

- II. An Intra-Organisational Children in Care Forum to ensure that children in our care are a priority for service provision across the agencies and that services are better integrated.
- III. A Board-wide Child Protection Committee to co-ordinate the inter and intra-agency response to children in need of protection.
- IV. A Best Health for Children and Adolescents Steering Group to co-ordinate the Board's work in further developing services for children, young people and their families and to implement "Best Health for Children" programme at Board Level.
- V. A Children Act 2001 Implementation Forum to oversee and drive the implementation of the Act.
- VI. A Quality Efficiency and Effectiveness Forum to improve the quality and efficiency of our services and ensure we adhere to best practice in both management and service delivery.
- VII. A Children and Families HR liaison group to improve the integration and planning of recruitment, retention, employee relations and staff development and training.

Chairs of these seven groups will form an Implementation Team to ensure the actions in our Organisational Strategy are delivered. The Implementation Team will also ensure that consultation takes place with the Partnership Forum for Child Care and Family Support, service-users, staff and other stakeholders throughout the life of the strategy.

Through this mechanism we will also deliver on the objectives of The Regional Child Care Framework and The Regional Youth Homeless Action Plan.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Child Care and Families Support Services

A range of services are provided, either directly by our Board, by the other Area Health Boards in the region on our behalf, or by non-statutory agencies who are grant-aided under Section 10 of the Child Care Act, to provide for and protect the welfare of children and families in our Board. These services include:

- Community Social Work and Child Care
- Family Support Service
- Public Health Nursing Service
- Community Mothers' Programme
- Family Welfare Conference Service
- Risk Assessment and Consultative Service
- Residential and Foster Care Service
- Voluntary Residential Children's Centres
- Inspection Services
- Pre-school Inspection Service
- Inter-Country Adoption Service

Voluntary Organisations

Under Section 10 of the Child Care Act 1991 - "A Health Board may, subject to any general directions given by the Minister and on such terms or conditions as it thinks fit, assist a voluntary body or any other person who provides or proposes to provide a Child Care or Family Support Service similar or ancillary to

a service which the Health Board may provide under this Act.”

The South Western Area Health Board grant aids a number of non-statutory organisations including the following:

- The Daughters of Charity
- Barnardos
- Kildare Youth Services
- Mater Dei Counselling
- Mercy Family Centre
- Extern West
- Dóchas
- Londubh
- Fatima Youth Initiative
- Life Start
- ISPCC
- An Cosán
- Carline
- Pack
- Rialto Family Centre

The following National Services are funded through our Board:

- PACT
- Treoir
- Cúnamh
- Irish Association of Young People in Care

The following organisations are grant aided to provide Residential Care Services:

- Los Angeles
- Miss Carr's
- Travellers' Family Care

The Eastern Regional Health Authority directly funds the following which provide services for

Children and Families in our Board:

- Adelaide and Meath Hospitals incorporating The National Children's Hospital
- St. John of God, Lucena Service
- Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin, including St. Louise's Unit

During 2002 a comprehensive review of all Barnardos services funded by the South Western Area Health Board was initiated. This review includes consultation with children and families using the service, Barnardos staff, South Western Area Health Board staff and other agencies referring children and families to these services. It is anticipated that this review will be completed early in 2003.

A similar review was undertaken with Los Angeles services. This organisation runs two residential children centres for our Board.

- A Child Care Information Officer was appointed in July 2002.
- Extern West Youth Programme was established in Dublin West in May 2002.
- Springboards projects in Dublin West and Kildare / West Wicklow were mainstreamed.

Additional funding was made available for the following:

- Cúnamh & Pact for pregnancy counselling services.
- Treoir for the development of a national service for young parents.
- Fatima Youth Initiative, Dublin South City for family support services.
- Londubh in Dublin West for family support services.

- Funding under youth homelessness for Kildare Youth Services and Clondalkin Partnership to expand their counselling services.
- The Irish Association of Young People in Care to develop their services.
- Funding provided under Children First and Children Act 2001 for our Children & Families Training Unit in Citywest and for TCI (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention) Training for staff in our residential units.

Child Health

Child Health Services are provided by a range of disciplines in a variety of settings namely, the child's home, health centres, G.P. surgeries and schools. Services are focused on pre-school children and children attending national schools.

The pre-school service includes primary prevention, immunisation, parenting advice and support, secondary prevention, development and metabolic screening. The national school service is delivered on school premises and includes examination of school entrants and programmed hearing and vision screening at regular intervals, until children reach 12 years of age.

- A Development Officer for "Best Health for Children" programme was appointed in 2002
- Additional funding was provided for immunisation programmes

Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Services

The Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Services in

the South Western Area Health Board are provided both directly by the Board and by Lucena Clinic, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services run by the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God. The Board also provides services to part of the Northern Area Health Board. These services provide a wide range of therapeutic activities as follows:

- Child & Family Centres
- In-patient Treatment Units
- Special Schools
- Liaison Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Service (Adelaide and Meath Hospital, incorporating the National Children's Hospital, Tallaght; Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin)
- Additional staff were appointed to our consultant-led multidisciplinary teams

Services for Children on the Autistic Spectrum

Beechpark Services offers a regional service for children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to the three Area Health Boards and is managed by the South Western Area Health Board.

Beechpark embraces a multidisciplinary team approach to service delivery, which is mainly provided, on an outreach, non-clinic basis in a variety of settings including home, school and respite.

During the year additional staff were appointed to the service and new premises was acquired for staff.

Child Care & Family Support

No. of notifications of suspected child abuse	771
No. of children in care at 31.12.2002	733
<i>Foster Care</i>	581
<i>Residential Care</i>	127
<i>At home under care order</i>	9
<i>Other</i>	16
No. of children admitted to care in 2002	168
No. of Section 20 Reports for Courts	90
No. of Inter-Country Adoption Assessments Completed	133
No. of assessments carried out by RACS (Risk Assessment & Consultative Service) March - Dec 2002 Completed	78
No. of Pre-School Inspection and Advisory Visits carried out	
<i>No. of first inspections</i>	124
<i>No. of follow-up inspections</i>	55
<i>No. of annual inspections</i>	112
<i>No. of advisory visits</i>	121
Speech and Language Therapy activity in 2002	
<i>Referrals Received during 2002</i>	2,109
<i>Assessments Completed</i>	1,385
<i>Children who received Therapy</i>	3,821
<i>Children Discharged</i>	1,624

Child Health

No. of visits to children by P.H.N.s	69,181
No. of babies attending developmental examination	7,770
No. of pupils examined at school medical examinations	6,400

Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

Summary of activities at the Child & Family Centres in 2002	
<i>Number of First Attendances</i>	1,706
<i>Number of Return Visits</i>	15,777
<i>Number of Group Sessions</i>	3,387
Services for Children on the Autistic Spectrum	
Numbers seen by outreach teams	
<i>Children</i>	205
<i>Families</i>	229
No. of Residential Units	2
No. of Special Schools	3
Family Welfare Conference Project	
<i>No. of Family Welfare Conferences held 2002</i>	9
<i>No. of referrals to service 2002</i>	21
<i>No. of cases carried over from 2001</i>	9
<i>No. of cases carried over into 2003</i>	10
<i>No. of completed conferences carried over into 2003 awaiting reviews to monitor implementation of Family Plan</i>	7
<i>No. of cases that did not proceed to FWC (closed)</i>	11
<i>Number of staff trained</i>	140

Residential Unit Capacity 2002

Childcare & Family Support	
Number of Children's Residential Units	
<i>S.W.A.H.B.</i>	14
<i>Voluntary</i>	6
Number of families who provided foster care in 2002	320
No. of Health Board funded Family Support Services run by voluntary organisations	
<i>Day Nurseries</i>	29
<i>Family Support Projects / Centres (including eight pre-schools)</i>	19
<i>Neighbourhood Youth Projects</i>	10



Alba Adult
Counselling
Service

Alba Counselling Service is provided by the South Western Area Health Board and forms part of the National Counselling Service, which was established in September 2000 for adult survivors of childhood abuse. Alba exists to offer counselling to adults who experienced physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect in childhood. Priority of allocation is offered to people who experienced any form of childhood abuse in an institutional setting.

Referral Sources

Alba Counselling Service encourages people to self-refer to the service. Self-referral indicates a state of readiness for therapy thus contributing to a more successful outcome.

We also accept referrals from:

- a) Mental Health Professionals
- b) Social Work Personnel
- c) Medical Personnel
- d) Support Workers
- e) Voluntary Agencies
- f) Survivor Groups
- g) Solicitors

counselling sessions per week. We offer group therapy on a weekly basis with six people attending. Other activities include:

- Developing links with other agencies, providing information, education and support.
- Provision of a freephone information line with Counsellors offering support to callers as necessary.

All clients are offered a maximum of eighteen months in counselling and over 50% of people opt for long-term counselling contracts.

Adult Counselling Service Activity	Activity
Individual counselling sessions per week	115
Number of clients attending for counselling	104

Activities and Developments in 2002

Alba offers individual counselling and group work to adults who experienced childhood abuse. Currently we offer 115 individual



Community
Mothers'
Programme

The Community Mothers' Programme is a parent support programme for mainly first-time parents who live in disadvantaged areas within the three Area Health Boards of the Eastern region. Local volunteer mothers who are recruited, trained and guided by Family Development Nurses deliver the Programme to parents in their own homes. The Programme focuses on health care, nutritional improvement and overall child development.

