



**Minutes of a Trust Board Meeting held on  
Thursday 31 July 2014 at 2.00 pm at The Clarion Hotel, 75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus, Co  
Antrim, BT38 8PH**

**Present:**

Mr P Archer	Chairman
Mr L McIvor	Chief Executive
Ms A Paisley	Non-Executive Director
Mr N McKinley	Non-Executive Director
Dr J Livingstone	Non-Executive Director
Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance & ICT
Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations
Dr D McManus	Medical Director
Ms R O'Hara	Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services

**In Attendance:**

Miss K Baxter	Executive Administrator (Acting)
Mrs J Pattison	HR, Senior Secretary (Temp)

**Welcome and Format of the Meeting**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and Trust Board.

**1.0 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Professor M Hanratty, Non-Executive Director.

**2.0 Procedure: Declaration of potential Conflict of Interest / Pecuniary Interests  
Quorum.**

No potential conflicts of interest/pecuniary interests were declared and the Board was confirmed as quorate.

**3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 27 March 2014**

Members accepted the minutes as a true reflection of discussions held on the proposal of Dr J Livingstone, seconded by Ms A Paisley.

**Action:** Approved

**3.1 Action Log**

The Chairman presented the Action Log and confirmed that the log was subject to ongoing review.

In relation to action point 7 an issue has been identified in respect of the recording of absence in the new BSTP system. The accuracy of reported

absence information has been questioned and cannot be confirmed at this time, therefore the Trust Board agreed that NIAS should not present absence information until the issues have been resolved.

#### **4.0 Matters Arising**

All matters arising would be picked up through main agenda items.

#### **5.0 Chairman's Business**

##### **5.1 Chairman's Update**

The Chairman gave a brief outline of his diary commitments since the last Board meeting.

##### **5.2 Visit to Carrickfergus Ambulance Station**

The Chairman on behalf of the Board paid tribute to the staff and officers for the visit to Carrickfergus Ambulance Station. The Chairman stated once again that the Non-Executive Directors in particular received great value from visits to local stations before Board meetings where they have the opportunity to inspect the facilities and talk to any staff who were present. Carrickfergus was a good example of a well organised station and the enthusiasm of the staff was very obvious during the visit which included a practical demonstration in the training room of the challenges faced while on duty in all sorts of conditions when having to inject patients with fluids or medicines.

#### **6.0 Chief Executive's Business**

##### **6.1 Chief Executive's Update**

The Chief Executive gave a brief outline of some of his activities since the last Board meeting which included the following meetings:

- Urgent and Emergency Care Forum Steering Group - attended as the representative for Northern Ireland on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014.
- SAI Review - Introductory Meeting with Sir Liam Donaldson on the 23 June 2014.
- End of Year Accountability Meeting with DHSSPSNI on the 24 June 2014.
- Memorandum Of Understanding For The Provision Of A Declared Incident Mutual Aid – meeting with RoI Ambulance personnel on the 30 June 2014.
- Unscheduled Care Task Group with Dr McBride on the 10 July 2014.
- Introductory meeting on the 23 July 2014 with Richard Pengelly (Permanent Secretary) - opportunity to increase awareness of Ambulance Service.

The Chief Executive briefed the Board on current issues reported in the media - the use of St Johns Ambulance and Weekend cover pressures.

##### **6.2 Transforming Your Care Update**

An update was provided by the Chief Executive, who reported that support sought following HSCB presentation on NIAS proposals had been secured and captured on record. Two Clinical Posts were being engaged to maximise impact of alternative care pathways.

## **7.0 7.1 Performance Report 2014-15 as at 30 June 2014**

The Chief Executive referred members to page 5 on of the 2014/15 report which outlined an overview of the Strategic Aims and Objectives.

The Chief Executive reported that the CAT A diminished performance caused concern in respect of service delivery objectives, while current financial issues remained a concern. Key engagements were outlined highlighting how the Trust was working with HSCB on this, TYC and associated issues.

### **Operations**

As at 30 June 2014:

The Director of Operations updated members. He referred to (page 66) the performance charts showing monthly cumulative position of Cat A calls and outlined issues in respect of performance and service delivery. Trust Board was updated in respect of purchase of Ballymena Site for New Ambulance Station at a cost of £3.7M, tender process to begin in August 2014.

The Director of Operations provided a detailed update on the issues of the previous weekend informing them that the service had only 37 out of 52 crews in operation due to staffing issues.

The problems at the weekend were multi-factorial including extant vacancies, holiday leave arrangements, short-notice casual leave and carers leave requests and long and short-term sickness, compounded by a reluctance to work overtime most likely influenced by weather etc.

NIAS has established a team dedicated to planning and maintaining cover and systems which support staff in managing work patterns and leave etc. this team operates 7 days a week to plan cover and try to fill short-notice gaps as they arise. Unfortunately over the weekend they were unable to secure sufficient extra staff to replace those who were/became unavailable.

