



PAPER NSMC HEFS 1 (10) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY SECTORAL FORMATS

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

2 JUNE 2010

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

HEALTH SECTOR

1. The tenth North South Ministerial Council meeting in the Health and Food Safety sectoral formats was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh on Wednesday, 2 June 2010. The meeting was attended by Mary Harney, TD, Minister for Health and Children, Michael McGimpsey MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Barry Andrews, TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Michelle Gildernew MP, MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Minister Harney chaired the meeting.
2. Ministers launched the 2009 Cancer Consortium Annual Report “Transcending Borders for Better Health: Empowering the Future through Research, Education and Care”. This publication marks the tenth anniversary of this highly beneficial collaboration. The goal of the consortium is to reduce the incidence and mortality of cancer in Northern Ireland and Ireland and to build capacity and infrastructure for cancer research on the island.

Progress Report

3. The Council noted and welcomed progress on the following issues:

Suicide Prevention

The broad range of co-operation on suicide prevention including the all-island evaluation of ASIST training.

Radiotherapy

The current position and projected timescale for the development of a new satellite radiotherapy centre at Altnagelvin Hospital.

Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services (PCCS)

The operation of the Service Level Agreement in this highly specialist area where the aim is to share resources for the benefit of both populations.

A/H1NI Pandemic

The reviews which are underway on the responses to the Pandemic.

Cancer Research

The continuing progress on cancer research including continued participation of nurses in training in clinical trials at the National Cancer Institute (USA) and their employment in support of trials upon their return. Northern Ireland's participation for the first time, in the Health Economics Fellowship scheme alongside Fellows from Ireland was also noted as was an enhanced collaborative focus on research into prostate cancer.

GP Out-of-Hours Projects

The most recent figures on patient uptake in the pilot projects in Inishowen/Londonderry and Keady/Castleblayney. Further analysis on the uptake of the service has been requested. This analysis will be used to evaluate the sustainability of the service.

Health Promotion

The wide range of co-operation on health promotion including action to reduce tobacco use, drugs misuse and on physical activity and nutrition.

Health and Social Care Services Presentation on Interreg IV

4. The Council welcomed the presentation from Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) on the progress in implementing the Interreg IVA Programme in Health and Social Care. The Special European Programmes Body has awarded €30 million to both Health departments for health and social care activity. CAWT was chosen by the Health departments to implement and manage the delivery of a range of activities supported by INTERREG IVA.

Child Protection

5. Ministers noted and welcomed the ongoing progress on a range of child protection issues including the establishment of the innovative North-South Child Protection Hub website and its planned launch in Autumn 2010; the further development of a draft joint protocol dealing with children in care and those on the child protection register who move between jurisdictions, where there are concerns and the intention that this will be published following legal and professional advice and Ministerial approval. Ministers also noted the further development of a draft joint communications strategy and that this will be published following Ministerial consideration.
6. Ministers also welcomed the ongoing work within both jurisdictions to deal with the very complex and sensitive issue of historic child abuse and the continuing collaborative work within both jurisdictions on the management of sex offenders.

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD (*safefood*)

***safefood* Progress Report**

7. Ministers noted the promotional activities undertaken by **safefood** and the current position on the body's scientific activities including the completion of a number of research projects covering food safety, hygiene and dietary health and the initiation of a number of new research projects. They welcomed the development of all-island knowledge networks of food safety professionals.

Scientific Advisory Committee

8. The Council approved the appointment of **safefood's** Scientific Advisory Committee and the appointments of Dr Ken Baird and Professor Charles Daly as Chair and Vice Chair respectively

***safefood* Annual Report and Draft Accounts 2009**

9. Ministers noted the current position on the production of **safefood's** annual report for 2009 and that the draft accounts for 2009 have been submitted to the Comptrollers and Auditors General in both jurisdictions.

Surveillance of Foodborne Diseases

10. Ministers noted the work carried out by **safefood** in support of its legislative remit on the surveillance of foodborne diseases and the work of the Scientific Advisory Committee in identifying a harmonised approach to this surveillance.

**Joint Secretariat
2 June 2010**