Activities and Developments in 2002

This year has been extremely active, challenging and rewarding. The Community Mothers continued to serve their communities as successfully as in years past and they have been involved in a wide range of health promoting activities including children's health, women's health, nutrition and safety and accident prevention. 63 Community Mothers and five Family Development Nurses in the South Western Area Health Board supported 1,079 parents. These included lone parents, teenage parents, Traveller parents and Asylum Seekers and Refugees. The programme was further developed in Tallaght, Rowlagh and Ballyfermot and 38 new Community Mothers were recruited and trained.

The South Western Area Health Board has sought to continually enhance the quality and effectiveness of its work and has invested in further evaluation of outcomes. We continued our partnership with the University of Massachusetts, USA. Mary Ellen Maguire-Schwartz, a doctoral student, made visits to Dublin West in January and March to explore the relationship between family and social support and parent-child attachment. In April of this year the *"Still Going Strong"* Report, a

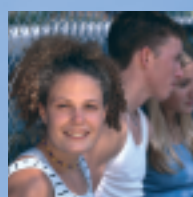
tracer study on the Community Mothers' Programme, was published by the Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Netherlands. It was launched at their 'Following Footsteps' workshop in Jamaica.

The immunisation rate for parents who completed the programme in the South Western Area Health Board was 97%. This would be in line with the World Health Organisation and national policy guidelines. There was no case of child abuse and 98% of parents started reading to their child in the first year.

The on-going training of the Family Development Nurses and Community Mothers remained a priority to support them in the delivery of a high-quality service and keep their knowledge base up-to-date. Topics included breastfeeding, nutrition, child-development, post-natal depression, team building, stress management, creative facilitation and conflict resolution.

We were involved in a number of new projects this year. One such project involved our collaboration with the Association of Lactation Consultants in Ireland, Cuidiú and La Leche League in relation to the development of the Community Mothers' Programme 'Guide to Breastfeeding' which will be published shortly. The Programme Director also started working in an advisory role with the University of London on the development and evaluation of an infant feeding peer support trial.

The emphasis over the next year will be on maintaining our target numbers of parents and Community Mothers and maintaining excellence in all areas.



Intellectual,
Physical & Sensory
Disability Services

The overall objective for the disability services in our region is to uphold the rights of persons with a disability to quality services which respect their dignity, and are provided within the least restrictive environment and promote the greatest possible inclusion of persons with a disability in society.

There are 8,958 persons on the National Intellectual Disability database in the Eastern region. We are actively inputting into the newly established National Physical & Sensory Disability database the aim of which is to provide a picture of the specialised health and personal social service needs of people with a physical or sensory disability by monitoring current service provision and future service requirements within a five-year period. Having such a database will support planning for the future development of appropriate services and assist resource allocation decisions.

In the South Western area, data collection commenced during 2002 and to date there are 2,190 persons registered on the Regional Physical & Sensory Disability Database. Proposals for 2003 include updating current data to reflect service utilisation and requirements.

The Board works in partnership with a number of voluntary organisations that are funded either by the E.R.H.A. or directly by the Board to provide services in our Board's area. Among these organisations are St. John of God, Stewart's Hospital, Cheeverstown House, St. Michael's House, Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary, Moore Abbey, KARE, Dara Residential, Camphill Communities, Walkinstown Association and the Irish Society

for Autism. These organisations are represented on the Intellectual Disabilities Consultative and Development Committees.

The Board also works closely and in partnership with voluntary agencies that deliver physical and sensory disability services in our area. Some of these agencies include the Irish Wheelchair Association, Enable Ireland, the Central Remedial Clinic, Cheshire Foundation, The National Council for the Blind, The National Association for the Deaf, Muscular Dystrophy Ireland and Post Polio Support.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Early Intervention Service

The Early Intervention Service teams in Kildare are unique in the South Western Area Health Board as they involve collaboration of statutory and voluntary service providers to provide multi-disciplinary clinical support to children with an Intellectual Disability. The Pre-school Initiative involves a strengthening of this collaborative process and initial reports are very positive. A thorough review has been completed by external consultancy and the outcomes will be reviewed for 2003.

Intellectual Disabilities

Day Places - 10 new day places for Adult Autism were created in 2002 for clients in the South Western Area Health Board.

Residential Places - 5.5 emergency residential places were created for clients of the South Western Area Health Board in 2002.

Home Support - Walkinstown Association received funding of €30,000 for Respite and Home Support in 2002.

Health Related - €67,000 was allocated for Summer Respite Schemes to agencies within the Board's area in 2002.

Database Administrator / Data Collectors - this post was filled in 2002 along with the posts of 6 full-time and 6 part-time Database Collectors employed to help with the collation of database information.

Rehabilitative Training - a total of 373 rehabilitative training places were available in the South Western Area Health Board inclusive of 45 new rehabilitative training places.

Physical & Sensory Disability

Physical & Sensory development allocations funded regionally by all three Area Health Boards within the Eastern Regional Health Authority in 2002 were distributed as follows:

- Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland
1 x WTE (Whole-time Equivalent) Family Support Worker / Administrator
- National Council for the Blind in Ireland
1 x WTE IT Training Specialist
1 x WTE Mobility Officer
- MS Society of Ireland
3 x WTE Nurses
- Friedrichs Ataxia Association of Ireland
1 x WTE Administrative Support

- Brainwave (Irish Epilepsy Association)
1 x WTE Nurse Specialist for Epilepsy
- Fighting Blindness Ireland
1 x WTE Counselling Support Staff
- Irish Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus
Funded for respite service
- Cheshire Community Services
Funding for Community Support Services
- Enable Ireland
Received €30,000 for respite care

Physical & Sensory development allocations funded by the Board in 2002 were as follows:

- Irish Wheelchair Association
24 New Day Places
Assisted Living of 3,000 hours
- Muscular Dystrophy Ireland
1 x WTE Family Support Worker
- Post Polio Support Group
Pilot Counselling Project
- National Council for the Blind in Ireland
1 x WTE Manager for Adult Services

The South Western Area Health Board also provided funds of €574,000 towards Aids & Appliances.

Table 1: Financial Allowances 2002

Financial Allowances	Total
Blind Welfare Allowance:	
Number of Applications	52
Number of Approvals	40
Number in receipt of allowance	236
Mobility Officer:	
Number of Applications	89
Number of Approvals	48
Number in receipt of allowance	416
Domiciliary Care Allowance:	
Number of Applications	454
Number of Approvals	304
Number in receipt of allowance	1,834
Motorised Transport Allowance:	
Number of Applications Under 65 years	29
Number of Approvals	11
Medical & Surgical Appliances	7,529
Long Term Illness:	
Number of Applications	718
Number of Approvals	682
Home Help:	
Number of Persons Under 65 years	286
Home Support Service Intellectual Disability	295



Mental Health Services

The South Western Area Health Board aims to provide a comprehensive range of mental health services, which can respond to individual and community needs and provides treatment and care in the most appropriate setting close to the person's home.

In December 2001 the South Western Area Health Board adopted an Action Plan for Mental Health Services outlining twelve areas for development and significant progress has been made in realising these objectives. In 2002 a number of key tasks were completed with the strategic direction of our services being agreed.

The Mental Health Services in the South Western Area Health Board are recognised as leaders in community psychiatry but will require some future investment to further maintain this position.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Kildare / West Wicklow Mental Health Services

Recognising the enormous population growth in the county, the North Kildare Sector was divided and a new Consultant-led team in North Kildare created.

Extended Hours Day Hospital Pilot Project

Managers and Staff in the Kildare Service secured funding from the Health Service National Partnership to pilot an Extended Hours Day Hospital programme. Evening opening has improved service access for many people who require the service but have

difficulty attending due to work or childcare commitments. This pilot project was conducted throughout the Autumn months and its impact evaluated.

Dublin West / South West Mental Health Services

A comprehensive review of the Dublin West / South West Mental Health Services was conducted during 2002. Staff, Service-users and Voluntary Organisations representing people with mental illness contributed to this wide-ranging review. The Area Management Team has been working closely with all staff groups with a view to extending the Home Care treatment model to the Ballyfermot and Tallaght sectors in 2003.

An 'Advance Building' was built to replace Unit F as the Rehabilitation Unit in St. Loman's Hospital. This modern new unit opened in December, greatly improving the standard of accommodation for patients and staff.

Dublin South City Mental Health Services

St Martha's Day Service incorporating Day Hospital and Sector Headquarters opened in the Autumn of 2002. This newly refurbished facility creates a greater community presence in the Camac (South Inner City) sector.

This service also secured approval for two new Consultant-led teams, one to serve the Drimnagh catchment and the second to provide specialist mental health care to Homeless individuals and at the Coombe Women's Hospital. Both of these new Mental Health Teams will be recruited in 2003.

ClubHouse

ClubHouse is a user-led day service for people with mental illness, originating in the US. Ireland's first ClubHouse Platinum opened in Newbridge in 1999. Based on a positive evaluation and international accreditation a second site, Phoenix ClubHouse, opened in Clondalkin in August 2002.