In addition we had arranged for support from voluntary ambulance providers to support our staff in transporting suitable non-emergency patients, to ease the burden on NIAS personnel and allow us to prioritise NIAS personnel to emergency calls. We operate robust attendance management policies and offer rapid access to supplementary health services for specific relevant conditions to expedite return to work for our staff when they are sick.

The 'review' of the issues started on Saturday 26th July 2014 and a number of meetings of senior NIAS Operational Managers have already taken place which have developed short and longer term action plans for operational staff. In addition to the steps outlined below designed to immediately impact on this weekend, there is a

focus is on the next 90 days (taking us to the end of October by which time the initial phases of the recruitment should have been completed).

Key Actions identified:

- Increased Non-Emergency Ambulance provision from Voluntary Ambulance Services
- Increased Managerial scrutiny of short-term absence to expedite return to work
- Refusal of Casual Leave applications
- Revised arrangements for notification and authorisation of Carers Leave Requests
- Revised management of Relief staff to prioritise cover of high-impact shifts
- Reallocation of Training Officers to operational front-line duties
- Revised arrangements for call management to maximise use of voluntary ambulances in place of emergency ambulances where appropriate
- Revised arrangements for GPs in Ambulance Control to maximise use of voluntary ambulances in place of emergency ambulances where appropriate
- Review of recruitment programme to expedite filling of vacant posts

## **Finance & ICT**

As at 30 June 2014:

The Director of Finance & ICT highlighted that the Trust Delivery Plan (TDP) is dependent on approval of the Commissioning Plan, which has not yet been received from the HSC Board; as such the TDP is still in a draft form.

The Director of Finance highlighted on NIAS's financial position. She stated that current figures to the end of June indicated that the Trust had a £15,000 overspend.

The Director of Finance confirmed that there is a requirement for NIAS to deliver savings of £3 million in 2014/15 on a recurrent basis. She continued that about £2 million of efficiency savings had been delivered during 2013/14, although this been through both non-recurrent means and the use of some bridging funding. There are outline proposals for the £3 million saving in 2014/15, however, these are not yet fully confirmed.

The Board was directed to page 87 which dealt with the prompt payment of invoices. Director of Finance indicated that although >90% had been paid within 30 days in the month, the cumulative target of 95% had not been reached and has dipped primarily due to demands of year end accounts and the new computer systems.

## **Human Resources & Corporate Services**

The Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services updated members on her report. The following issues / comments were raised:

As at 30 June 2014

The following issues and comments were raised:

- DHSSPS – Benchmarking information on absence no longer available.
- In Conjunction with the Department NIAS are proposing an absence target of 7%, this was based on benchmarking other HSC Trusts through HRMS.

- HRPTS System went live on 14 February and reported absence figures have increased regionally by approximately 2%. It has been identified that there is an issue within the system and NIAS Trust Board has determined that HRPTS absence reports would not be presented until the issues are addressed.
- Page 109 illustrated that Job Evaluation for three AfC jobs are still outstanding. The Trust is in regular contact with DHSSPS on this.

## **Medical**

The Medical Director presented his report and commented on the new format.

The following issues were discussed:

- Emergency Planning Report (Page 45):
  - It was noted that there had been no major incidents during this period. The numbers of calls to incidents involving Carbon Monoxide were due to the increased use of Carbon Monoxide alarms and the increased awareness of Carbon Monoxide inhalation within the General Public due to recent media campaigns,

## **8.0 PCS Eligibility**

This paper was tabled last year; the information has now been updated.

## **9.0 HSC Framework Document**

Board Members have been asked for comments by 22 August 2014

## **10.0 Items for Approval**

### **10.1 Equal Opportunities Policy**

Approved by Dr J Livingstone; Seconded by Mr L McIvor

### **10.2 Working Well Together Policy**

Approved by Dr J Livingstone; Seconded by Mr L McIvor

## **11.0 Items for Noting**

### **11.1 Emergency Preparedness & response Annual Report**

Draft Form submitted to PHA.

### **11.2 Assurance Committee Minutes – 5 June 2014**

Noted – with no changes.

### **11.3 Audit Committee Minutes – 29 May 2014 and 10 June 2014**

Noted – with no changes.

**12.0 Application of Trust Seal**

The Trust Seal has not been used since the Trust Board Meeting on the 27 March 2014.

**13.0 Forum for Questions**

No Questions were received.

**Any Other Business**

**14.0**

None

**15.0 Forward Agenda**

The Chairman brought forward the suggestion that the Board should plan Workshops for 2015-16.

Dr J Livingstone brought forward the suggestion that each Director should give a verbal update on the Governance Rolling Action Plan and this should be repeated at alternative Board Meeting i.e. three times per year. This was agreed by the Chairman.

**Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Trust Board will be held on Thursday 25 September 2014 in Headquarters

The Chairman thanked those present for attending and called proceedings to a close.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairman**