

National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHEM)

COVID-19 Subgroup on Workforce - Meeting 3

Note of Meeting and Actions Arising

Meeting Date: Friday 27 March 2020

Time: 11:30 am

Location: Teleconference

In attendance:

Department of Health:

Gerry O'Brien (Sub-Chair), People Pay & Superannuation Unit (PPSU)

Eilish Timoney, People Pay & Superannuation Unit

Paul Howard, People Pay & Superannuation Unit

Samantha Kenny, People Pay & Superannuation Unit

Amanda Younge, Industrial Relations (IR)

John Seery, Industrial Relations

Stephen Brophy, Governance and Performance Unit (GPU)

Kieran Cashman, Professional Regulation Unit (PRU)

Patsy Carr, Social Care Unit

David Noonan, Primary Care

David O'Connor, Disability Unit

Ray Healy, Nursing Policy

Derek McCormack, Office of the Chief Nursing Officer

Joan Regan, Acute Hospitals and Policy

Teresa Maguire, Research and Development and Health Analytics

Dympna Kavanagh, Primary Care/Dental

Bernadette O'Donnell, Primary Care/Dental

Alison Green, NPHEM Workforce Subgroup

Tracey Phelan, People Pay & Superannuation Unit (Secretariat)

Emer Hanney, People Pay & Superannuation Unit (Secretariat)

HSE:

Philippa Withero, Assistant National Director of Human Resources

Jackie Nix, Community Operations, Human Resources

Colette Walsh, National Ambulance Service, Head of Human Resources

Department of Public Expenditure & Reform:

Mairead Emerson, Civil Service Human Resources

Kevin O'Farrell, Public Service Pay and Pensions

Cian McCarthy, Health Vote

Apologies

Department of Health:

Paul Bolger (Chair), Resources Division

Rachel Kenna, Office of the Chief Nursing Officer

Siobhan Kennan, Professional Regulation Unit

HSE

Anne Marie Hoey, National Director of Human Resources

1. Welcome

The Sub-Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Secretariat carried out a roll call of attendees. Agreed Actions from the previous meeting.

2. DoH status update

Update on progress to date including the resolution of HR related Terms and Conditions barriers (e.g., the Waiver of Fees for re-registration), cross-government deployment, the entry of Interns to the workforce and the use of private hospital locations and staff. It was noted that the question of Childcare was being advanced.

Discussion held around nursing students' progress through their placement programmes, training during the emergency and treatment of other (non-nursing) students in the health sector.

HSE raised the issue of fees for new staff, the restoration of fees and the numbers of nurses and midwives who have volunteered and/or are available for return to work. PRU advised on the advancement of legislation in respect of re-registration. HSE, undertook to arrange a link between HSE and CNO's office to share details of Be On Call for Ireland applications.

Discussion held around Garda Vetting for SNAs from schools seeking to help in the health sector.

3. HSE status update

Update on the applications processed through Be On Call for Ireland, work around managing multi-task attendant grades, deployment, the increase in additional capacities and the expansion of capacity planning. HSE confirmed that regular COVID-related circulars are being issued across the health sector for the information of staff.

Discussion held around non-nursing health students and the HSE undertook to provide details of non-nursing health students to enable a mapping exercise to be carried out in respect of their roles.

4. Update from other subgroups and areas

DoH Acute Hospitals and Policy Division addressed the problems encountered in relation to staffing of maternity areas, delays in swabbing results for staff and the importance of staff returning to work being directed back to the areas in which they worked immediately prior to leaving.

DoH People Pay and Superannuation Unit confirmed that priority testing is in place for essential health workers including key maternity hospital staff through a dedicated health link system. Any issues should be raised with local occupational health departments.

DoH Acute Hospitals and Policy Division raised the issue of recent press reports regarding changes to death in service arrangements for GPs. DoH People Pay and Superannuation Unit confirmed that this matter had been resolved and communicated to GPs.

DoH Primary Care Division (Dental) provided an update on the dental service and the challenges in mapping skills. The HSE undertook to ask the Health & Social Care Professions (HSE) to contact DoH Primary Care Division (Dental).

The Vulnerable People Subgroup provided an update on their document – Framework for Community Support. They confirmed that the Taoiseach's office also has a Framework prepared and this may supersede the Vulnerable People Subgroup's paper.

The Sub-Chair reiterated the remit of the Workforce Subgroup stating that a vehicle must be identified to deal with queries and provide advice in respect of 'at-risk people' which will act as a guide for all employers.

Discussion held around delays experienced in respect of Garda Vetting for staff of nursing homes and the depletion of nursing home staff due to them being called off panels to work with the HSE. The HSE confirmed that it was not focussing on recruiting nursing home staff and supports the need for residential care sector.

The DoH Professional Regulation Unit confirmed that they had no further updates.

5. AOB

DoH Governance and Performance Unit stressed that indemnity should not be an obstacle to recruitment. The HSE advised that they had linked with the DoH Professional Regulation Unit on this matter.

Actions Arising

	Action	Owner
1.	Share the most recent paper on childcare provision with the HSE.	DOH
2.	CNO's office to engage with the HSE when details around hiring students into relevant roles, while continuing to gain necessary credits for their course, are clarified.	CNO Office
3.	DPER to confirm final arrangements for DEASP payments for COVID-19 related issues with DOH.	DPER
4.	HSE to link with HBS Recruit, HSE to share details of the nurses applying through Ireland On Call portal with CNO's Office, DOH.	HSE
5.	DOH, HSE, Gardaí and Dept. Education to communicate to resolve issues in relation to SNA vetting requirements.	DOH
6.	All details of current health care students (excluding nurses) to be sent to Workforce Planning in order to map skills mix and find suitable roles. HSE to talk to HSPC, HSE.	HSE
7.	HSE to talk to HSPC, HSE, and develop links with Chief Dental Officer, DOH to apply the Dental skills mix model to other areas.	HSE

Next Meeting agreed for Thursday 9th April 2020 @11.30am