

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Irish Blood Transfusion Service held  
on Monday 14th March 2011 at 12.30pm in the Boardroom, National Blood  
Centre, James's Street, Dublin 8.**

**Present:** Ms Katharine Bulbulia, Chairperson  
Mr Sean Wyse  
Mr David Keenan  
Ms Jane O'Brien  
Ms Ann Horan  
Ms Sinead Ni Mhaille  
Dr Paolo Rebullia  
Mr Mark Moran  
Dr Paul Browne  
Dr Hilary O'Leary

**Apologies:** Ms Marie Keane  
Mr David Lowe

**Also in attendance:** Mr Andrew Kelly, Chief Executive  
Dr Ian Franklin, Medical & Scientific Director  
Ms Mirinda O'Donovan, Secretary to the Board

**1. Dr Frank Dolphin, Chairman, HSE Board**

The Chairperson introduced Dr Frank Dolphin, Chairman of the HSE and Mr Dara Purcell, Secretary to the HSE Board. Dr Dolphin thanked Ms Bulbulia for the invitation and for the opportunity to speak to the Board. The IBTS Chairperson thanked Dr Dolphin for taking the time to come and speak to the Board.

**2. Minutes of the meeting on 14th February 2011**

The minutes of the meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February were agreed subject to amendment. The minutes were proposed by Mr D Keenan and seconded by Ms A Horan.

**3. Matters arising**

*Therapeutic Apheresis Service*

Meetings on changing the delivery model for this service between IBTS and SJH have not yet taken place. The CE has been in touch with SJH to progress this issue.

*Reconfiguration of services in HSE South*

The CE has sought a meeting with the relevant HSE personnel in Cork to discuss the implications of the reconfiguration for IBTS.

*Recombinants*

The contract for Factor IX was approved by the Board and the Board seal applied. The deed of indemnity for the Wilate contract also had the seal of the Board applied. The CE briefed the Board on a legal matter raised by another supplier in relation to the transfer of contracts and responsibility to SJH.

### *BECS*

The CE has sought a meeting with the Assistant Secretaries for Blood Policy and Finance in the DOH&C to discuss decoupling the pension issue from the project to the replace Progesa. This meeting request was refused. The CE advised the Board that this project was now 6 months behind schedule as the DOH&C continued to veto it and that the timelines on support for existing hardware and software were finite. This could prove a risk to the blood supply.

### *Redundancy scheme*

This was discussed with the DOH&C last week. The Department are waiting to learn of the policy of the new Government re redundancy.

## **4. CE's Report**

### *Blood supply*

This remains very positive. There has been a significant fall in the sale of red cells and platelets for the second consecutive month. This is before the impact of the blood optimisation programme starts. It was noted that some of the changes proposed in the platelets usage report have already been acted on by the hospitals and this would be affecting platelets usage, while studies on the trigger points for platelet transfusion would also have altered clinical practice.

It was also noted that the number of new donors had dropped significantly in the first two months of the year. While a planned recruitment campaign targeting new donors was postponed because of the falling sales in red cells and the robust state of the blood supply at the moment.

### *Finance*

Strict controls were primarily responsible for the positive variance in staff costs in January, while there was a corresponding positive variance on non-pay costs. The negative variance for income in February was primarily due to the decrease in sales of red cells and platelets.

### *Loss of earnings claim*

The arbitrator has ruled on the loss of earnings claim from D'Olier Street. The CE agreed to look at charging this claim to the 2010 accounts.

### *Strategy on cost saving measures*

The outputs from the EMT meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February were discussed. The scale of the savings envisaged was noted. It was also noted that additional work needed to be completed to work up these options. The alternative funding model identified was a proposal worthy of serious consideration. It was agreed that the joint session on this between the Board and the EMT would take place at the May Board meeting.

## **5. Cork Centre**

The CE said that the PIN notice had been placed on the etenders website to procure project management expertise and a design team for the project, while quotations have been sought from 3 teams of architects to carry out feasibility studies on the two sites at SFH.

It was agreed that the CE proceed with the assessment of the sites at SFH and explore the alternative proposed at CUH reverting to the Board with a final report to be considered at the next Board meeting in April.

#### **7. Presentation on Quality & Compliance**

It was agreed to take this item next. The Director of Quality & Compliance gave a presentation on quality measures and continuous improvement in 2010. The Chairperson thanked Ms M O'Connell for her detailed and informative presentation. It was suggested by Dr P Rebullia that the Director of Q&C consider publishing some of this work in an academic journal. It was also suggested that donors that are permanently deferred because of TUs be redirected as LVOs/champions for the IBTS.

#### **6. Pension Scheme**

Mr D Lowe joined the meeting via audio link for this item. The CE briefed the Board on current developments, including a discussion with the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for Blood Policy who reiterated the DOH&C's position on the pension levy. It was agreed that the Board would write to the Minister for Health seeking a meeting to discuss this matter. It was agreed that the Chairs of the Finance and Audit & Compliance Committees would join the Chairperson of the Board at this meeting.

#### **8. Report from the Research Evaluation Group**

The M&SD gave a verbal report to the Board on the issues identified by him to date that he will be focusing on over the coming months, including the possibility of broadening the basis of the MAC to include some scientific expertise. Dr P Paul Browne left the meeting for the rest of this item.

The M&SD briefed the Board on the proposals submitted for the R&D fund and the outcome of the evaluation process by the International panel of referees. The international panel made a recommendation to the Board which was accepted and it was agreed that the CE would revert accordingly to the two principals proposed to lead the projects. It was noted that additional work was required on certain modules of what was proposed and the M&SD agreed to progress this. It was noted that the selected project will probably commence in quarters 3/4 of 2011.

The Board acknowledged the efforts of former Board Member and Chair of the MAC Dr M Cahill in pursuing this particular objective of the Board and a vote of thanks was proposed by Ms J O'Brien and seconded by Dr P Rebullia. The Chairperson also proposed to write a letter of thanks to Dr Cahill to thank her for her work on this matter.

Dr P Browne rejoined the meeting.

#### **9. Minutes of the MAC meeting 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

The minutes were taken as read. Dr Browne noted that the key issues for discussion were the forthcoming HIQA report on prion filtration, the therapeutic apheresis and the Cork Centre development.

**10. Audit & Compliance Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

The minutes were taken as read. The latest meeting of the A&C Committee was on 8<sup>th</sup> March where the IT Audit Contract was reviewed and the Committee also reviewed the Financial Controls Audits.

**11. Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

The minutes were taken as read. The last meeting of the Committee was in the middle of February, where the Committee looked at the end of year accounts and had a presentation on the ABC project.

**12. Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Board is on **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April at the National Blood Centre at 12.30pm**. It was agreed that the workshop on board evaluation would be held in conjunction with the April board meeting.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_