Primary Care & Mental Health

The South Western Area Health Board has been working closely with the Irish College of General Practitioners (I.C.G.P.) in advancing a number of collaborative projects.

A Director for the Primary Care & Mental Health research project was recruited in July 2002. This project examines the current situation for General Practitioners treating people with mental illness in the South Western Area Health Board. Over 400 G.P.s have been surveyed and many have indicated a wish to participate in follow-through focus groups.

The Suicide & Primary Care Training Project has completed phase one, with a successful seminar held in September. A range of training materials have been developed in conjunction with the I.C.G.P. The Board funded this project with assistance from the National Suicide Review Group.

Social Housing

South Western Area Health Board staff have been working closely with their colleagues in the four Local Authorities to improve access to integrated housing for people with mental illness. The Board has also been greatly assisted by the work of Celbridge Mental Health Association and HAIL (Housing

Association for Integrated Living). Clonree House in Newbridge and Teach Bán in Newcastle, Co. Dublin were made ready for residents.

Advocacy in Mental Health

The Mental Health Act 2001 makes provision for advocacy for people with mental illness; advocacy is designed to safeguard the rights and interests of people who may be passing through a vulnerable period in their lives.

South Western Area Health Board funds the post of Development Officer with the Irish Advocacy Network. The Development Officer coordinates training programmes and access to advocacy services in the Eastern region.

An accredited training programme preparing Nursing Staff for the emergence of Peer Advocacy has been delivered. The course which was devised by the Board, its Directors of Nursing, Irish Advocacy Network and Dublin City University is funded by the Nursing & Midwifery Development Unit at E.R.H.A.

Mental Health Service-users have been actively involved in shaping a number of service developments during 2002 including:

- Extended Hours Day Hospital Project at Celbridge
- Mental Health IT System in Dublin West / South West
- Opening of St Martha's Day Hospital
- Training Programme for Nursing Staff, DCU
- Development of new information materials for Service-users

Suicide Prevention

A Suicide Resource & Mental Health Promotions Officer was appointed in January 2002. The Board established a Steering Group on Suicide Prevention and this group advanced a number of significant initiatives during the year including:

- The DUMP (Dispose of Unused Medication Properly) Project
- 'Suicide - a Challenge for Primary Care' seminar on September 25
- 'Don't Get Down, Get Help', Cinema & Media Campaign
- Suicide Awareness Training for over 300 Healthcare Staff
- Funding for Voluntary Organisations supporting those bereaved by suicide

The DUMP Project was successfully piloted in six pharmacies in the South Western area. This project encourages householders to return unused medications, which may pose a risk to children or those at risk of self-harm.

New Technology

E.R.H.A. has allocated €165,000 towards the introduction of a Mental Health IT system in Dublin West and South West. Each facility will have immediate access to computer hardware, software, networks and training. This will allow for the easy exchange of information between the Acute Units at Tallaght and St. Loman's, Day Hospitals and Clinics. The selection of an integrated Mental Health IT system will begin in 2003.



Addiction
Service

The Addiction Service of the South Western Area Health Board provide a range of high quality, person-centred services. The services are strategically located throughout the region to ensure that they are as accessible and as responsive as possible. There has been considerable growth over the past number of years with significant expansion of the services offered by the Board based on the needs of individuals, their families and the community. In addition to the wide range of addiction services offered, the Board supports a range of community and voluntary provision in the area of drugs education / prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The Board's area contains some of the most marginalised communities in the State and these communities have suffered disproportionately from the adverse consequences of drug misuse. The Board is committed to working in partnership with all communities to address both the problems and the causes of drug misuse.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Despite a more challenging funding environment in 2002 the Addiction Service has sustained all current services and implemented a number of planned developments within the period. This has been achieved through the completion of developments already in train and utilising resources more effectively through re-configuring services.

Some of the key developments in 2002 were as follows:

- Over 2,500 people were in treatment at the Board's 14 addiction centres and 11 satellite clinics.

- Nursing services were developed with an increase in nursing posts, the expansion of primary health care services and the introduction of standardised care plans for the 17 most common nursing interventions. In addition, the nursing service carried out an extensive audit of viral screening practices and An Bord Altranais approved the recently developed in-service Venepuncture training course.
- The appointment of a Consultant Psychiatrist in Adolescent Substance Misuse. This will allow the Board to develop its services for young people.
- There has been a significant reduction - down 54% - in the numbers of those awaiting methadone therapy places in 2002.
- Two additional syringe exchange slots were put in place, which will assist in reducing the spread of blood-borne viruses.
- There has been extensive work undertaken with Irish Prison Services in developing services for drug misusers whilst in custody and in ensuring continuity of care on their release.
- The service appointed six Senior General Assistants in 2002 to ensure that the grade, which is the initial point of contact for most service-users, receives the support and training required to deliver a high-quality service that is focused on the service-user.
- A comprehensive review of the Board's Outreach Services was undertaken during 2002. This will assist the Addiction Service in developing the Outreach Service and maximising contact with drug misusers not yet in treatment.
- Considerable work has been undertaken with the National Drug Strategy Team in developing a Regional Drug Task Force for the South Western Area. It is the intention to hold the first regional Drug Task Force

meeting in the second quarter of 2003.

- The Addiction Service has continued to provide training for both communities and its own staff to develop capacity in relation to the problems of drug misuse. The service will see both community workers and staff graduate from both the Diploma and Certificate Drugs Courses undertaken in the academic year 2002 to 2003. These will be in addition to the graduates of the class of 2002. The National University of Ireland accredits these training courses.
- The Addiction Service has worked closely with the National Development and Training Institute in opening the NDTI Coolamber facility in 2002. This facility will provide 20 vocational rehabilitation places when fully operational.

Work with Communities

The Addiction Service continues to work in partnership with communities in addressing the issues of drug misuse. The Service works with communities in a number of ways including:

- Local Drug Task Forces
- Section 65 Grants
- Mainstreamed Task Force Funding

Local Drug Task Forces

The Addiction Service works closely with the six Local Drug Task Forces within the South Western Area. The Service recognises the significant contribution that communities can

and do make in addressing the problems of drug misuse. The Service supports the Task Force directly through the employment of all the local area Co-ordinators and associated support staff. The Service also provides premises and administrative support for local area Co-ordinators. In addition to this direct support, the Service liaises closely at a national level with the National Drug Strategy Team and at a local level with the Local Drug Task Forces to ensure an integrated and co-ordinated response to the issues of drug misuse.

Section 65 Grants

The Service also directly supports a wide range of community and voluntary groups through the provision of Section 65 Grants. The organisations supported through this include those working in the following areas:

- Prevention / Education
- Treatment
- Rehabilitation
- Residential Services

Mainstreamed Projects

The Addiction Service also manages the delivery of mainstreamed funding to projects, which were initially funded by the Task Forces. The Addiction Service manages and processes payments of €3m per annum to mainstreamed projects.



Alcohol
Services

It is only slowly beginning to be recognised that alcohol is a major health determinant. The Alcohol Service works to assist individuals and families with alcohol problems through counselling, education and support.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Kilcock Alcohol Awareness Project

The service assisted in providing the training for 13 front-line professionals for 3 days in September as part of this project. The service is also involved with Canal Communities in assisting them to develop their own alcohol project.

Treatment Programmes

A 14 week abstinence programme for problem drinkers followed by six months of weekly aftercare continue to be offered to clients. We offer a similar programme for family members and two such groups ran during the year.

Alcohol Education Programme

We offered this programme one morning each week during the year for all new clients who attended for four consecutive weeks. This programme has also been available to health and family professionals who wish to gain insight into alcohol-related problems. There were 1,040 attendances at this programme throughout the year.

Information & Education

Demand for leaflets and information increased during the year. Requests for education programmes came from a variety of voluntary and statutory groups.

Alcohol Services Activity 2002

Total No Counselling Sessions	1,855
Total No Group Attendances Problem Drinkers (2 Night + 2 Day) + Concerned Persons (2 Night) Aftercare Groups (1 Night + 1 Day) + Preparation Group (3 Day)	1,249
Total No Attendances at Alcohol Education Sessions	1,040
Total No Individuals Received	1,151
Total Number of Attendances	3,440

Total No Group Sessions (P.D. + Aftercare + Prep + Education Discussion + C.P.)	283
Total No Alcohol Education Lectures	49
Total No New Clients Received	184
Total No New Clients offered appointments "not taken" or given but "did not attend"	136
No of 'return' clients (absent 6 months +)	85
Total No Educational Talks outside centre	16
Total No Attendance at Meetings outside centre	65
Caseload	375

New Referral Statistics

	M	F	Total
Total No of Male / Female Problem Drinkers	96	50	146
Total No of Male / Female Concerned Persons	2	34	36
Total No of Children / Adult Siblings	-	2	2
Total New Clients Received	98	86	184

Sources of Referral of New Clients

Self Referral	34	Family Referral	12
Client Referral	6	A.A.	5
G.P.	55	Court / Probation / Legal Aid	11
Psychiatrist	23	Social Worker	10
Al-Anon	4	Employer	4
Other	11	AMINCH	9



Older Persons' Services

The aim of the service is to provide a range of services that empower older people to make choices suitable to their needs and to consult with service-users and other stakeholders in the planning and development of services.

