

## **Meeting of Dialogue Forum with Voluntary Organisations**

***Monday 7 November, 14:00-16:00, Miesian Plaza***

### **Note of Meeting**

#### **1. Introductory Update – Chair Peter Cassells**

In his opening remarks, the Chair introduced new Forum members and also those attending in place of Forum members. The Chair referenced the hybrid and interdependent nature of the health and social care system, emphasising the need to continue working together and showing commitment to a problem solving approach to issues with the ultimate aim of improved services. The Chair briefly reflected on the progress made concerning the various workstreams that are underway within the Forum and thanked members for their ongoing contributions. The Chair also mentioned his recent positive meeting with the new Interim CEO of the HSE at which the HSE's commitment to the Forum and to a positive working relationship with the voluntary sector was reiterated.

#### **2. Risk appetite and audit findings – presentation and engagement led by HSE**

Colleagues from the HSE Board and Executive delivered a presentation on the HSE's risk appetite and internal audit function. Key points included:

- There is a desire to begin to build a common understanding of risk appetite and common audit issues. This engagement comes at a useful time so as to provide an opportunity to input into a number of important reviews which are underway in the HSE.
- Today's discussion also presents an opportunity to advance the accountable autonomy discussion. It was suggested that governance can be a valuable frame for Forum discussions.
- The HSE has a very significant budget, more than a number of Government Departments combined, and provides significant grants to those providing services on behalf of the HSE. The HSE has clear public accountabilities that are mandated and stakeholders rightly seek assurance and information. There is accountability to provide information, explain decisions and 'own' results. In addition, funded agencies have mandated accountabilities under various Acts and Codes.
- There has been significant development of the risk discipline within the HSE in recent years which goes beyond a risk register. There is a desire to share the best information system-wide to identify and anticipate risks.
- The HSE Board has a fundamental role with regard to risk appetite and tolerance. Overall, the HSE's appetite for risk is 'cautious' however innovation is encouraged.
- Reoccurring audit issues include governance issues including Board composition and Board information; risk management; internal controls including segregation of duties, procurement and purchases; and SLA compliance including annual financial management returns and Garda vetting.

The Chair thanked the HSE for their engagement with the Forum and breakout discussions followed to gather members' views on the risk appetite and internal audit functions of the HSE. Discussions focused on the following questions:

- Do the insights shared give you a better understanding of the HSE's approach?
- What does a move to greater accountable autonomy mean for how we should approach risk at a system level?

- Bearing in mind the information shared, what perspectives would you most like HSE colleagues to know/understand as they think about changing/improving this area?
- What does a move to greater accountable autonomy mean for how the HSE might approach its audit, compliance and oversight roles?

An output pack (attached) summarises the points made in these breakout discussions.

### **3. Update on ongoing Forum Work**

#### *Partnership Principles*

The DoH provided an update to Forum members on the launch of the agreed partnership principles. Key points included:

- Due to diary constraints, and following consultation, it is planned to launch the partnership principles in the New Year. Forum members were asked to hold the date of Monday 13 February for the launch.
- DoH has engaged with colleagues in the Department of Rural and Community Development on their recent launch of that Department's agreed set of Values and Principles for collaboration and partnership with the Community and Voluntary Sector and this engagement will inform the Forum's launch.

The Chair thanked the DoH for their input and for the work undertaken in relation to the planning of the event. Forum members welcomed the proposal and the Chair advised members to anticipate the receipt of further updates from the DoH concerning plans for the launch.

#### *Case studies*

The Chair invited the DoH to share an update on the case study process. Key updates included:

- The case studies are now underway and the feedback received from those participating has been generally positive. The case studies should conclude in early December.
- It is intended that the Oversight Group will meet shortly to gather feedback from the early workshops and this will inform the ongoing workshop design.
- Subsequent to the completion of the case study workshops, initial findings will be compiled and shared with members at the February meeting of the Forum.

Following the update provided, Forum members highlighted the fact that case studies to date had been well facilitated. A query was raised regarding attendance by relevant HSE colleagues and the Chair recognised the importance of relevant HSE colleagues attending the workshops. The Chair welcomed the update and suggested that consideration be given to whether initial findings from the case study process could be shared at the launch event for the partnership principles.

#### *SA Review*

The HSE provided an overview to Forum members on the review of the Service Arrangement and the points made included the following:

- The Forum's partnership principles and the case study findings will inform the Service Arrangement review.
- The HSE Working Group will meet again next week with a view to finalising the Terms of Reference and progressing the development of a consultation process with voluntary organisations.

- It is envisaged that the review of the Service Arrangement will be take place in Q1/Q2 to enable the review to be informed by the case study findings.

The Chair thanked the HSE for the update provided and welcomed the HSE's commitment to the review of the Service Arrangement. The Chair highlighted the importance of the Service Arrangement review and noted that members can anticipate further updates at the February meeting of the Forum.

#### *Regional Health Areas*

The Chair invited the DoH to provide an update on the Regional Health Areas. Key updates included:

- A number of regional engagements have taken place and there has been a strong resonance between the feedback received in these regional engagements and at the recent Forum workshop.
- Several workstreams are being progressed with senior HSE and DoH involvement and with local and regional leads being added.
- 2023 will see a focus on implementation given the plan to operationalise RHAs in 2024. The population based allocation approach will mean significant devolution and each region will have a significant budget. There is a desire to realise the benefits of population based allocation and planning.
- The role of the HSE centre and the DoH are being examined as are the substructures within RHAs with a key focus on addressing silos. There will be implications for the whole service delivery ecosystem.
- The implementation of the RHAs will be informed by the agreed partnership principles and the findings of the case study process.

The Chair welcomed the overview provided by the DoH and noted the inherent interconnectedness between the Regional Health Areas, the partnership principles and the case studies process.

#### **4. Upcoming Meeting Dates 2023**

Meetings of the Forum and Planning Group in the first half of 2023 will take place as follows:

##### *Upcoming Forum meeting dates:*

- Dialogue Forum meeting: Monday 13 February (14:00 – 16:00)
- Dialogue Forum meeting: Monday 3 April (14:00 – 16:00)
- Dialogue Forum meeting: Monday 12 June (14:00 – 16:00)

##### *Upcoming Planning Group meeting dates:*

- Planning Group meeting: Monday 30 January (14:30 – 15:30)
- Planning Group meeting: Monday 27 March (14:30 – 15:30)
- Planning Group meeting: Monday 29 May (14:30 – 15:30)

#### **5. Close**

The Chair concluded the meeting, thanking members and representatives from the HSE for their engagement and their insights. The Chair stated that a further session on the HSE's financial management system would be welcome.

The Chair remarked that recent meetings of the Forum have been productive and have allowed members to get into the detail of issues. He encouraged members to reflect on how further, deeper exploration of the issues can be achieved so as to facilitate further shared understanding and a problem solving approach.