Minutes of the Health Budget Oversight Meeting (HBOG)
27 May 2020
Conference Call 2:30pm

Health Service Executive:	Stephen Mulvany, Tim Cummins, Colum Maddox, Angela Fitzgerald, Nigel O'Keefe, Damien McCallion, Mark O'Connor, Helen Byrne, Pat Healy, Tony Patterson.
Department of Health:	Paul Bolger, Fiona Prendergast, Greg Dempsey, David Smith, Kevin Colman, Fergal Goodman, Caoimhe Dolan, David Bolger, Denise McCarthy, Eoin Halpin, Matthew Dignam, Sharon Gilligan, Aidan Gilchrist, Shane Corr, Rhona Broderick.
D/Public Expenditure & Reform:	Ronnie Downes (Chair), David Owens, Terry Jennings, Patrick Moran, Robert Scott, Cian McCarthy, Albert Morris.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting**

Previously submitted amendments from D/Health and the HSE for the Minutes of the meeting held on May 21st were discussed and agreed.

2. **Update on HSE COVID-19 Action Plan**

Logged queries – state-of-play:
A number of queries were raised regarding the latest flash report submitted to DPER and DoH. It was agreed that a separate technical discussion should take place to deal with these.

DoH to arrange trilateral meeting on Flash Report queries.

3. **COVID-19 Reporting and Monitoring**

Private Hospitals

The Group were informed that the HSE board has written to the Department of Health to recommend the extension of the agreement with Private Hospitals for the two additional months, as allowed for in the Heads of Terms.

The Minister for Health is currently considering the recommendation and analysis from the HSE and will be bringing a Memo to Government with his own recommendation, which it would be premature to open for discussion at this meeting, in next day or so.

GP Revised Contract

The deadline of 15 June 2020 for a decision on future for the COVID-19 GP arrangement was noted, as was the need for an early consideration of this.

A separate meeting with relevant officials will be held in the coming days to discuss this arrangement.

Temporary Assistance Payment Scheme (Nursing Homes)

It was noted that the costs of this scheme will not be fully known until such a time that the deadline for submissions of Form B has passed (5 June 2020).

The Group reaffirmed the importance of considering both the financial and non-financial supports to the sector by the HSE, in order to get a better picture of the overall assistance provided to Nursing Homes; figures given to the Dáil C-19 Committee were referenced.

Testing

The Group were informed that the Department of Health are still in the process of developing a Memo to Government regarding the costs of testing in the future, having regard to the significant amount of information that needs to be collected and analysed for a thorough analysis.

A number of additional steps regarding legal safeguards concerning testing are being implemented. Dialogue in ongoing between the HSE and the State Claims Agency on this matter.

Citywest Facility

The Group were reminded that the deadline for a decision regarding the extension of this arrangement post October is 26 June 2020. The Department of Health and HSE are still investigating the potential alternative / additional uses for the spare capacity within this facility for the remaining period of the license agreement.

4. AOB

The point was made that, despite the positive news regarding the continual daily decrease in new infections, the pandemic is still ongoing and a crisis situation may pertain for months to come. Any future recession will increase the demand on the public finances and the Group acknowledged that there are significant expenditure challenges ahead.

Next meeting: Thursday 4th June, 2:30pm.