

Meeting of Dialogue Forum with Voluntary Organisations

Monday 19 June, 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 welcomed guest speakers from the DoH and HSE to the Forum. The Chair referenced the Minister for Health's remarks at the recent launch of the Partnership Principles at which the Minister highlighted the hybrid and interdependent nature of the health and social care system and the fact that voluntary organisations are an integral component of the health and social care system. The work of the Forum has seen a shared understanding of the issues facing the State and voluntary sector emerge. The Chair reminded members of the Forum's work programme for the year, emerging from the Case Study process, that will concentrate on the new Health Regions, the Service Arrangement Review and Sustainability.

2. Estimates and National Service Plan (NSP) processes – presentation and engagement led by DoH and HSE

Senior colleagues from the Department of Health's Finance Unit and Performance Management Unit and from HSE Finance and HSE National Strategy and Research delivered a presentation on the annual Estimates and National Service Plan (NSP) processes. Key points included:

- The Estimates process should include two-way engagement with all Operational Services through the normal governance arrangements, which includes a focused engagement with services around key themes. It typically encompasses pay costs, non-pay costs, income generation and expected WTEs. Input from service areas is essential when considering the requirement for the following year.
- The DoH Finance team leads the Estimates process, coordinating with DoH colleagues, the HSE and other agencies, to prepare a final bid which is submitted to DPENDER and is followed by detailed negotiations.
- The final Estimates bid reflects the Minister's priorities, as well as costings obtained through engagement with the various stakeholders including the HSE.
- The available funding and budgetary space depend on the parameters set out by the Government in the Summer Economic Statement and Government's priorities. The funding provided will often be less than the amount sought and areas for additional investment must be prioritised.
- The components of the Department's Bid can be broken down as follows:
 - o Existing Level of Service (ELS) – additional Core funding to maintain current services, taking into account changes in price and volume. ELS is prioritised before new service developments to ensure existing services are sufficiently funded.
 - o New Developments – additional Core funding for new services, in accordance with the Minister's and Government's priorities. In line with delivering Sláintecare, new measures have focused on access, quality and affordability in recent years.
 - o Non-Core Funding – additional funding for non-recurring expenditure that does not go into the Department's base funding, e.g. COVID-19, Ukraine, Brexit.

- Capital – funding for projects agreed under the National Development Plan, and any subsequent Capital projects approved for funding.
- The Letter of Determination (LOD) is issued by the Minister after Budget Day and must be submitted within 21 days of Budget Day. It sets out the amount of funding available, and any conditions attaching to the funding. The HSE has 21 days to submit the NSP on receipt of the LOD.
- The NSP is submitted to the Minister for approval. It must indicate the type and volume of health and social care services the HSE will provide, estimates of number of employees and specified KPIs. The NSP is guided by the Programme for Government, Ministerial priorities, Sláintecare and the HSE Corporate Plan.
- The bottom-up development of the NSP is influenced by Quadruple Aims (Experience of Care, Clinical Outcomes & Population Health, Value and Experience of Care).
- Extensive engagements between HSE & DoH take place. Drafts are provided to the DoH and feedback is provided to HSE prior to final submission. The NSP is approved by both the Minister for Health and MCEDIY following the transfer of disability functions. After approval the NSP is laid before the Houses of Oireachtas.
- DoH and DCEDIY monitor HSE performance through the Performance Engagement Model throughout the year while the HSE monitors its own performance using the HSE Performance and Accountability Framework and Board Strategic Scorecard (BSS). The BSS provides monthly progress updates on KPIs and is a key reporting tool developed to align with the annual LOD.

The Chair thanked both the DoH and HSE for their presentations and opened the floor to questions from Forum members.

A query was raised regarding how the process will work in light of the disability function transferring to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Clarification was provided that there will be two separate estimates processes with a vote for each Department, however there will need to be close alignment and cooperation between the Departments. Both Departments will engage with the HSE as part of the NSP process.

Breakout discussions followed to gather Forum members' views and experiences of both the NSP and Estimates processes. Discussions focused on the following questions:

Taking account of the partnership principles and the case study process recommendations

1. Estimates Process:
 - What is your current experience of the process?
 - How could it be improved?
 - Barriers/Enablers
2. NSP Process:
 - What is your current experience of the process?
 - How could it be improved?
 - Barriers/Enablers
3. Aligning with the partnership principles, how could engagement and communication processes be improved:
 - Inputting into Estimates and NSP
 - Decisions made

4. What are your priorities (organisation/service area) for 2024?

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

3. Update on ongoing Forum work

Dissemination of the Partnership Principles

The DoH provided an overview to Forum members of the dissemination of the Partnership Principles (PPs). The launch received excellent coverage on social media, including Twitter and TikTok, where posts gained significant traction and engagement. Posts, including those by the Minister, DoH, The Wheel and the HSE CEO were seen by tens of thousands of people. A number of organisations published press releases and news stories covering the event and the DoH published a piece in its weekly newsletter which is circulated to all DoH staff. The Chair thanked the DoH for the update and noted the success of the launch. The Chair acknowledged that it would take some time for all organisations to disseminate the Partnership Principles, especially larger organisations. He highlighted the importance of dissemination in ensuring that the PPs are lived principles and welcomed their application in both projects currently underway: the Health Regions Implementation and the SA Review.

Health Regions Implementation

The DoH provided an update on the implementation of the Health Regions. The HSE CEO has embraced the new Health Regions and is committed to their implementation. The Partnership Principles have been embedded in the Implementation Plan, which is expected to go to Government in the coming weeks for approval. Forum members were encouraged to become familiar with the Plan once published. Plans are advancing to approve Health Region leads by year end. The Implementation Plan is focused on improving service delivery, in particular continuity of care between care settings and providing an improved platform for integrated care. The DOH and HSE are committed to working with voluntary organisations in the implementation of Health Regions. The Chair thanked the DoH for the update and reiterated the importance of embedding the Partnership Principles in such reforms.

SA Review

Following on from the circulation to the Forum of the detailed PID, the HSE provided a brief update on the SA review. The HSE thanked members for confirming their nominees to both the Oversight and Working Group. Both Groups have now been fully populated, and the first meetings have been scheduled for the coming weeks. The HSE is keen to ensure sustained progress on the review so as to influence the 2024 Service Arrangement. The SA Review will be part of a process of continued improvement to the SA. The Chair thanked the HSE for the update and for all of their work on the SA Review to date.

4. Close

The Chair concluded the meeting, reflecting on the depth of the discussions and the clear identification of a number of key issues. The Chair thanked the presenters for both their presentations and their participation in the breakout sessions and thanked Forum members for their valuable inputs to the discussions. Significant work will continue this year on the SA Review and Health Regions Implementation while the theme of sustainability is also priority for the Forum's work programme. The Chair also paid tribute to Yvonne O'Neill on her upcoming retirement from

the HSE, thanking her for her active involvement in and commitment to the work of the Forum. The Chair concluded the meeting noting that the Planning Group will meet on Monday 25 September and the Forum will meet on Monday 16 October.