

## NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

### ***Minutes of a Meeting of Trust Board held on Thursday, 19 July 2012 at 2.00pm at the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Headquarters, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast. BT8 8SG***

#### **Present:**

Mr P Archer	Chairman
Ms R O'Hara	Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services (Acting Chief Executive)
Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance & ICT
Dr McManus	Medical Director
Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations
Ms A Paisley	Non Executive Director
Prof M Hanratty	Non Executive Director

#### **In Attendance:**

Mrs M Crawford	Executive Administrator
Miss K Baxter	Senior Secretary

#### **Welcome and Format of the Meeting**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and Trust Board and explained the arrangements for receiving questions from the public.

#### **1.0 Apologies**

Mr Liam McIvor, Chief Executive  
Mr Norman McKinley, Non Executive Director

#### **2.0 Procedure: Declaration of potential Conflict of Interest Quorum**

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

#### **3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 31 May 2012**

Members accepted the minutes as a fair summary of discussions held on the proposal of Prof Hanratty seconded by Ms Paisley.

#### **4.0 Matters Arising**

##### **4.1 Quality 2020: A 10 Year Strategy to Protect & Improve Quality in Health & Social Care in Northern Ireland**

The presentation which was to have been made to the Board today by a member of the CMO's staff has had to be cancelled. It will be rescheduled.

## 4.2 **Issue of '111' information**

Information in relation to '111' has been issued to the Board by the Chief Executive. Discussion ensued in relation to which organisation would take ownership of the system and what would be involved for that organisation. NIAS are in a strong position to take this major project forward; given the platform of 24/7 emergency cover, however it will be the DHSSPS/HSCB who will make this decision.

## 5.0 **Chairman's Business**

### 5.1 **Visit to Whiteabbey Ambulance Station**

The Board were very impressed with their visit this morning. The enthusiasm of the Station Officer and his staff was noted and the Station appeared to be a good environment for all. The Board requested that the Director of Operations convey the Board's thanks to all concerned for their warm welcome.

### 5.2 **Chairman's Update**

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

### 5.3 **Queen's Ambulance Medal**

The Chairman congratulated the Director of Operations, Mr McNeill on behalf of the Board on his recent award of the Queen's Ambulance Medal.

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

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

The Director of HR&CS (Acting Chief Executive) outlined some activities since the last Board meeting as follows:

- The 'Nolan Show' was presented this morning from the Emergency Control Room. This was an excellent opportunity to showcase the service. Positive feedback has already been received through social networking sites. Tributes were paid to the Communications Officer, Mr John McPoland for his sterling work in engaging with the producers of the show and choreographing calls from members of the public who had cause to ring 999 in the recent past which delivered a very positive image of NIAS. The Board concurred with this and added that they were very proud and honoured to be part of the ambulance service.
- The Minister for Health, Mr Edwin Poots launched the use of 'FAST' straplins on the sides of some ambulances in conjunction with the Health Promotion Agency at NIAS Headquarters this morning. This occurred after the Nolan Show.
- Contingency arrangements over the 12 July 2012 period were operated at Ardoyne and the Ambulance Station decanted for around 24 hours to Broadway Station. Response times were not affected.

- There was a recent attack on ambulance staff where the crew had to lock themselves in the back of an ambulance until police arrived. The crew were stood down and post incident support was given. Meetings with local representatives from the area have taken place to address the issue.
- There was a recent media story in the Belfast Telegraph on the 18 June 2012 where it was stated that hundreds of patients had to wait more than one hour for an ambulance during 2011/12. The actual figure was 277 patients however the Trust aims to transport patients within 21 minutes and the RRV paramedic will remain with the patient until the conveying ambulance arrives. It was noted that 96% of patients are conveyed to hospital within 30 minutes.
- There was a further media story at the weekend where it reported of a delay in ambulance response to an incident involving a child at a beach in North Antrim. The crew was advised of the best point to access the beach and got the ambulance as close as possible but had to travel by foot the rest of the way. The crew made a sterling effort to save the child and this was not reported in the article. Unfortunately the child died and the Board wished to extend their sympathies to the family and considered that the report in the media could cause further upset to the family.

**Action:** It was agreed by the Board that the Acting Chief Executive should write to the Editors regarding their misinterpreting of the facts and making the point that such reporting only caused further upset to patients and families.

## **6.2 Transforming Your Care (TYC)**

The Board were pleased to see that there have been a number of references to the Ambulance Service within TYC. It was noted that the proposal for '111' is listed in the paragraphs on the Ambulance Service.

