

Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes 27th June 2017

PHECC office, Naas

Present

Shane Knox (Chair)
Ray Lacey
Paul Lambert
Niamh O'Leary
Tom Brady
Frank Keane
Tess O'Donovan

Apologies

Ben Heron

In Attendance

Kathleen Walsh
Margaret Bracken

1. Chair's Business

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the first meeting of the Education and Standards Committee 2017 and thanked the members for their nominations and attendance. Apologies were noted.

1.1 Introductions

Introductions were made around the table.

1.2 Minutes from May 2016 meeting

Minutes of the final meeting of the previous Education and Standards Committee were included in the papers. Kathleen Walsh confirmed that any concerns were raised by the members in relation to the accreditation of new Recognised Institutions, at this meeting were addressed at the final Council meeting in June 2016 and there are no issues outstanding. Acknowledgements were made by the Chair to Ms Valerie Small, the Chair of the former Education and Standards Committee, and to the Programme Development Officers and PHECC staff, for all their hard work and invaluable contribution to the Committee.

Resolution: That the minutes of the Education and Standards Committee held on 24th May 2016 be approved.

Proposed: Ray Lacey
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Paul Lambert

1.3 Committee Terms of Reference

Kathleen Walsh briefed the members on TOR015 – Education and Standards Committee terms of reference which was approved by Council on 11th May 2017. Specific points in the terms of reference were highlighted, with emphasis on governance and accountability, confidentiality of Committee work. The importance of research in education and training as a key term of reference was discussed with the Committee acknowledging the requirement for sufficient staff resources for addressing its TORs. The use of external persons/experts where needed to assist with Committee work was also mentioned.

1.4 Committee Membership

Members were informed that expressions of interest have been sought for the Committee. This process was conducted over several weeks, with a low response rate. While expressions of interest were received not all met the criteria required. Council examined the process at their meeting on 14th June and a decision was made for a second round of expressions of interest to be conducted, to include EMTs as part of the practitioner group. Kathleen Walsh noted this would occur in the next week in order to populate the Committee for its full complement of 12 members.

1.5 Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies

POL033 – Code of Governance and Business Conduct as approved by Council was included in the papers for information. Kathleen Walsh provided an overview and requested the members to familiarise themselves with policy. She highlighted areas involving governance of Council, fiduciary responsibility of Council, the annual evaluation of Committees of Council, delegated functions to the Director, and reporting requirements.

1.6 Conflict of Interest Policy

POL032 – Council Member Policy – Conflict of Interest was included in the papers and a discussion ensued. It was noted that it is the responsibility of individual members to identify conflicts of interest and as they arise they should be managed appropriately. As meeting papers are to be circulated to members one week prior to meetings it was suggested that any conflicts of interest could be communicated before the meeting date.

2. Committee Activity 2012 – 2016

2.1 Education and Standards with reference to PHECC Strategy and Business Plan

Included in the papers was a summary of The Education and Standards Committee key activities from 2012 – 2016 and Kathleen Walsh briefed the members. Consideration was given to the significant amount of work carried out by the Committee previously and the priority areas as identified in the extract information from the strategy and business plan. Thus, it was agreed that the proposed schedule of meeting every 2 months was appropriate at this time.

3. PHECC Committees/Working Groups relating to Education and Standards work

The terms of reference for PHECC Committees and working groups were included for information as there is significant interaction and linkage between various Committees and groups and programme work. The Chair gave an overview of the terms of reference for all the Committee, informing members as per Council decision any Council member is welcome to attend any of the PHECC Committees meetings and the Committee Chairs will receive Education and Standards Committee papers.

3.1 Quality and Safety Committee

3.2 Medical Advisory Committee

3.3 Priority Dispatch Committee

3.4 Examination Quality Group

3.5 Examiner Panel Group

3.6 Test Item Writing Group

The Chair noted that the Terms of reference and membership of the above groups (3.4, 3.5 and 3.6) dating from the previous Council should be reviewed by the Committee and then proceed to Council. As these groups are managed by Jacqueline Egan, Programme Development Officer for Examinations, Kathleen Walsh will liaise with her in preparing this information for the Committee's consideration. The Chair requested that governance and criteria for member selection are addressed in this review activity.