In 2000 it was recorded that 35% of the total elderly population in E.R.H.A. region lives in the South Western area. Predictions for the future elderly population in the Board's area anticipate that in 2006 there will be 51,000 older people, an increase of 6,000 since 1996. A further increase of 4,000 has been predicted by 2008 to bring the older population to 55,000. The biggest increase in the future is expected to be in the over 75s who accounted for 4% of all older people in 1996 and are expected to have increased by 19% in 2011.

The growing population and the fact that people are living longer and are healthier than previous generations provides challenges for all those involved in planning and providing services for older people.

The National Health Strategy launched in the latter part of 2001, helped shape our plans in 2002 for future services for older people. The Board is committed to providing a range of services to enable older people to remain at home.

In 2002 a programme of work began to review and evaluate current services and to expand and consolidate services currently being provided where appropriate. New developments were planned to support the National Health Strategy to identify gaps in services and to underpin the Board's Organisational Strategy.

Activities and Developments in 2002

A Consultant Geriatrician was appointed and an additional 30 assessment beds for older persons were provided in Naas General Hospital.

A Senior Health Promotion Officer for Older Persons was appointed.

The new Maynooth Community Unit opened in July 2002 on a phased basis. The unit provides quality residential accommodation in single, two and four bedded rooms.

The Charter of Rights for Older Persons, a joint initiative between the three Area Health Boards, was launched in April 2002 in Brú Chaoimhín residential unit for older persons. The Charter of Rights is a welcome initiative to protect and validate the rights of all older people especially those who are vulnerable.

Whitechurch Day Care Service

The Bellvilla Community unit started an outreach day care service in Whitechurch in Rathfarnham in response to the demand from older people living in the area. The service provides day care two days a week and is linked with the day care service provided in Bellvilla.

The Board in partnership with the voluntary sector supported the following projects:

Dementia Case Management Project

The success of the pilot case management project between the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Dublin South West was

consolidated when the project was mainstreamed in 2002. The aim of the project is to assess need, devise a care plan using the full range of services available and co-ordinate these services.

Negotiations with the Alzheimer Society of Ireland to set up an In-home Respite Service in Dublin South City took place and a service was started on a phased basis in late 2002.

Peamount Hospital Day Care

In August 2002 Peamount Hospital opened a new day care service in refurbished ground floor accommodation. The service provides for up to 100 people per week and 20 people per day.

Kilcock Day Care

Funding was provided to employ two staff to manage the day care service.

Local services were enhanced by the following grants totalling €210,500:

Rialto Day Care Centre	€38,000
St. James's Senior Citizens Club	€38,000
Meath Street Day Club	€13,000
Terenure Day Centre Evergreen	€4,000
Mount Drummond Court Community Centre	€6,500
Terenure Tuesday & Thursday Luncheon Club	€6,500
Bellvilla Community Unit Day Care Centre	€13,000
St Martha's Day Care	€19,000
Allenwood Day Care Centre	€19,000
Clondalkin Meals on Wheels	€44,500
Rathangan Golden Circle	€5,000
Newtown / Doneda 'Young At Heart'	€4,000

A joint initiative between the Board and St James's Hospital and Our Lady's Hospice, Harold's Cross to provide a re-enablement unit with 25 beds was opened on a phased basis in December 2002. The service will provide intensive rehabilitation by a multi-disciplinary team for patients after they have completed their acute stage but require intervention before they can return home. The project is community focused and clients in the community may also be referred to the unit.

During the year the Board provided over a million hours of home help, 573 contract beds, 472 subvented beds and 771 Health Board in-patient beds.



Acute Hospital
Services

Naas General Hospital

Naas General Hospital is the Acute Hospital Service for the catchment population of Kildare / West Wicklow (population approximately 180,000). It aims to provide a high quality, people-centred, equitable and cost-effective acute hospital service in an appropriate setting for the people of Kildare / West Wicklow. The hospital provides Acute General Medical, General Surgical and Psychiatric in-patient Services in addition to a 24 hour Accident & Emergency Service. Other supporting services in the hospital include:

- Pathology
- Radiology
- Pharmacy
- Physical Medicine
- Day Procedures
- Out Patient Services
- Specialist Nursing Service
- Day Hospital for Older People

The hospital continues to develop close working relationships with Tallaght Hospital to ensure a high quality Acute Hospital Service for the wider catchment population of both hospitals. The Clinical Development Committee was established in March 2002 comprising Clinicians and Management from both hospitals.

The New Hospital Development Programme, which commenced in 1999, continued in 2002 with part of Phase 2 becoming operational in November. This included in-patient ward accommodation, Coronary Care Unit and Medical Records. This is the biggest phase of the three-phase development and includes In-

patient Ward Accommodation, Radiology Department, Operating Department (3 Theatres), Accident and Emergency Department, Out-Patient Department, Day Services Department, Medicine for Older People Department, Intensive Care Unit, Pharmacy and a Supplies Department.

This will give the hospital state-of-the-art facilities to meet the highest modern-day standards. The new facility will increase the bed capacity of the hospital to 279 beds. The Phase 3 development of the hospital, which has already commenced, includes new facilities for Pathology, Mortuary / Post Mortem, HSSD, Maintenance, Catering, Physical Medicine and Administration.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Service Description	Jan-Dec 2002 Activity
Admissions	6,660
Day Procedures	1,069
Out-Patient Attendances	19,314
Accident & Emergency	19,914
Radiology Department X-Ray Examinations	45,224

Consultant Staff

The following Consultant Appointments were made in conjunction with Tallaght Hospital.

- Three additional Consultant Anaesthetist posts (5 Sessions each, Naas)

- Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon (2 Sessions, Naas)

- Consultant Physician with special interest in Gastroenterology (8 Sessions, Naas)

- Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine (8 Sessions, Naas)

Comhairle na n-Ospidéal approval was received to appoint the following:

- Consultant Radiologists X 3 (11 Sessions each, Naas)
- Consultant Histopathologist (2 Sessions, Naas)
- Consultant Surgeon (Breast / Endocrine Surgery), replacement post (6 Sessions, Naas)

- Consultant Cardiologist / General Physician x 2 (8 Sessions, Naas) / (3 Sessions, Naas)

The Hospital Local Partnership Committee was set up and has been working on a number of initiatives to develop and improve the working life of all in Naas General Hospital. Under the Partnership Committee, a Communications Officer was appointed to strengthen communications within the Hospital, prepare for the move to the new hospital and to develop systems to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date on all developments. In addition, a number of initiatives were undertaken as part of the Cardiovascular Health Strategy and are outlined in the Health Promotion section of this report.



Social
Inclusion

In 2002 the South Western Area Health Board put in place a social inclusion structure. Its broad mission is to ensure there is equality of access to health board services by the socially disadvantaged in the South Western area and to promote their participation in the development of services appropriate to their needs and to work in partnership with all sections of the Health Board and other agencies to ensure there is a holistic and integrated response. The Health Board has identified three key target groups for the social inclusion team - Travellers, Homeless people and Asylum Seekers / Refugees.

Activities and Developments in 2002: Travellers

The South Western Area Health Board manages the delivery of health and social services to Travellers on a regional basis, on behalf of the three Area Health Boards in the Eastern Region. We aim to raise the health status of the Traveller community to the national target levels for the population in general by providing accessible and culturally appropriate services developed with Traveller participation. The publication of the National Traveller Health Strategy in 2002 was a major development. This contains very specific actions to be completed in the period 2002-2005 and is in line with the policy of social inclusion enunciated in the National Health Strategy - *"Quality and Fairness - A Health System For You"*.

Traveller Health Unit

The Traveller Health Unit (THU) in the Eastern

region is a Committee established through a working partnership between the three Area Health Boards, Traveller representatives and Traveller organisations within the Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare regions.

During 2002, the THU Committee continued to develop models of good practice around nine initiatives. Improving Traveller participation and joint accountability were themes that recurred during the development of the models. These were reflected in the establishment of: sub-groups to look at finance; national performance indicators; a template for proofing service plans; and steering groups and working parties on each of the funded initiatives. In addition, the further formation of guidelines, accounting mechanisms, performance indicator matrices and report mechanisms were undertaken to help the Committee process and monitor funding applications and grants.

During the years 2000-2002 the THU moved into the second phase of its work. In addition to the development of the nine initiatives, it began an ongoing process of identifying and funding projects that could further improve Traveller's health status, e.g. initiatives that could be developed to reflect the Primary Health Care for Travellers Project model.

During the year the THU Committee was engaged in a national review. The review followed a recommendation in the National Traveller Health Strategy, published in February. The Traveller Health Policy Unit at the Department of Health and Children undertook to review and survey the state of implementation of the Traveller Health Units, and the

models developed, in each of the Health Boards nationally.

In the summer of 2002 the Traveller Health Unit in the Eastern Region met the review body to discuss its aims and objectives, its formation, internal structures, policy and practice. The report on the review body's findings is expected in 2003 and the Traveller Health Unit intends to disseminate information on the development of those models of good practice in 2003.

In March 2002 the THU Committee started to look at the development of a Regional Implementation Plan, following a recommendation in the National Traveller Health Strategy. The Committee undertook to engage Health Boards and Traveller organisations in the region to draft a three-year plan that states how the recommendations of the National Traveller Health Strategy will be implemented in the region. Committee members carried out a series of presentations on the strategy and its action plan. Each area began the process of auditing what was happening within their sphere for Travellers, what actions would be carried out over the next three years, and in addition, drafted performance indicators and the budgetary implications of the actions.