## **7.0 Assurance Framework as at 31 May 2012**

### **Medical**

The Medical Director presented his report and referred members to the Audit of Acute Stroke Management. He advised that it would save time to alert the Stroke Team within the Hospital and take the patient direct to the scanner room which could aid a better recovery for the patient. NIAS have shown that crews are correctly identifying the symptoms of stroke. It was added that the FAST programme and its advertising on ambulances, which was initiated today by the Minister, gives clear advice to the public regarding the symptoms of stroke. The Board will be kept informed of any further developments in this area.

The following comments/issues were raised:

- The review of the GP urgent calls was raised.
- The review is ongoing with the collection of data to help inform decisions.
- Does the Trust get inappropriate calls from GPs?
- If 'inappropriate' is taken as meaning 'relying on inaccurate information', the Trust does receive inappropriate calls on occasions from GPs. However the GP bases the request on the information he/she has been given.

## **Operations**

The Director of Operations presented his report and the following comments/issues were raised:

- The information on turnaround times at A&E hospitals was welcome and the delays at the Ulster and RVH was noted?
- This situation is not ideal however these hospitals are very busy and work is ongoing with the hospitals to identify local solutions. The Commissioners are aware and a definition of turnaround times is to be agreed to enable them to monitor the situation.
- The information in relation to the time lost waiting at hospitals was stark reading and the Board asked if some of the local solutions put in place at other hospitals could be transferred to these busier hospitals.
- Efforts are being made to eliminate ambulance queuing time spent at hospitals. It was clarified that seriously ill patients are being treated as urgent upon arrival at A&E.
- How wide is this information being shared?
- This matter has been raised with the Board at Performance Management Meetings.
- Are Acute Trusts counting this time in their figures for waiting times?
- This is an issue that has been highlighted in the past and it is anticipated that this will be addressed when the Commissioners review the hospital turnaround times at A&E.
- What can the Trust do to address the issue of transport in rural areas?
- This matter is being addressed through the Trust's Delivery and Corporate Plans.

## **Finance**

The Director of Finance updated members on her report and the following comments/issues were raised.

- If the Trust gets consent for the Enniskillen Business Case what is the next stage?
- Once agreement is given the Trust will then apply for the funding to implement.
- The Board noted the number of FOI requests received.
- These requests can cover a wide range of subjects and can have a number of requests within one question. This generates a significant workload for the small team within the Information Department.

## **Human Resources**

The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services updated members on her report and advised the Board of the initiatives being piloted following a recent Health Promotion Day at HQ. This enabled staff to have a health check which included blood pressure and cholesterol checks. The following comments or issues were raised:

- The Board welcomed the additional information on absence and asked if the Trust promoted exercise opportunities eg a static bicycle within Stations?
- There is no such equipment at present and it was advised that Charitable Funds could be considered if such a request was received from staff.

## **8.0 Items for Approval**

None.

## **9.0 Items for Noting**

### **9.1 HR Annual Report 2011/12**

The Director of HR&Cs presented the report and the following questions were raised.

- Why were there a large number of contracts issued in comparison to the number of recruitments for the year?
- A number of contracts have been updated and issued to existing staff.
- In regard to the equality information there appeared to be a high percentage of males and Protestants recruited this year compared to the proportion of applications. The Director of HR&CS was requested to provide a trend analysis for the Board's information.

**Action:** Director of HR&CS will provide trend analysis to the Board.

### **9.2 Health & Wellbeing & Attendance Management Action Plan**

Noted.

### **9.3 Minutes of Audit Committee held 12 March & 7 June 2012**

Noted.

### **9.4 Minutes of Assurance Committee held 7 June 2012**

Noted.

## **10.0 Application of Trust Seal**

### **10.1 Streamline Merchants**

The Trust Seal has been applied today in respect of banking mandates and the provision of online/telephone payment services to facilitate the new BSTP systems.

## **11.0 FORUM FOR QUESTIONS**

A member of the public present had asked if the provision of '111' will be provided by NIAS. This question was addressed during the discussion on '111' under Matters Arising and NIAS's aspirations, as outlined in its Corporate Plan, to be the provider of the service, were again noted.

## **12.0 Any Other Business**

None.

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

The next meeting of the Trust Board & AGM will be held on Thursday, 20 September 2012 at NIAS Headquarters.

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

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

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