Committee members discussed the need to ensure there is cohesion between the various Committees' work streams and outputs. Frank Keane shared the example for the association of Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) development by the Medical Advisory Committee and the relevant Education and Training Standards. Kathleen Walsh stated that with the new formation of the Committees, communication amongst them/Chairs was critical– this included the link with the other Programme Development Officers for their input with Committees' work.

3.7 PHECC Organisational Map

An overview of current structures/responsibilities was included for information.

4. Education and Standards – Responder and Practitioner Levels

A general discussion took place regarding the mechanisms for reviewing and revising the Education and Training Standards across all levels. Niamh O'Leary suggested that a methodology and continuous quality review process should be developed to direct this activity. Tess O'Donovan queried about the creation of a project team to support this work. The Chair requested that proposals be prepared for the next meeting.

4.1 Cardiac First Response and Medications for Listed Organisations (2016)

Kathleen Walsh gave a summary of the implementation of this new standard including the uptake by RIs to deliver these courses. To date 3 RIs are providing training and there are additional applications under review. She spoke about the collaboration between PHECC, Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland and the Health Product Regulatory Authority and the briefings provided to the Dept of Health on the initiative.

4.1.2 Criteria for instructors

Correspondence from an RI approved for CFR and MLO courses was reviewed by the Committee in relation to an application for instructor status recognition. The Committee considered the criteria submitted in support of the application against the established criteria as per the Standard. The Committee came to the conclusion that the applicant currently does not meet the criteria i.e. "other registered healthcare professional with a valid CFR instructor certificate and have experience in managing emergencies and it's within their scope of practice..." The Committee was of the view that as this was a new initiative caution should be exercised, and there was an option available to the individual to obtain EFR instructor status allowing for CFR and MLO instruction.

4.1.3 Evaluation of Instructor Course Pack

The Committee discussed the necessity of evaluating the instructor course pack for the CFR and MLO courses at a near point in time to determine if it was fit for purpose and met RI and student needs. Reference was made to correspondence between PHECC Executive and HSE National Social Inclusion Office about Naloxone CPG (1.3.6) for dosing. This issue is being addressed by Medical Advisory Committee and may result in changes for the education material in view of any revisions to the CPG.

It was agreed to collect information from RIs in the several months for the numbers of persons receiving training, to aid in planning the evaluation, ensuring adequate sample size of RIs and students.

5 Recognised Institutions current status

5.1 Council Rules for Recognition of Institutions and course approval

As an overview, Kathleen Walsh referred to Council Rules as foundation for RI and course approval. It was noted that the Committee's ToR involve considering and making recommendations to Council on recognition of institutions (1d). The historical background of the approval process from the Accreditation Committee transferring to the Director through delegation decisions per Council resolution was shared. Following discussion, the Committee concluded that the current process should be referred to Council.

5.2 Listing of Current RIs and approved courses

5.3 Delegated decisions to Director – Council Report Courses Activity

These two items were provided for information purposes, detailing the number of organisations approved as RIs and course approvals over the course of the past year. It was stated that this information is provided to Council at each of its meeting. The Committee requested that these reports also be presented at future meetings.

6. Quality Review Framework (QRF)

6.1 Current Status

The Quality Review Framework – QA model for RIs has concluded its first 3-year cycle of monitoring, with the completion of on-site reviews with the 2015 cohort of RIs. Kathleen Walsh stated that it has been a great learning experience for PHECC and RIs and at this juncture an evaluation of the QRF was required. She referred to the need to incorporate the QRF more solidly within the RI

application and renewal processes and there are other areas for review. The Committee agreed it was timely to evaluate the model and requested that it be included for the September meeting.

6.2 Quality Review Panel Guidelines

The composition of the Quality Review Panel was discussed by the Committee members. It was acknowledged that the initial reliance for external expertise and experience served the process well. The Chair raised that it may be appropriate and timely with the evaluation to introduce PHECC educators/practitioners for panel participation. Tess O'Donovan suggested that it was important for building capacity for quality improvement in the health services that others with specific training and academic qualifications are involved in the reviews. It was agreed to review the QRF panel membership as part of the overall evaluation.

