

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 3 | <p>Chairperson's Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chair and the other Commission Members welcomed Dr Hillery to the Commission. 2. The response from the DOH as regards the MHC sitting on NPHEP was noted and it was agreed to discuss with the Minister at the meeting later in the morning. 3. New Email Policy – It was noted that a comprehensive policy had been produced and that the Commission Members are required to read the policy and confirmed in writing that they have read and understood same to JG by 27 November 2020. It was noted that the Email Policy is a protective mechanism for everyone for the MHC and set out best practice in the area. 4. Bios of Commission Members for the website should be sent to the Comms Team. 5. If there are any queries related to the new devices, Commission Members should contact John Daly to resolve them. 6. The December meeting will be held on 17 December 2020. | JG /Comms |
| 4 | <p>Chief Executive and Executive Reports</p> <p><u>CE's Report</u></p> <p>The CE noted the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The new Director of Regulation will take up the role at the end of the month. He is coming from a regulator background. 2. The impact of Covid-19 is continuing to be monitored by the Covid-19 Monitoring hub within the RMT team in collaboration with the DOH and HSE. Hostels are also being monitored also. The process involves MHC getting notification of suspected and confirmed cases, examining the risk and escalating the issue to HSE and DOH as required. 3. The Business Planning Process for 2021 is underway with teams preparing their individual plans. This will be presented to the Commission in due course. 4. The Report on the Overview of Mental Health for Older People will be published before the next Commission meeting. Commission Members will receive notification of this in advance. <p><u>Corporate</u></p> <p>SM then addressed the Members as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is currently a projected surplus for year-end. 2. The DOH has indicated that additional funding for 2021 may be received which would help to develop the business plan in confidence. 3. Risk Management Training took place in October. 4. The Migration to Microsoft 365 has been rolled out. 5. The process of selecting an external partner to develop a new ICT strategy is in progress. <p>PL requested that SM provide a Memo outlining the top five areas of underspend in 2020 with the reasons for same, as this would enable the Commission to accurately review where savings have been made. It was agreed that this would be provided to the FARC and PL would then report from the FARC to the Commission at the December meeting.</p> <p>JN queried whether, given the substantial savings made in 2020, the SMT is looking at potential process changes that could be made to how the Commission undertakes its business. JF noted that the Business Plan for 2021 is currently being drafted which will outline the core activities of each division. Following this, the SMT will be examining what areas may need to consider changes and how that impacts on the Budget for 2021.</p> | SM |

Bank Mandates – Updated bank mandates for both bank accounts were circulated – SM outlined the changes made.

Decision 26

MW proposed approval of the Bank Mandates and JN seconded same.

Legal

The report was circulated as part of the Commission Papers.

RMT Report

The report was circulated as part of the Commission Papers.

MHT

OK noted the following:

1. The Annual Seminar for Panel Members was held in October, it was very interactive with the live chat and the feedback was excellent. It also identified the ongoing issue of connectivity in relation to video training / calls.
2. A Memo was circulated as part of the Commission Papers relating to the Project for the move to Video Conferencing for Mental Health Tribunals. OK noted that since issuing the Memo the HSE has agreed to purchase the equipment for its approved centres and to manage the operation of that equipment for the pilot. The result is a reduction in the figures quoted for the Project in the region of €100,000. Furthermore, two private approved centres have been contacted about taking part in the pilot project. The vision is that MHTs will take place remotely for now but that the patient will be able to see everyone. There will be guidance documents setting out clearly how the process will operate. This process shall be patient driven, allowing patients to opt for phone conferencing if they prefer. Post-Covid-19, MHTs will revert to being in person, however the video conferencing system will be there as a back up option in case of emergencies eg weather-related conditions or a norovirus outbreak in an approved centre. It was confirmed that all legal representatives currently have access to their patients by phone or WhatsApp but eventually the video conferencing equipment would be available when a patient needs to speak to his/her legal representative. Questions were raised and addressed in relation to the Project. The Members considered the matter carefully and agreed to approve the Project, which is for the benefit of the patients.

Decision 27

NK proposed approval of the project and NB seconded same.

DSS

AF confirmed that the DSS formally transferred from the DJE to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) in October. A meeting with Minister Rabbitte took place on 20 October attended by the CE, Chair and AF. At a meeting of the Inter-Departmental Steering Group on 10 November, A/Sec DCEDIY stated that responsibility for the 2015 Act and the DSS will move to the new Disability Team within the DCEDIY in the coming months. The team has not been put in place and presently there is no resource dealing with the Act and regulations. The timelines and dependencies for commencement were reiterated to the DCEDIY with the need to progress certain matters early next year. A/Sec DCEDIY proposed a further sub-group meeting to review legislative amendments and regulations, to take place in December.