Homeless

In previous years the Northern Area Health Board managed services for homeless people on a regional basis. In 2002 the South Western Area Health Board received a dedicated stream of funding from the Eastern Regional Health Authority to develop a range

of services in the Board's area. The main aim in relation to homeless services is to ensure that homeless people can access mainstream health services on as equal a basis as the overall population and where necessary to develop targeted initiatives to respond to the many health needs of this group.

The South Western Area Health Board works in partnership with other Health Boards, the local authorities and the voluntary sector to implement "*Homelessness - an Integrated Strategy*" - the Report of the Cross-Departmental Team on Homelessness; the Report of the former Eastern Health Board's Multi-disciplinary Group; and the recommendations of the Dublin Action Plan on Homelessness.

The Homeless Persons' Unit provides a placement service on a regional basis on behalf of the local authorities. The unit also provides a payment service and an advice, information and referral service. During 2002 a total of 3,032 new homeless households availed of this service, representing 4,115 individuals. This represented an increase of 22% in the number of new homeless households between 2001 and 2002. The biggest percentage increase was in the single male category.

During 2002 the Homeless Persons' Unit moved into two new buildings - James's Street, which caters for homeless men, and Wellington Quay, which caters for women and families. The Units also provide an outreach service to the hostels and bed and breakfast accommodation.

In line with the Government Strategy on Homelessness the South Western Area Health Board provided funding for the care costs in 13 separate projects for homeless people in the Board's area. These consisted of emergency hostels, day centres and supported housing.

In line with the 1999 Report of the former Eastern Health Board Multidisciplinary Group, the multidisciplinary primary care team for homeless people was split during 2002, with one team operating in the Northern Area Health Board and the other operating in the South Western Area Health Board. The main aim of the team is to link homeless people into mainstream health services. The team also provides and arranges nursing, chiropody, dental care, counselling and harm reduction measures. The team provides regular sessions in a number of homeless services in the area.

The South Western Area Health Board has provided funding to support a range of on-site health services in Fáiltiú, a day centre for homeless people based on Merchants' Quay. Approximately 200 homeless people attend the centre on a daily basis. The Board funds a full-time nurse and counsellor. In addition, during 2002 a fully equipped dental surgery was provided on-site and a dental surgeon was recruited to specifically address the dental needs of homeless people.

During 2002 approval was received from Comhairle na nOspidéal for the appointment of a Consultant Psychiatrist to lead an outreach psychiatric team for homeless in the Board's area.

In 2002 agreement was reached with the Dublin Simon Community hostel on Ushers Island to provide eight dedicated beds for homeless people who wished to deal with their alcohol problem. This G.P. led service will commence early in 2003.

A Rialto Community Homeless Support project has been established to address the needs of the homeless people in that area with particular emphasis on rough sleepers and preventative measures. The South Western Area Health Board is funding an outreach project worker to work with homeless people in the area.

A group consisting of health professionals and homeless service providers met on several occasions during 2002 to consider the health promotion needs of homeless people. Arising from this, a five-day health promotion course for staff working in homeless agencies was devised and will be piloted early in 2003. In addition, homeless people in a number of hostels were provided with the 'flu vaccination and also an accelerated Hep B vaccination programme for homeless people was piloted in one Dublin hostel.

South Dublin County Council established a Homeless Forum during 2002. This consists of statutory and voluntary representatives. Social Inclusion and Mental Health Services represents the Board on the Forum. The Forum has commenced work in developing local responses, especially in the Clondalkin and Tallaght areas. The aim is to ensure locally-based advice, information and referral for homeless people and a supply of locally-based emergency and transitional accommodation. The Board has funded a guide for Homeless

Persons, produced by Clondalkin Partnership. The Kildare Action Plan on Homelessness was produced in 2002. This sets out specific actions and targets in relation to accommodation and health services. The Kildare Homeless Forum, which includes representatives from the Board, has commenced implementation of this plan.

Asylum Seekers

The Northern Area Health Board manages this service by agreement on behalf of the three Area Health Boards. A priority in 2002 was to improve the health status of asylum seekers and to ensure that health screening was available to them and that uptake levels were improved as much as possible.

An additional screening centre was opened in North County Dublin. This centre, which can accommodate up to 400 people, has a purpose-built medical screening centre on-site, with a G.P. and ante-natal service available daily. The ante-natal service is provided on an outreach basis by the Rotunda Hospital. This new centre has greatly improved the take-up of screening and since its inception the average has been 70%.

Our staff works closely with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform as well as the Reception and Integration Agency.

An important innovation during 2002 was the introduction nationally of a patient-held medical screening record, which all asylum seekers screened at our centres are given and which includes all available data on screening carried out in the centre.

Clients are also advised to keep all medical records in this handy "ziplok" plastic file such as Maternity and G.P. records. There is an explanatory leaflet with each pack in the language of their country of origin.

Asylum seekers presenting at reception centres are offered the following services:

- Screening and vaccination for TB, hepatitis and polio
- Psychological services
- Public health nursing services
- Community welfare services

Following dispersal from the local Health Board, asylum seekers apply for medical cards and can thus access the range of services available under the medical card scheme.

The Northern Area Health Board (N.A.H.B.) funded a pilot peer-led health information service in 2002. This provides information on Irish health services to newly arrived asylum seekers. The information is provided by people from a range of ethnic backgrounds who have themselves experienced the asylum process in this country. This will enable asylum seekers to more effectively and appropriately access health services wherever they are subsequently located in the country.

In an effort to foster greater understanding and acceptance of cultural differences in service delivery, a pilot project in the area of cultural mediation has been devised and delivered by Access Ireland, again supported by the N.A.H.B., on behalf of the Boards in the region. Participants from this course will graduate in early 2003 and will be available to health and other statutory service providers to

act as mediators where issues arise from or during the delivery of services.

During the course of 2002 funding was provided to several voluntary groups which provide support and assistance to asylum seekers and refugees in the Eastern region.



Community
Welfare Services

The Northern Area Health Board manages the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme on behalf of the three Area Health Boards and on an agency basis for the Department of Social, Community & Family Affairs, in accordance with Legislation, Statutory Instruments, Circulars and Regulations.

The aim of Community Welfare Services is "to relieve distress and prevent its recurrence". The nature of the service provided by the Community Welfare Officer often means that this service is the first point of contact with health and personal social services for very vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups.

Services provided include:

- Financial Support, e.g.:
 - Basic Supplementary Welfare Allowances
 - Income Supplements (including Rent, Diet, Heating, Clothing)
 - Exceptional Needs Payments
 - Urgent Needs Payments
- Information and advice on health, housing and social welfare services and schemes
- Assistance to applicants in obtaining entitlements
- Advise and direction in relation to budget and debt management
- Participation in local Community Development initiatives

Community Welfare Services are easily and locally accessible, being delivered from over 40 locations (generally the local Health Centre) within our Board's area. In addition, services

to the Homeless, and to Asylum Seekers, are delivered on an "outreach" basis, (i.e. the Community Welfare Officer regularly visits the location where the applicant is accommodated).

The statistics show increases in expenditure for all areas in 2002, and in particular show the increase in the level of rent supplement payable, which in 2002 accounted for 54% of the total Social Welfare Allowance expenditure for our Board. At 31st December 2002, a total of 9,766 rent supplement claims were being paid in our Board's area.

South Western Area Health Board Expenditure 2002

Expenditure	2002
Basic Payments	€31,722,250
Supplements*	€57,120,814
Exceptional Needs	€8,448,708
Total	€97,291,772
*Rent Only	€53,822,500

Back to School Clothing and Footwear

Number of Payments	9,481
Total Paid	€1,816,560



Environmental
Health
Services

The Board's Environmental Health Department provides a wide variety of services throughout the South Western Area Health Board and provides an agency service for the local authorities within that area. There are currently 76 Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in total in the Department, 43.5 are involved in Health Board functions while the remainder are assigned to local authority functions.

Activity and Developments in 2002: Tobacco Control

Although the Environmental Health Services are probably best known for their activities in Food Control, they also have a very important role to play in other areas of public health, not least of these being Tobacco Control. As the enforcement officers for tobacco legislation since 1978, Environmental Health Officers have responsibility for enforcing laws governing a number of areas including the following:

- Sale of Tobacco Products to persons under 18 years of age
- 50% No Smoking in Dining Areas
- Designated Smoke Free Buildings, e.g. cinemas, surgeries, chemists, public buildings, financial institutions, educational institutions, public transport, hairdressers, barbers, etc.
- Advertising, Labelling and Sponsorship

In the South Western Area Health Board, there are 5.25 designated Tobacco Control Environmental Health Officers dealing with tobacco complaints, while also undertaking a

pro-active schedule of inspections, surveys, policy and educational initiatives with a view to improving compliance with this legislation. During the year 1,822 inspections were carried out under tobacco control legislation. In addition, the Service is also involved in the piloting of a National Tobacco Control Database based on protocols drafted by the Office of Tobacco Control in consultation with Environmental Health Officers.

With the enactment of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002 and the imminent introduction of a ban on smoking in all workplaces it is envisaged that the role of the Board's Environmental Health Service will further develop in this area over coming years.