7. Transition of Occupational First Aid/HSA to First Aid Response/PHECC

7.1 Overview and current Project work

Kathleen Walsh presented an overview of the transition project underway, providing the statistics for FAR provider and instructor course approvals and applications under review. Specific project work with external assistance is focused on improving the application/review process for new RIs, RI database management, and funding models. The Committee discussed the implications for PHECC staff and resources and sought that this project should be noted in PHECC risk register and advanced through the current business cases.

The mapping diagram of OFA/FAR training standards was considered by the Committee along with the stakeholders' concerns for differences with student/instructor ratios and duration of courses. Kathleen Walsh asked for the Committee to examine the 2014 FAR Standard as a matter of priority. The Committee agreed this review should be progressed and include consideration of international practice. Niamh O'Leary referred to the International Red Cross standards for first aid as a resource.

8. Paramedic Exams/Assessment – Mega Code

The Committee were informed by Kathleen Walsh that the PDOs undertaking mapping exercise across 3 paramedic programmes studying the PHECC Standard and Mega-code assessment. This will involve meeting with 3 RIs representatives (NASC, DFB and UL) to review and revise current assessment processes to standardise approaches across the RIs. This work will progress over the next few months and be reported back to the Committee.

9. Recognition of Professional Qualifications overview

The Committee were briefed on the recent regulations (SI 8 of 2017) for the transposition of the EU directive for Recognition of Qualifications. Work is underway to ensure PHECC documentation and processes are aligned to the new Regulations and to provide greater guidance to applicants at EU and non-EU levels. This has involved workshop participation within the Depts of Health and Education and examining current structure and processes for compensation measures of adaptation and aptitude testing for practitioner levels.

9.1 Recognition of Qualifications – Assessor Panel

The terms of reference for the Qualification Assessors Panel (TOR-003) were included for information. Panel membership is appointed by the Director. The Committee queried the criteria for appointment and the activity level for the Panel. Kathleen Walsh stated that the application file numbers vary – noting 23 applications were processed in 2016. The Chair noted that as the recognition of qualifications is part of the Committee's remit it should review the ToR for the Assessors Panel.

10. Teaching Faculty Framework overview

The Teaching Faculty Framework (STN021) was provided to the Committee for information

10.1 Educational Awards – Status

Current statistics for Educational Award Holders were given by Kathleen Walsh. She noted various points for consideration by the Committee for teaching faculty. These involved exploring the association of the awards with the QQI and the National Qualifications Framework; improved engagement with EA holders particularly with future project work; and surveying of RIs and teaching faculty for their existing associations.

11. Continuous Professional Competency overview

11.1 Registration and EMT CPC Report

Omar Fitzell, EMT CPC Coordinator presented an overview of the project work for implementing CPC for EMT. (Refer to *Report on the creation of an assessment process for monitoring Continuous Professional Competency within Emergency Medical Technicians in Ireland* (2016) and PowerPoint slides for details.) At the conclusion of the presentation he outlined areas for future clarification and several recommendations drawing on the work to date including stakeholder engagement. The Chair thanked Omar Fitzell for his huge work and noted the positive feedback received.

The CPC standard for Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics and its development was referred to as ToR for the Committee. Kathleen Walsh mentioned Ricky Ellis's (PDO) current activities in this area and suggested he present his work to date to the Committee. The Chair suggested that a sub-Committee/working group for CPC be formed to advance the CPC standard. He noted this Committee first for design and implementation of the standard with Quality and Safety to ensure the standard is met.

11.2 CPC Guide for EMT (2017)

Provided to the Committee for information purposes.

12. National Ambulance Service School Project

Council requested the Committee to examine the request of NAS staff for PHECC support with its school education project. The information pack developed locally for schools was circulated to Council and included in the Committee papers. Kathleen Walsh requested a written proposal from Micheal Dineen (NAS) detailing the specific supports sought for the project. She will follow up with him to have the proposal submitted for the next meeting.

13. AOB

The Chair suggested that the Committee consider its remit for supporting research activities within the pre-hospital emergency care environment and plan for focused attention on this re: hosting a future workshop to include external expertise.

Kathleen Walsh referred to the European Committee for First Aid Education Publication *Single European First Aid: Cross Border First Responders (2016)* for future Committee consideration associated with review of responder programmes.

14. Proposed 2017 meeting dates

Tuesday 5th September

Tuesday 7th November

Tuesday 25th July - Cancelled

The meeting concluded at 4:15pm.

Signed:


Chair

Date:


5/8/17