Health Budget Oversight Group Minutes

9th July 2020. 2:00pm

Health Service Executive:	Stephen Mulvany, Tim Cummins, Colum Maddox, Nigel O'Keefe, Damien McCallion, Mark O'Connor, Pat Healy Tony Patterson.
Department of Health:	Paul Bolger, Fiona Prendergast, Kevin Colman, Caoimhe Dolan, Eoin Halpin, Matthew Dignam, Aidan Gilchrist, Evan Walker, Mark Hennessy, Shane Corr, Sharon Gilligan, Louise Carrigan, Aonraid Dunne, Megan Coll
D/Public Expenditure & Reform:	Ronnie Downes (Chair), Terry Jennings, Patrick Moran, Deirdre Collins, Cian McCarthy, Seán Prior, Albert Morris.

1. Minutes & Agenda

Minutes from the previous HBOG meeting from 25th June 2020 were accepted.

2. COVID-19 Reporting and Monitoring

Private Hospital Agreement

DPER officials expressed dissatisfaction that requested information regarding costs associated with the Private Hospital Agreement had not yet been supplied. It was noted that a letter on this topic had been issued from DPER to D/Health, and hence the issue has been escalated within the Department of Health. However, the Chair reiterated that the HBOG retains an important function in overseeing all aspects of the Health Budget and expects to be apprised of these costs as requested.

Personal Protective Equipment

An extensive discussion took place in which the context of the original procurements of PPE by the HSE was presented, as well as the analysis that is being developed by the Department of Health on the HSE's model for future PPE requirements. The Group acknowledged that the HSE was working within a challenging and volatile global market for PPE, with very little global epidemiological information to inform procurement requirements. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged by all parties that the regularisation of the sanctioning of PPE expenditure remains an important outstanding issue and that finalisation of the model for future PPE requirements was necessary in advance of discussions on the 2021 Budget Estimates. It was noted that the HSE had recently issued a request to the Department of Health and that a Memo for Government is in preparation with a view to addressing the PPE expenditure.

3. AOB

- DPER requested an update on the note to be provided in relation to the 'loss of income' in the community line in recent reports. This is expected prior to the next HBOG.
- DPER Payside informed the Group that there was a conciliation with health sector unions under the WRC, and they are to reconvene on the 23rd. Engagement continues but there is no outcome as yet.

- The next monthly Memo on Covid-19 Expenditure Planning is planned to go Government on the 20th July.

Next meeting is scheduled for 23rd July 2020, 2:30pm.