Food Control

The introduction of a number of major pieces of food legislation since 1998 has greatly expanded the role and work of the EHOs involved in Food Control. The Official Control of Foodstuffs Regulations 1998 and the EC (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) Regulations 2000 means that the traditional methods of inspection have been replaced with a more detailed and comprehensive system of auditing. Elements of the food business including HACCP risk management systems, documentation, operational and structural hygiene, staff training and personal hygiene are all now regularly examined and assessed.

All food premises whether for profit or otherwise, public or private, are now subject to inspection under these new Regulations, as are Health Board premises and voluntary

institutions. In turn, certain categories of premises are also subject to Registration or Licensing under the original Food Hygiene Regulations 1950/89.

In addition to the above the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998 established the FSAI, giving it the responsibility to ensure compliance with Food Legislation. However, as responsibility for food control and food law enforcement still rests with the regional Health Boards this is achieved by means of an agreed service contract between the FSAI and the Board.

Under the recently agreed (2003-2006) service contract a target rate of scheduled inspections must be achieved. This target is specified as follows:

High Risk Premises	- 3 times per year
Medium Risk Premises	- twice a year
Low Risk Premises	- once a year

In the year from January to December 2002 the Board's Environmental Health Officers carried out 4,735 visits to food premises. Growth in the food service sector is showing no signs of stabilising and the number of new food outlets has again increased in 2002. An increased number of programmed inspections are required to comply with the FSAI service contract, which will require staff resources in addition to the complement currently approved.

Food Control also comprises:

- Microbiological & Chemical Food Sampling Programmes

- Rapid Response to Food Alerts and Product Recalls
- Food Labelling
- Investigation of cases of Food Poisoning
- Hygiene Education

Other Board EHOs are also undertaking necessary Health Board functions not specifically provided for under Food Control, including the inspection of Childcare Facilities, Cosmetic Regulations and Infant Baby Formula Regulations.

Local Authority

The Board's Environmental Health Department provides services on an agency basis to Dublin City Council, Kildare County Council and South Dublin County Council.

The service comprises the following:

- Inspections of standards in private rented and local authority rented housing accommodation
- Air quality monitoring and pollution control
- Noise Control, monitoring and abatement
- Drinking water monitoring programmes
- Issues of Public Health significance
- Physical planning and development
- Housing accommodation assessments

Activity Out-turn for 2002	Output
No. of food hygiene registration applications	190
No. of inspections of food premises	4,735
No. of participants completing primary food hygiene courses	574
No. of food samples taken	1,536
No. of prosecutions taken under food control legislation	9
No. of pest control complaints received	1,762
No. of pest control complaints treated	1,663
No. of tobacco inspections in non-food premises	576
No. of tobacco inspections in food premises	1,246



Public Health
Laboratory

The Public Health Laboratory located in the South Western area serves the three Area Health Boards in the Eastern Regional Health Authority area and the North Eastern Health Board area. Its aim is to provide the most effective and efficient service possible to support the diagnosis, prevention and control of infectious communicable diseases and food-borne illnesses.

The laboratory provides:

- A Regional Public Health Microbiology service accessed by the Environmental Health Service
- A National Verocytotoxin E.coli diagnostic clinical service accessed by a Consultant Microbiologist and Laboratory Directors
- A local routine clinical microbiology diagnostic service for hospital in-patients and General Practitioners in the surrounding region

It is also the national designated laboratory for diagnosis of bacterial bio-terrorism pathogens.

The food and water microbiology service is accredited since 1998 by the National Accreditation Board to the current ISO 17025 Standard.

The Public Health Laboratory, South Western Area Health Board has developed robust operational protocols and has a highly skilled technical and medical staff experienced in the investigation of community outbreaks of communicable public disease. Close working liaisons are established with the Environmental Health Service, Eastern Regional Health Authority Public Health Department, Food

Safety Authority of Ireland, Food Safety Promotion Board, National Disease Surveillance Centre, all of which contribute to the public health of this region.

Activities and Developments in 2002

The following table lists the Public Health Laboratory activity with regard to its food surveillance and environmental monitoring programmes.

Food and Water Sampling Programmes	2002
Routine Food Samples	1,313
Sampling Projects (e.g. surveys)	179
Other (Incidents / Outbreaks, etc.)	916
Foods Received	2,408
Tests on Foods	28,896
Waters	2,363
Tests on Waters	5,371

Molecular Laboratory

In 2002, PCR (polymerase chain reaction) detection and sub-typing of VTEC (verocytotoxin E.coli) was introduced which has greatly contributed to the National VTEC database. The Public Health Laboratory further plans to expand on this work with the introduction of PFGE (polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis) for VTEC typing in 2003.

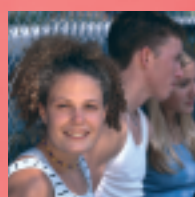
Research and Development

The Public Health Laboratory has an active research programme in place and has published and presented at international meetings of public health significance. Collaborative research has been undertaken with the Eastern Regional Health Authority Department of Public Health and the Central Veterinary Laboratory, Abbotstown and this has been published. Current research grant holding is with Belfast City Hospital, Cork Institute of Technology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin and University College Hospital, Galway. In 2002, the Public Health Laboratory competed for and was awarded the 2003/2004 Food Safety Authority of Ireland Research Project into E.coli

026 and 0111 in raw minced meat throughout the Republic of Ireland. The research will be co-ordinated by our Molecular Biologist (research funded). The output of research of public health significance is an integral part of the Public Health Laboratory role.

Accreditation

The Public Health Laboratory has continued to offer a wide range of accredited microbiological tests on both foods and waters in 2002. It was inspected in December 2002 and successfully maintained its accredited status. Further extensions to its accredited scope are planned for 2003.



Special
Projects

The Special Projects office is responsible for:

- Acute Hospital Service
- Major Capital Projects
- Engineering Services
- Eastern Region Ambulance Service
- Regional Emergency Planning Service

Major Capital Projects

Naas General Hospital Development

Excellent progress was achieved on the construction of Phase 2 of the Naas General Hospital development during 2002. The main Ward Block and the Theatre / ICU / Radiology Block were completed during the year and the following departments were occupied:

- Coronary Care Unit
- 3 General Wards
- Department of Medicine for the Elderly
- Medical Records
- On-Call Accommodation
- Staff Changing

The remainder of the present phase of construction, including A&E, OPD, Administration and Pathology will be completed in 2003. The capital funding for the final phases of the Hospital development is in place and the detailed design is being finalised. Towards the end of 2002 planning applications for the next phase, which includes H.S.S.D., Day Surgery Unit, Physical Medicine and two additional wards was lodged with Naas Town Council.

St. Loman's Hospital Development

Temporary accommodation in the form of an Advanced Rehabilitation Unit was completed in October 2002 and patients have now been transferred to this accommodation.

Meath Hospital Development

A planning application for the refurbishment of the former Nurses' Home was successful in 2002. It is proposed to refurbish this unit as an interim measure to support the existing Community Unit.

Pilot Primary Care Unit: Meath Hospital

A special Pilot Primary Care Unit is currently under design for the Meath Hospital. The new Unit will incorporate a range of services and is due to be opened in 2003.

Maynooth Community Unit

The construction of a 50 bed Community Unit for older persons is complete and has been equipped and fitted out. This Unit is now operational.

Clondalkin Addiction Support Programme

The joint project between the South Western Area Health Board and the Clondalkin Addiction Support Programme involved the construction of an Aftercare Centre & Detox Unit in Clondalkin. Construction commenced in September 2001 and is now completed.

Addiction Support Unit: Clondalkin

A planning application was made during 2002 for a purpose-built Addiction Unit at St. Loman's Road, Clondalkin and planning permission has been granted.

Drogheda Memorial Hospital

Construction of a purpose-built Unit at Drogheda Memorial Hospital commenced in 2001 and was completed in late 2002. The new Unit provides 20 beds for older persons and 7 beds for palliative care. This was a joint project between the South Western Area Health Board and the Friends of St. Brigid's Hospice, Kildare.

Engineering Services

Engineering Services to South Western Area Health Board properties, as listed hereunder, are provided from the Engineering Base located at Cherry Orchard Hospital.

A.	1 Acute Hospital
B.	8 Homes - 1,240 Beds
C.	47 Health Centres
D.	43 Hostels
E.	21 Day Care Centres
F.	18 Administration Offices
G.	3 Stores / Distribution

Services provided include minor capital priority projects, major maintenance projects as well as ongoing routine maintenance tasks. During 2002 the Engineering Staff carried out:

- 12 Minor Capital Priority Projects
- 16 Major Maintenance Projects
- 14,778 Routine Maintenance Tasks

Eastern Region Ambulance Service

The Eastern Region Ambulance Service managed by the East Coast Area Health Board provides a regional service for the three Area Health Boards.

During 2002 a number of developments took place in the Eastern Region Ambulance Service. These include:

- Purchase of seven new A&E Ambulances.

- Purchase of one new 4x4 Ambulance.
- Refurbishment of an Ambulance to act as back-up to the National Neo-Natal Ambulance Service.
- Continuation of Communications Upgrade Programme.
- Training Programmes:
 - Emergency Medical Technician Conversion Programme
 - 12 Lead E.C.G. programmes
 - Major Incident Medical Management Support Programme
 - Manual Handling
 - Revalidation
 - Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support
 - New Crisis Intervention Programme
- Construction of Upgrade of Ambulance Bases.

