

Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes 11th January 2018

PHECC Office, Naas

| Present | Apologies | In Attendance |
|--------------------|---------------|--|
| Shane Knox (Chair) | Adrian Murphy | Kathleen Walsh, PDO |
| Peter McDaid | | Jacqueline Egan, PDO |
| Róisín McGuire | | Brian Power, PDO |
| Ben Heron | | Shane Mooney, Chair Quality and Safety Committee |
| Niamh O'Leary | | Hillery Collins, Vice Chair Council |
| Paul Lambert | | Margaret Bracken, Support Officer |
| Frank Keane | | |
| Tom Brady | | |
| Gareth Elbell | | |
| Tess O'Donovan | | |
| Chris O'Connor | | |
| Ray Lacey | | |
| Melissa Redmond | | |

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted. The Chair welcomed new Committee member Ms Melissa Redmond, a representative for patients, to the Education and Standards Committee. Ms Redmond addressed the meeting and provided her working background to date, and introductions were made by the members present.

1.1 Minutes from previous meeting of 7th November 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2017 were reviewed.

Resolution: That the minutes of the Education and Standards Committee meeting held on 7th November 2017 be approved.

Proposed: Niamh O'Leary

Seconded: Gareth Elbell

Carried without dissent

1.2 Matters Arising

Agenda item 3 Review of revised Terms of Reference.

Revised Terms of Reference for Recognition of Qualifications Assessors Panel, Examiner Panel, Examination Quality Group and Test Item Writing Panel, were recommended to Council for approval by the Committee. Ms Kathleen Walsh informed the members that the terms of reference were on the agenda for the December Council meeting but were deferred to their meeting on 18th January.

Agenda item 6.1 Appendix 1 NQEMT examination included as part of Appeals Policy POL019 – V2.

At the November meeting the following was agreed: that amendments would be made to Appendix 1 NQEMT Examination and a revised draft be resubmitted to the Committee for further consideration. The Committee recommend to Council that RIs be given notification of MCQ exam results with the candidate's permission.

Ms Walsh informed the members that Appendix 1 is currently being revised by Ms Jacqueline Egan, Programme Development Officer. The recommendation from the Committee regarding the MCQ exam results will be made to Council.

Agenda item 6.3 Paramedic examination – Interim Standard.

A revised Paramedic Examination – Interim Standard was recommended to Council for approval with noted amendments. Ms Walsh informed the members that the Interim Standard was on the agenda for the December Council meeting but was deferred to their meeting on 18th January.

Agenda item 10.1 AOB. At the November meeting the Chair requested the publication date of the field guide. Mr Brian Power, Programme Development Officer, provided an update on the field guide. He informed the members that some difficulties have arisen with the App due to unexpected significant costing issues. The solution is to go to tender to develop a new App, however this will take some time. A printed copy of the medications section of the field guide will be printed as an interim solution. It is anticipated that the RIs will be provided with the medications field guide by the end of February.

Agenda item 10.3 AOB. It was recommended that a field guide be included in the paediatric station of the EMT OSCEs. An update was sought from the members regarding this. Ms Walsh informed the members that a field guide will be included in this station for future EMT examinations.

2. Recognition of Professional Qualifications

2.1 Status update

A report of recognition of professional qualifications applications processed in 2017 was included in the meeting papers and Ms Walsh briefed the members. There were 23 applications processed in 2017 and currently there are 8 applications at various stages of assessment and review. The members were informed that the Department of Education had requested a report on all applications processed in 2016. This annual report was submitted to the DoE by the Executive. Tess O'Donovan requested a copy of the report to be circulated to Committee members with the draft minutes. Revised draft Recognition of Qualifications Assessors Panel terms of reference, reviewed and agreed at the November meeting, was recommended by the Committee to Council for approval. However, this item was deferred at the December meeting of Council and is listed for its January 18th meeting. Expanding the Recognition of Qualifications Assessors Panel was considered at a previous Committee meeting and will be actioned post the Council's approval of the Terms of Reference.

* Chris O'Connor joined the meeting .

3. RI applications and course approvals

3.1 Status update

A full current listing of RIs and course approval status was included in the meeting papers and Ms Walsh briefed the members. There are 53 RIs currently approved with 6 new applications being processed at present.

4. FAR Transition Project

4.1 Final Project Report PHECC Project: Transition from Occupational First Aid (OFA) Health and Safety Authority (HSA) training standard to PHECC First Aid Response (FAR) training standard.

A final project report on the transition from OFA/HSA training standard to PHECC/FAR training standard, prepared by project manager Audrey Kirwan, was included in the meeting papers. Ms Walsh provided an overview of the project report. Ms Walsh informed the members that the transition period from OFA to FAR has been extended to May 2018 as per the HSA.

4.2 RI Online portal Development - Update

Ms Walsh gave a presentation on the RI online portal system demonstrating how applicants and RIs would access the system. There was discussion and feedback from the members. Ms Walsh informed the members that the timeline for access and use of the new website portal service is targeted for the end of February. An engagement event for the RIs on this initiative will be organised towards the end of February also. She noted that a sample of RIs participated in user testing in mid-December and the feedback was very positive.

