action**

**17/23 Business Case : Priory Surgery Purchase**

A briefing paper and business case in respect of the Purchase of Priory Surgery had been circulated with papers for the meeting.

In response to queries raised by Mr Mawhinney, Ms Thompson advised:-

- The Trust is being fully funded by the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG) to purchase this GP Practice building.
- The existing owners of the building (GP Practice) would not agree to lease the building to the Trust beyond 31 March 2023. There is no suitable alternative accommodation available within the area.
- The valuation is based on the LPS initial value and has been accepted by SPPG who will ultimately provide the funding. The LPS valuation was completed in early February 2023.
- When a new Provider is identified their contract with SPPG will include an element to cover the use of the premises.

Mr Mawhinney sought and received Committee approval for this Business Case.

**18/23 Business Case : Hospital Parking Charges Act**

A briefing paper and business case in respect of the Hospital Parking Charges Act had been circulated with papers for the meeting.

During discussion of the business case Ms Thompson advised that the legislation on Hospital Parking Charges Act will impact all Trusts. Whilst no charges can be applied from May 2024, there will nevertheless be a requirement to ensure that there are car parking spaces available for staff; patients and visitors. Whilst car parking is “free” it cannot be a “free for all” approach to parking on Hospital sites. The loss of revenue will not impact the Trust in 2023/24 but preparations for the changes in 2024/25 are required. Detailed work has been undertaken by the Travel Team, having consulted with other UK Trusts/Providers, to compile this business case and Option 6 (upgraded barrier management system; expenditure on infrastructure and specialist contractor with responsibility for Automatic Number Plate Recognition/Parking Charge Notices) is

viewed as the most appropriate. In conclusion, Ms Thompson commented that appeals are being made to rescind this legislation.

**Action**

Mr Mawhinney enquired how this would impact on the 2024/25 budget and Ms Thompson advised that the financial impact of the legislation would be included as an inescapable pressure.

Mr Mawhinney sought, and received, Committee approval for the Hospital Parking Charges Act Business Case.

### **19/23 Review of 2023/24 Planned Savings Measures**

A report entitled Review of Savings Plans 2023/24 had been circulated with papers for the meeting.

Ms Thompson noted that further to discussion Trust Board this report had been prepared to provide assurance on the actions being undertaken.

During discussion Ms Thompson advised that the identified measures will be broken down into Directorate specific targets which will be monitored via Finance Focus Groups with senior Teams. Alongside this work there will be a number of workstreams on non-cash releasing initiatives which will be managed via the Planning & Performance Directorate. A joint summary report will be prepared for the Executive Management Team and will progress to Trust Board in the Finance Report. The current Finance Report will be adjusted to reflect these measures and actions being undertaken throughout the year.

In response to a query regarding the use of Off Contract Agencies, Ms Thompson confirmed that a new regional agency framework for Nurses, Midwives and Healthcare Support Workers is being finalised and should be operational by mid May/early June 2023. This approach is welcomed and will be monitored by the Regional Agency Reduction Group. Ms Thompson commented that the main area of off-contract Agency usage within the Trust is Prison Healthcare. Staff have been informed of the regional change. A new regional framework for Medical and Dental is currently being tendered and should be implemented later in the year.

Further to a query regarding Pharmacy savings, Ms Thompson advised that there has been focus on Pharmacy/drug savings. The Medicines Optimisation Regional Efficiencies (MORE) have realised savings in switching medications to generic brands although there have been

“peaks and troughs” in these savings depending on when drug patents expire. Ms Thompson noted that Ward based Pharmacy Technicians have achieved savings in enabling medical outlier patients to transfer their controlled drugs with them when moved to appropriate wards.

**Action**

In response to a query regarding the 2023/24 budget, Ms Thompson advised that formal notification is awaited.

**20/23 Any Other Business**

No issues were raised.

**21/23 Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on Monday 26 June 2023 at 9.45am in the Boardroom, Trust Headquarters, Ulster Hospital.