Emergency Planning Service

The Emergency Planning Service is a regional service and operates out of the Emergency Planning Centre at Phoenix Hall, St. Mary's Hospital, Phoenix Park.

The purpose of this service is to ensure that all areas of the Health Service in the region have up-to-date and functional procedures for response in the event of a major incident. These responses should cater for both external service provision and internal service continuity. It liaises with both statutory and voluntary agencies in respect of disaster planning and large crowd event medical planning and management to ensure the health services in the area are part of an integrated and co-ordinated approach.

During 2002 a number of developments took place:

- Training for staff from the Area Health Boards in major emergency planning.
- Work is ongoing on the development of an integrated Health Service response plan for the region.
- The Strategic Planning Group launched the Community Services Emergency Planning guideline document.
- Procedures were drawn up prior to the establishment of Area Health Board Planning Teams in early 2003.
- Major Incident Medical Management training was undertaken by staff members.
- The Working Group for Voluntary Ambulance / First Aid providers to develop a standard response plan by which these agencies can assist the Area Health Boards at the time of a major incident continued.
- The service represented the Area Health Boards at numerous Large Crowd event meetings and ensured that proper facilities and procedures were in place prior to and during the running of these events.
- Assistance was and continues to be provided by the service to the organisers of the 2002 Special Olympics.



Human
Resources

The Human Resources Department continued to manage an active portfolio in 2002. Throughout the course of the year considerable efforts were expended in delivering an Implementation Plan as part of South Western Area Health Board's Organisational Strategy. This plan was progressed in tandem with the input of key members of the Department into the Action Plan for People Management being developed in the Health Service nationally. Our Board is now ideally placed through its Implementation Plan to deliver on the key requirements of the Action Plan for People Management. In addition, we are also in a position to respond to priorities highlighted by our staff and Managers in relation to Human Resource processes, policies and procedures.

Activities and Developments in 2002

With regard to the specific activities of this department, many new projects have commenced. In recruitment 128 permanent competitions were advertised in 2002 and 708 appointments were made throughout the course of the year across all grades and services. Many of these appointments were made from overseas. In this regard, recruitment of nurses overseas continued on from 2001 and a total of 75 nurses from such countries as Nigeria, the Philippines and South Africa commenced employment with our Board. In addition, the Board was involved in a national project for recruitment to scarce therapy grades and a number of Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and Radiographers

commenced employment in 2002 with further staff due to commence in 2003. In addition, in late 2002, jointly with the two other Area Health Boards in the Eastern Region, an overseas recruitment process to source Registered Nurses in Mental Health (RNMHs) and Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) commenced with the first intake to begin their Clinical Placement in Spring 2003.

With regard to Training and Development, progress has been made across all grades and care groups in the provision of generic, professional and management development training. A number of these have been progressed collaboratively, i.e. under the auspices of the regional Child Care Framework or in conjunction with the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit of the Eastern Regional Health Authority. We have also continued the sponsorship of students in key professions such as Speech and Language Therapy and Social Work.

In relation to activity levels, a total of 2,381 staff availed of 1,690 training days in the following broad category areas: Information Communication Technology, Management Development and General Training.

Our Employee Relations Department continues to deliver caseload and advisory services and also has completed some significant projects, namely, the production of a comprehensive Line Managers' Manual, the first edition of which will be launched in 2003. This will provide essential assistance to all Managers involved in the management of people. In addition, the department was also involved in ensuring that major change items such as the

opening of the new Naas General Hospital development occurred on schedule. Its involvement in this issue was preceded by tremendous progress on this major change item through local Partnership structures.

During 2002, our Organisational Development (OD) Unit project-managed the Strategy Development and Implementation Planning work, which progressed our Organisational Strategy towards completion in early 2003. It continues to play a lead role in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of implementation. The OD Unit acted in an advisory role for managers in relation to the management of change and development and had direct involvement in a number of such projects including joint work on Partnership / OD projects.



Customer Services,
Complaints & Appeals,
Freedom of Information
& Data Protection

Customer Services, Complaints & Appeals

The Customer Services, Information and Appeals Service provides a central service on behalf of the South Western, Northern and East Coast Area Health Boards and the Eastern Regional Health Authority. This service ensures that complaints and appeals are managed in a confidential, responsive and user-friendly manner by:

- Managing, investigating and responding to complaints and appeals from clients in relation to any aspect of the health and personal social services provided by the three Area Health Boards.
- Developing and implementing policies, procedures and guidelines to address anomalies identified as a result of analysis of complaints and appeals.
- Dealing with complaints referred by the Office of the Ombudsman and acting as Liaison for the Office with each of the three Area Boards.

The service, mirroring the standards of quality and fairness of the National Health Strategy, is based on the following principles:

- Responsiveness
- Accessibility
- Impartiality
- Simplicity
- Confidentiality
- Accountability

The ultimate aim is that of customer satisfaction based on customer involvement and people-centred service.

Complaints

In each Board, every service has a designated complaints manager to whom formal complaints are addressed in the first instance. The emphasis is on local resolution, so training in customer services and complaints is targeted at front-line staff dealing directly with the customer.

During 2002 over 147 complaints were processed and resolved locally in our Board's area. The central Customer Services, Information and Appeals Service processed 173 service-user complaints and 50 complaints from the Office of the Ombudsman centrally on behalf of the three Area Boards.

Customer Services, Information and Appeals Service and the Sub-Committee on Complaints and Appeals in the Eastern Regional Health Authority provided staff training in complaints management and customer services. Staff training in complaints management is part of the Area Health Boards' ongoing training programme and is offered to all local complaints managers in the three Area Boards. Customer Services training for front-line staff is also offered.

Appeals

During 2002, a total of 1,121 appeals were processed for the South Western Area Health Board – of these 285 were allowed, 543 disallowed, 99 withdrawn and 190 were pending at the year-end. The vast majority of appeals related to the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme and community services such as medical cards, drug refunds and disability allowances.

Five Year Strategy

During 2002, the three Boards agreed a five-year strategy for the development of the service and the process of implementing the strategy has begun.

Freedom of Information and Data Protection

The service aims to promote openness and transparency within our health services whilst ensuring the statutory obligations provided for in the Freedom of Information Act 1997 are complied with.

Services provided by this Unit include the following:

- Ensuring compliance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act
- Preparing publications in accordance with Sections 15 and 16 of the FOI Act
- Appointing local Decision Makers and developing decision-making expertise
- Tracking and quality assuring requests
- Statistical reporting to Government agencies
- Promoting staff and public awareness
- Assisting other health agencies
- Liaison with the Office of the Information Commissioner

Activities and Developments in 2002

In late Autumn, local Freedom of Information Offices were established in the East Coast Area and Northern Area Health Boards. An FOI

network for the Eastern Region was also established at that time to enhance FOI support systems.

Publications

Section 15 - "An Information Guide to the South Western Area Health Board's Services"

In accordance with Section 15 of the Freedom of Information Act, this Board is obliged to publish information about its structure and organisation, functions, powers and duties, services provided and access arrangements for such services. A revised Section 15 manual has now been published on the Board's intranet site. Published versions of this manual will now be made available to health board locations as well as other information centres, e.g. Citizens Information Centres and Public Libraries. Printed copies may also be obtained by emailing the Central Freedom of Information Office at foi@erha.ie.

Section 16 - "An Information Guide to the Administration of Services and Schemes"

In accordance with Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997, the Board must publish details of rules, procedures, practices, guidelines, interpretations and indexes of precedents used by the Board when determining eligibility for services. Work commenced on Section 16 in 2002 and publication is scheduled for 2003. Section 16 will also be available on intranet and internet sites.

Other publications completed by this office in 2002 were as follows:

- *The Freedom of Information Act, 1997 'Your Right To Know'*
A revised public information leaflet for the Board was published and distributed to all locations in the Board, Citizen Advice Centres and Public Libraries.
- *The Freedom of Information Act, 1997 - A guide for staff in the Eastern Region Health Services*
A new Guide for Staff in the Eastern Region Health Services was prepared and distributed in 2002.
- *Handbook for Health Professionals on management of personal information*
The Board's FOI Office, as part of the National FOI Health Board network has contributed to an initiative to compile a handbook for health professionals on the management of personal information.

Training - Decision-Makers & Internal Reviewers

The provision of expert training to decision-makers and internal reviewers is vital in ensuring quality decision-making. Training opportunities were provided in-house on a number of occasions in 2002. External advanced training places provided by the Central Policy Unit were also availed of.

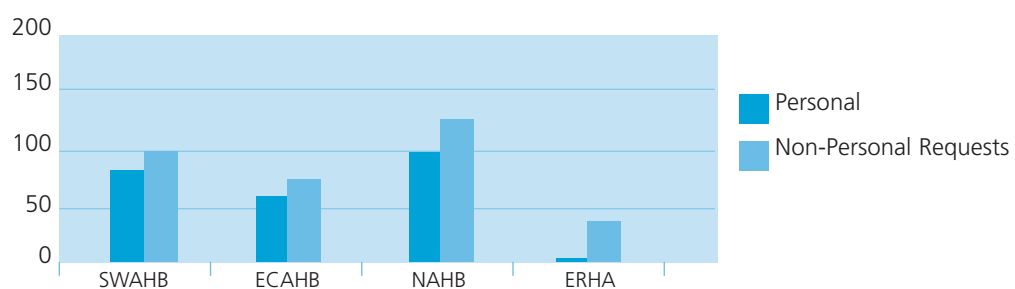
Staff Overview Training

The FOI Unit provided a number of staff overview training sessions in relation to FOI, Report Writing and Record Management during the year.