The Chair referred to the concerns expressed by OFA providers and individual instructors regarding advertising and providing future FAR courses. He queried PHECC activities for the transition and the communication to these groups. Ms Walsh shared that there does need to be improved communications involving the transitioning process for instructors. This requires further consideration and resource allocation.

4.3 Education and Training Standards Revision

A working group for the review of the FAR Education and Training Standards was established following the September meeting and they have had several meetings over the past 4 months. A report on the progress of the FAR Education and Training Standards review and revision with feedback from the working group, concerns and key issues identified from stakeholders across the continuum of the health and safety training and business/industry sectors, was included in the meeting papers. Ms Walsh gave an overview to the members and a discussion followed. The ratio of instructor to student (1:6) was highlighted as a key concern. The Chair noted that ratio determination for other PHECC courses (1:8) could be considered as a precursor with other criteria established.

It was highlighted that the Ambulatory Care Report (introduced in the FAR Standard) may not be appropriate for recording occupational first aid in the workplace and should be reviewed. Ms Walsh explained to members that a revision of the ACR report is not currently part of the working group's brief. However, members discussed the need to examine the use of the ACR within the FAR Standard and to consider replacing with a more relevant form. Also considered were the implications of data protection, and legislation in relation to any responsibility of PHECC for collection and reporting of data. It was suggested to engage with relevant data protection officers and the HSA for recording by the First Aid Responder in the workplace. Paul Lambert highlighted the need for a standalone FAR CPG publication as currently FAR CPGs are grouped with other responder and practitioner CPGs.

The working group will report back to the Committee in March with their recommendations for revisions to the FAR Standard. Ms Walsh informed the members that a meeting is scheduled with PHECC and the HSA shortly and any relevant issues identified will be reported back to the Committee.

5. Working group for Research

5.1 Terms of Reference – Committee feedback

Ms Walsh updated the members. At the November meeting nominations were received from the members to join the Education and Standards Committee Working Group for Research as approved by Council at their October 2017 meeting. It was proposed that a draft template be developed for the Committee members to populate in relation to drafting the terms of reference for the working group. Committee members were asked prior to this meeting to consider these points and prepare a minimum of 2 terms of reference for discussion at the meeting. Suggestions were received by Ms Walsh from Niamh O'Leary and Ray Lacey, which were tabled for further discussion at the meeting. Members are requested to email any suggestions for draft terms of reference to Ms Walsh in advance of the first meeting of the working group and the listing of ideas for TORs will be circulated to the working group will by the Chair.

5.2 Meeting date

The first meeting of the working group for research will take place early February. Date to be agreed by members.

6. CPC Subcommittee update

At the September meeting the Education and Standards Committee referred to a subcommittee the issue of determining a standard for CPC that will apply to the register divisions of Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic and membership of the subcommittee was determined. A brief update report on the CPC subcommittee progress to date was included in the meeting papers. Ms Walsh provided an overview to the members based on written report provided by the Chair of the subcommittee Mr Ricky Ellis. The subcommittee have met twice to date and drawn up terms of reference and a recommendation on a standard for CPC will be brought to the Committee when discussions are complete. It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meetings of the subcommittee and a progress report with definitive timelines and proposals be submitted by the subcommittee for the next Committee meeting in March. The Chair commended the CPC subcommittee on the work carried out to date.

7. Quarterly Assessments/Paramedic Schedule/TFF – Criteria for Assessor

At the November Committee meeting, Shane Mooney, Chair of the Quality and Safety Committee, expressed concerns about issues regarding quarterly assessments for paramedics. He informed the members that assessments are being carried out by qualified tutors, and assistant tutors are not authorised to carry out assessments at present, which is time consuming for such a small number of tutors. The Teaching Faculty Framework criteria for assessors was included in the meeting papers. Mr Mooney addressed the meeting. Expanding the standard to allow assistant tutors and mentors to carry out quarterly assessments was proposed and discussed. Ms Jacqueline Egan, Programme Development Officer, highlighted that assessment schedules and the examination handbook will have to be revised and updated simultaneously.

Resolution: that the Education and Standards Committee recommend to Council that assistant tutor level or someone who has completed an assessors programme or equivalent be the minimum requirement for carrying out quarterly assessments for paramedics.

Proposed: Ben Heron
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Ray Lacey

8. Examinations update

8.1 Report from Research Workshop

A report from the PHECC NQEMT Paramedic Examination Standard research workshop held on 21st November 2017, was included in the meeting papers. Jacqueline Egan provided an overview and a discussion ensued. Ms Egan highlighted the gap in the links between the Paramedic Interim Standard, Assessment Schedules and Examination Handbook. She informed the members that the gaps will be addressed through the process of developing the Paramedic Examination Standard. In addition, she pointed out that the current PHECC Paramedic NQEMT Examinations Standard (Interim) V1 will address all variations across the three RIs at Paramedic level.