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 5 | <p>Risk Management FARC will review the latest risk register at its meeting next week and will report to the Commission in December.</p> | |
| 6 | <p>Committee Updates</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> FARC – No scheduled meeting since the last Commission meeting. Legislation Committee – No scheduled meeting since the last Commission meeting. | |
| 7 | <p>Stakeholder Initiative - Presentation by the Irish Hospice Foundation – 11.05 am - 12.05 pm Sharon Foley, CEO, Rebecca Lloyd, Public Engagement Officer and Dr. Brendan O’Shea, Specialist in General Practice & Occupational Medicine gave a presentation to the Commission on their “Think Ahead” initiative which is a planning document for all adults encouraging them to think, talk, tell and record their wishes for ill health, end of life and after death.</p> <p>The Members complimented the IHF on their presentation and the “Think Ahead” initiative, which they noted was relevant to every person in the country. The Members thanked the Irish Hospice Foundation for attending and wished them future success.</p> | |
| 8 | <p>Meeting with Minister Butler - 12.15 to 1.15 pm The following representatives from the Department of Health joined the meeting with Minister Butler - Colm Desmond, Assistant Secretary Mental Health Unit, David Maguire, Principal Officer Mental Health Unit, Pdraig Kelly, Private Secretary to the Minister and Kate Mitchell, Advisor to the Minister.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Bill to amend the Mental Health Acts 2001 – 2018 (the 2001 Act) It was noted that DOH has conducted a review of the 2001 Act and it was hoped to send the Heads for legal advice before the end of the year but this has been slightly delayed as comments are awaited from the HSE. The Minister noted that it is hoped that the Heads will move quickly thereafter and be sent to the Attorney General’s Office during Q1 2021. She added that there were a number of complicated matters that would require some further consideration. The Minister acknowledged the great contribution made by the MHC to the Heads. Letter from the Department re NPHE The Minister noted that the Commission is seeking a seat on NPHE and advised that the request had been passed on to the CMO. The Chair acknowledged the Minister’s reply but noted that no response had been received by the Commission from NPHE. The DOH agreed to follow this matter up after the meeting. Physical Infrastructure of Approved Centres There was an extensive discussion on this matter. The Minister acknowledged that many centres which have multioccupancy bedrooms and bathrooms require updating. The need for such works has escalated due to COVID-19. The HSE commenced an infrastructure improvement programme in 2018 and €6 million has been allocated to this. In addition to this, the Minister noted that 15 centres were non-compliant in 2020 due to the conditions regarding cleanliness and 22 were non-compliant due to structural and decorative conditions which she deemed to be unacceptable. JF noted that it is approved centres in acute hospitals that are struggling to achieve compliance with this regulation and that it | |

might be more appropriate to give these beds back to the acute systems and build fit for purpose acute units. JF also noted that a number of approved centres are not getting basic issues such as hygiene right and this cannot be tolerated. It was agreed by all that there is an urgency and an onus to improve and raise standards in approved centres. The Minister wanted it noted that both she and the DOH have zero tolerance for any non-compliance regarding issues of hygiene. JN welcomed the Minister's zero tolerance on hygiene matters and commitment to addressing this area of improvement and recommended that a review of progress on hygiene compliance in approved centres remains a priority agenda item.

TM noted that he is involved with the opening of the new Unit in Sligo and said the impact of the new building on the patients and the staff was transformative. One example of the change is that all patients now have their own room. He said that to date people have underestimated the impact of the physical environment and this is a clear example of where the positive impact of the change can be seen. Minister Butler expressed that she would like to visit the new Unit in due course.

It was also acknowledged that approved centres are only one component of acute mental health services and that the Commission is seeking to have its remit broadened in terms of regulating residential and community services. The Minister confirmed that she is 100% committed to enhancing community mental health services and that the regulation of mental health community residences by the Commission will be dealt with in the new legislation.

4. Report from the Inspector of Mental Health Services for Older People

The Minister noted that this valuable report highlights a gap in service provision and will take its recommendations into account in the development of mental health services for older people. On a related matter, the Minister noted that her team was working on trying to get day care centres for older people reopened and this would hopefully happen in the Spring. Inter-department collaboration will be required in addressing the many issues affecting older people, including in areas such as transport and housing.

SF noted that the integration of services is important and that if this does not happen, demand will not be met in 20-30 years' time. The Minister acknowledged this issue.

It was noted that there is often a lack of transparency in the HSE on where the funding is spent. The Minister noted that she will be requesting a meeting with the HSE to ensure that the €38 million allocated in next year's budget for new services will in fact be spent on new services.

The Chair noted that it is critical that the right services are in place for the relevant people at the right time and place. The Minister agreed and said that there will need to be a lot of collaboration between various entities - the HSE, NGOs and the relevant Government Departments - over the next few years to address these issues collectively.

The Minister concluded by saying that she wants to ensure equity in mental health service delivery in all regions across the country.

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| | <p>The Minister thanked the Commission for the collaborative efforts to date with the HSE and DOH in relation to Covid-19 monitoring in approved centres and in relation to the continued operation of the mental health tribunals.</p> <p>The Commission thanked the Minister for taking the time to join their meeting.</p> | |
| | <p>Next Meeting – 17/12/2020 at 10.30 am</p> | |

| ACTION LOG | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| No | Action | Person Responsible | Status |
| 1. | Minutes of 15 October to be reviewed | OK | In Progress |
| 2. | Members – 2.1 Submit updated Bios to Comms Team, and 2.2 Read Email Policy and confirm same to JG | Members | In Progress |
| 3. | Memo to the FARC outlining the top areas of underspending | SM | In Progress |

Dated: 17/12/2020

Signed:



By the Chair