FOI Activity during 2002

Agency	No. of Requests Received	
	Personal	Non-Personal
South Western Area Health Board	82	100
East Coast Area Health Board	58	72
Northern Area Health Board	100	124
Eastern Regional Health Authority (Corporate)	5	39
TOTAL	245	335

Personal / Non-Personal Requests



Analysis of Category of Requester

Board	Public	Journalists	Business	Oireachtas	Staff	Other	Total
SWAHB	118	13	1	4	14	32	182
ECAHB	78	10	1	0	26	15	130
NAHB	142	9	1	0	8	64	224
ERHA	14	18	0	0	5	7	44
Total	352	50	3	4	53	118	580



Communications

The Communications Department co-ordinates internal and external communications for the Board and is a resource for staff in all areas of communications including: publications, event management, corporate identity, organisational strategy development, campaigns, crisis management and the media.

Activities and Developments in 2002

Media Services

The department provided a 24 hour media service, responding and issuing statements and releases to local and national print and electronic media. The department also arranged advertisements in various print media, highlighting the work and services of our Board.

Intranet and Internet

During the year the department commenced the development of an Internet website and an intranet site. The intranet came into operation during the year. Information on our Board and our services can be accessed from the Eastern Regional Health Authority website, www.erha.ie.

Publications

The Department provided advice and assistance on design and editing to staff throughout the Board on various publications. It produced a number of publications including the Annual Report, the Newsletter for the South Western Area Health Board, the Organisational Strategy and a Directory of Services.

Events and Launches

The department assisted with the planning and organisation of a number of events during the year. Some of the events hosted included:

- Visit of President Mary McAleese to Aisling House, Maynooth
- Opening of the new Health Centre in Derrinturn, Co. Kildare
- Launch of a Charter of Rights for Older People
- Laying of Foundation Stone for Phase 3 of the new Naas General Hospital by Mr. Charlie McCreevy, T.D., Minister for Finance

Getting Better Together 2003-2007

The department assisted with the development and communication of the Board's Organisational Strategy 2003 - 2007, *"Getting Better Together"*, which is assisting us in implementing the National Health Strategy - *"Quality and Fairness - a Health System for You"*. As part of this plan we have developed a communications strategy for our Board and work commenced to implement this during the year.



Finance

The South Western Area Health Board has developed an Organisational Strategy that describes our Vision for the future of financial management services in our Board. This strategy is also the vehicle to describe our values and guiding principles into the future. It is our roadmap to successfully implementing the National Health Strategy that was launched in November 2001 and will assist the Board in the Reform Programme to get underway in 2003.

Finance is an integral part of the South Western Area Health Board. In today's environment it is essential that we further enhance and develop strong systems to ensure corporate governance and best practice throughout our organisation. In that context we have identified key issues for finance going forward and we need to continually review and develop the finance function to meet the ever-changing needs of our organisation. We can meet this strategic challenge by focussing increasingly on providing more enhanced and timely management information in order to further improve decision-making within our organisation. The use of Eastern Health Shared Services to perform many of the central accounting and volume transaction processing for our Board allows the Finance Department to focus on developing our financial management capacity.

Statutory Accountability

Statutory accountability of Health Boards has been considerably strengthened in recent years with the introduction of the Health (Amendment) (No. 3) Act 1996, the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993, the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997 and Accounting

Standards for Health Boards. In addition, the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2001, sets out principles of corporate governance for our Board.

The summary financial performance of South Western Area Health Board for the year ended 31st December 2002 is as follows:

<i>Financial Performance</i>	<i>€m</i>
2002 Budget Determination	431.182
2002 Expenditure	434.532
Variance for 12 Months Ended	
31st December 2002	(3.349)
Add: 1st Charge from 31/12/01	(2.980)
Cumulative Variance as at	
31st December 2002	(6.330)

The adverse variance for the year ended 31st December 2002 represents less than 1% (0.78%) of our allocation. During 2002 our Board experienced significant cost pressures in a number of service areas, particularly in the context of Services for the Elderly, Services for Children and Families and the Acute Hospital Services sector.

Prompt Payment Legislation

The Board's payment practice is one of ensuring that properly completed and agreed invoices for goods and services supplied to the Board are discharged within the prescribed payment period. Appropriate systems and procedures have been put in place to provide assurance that the Act is fully complied with. Interest payments of €53,538 were paid in the year ended 31st December 2002 to suppliers where payments could not be made within the timeframe.

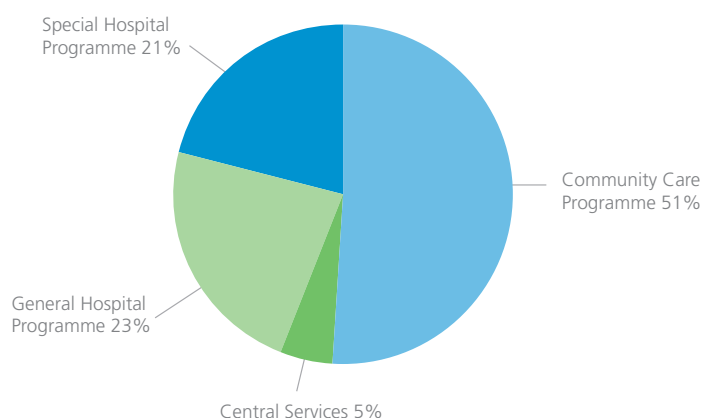
Payments paid in 2002

Value of payments on which interest was paid	€10.638m
Number of payments on which interest was paid	15,309
Amount of interest paid	€53,538
Number of payments valued in excess of €317.43	3,633
Amount of interest paid in respect of payments in excess of €317.43	€47,435
Interest expressed as a % of Non-Pay	0.02%

Programme Analysis of Expenditure & Income

Line No.		Pay	Non-Pay	Gross Expenditure	Income	12 Months to 31/12/02 Net Expenditure	12 Months to 31/12/01 Net Expenditure
		€	€	€	€	€	€
a	General Hospital Programme	61,187,562	48,523,112	109,710,674	(11,507,953)	98,202,721	84,002,925
b	Special Hospital Programme	43,106,361	50,122,440	93,228,801	(1,968,357)	91,260,444	85,218,437
c	Community Care Programme	77,147,147	152,920,725	230,067,872	(6,423,565)	223,644,307	201,899,815
d	Central Services	5,538,262	18,300,189	23,838,451	(2,414,296)	21,424,155	33,115,338
e	TOTAL	186,979,332	269,866,466	456,845,798	(22,314,171)	434,531,627	404,236,515

Expenditure Distribution



Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2002

	31/12/2002	31/12/2001
	€	€
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets	81,899,161	52,723,632
Financial Assets	0	0
	81,899,161	52,723,632
Current Assets		
Stocks	11,751,754	12,346,257
Property Purchase Deposits	0	0
Debtors	16,708,806	33,281,710
Cash at Bank or in Hand	332,566	269,856
	28,793,126	45,897,823
Creditors		
Bank Loans & Overdrafts	21,756,355	13,649,268
Other Creditors	59,545,863	84,874,842
	81,302,218	98,524,110
Total Assets Less Liabilities	29,390,069	97,345
Capital & Reserves		
Non Capital Income & Expenditure Account	(6,329,979)	(2,980,124)
Capital Fund:	€	
Capitalisation Account	81,899,162	
Less Deficit on Capital Income & Expenditure Account	(18,904,335)	
	62,994,827	29,303,258
Deferred Income	0	0
Special I&E Account	660,123	1,709,117
Reserve on Establishment	(27,934,902)	(27,934,906)
Total Capital & Reserves	29,390,069	97,345



Subsidiary
Companies

The South Western Area Health Board has two subsidiary companies. It finances their activities that are within the scope of the objects clause in their memorandum of association. The two subsidiary companies are:

1. Eve Limited

Eve Limited provides rehabilitation programmes for people who have experienced mental health difficulties and learning disabilities referred within the Eastern Regional Health Authority's catchment area. The issued ordinary share capital of the company consists of two shares held in trust on behalf of South Western Area Health Board. It has no borrowings and no money advanced. Funding for the company is shown as a Section 65 Grant in the accounts of the Area Health Boards.

2. Eastern Community Works Limited

Eastern Community Works is engaged in improving the living conditions of the elderly by carrying out minor repairs and decorations to the main living areas of elderly persons' homes. The company also administers the Homecare Attendants' Scheme and other minor programmes on behalf of South Western Area Health Board. The company is limited by guarantee. ECW Ltd. is registered as a charity with the Revenue Commissioners. Charitable status was established under Section 227 of the Taxes Consolidation Acts giving the company exemption from all forms of taxation. Its Board is comprised of officers from the three Area Health Boards. It has no borrowings and no money advanced. Funding for the company is shown as a Section 65 Grant.

