

INTEGRATED PROCUREMENT APPROACH FOR HEALTH WITH SECTION 38 AND 39 AGENCIES



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The HSE Corporate Procurement Plan 2022-2024 signals the importance of an integrated procurement approach for the health sector. This was a central theme at a recent HSE Procurement Information Session for Section 38 and Section 39 Agencies. The event, which took place at Cherry Orchard Hospital, welcomed representation from a selection of healthcare agencies.

National Director of HSE Procurement John Swords welcomed the audience by saying, “It is important to emphasise that this collaboration is significant for our way of working together. We are all aware that procurement activities take place within a highly regulated environment and it is critical that procurement spend on goods and services is carried out in a transparent and efficient manner. By working together we take an integrated approach to procurement which supports the patients and service users across the health sector.”

The event was organised and facilitated by Siobhan Dunphy, Assistant National Director of Sourcing and Contracting within HSE Procurement.

“We are the largest purchaser in the State with a Procurement spend of €4 billion approximately and therefore we are accountable for effective and compliant procurement that delivers value for money with security of supply,” she said.

She outlined that a key part of improving efficiency is transforming our ways of working around procurement activities, which incorporates:

- **Coordination and collaboration** with all HSE organisations to agree a Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) aligned to the implementation of the HSE Corporate Procurement Plan. The MAPP refers to the planning of the organisations future procurement requirements.
- **Spend Under Management (SUM)** is spend that is actively managed by procurement and finance professionals across the health sector to optimise compliance.
- **Improve SME participation** through the HSE MAPP pipeline of upcoming tenders that will be published each Quarter to inform SME's and Micro Enterprises of upcoming opportunities in advance of tender publication.
- **Sustainability:** The health service has a significant role to play in achieving Ireland's climate action obligations. HSE are required to

apply appropriate procurement processes, award criteria and weighting to support innovation, social inclusion, economic and environmental sustainability priorities into all procurement processes.

A further insight into the procurement operating model included an overview of Logistics and Inventory Management and Corporate Procurement Planning and Compliance Improvement.

HSE Procurement were delighted to welcome Kevin Cleary, Assistant National Director of the HSE Compliance Unit, who spoke about the compliance environment and on the importance of increasing the level of procurement compliance to help the HSE meet its obligations in terms of accountability. Continuing with the theme of collaboration, guest speakers from the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) presented on the common categories of products and services which they procure across the public sector.

The afternoon session gave an informative demonstration on the HSE Procurement Portal introducing the Procurement Agreements and Contracts eRepository (PACE) which provides information on HSE / health sector agreements and contracts for goods and services. This was followed by an overview of the HSE Procurement Sourcing and Contracting categories across the Procurement portfolios. The Procurement Assistant Heads outlined their programmes of work across five portfolios of:

1. Medical Professional Services
2. Rapid Response
3. Medical, Surgical & Pharmacy
4. Medical Diagnostics & Equipment
5. Digital Health & Innovation

A lively questions and answers session included positive feedback on the opportunity for the agencies to engage and collaborate on the procurement agenda.

Closing remarks from the National Director of Procurement referred to the strong engagement over the course of the day.

“Service delivery with the patient at the centre of our activities is key to everything. However, we can't bring real value without ensuring compliance and accountability within our regulatory obligation,” he concluded.