

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Irish Blood Transfusion Service held
on Monday 17th June 2013 at 12.00 noon in the Boardroom, National Blood
Centre, James's Street, Dublin 8.**

Present: Professor Anthony Staines, Chairperson
Ms. Jane O'Brien
Dr. Paolo Rebullia
Dr Lelia Thornton
Mr John Cregan
Ms Linda Hickey
Dr Cleona Duggan
Mr Gerard Kelly
Dr Paul Browne
Mr Brian O'Mahony

Apologies: Ms Olwyn Bennett

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

1. Members time

The Board met in private session.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 20th May 2013

The minutes of the Board meeting on 20th May 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairperson.

3. Matters arising

Head of ICT

It was suggested that this post be advertised. It was viewed that the salary limits imposed by the DOH would not attract the kind of candidate that the organisation requires and that advertising it would be counter productive. It was agreed that the Board would write to the DOH, seeking more flexibility for the Head of ICT post.

4. Chief Executive's Report

Blood supply

The reduction in platelets usage is having a direct impact on income. For the first 5 months of 2013, issues are down 13.1% for the same period in 2012. It was confirmed that changes in clinical practice was having an effect on platelet usage.

Finance

The commercial agreement for plasma is due to end in March 2014. The current contractor has significantly reduced intake and have asked for a collection holiday. It was agreed that the Finance Director would continue discussions with the company, with a view to putting in place a subsequent agreement.

Pension Scheme

The Chairperson of the Trustees Mr S Wyse is to meet the DOH next week. The hearing in the High Court case has taken place. A judgement is awaited. The CE also had a meeting with the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for pensions in DPER.

National Quality Assurance Manager post

The CE is awaiting the letter from the IMB supporting the IBTS case for filling this post at a higher point of the scale.

NHO

The CE is meeting the IMB later this week to see if this issue can be resolved.

Transport

There have been a number of issues with temperature excursions with the new transport provider. The contract with the provider is a HSE contract, not an IBTS contract. The IBTS drafted a SLA to be signed by the IBTS and the HSE, clarifying roles and responsibilities regarding the transport and distribution of product, but the HSE has declined to sign it. There has been intensive dialogue with the contractor on the absolute requirement to maintain the integrity of the transport of the products and on the full implementation of the quality management system. A weekly review meeting with the provider has now been set up and while the HSE is not attending, it is proving useful to manage the issues as they arise. It was agreed that if the HSE do not sign the SLA within a week, then the matter should be escalated to Mr. Tony O'Brien DG designate, HSE, and to Dr. Philip Crowley, Director for Patient Safety and Quality, HSE. It was agreed that this matter would be on the agenda again at the September Board meeting.

ICT

The NHO specification for an online reporting system has been sent to MAK Systems. They are due to respond before the end of the month.

5. Cork Centre

The CE briefed the Board on the outcome of the Contingency Workshop and the CUH proposal. It was agreed to consider this as two separate discussions. The IBTS was required by the DOH to reduce its cost base by 10%. This amounts to €7m. The consolidation of testing in the NBC is now complete. A decision is required from the Board on whether to centralise processing in the NBC or to continue dual processing. To enable the development of full scale contingency arrangements for processing the Board needs to make the decision so that the necessary resources can be assigned to enable this work to be completed with our identified partners. The Board agreed that it is the IBTS intent to move to single site processing, subject to the satisfactory development and testing of the contingency plan. The detailed plan to implement this decision to include the contingency arrangements would be presented to the Board in November 2013. It was confirmed that there would be no changes in Cork until the plan is in place and tested.

In relation to the CUH proposal on the new centre for Cork, it was agreed that the proposal dealt with some, but not all of the issues in the CE letter to the CUH Chief Executive Officer in February. It was noted that Dr C Duggan had a potential conflict of interest and it was agreed that if it came to a vote on the issue, that she would recuse herself. It was agreed that the fundamental issue of one versus two blood banks on the same site was not resolved and two blood banks on the same site did not give value either to the IBTS or CUH.

It was noted that HSE plans for diagnostic activity in the Hospital Group excluding CUH, would have direct implications for any decision the IBTS makes regarding retaining or closing diagnostics in the new Cork Centre. It was also agreed that unless agreement could be reached on one blood bank only on the CUH site, then IBTS requirements for a new centre would be better met at a different location. It was agreed that the IBTS would write back to the Chief Executive Officer at CUH, explaining the outcome of the discussion at the Board today. The Board intend making a definitive decision on the development of a new Centre for Cork at the September meeting. It was agreed that the letter would be CC'd to DG designate HSE, and Director of Acute Hospital Services, HSE.

10. Minutes of the MAC meeting of 15th April

These minutes were noted.

11. Report of MAC meeting on 17th June

The Chair of the MAC raised the issue of national on call rosters and that there had been concern expressed by the IBTS Consultants at the manner in which this issue was being handled. The CE pointed out that discussions on this matter had commenced over a year ago on an individual and a collective basis, but that there had been no progress because there was no engagement. It was agreed that the Chair of the MAC and the M&SD would discuss the matter and revert to the CE with a proposal.

7. Presentation on Financial Statements 2012 and May year to date accounts

The Finance Director made a presentation on the 2012 Financial Statements and on the Year to Date May 2013 Management Accounts. There is one outstanding matter to be finalised. The Financial Statements are still with the C&AG and are subject to final approval. The Financial Statements were agreed in principle and Chairperson of the Board and the Chair of the Finance Committee were nominated to sign the accounts, subject to no material change. It was noted that the accounts had to be signed before 30th June. If this cannot be done, then the DoH and the Minister will need to be notified.

The trend for 2013 up until the end of May shows a forecast surplus of €150,000 by the end of the year, however that will be subject to ongoing review as there is less certainty on income than on costs.

Discussions are ongoing with the company that buys Plasma regarding a payment holiday and the possibility of a new 2 year agreement once the current contract expires in March 2014.

8. Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016

The CE explained the format of the Strategic Plan 2013-2016 and advised that feedback from the DOH had been incorporated. A number of changes were proposed and agreed. The document is reflected in the Business Plan for 2013 and quarterly reviews are being carried out on progress using the Balanced Scorecard methodology. The outcome of Q1 and 2 reviews will be presented to the Board in September. The plan was approved by the Board.

6. Audit & Compliance Committee Minutes 29th April

The Chair of the Audit & Compliance Committee briefed the Board on work the Internal Auditors were undertaking reviewing the Risk Registers. The A&C Committee met the C&AG last week to review the accounts for 2012. The Committee has also reviewed its Terms of Reference and one change was agreed, which was that the TORs would be reviewed annually. IMB inspections have taken place in Carlow and Ardee. It was also agreed that the website be updated with information on mental illness and blood donation. The QA review is progressing and revised metrics have been developed. The importance of having two external experts on the Committee was noted and it was agreed that they should be invited to a Donor Awards Ceremony, as a mark of our thanks to them.

12. Any Other Business

The Chair advised the Board that he had received Dr Conor McGrane's resignation letter and that the DOH had been notified. The board thanked Dr. McGrane for his contributions to the work of the IBTS. The CE confirmed that he had contacted the DOH requesting that the vacancy be filled as soon as possible, preferably by someone with accountancy/business expertise.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the IBTS Board will take place on Monday 16th September 2013 in the Barry room in the Cork Centre.

Signed: _____

Date: _____