



***Meeting of
Children Acts Advisory Board
Tuesday 26th August 2008
Phoenix House***

Minutes

- Present:** Jacinta Stewart (Chair)
Cathleen Callanan, Michael Donnellan Charlie Hardy,
Cathal Flynn, Roger Killeen, Gerry O'Neill, Dermot Stokes,
- Apologies:** Nuala Doherty, Phil Hanna, Finbarr Murphy, Michelle Shannon,
Finbarr O'Leary
- In Attendance:** Aidan Browne, Jane Craig, Robert Murphy, Clodagh Thorne,

Declaration of Interest in agenda items, by Board Members

- No conflict of interests declared.

1) Minutes

- The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, agreed and subsequently signed by the Chairperson, Jacinta Stewart.

2) Matters Arising

- There were no matters arising.

3) Chief Executive Report

The Chief Executive reported on the following topics:

- The reduction in the allocation by €45,000, on foot of the Government decision to reduce spending, which was notified by the Secretary General of Department of Health and children (circulated).
- The rejection of the appeal against the inclusion of the CAAB in the valuation list. It was decided that all avenues of appeal should be exhausted. Lodging an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal will cost €300.
- CAAB National Conference.
- Evidence to Practice Seminar planned for November and developments on DRM in the HSE.

- Meeting held between the CAAB Executive and Atlantic Philanthropies. The aim of this meeting was to explore how value could be added and duplication avoided in research undertaken by both parties.
- The training seminar, undertaken by Ciarán Ó Searcaigh, Advisory Officer CAAB and JLO Garda Sergeant Ben Flahive from Cork, on Restorative Practice held in Summer Training Institute, Pennsylvania.

4) Subcommittee Reports

a) Finance

The finance report was circulated and it was noted that the CAAB have spent approx. 50% of total budget for the year to date and are on target. The reduction in the allocation will be reflected in the Management Report for August.

b) Research

The Research Committee met in July and the following was noted:

- HSE Audit of young people in care is currently in progress;
- The CAAB sponsored SIS research study on Special Care Applications has been published and was circulated to all board members;
- Children's Centre TCD overview of PREW will be presented to the CAAB later this week;
- The Therapeutic Interventions report is due for completion in September;
- A number of research projects are at the invitation to tender stage, including an Analysis of Literature on Inter-agency Co-operation and an Audit and Analysis of Irish Research Literature on Children in Detention and Out of Home Care. These should be completed before the end of the year;
- The point was made that there is a need to ensure that research projects in CAAB and the OMCYA are aligned.

c) Communications

The Communications Committee met in July and the following points were noted:

- Two members of the communications committee were unable to attend the meeting due to the HSE embargo on travel;
- The summer newsletter was published in July and the Autumn edition will be published towards the end of September;
- Invitations to attend the CAAB National Conference were issued widely;
- A web link to CAAB has been placed on most relevant agencies websites;
- An article on the CAAB will be published in the next issues of the Court Service and the Department of Education and Science;
- Next meeting will take place in CAAB offices at the end of October.

5) Report on Therapeutic Interventions

A discussion on the Therapeutic Interventions report took place and the following points were made:

- Concerns with regard to the definition of a therapeutic facility including legal and ethical considerations need to be addressed;
- Units describing themselves as therapeutic facilities need to operate within defined parameters;

- Guidelines for evaluating and inspecting units need to be developed, there are two critical issues to be considered i.e. the quality of staff and staff supervision.

6) Criteria for admission to and discharge from Special Care Units

The criteria was circulated and issues surrounding the wording in Section E 4 (b) were discussed, it was agreed that the wording should be changed to clarify the point that a Special Care Order **cannot** be made where a criminal charge is pending.

- It was agreed that the CAAB would draft a wording along these lines and consult with the Health Service Executive on this matter;
- It was agreed that a meeting should be sought with the DPP to request that consideration be given to prioritising children's cases in order to reduce the amount of time a child has to wait before appearing in Court;
- Discussions with regard to discharge have been initiated with the HSE.

7) Guardian *ad litem*

a) Guidelines

- The wording regarding conflict of interest on the appointment of a Guardian has been revised and the Board agreed that this was appropriate;
- Legal advice on the wording of the guidelines has been sought and applied;
- A sub-editor was engaged to ensure the guidelines followed a logical sequence and were readable by all, this will be completed shortly.

b) Advice

- The advice document was discussed and certain issues were brought up with regard to the wording and the layout;

Some options were put forward and it was agreed that the document would be looked at again by a sub-committee established for the purpose and chaired by the Board Chairperson, a final document is to be brought to the Board at the September meeting. In addition to the Chair the following members were appointed:

Roger Killeen; Gerry O'Neill; Michael Donnellan and Charlie Hardy

8) Publications

a) Annual Report

The 2007 Annual Report is ready to be translated into Irish, after which it will go to print. The report will be officially launched and presented to the Minister at the CAAB National Conference.

b) Interagency Booklet

A copy of the Inter-agency booklet was shown to Board members and it was agreed to circulate a final draft copy when available. This publication was seen to be an important piece of work and it was vital that all information contained in it was accurate and signed off by the relevant agencies. It was

suggested that the booklet should be uploaded to the CAAB website in a hypertext format with a search facility.

9) AOB

No other business was raised.

The next Board Meeting will take place in CAAB Offices on 30th September at 2pm. Lunch will be available from 1pm onwards.