The selection of representation relevant to the work for OSCE considerations was discussed. Some members were of the opinion that this did not adequately meet the brief for this workshop. It was shared that defined criteria should be established by the Education and Standards Committee for the selection of invited experts.

Frank Keane pointed out that at the start of the process to develop a Paramedic Examination Standard a very productive meeting took place between the RIs and PHECC, and that it would be very worthwhile to have a similar meeting again. Mr Keane expressed his concerns regarding the absence of videoing of Megacode OSCEs from the Paramedic Interim Standard, which was suggested and discussed at the November meeting. The question was raised as to why the RIs were not made aware of the Interim Standard. Ms Egan pointed out that at the November meeting it was agreed to amend the Paramedic Interim Standard to include 2 examiners per station, one examiner assessing the candidate and one examiner leading on the scenario, with a recommendation to Council for approval with this noted amendment. Ms Egan informed the members that the amended Paramedic Examination Interim Standard was on the agenda for the December Council meeting but was deferred to January 18th. Brian Power pointed out that exams will be run as per the Interim Standard which does not include videoing at this point but this can be considered in the future when developing a Paramedic Standard.

A subgroup of representatives from NASC, DFB and UL, to develop a PHECC Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard and include a review of RI Assessment Schedules and any related material as appropriate, was discussed and agreed.

Resolution: That a subgroup be established consisting of 2 representatives from NASC, DFB and UL to work on a Paramedic Standard and Assessment Schedule.

Proposed: Paul Lambert
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Tom Brady

9. Education and Training Standards Review and Revisions

9.1 Practitioner Level

9.2 Responder Level

Ms Walsh updated the members on the current status of the Education and Training Standards review and revisions for practitioner and responder levels and Emergency Operations Centre levels. Ms Walsh informed the members that a small working group managed by the Programme Development Officer for Education and Standards is proposed for this project. It is envisioned that a tendering process will need to be conducted for an external body to carry out the project as per agreement with PHECC. Ms Walsh proposed that QQI, the National Framework for Qualifications, be invited to make a presentation at the March Committee meeting to the agreement of the members. A discussion followed regarding the working group, tendering process and timelines, and the need for extra resources was highlighted. The importance of updating and aligning the standards with Clinical Practice Guidelines, examinations etc was also highlighted. The Chair suggested a review of the current Strategic Plan to identify the key issues for consideration.

Resolution: that the Education and Standards Committee are requesting Council to consider the provision of additional resources for reviewing, maintaining, and monitoring standards such as CPC and revised education and training standards.

Proposed: Niamh O'Leary

Seconded: Paul Lambert

Carried without dissent

10. Committee Meeting dates for 2018

Meeting dates were agreed for 2018 as follows:

Tues 13th March

Wed 9th May

Wed 4th July

Wed 5th Sept

Wed 7th Nov

11. AOB

11.1 Congratulations were made to Dr Chris O'Connor on his Doctorate in Education.

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 16:00.

The next meeting of the Education and Standards Committee will take place in the PHECC office in the Dr Geoff King Room on Tuesday 13th March 2018.

Signed: _____

Chair

Date: _____

11 - June 2018

Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes 13th March 2018

PHECC Office, Naas

Present

Shane Knox (Chair)
Paul Lambert (Vice Chair)
Róisín McGuire
Ray Lacey
Chris O'Connor
Tess O'Donovan
Frank Keane
Tom Brady
Gareth Elbell
Peter McDaid

Apologies

Adrian Murphy
Ben Heron
Melissa Redmond
Niamh O'Leary

In Attendance

Kathleen Walsh, PDO
Jacqueline Egan, PDO
Hillery Collins, Vice Chair Council
Evelyn Murphy, PHECC Support Officer
Margaret Bracken, PHECC Support Officer

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted. The Chair welcomed Ms Evelyn Murphy, who is replacing Margaret Bracken as the support officer for Education and Standards. The Chair expressed his condolences to Mr Brian Power, Programme Development Officer, on the recent death of his father. The first anniversary of the Rescue 116 tragedy was noted and marked by those present.

1.1 Minutes from previous meeting of 11th January 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th January were reviewed. Discussion took place and amendments were noted on 8.1 and agreed.

Resolution: That the minutes of the Education and Standards Committee meeting held on 11th January 2018 be approved with noted amendment.

Proposed: Gareth Elbell
without dissent

Seconded: Róisín McGuire Carried

Agenda item 8.1 Report from Examinations Research Workshop

A report from the PHECC NQEMT Paramedic Examination Standard research workshop which was held on 21st November 2017 was discussed at the January meeting. The selection of representation relevant to the work for OSCE considerations was discussed and some members were of the opinion that this did not adequately meet the brief for this workshop. It was shared that defined criteria should be established by the Education and Standards Committee for the selection of invited experts. This was not reflected in the draft minutes. It was agreed to amend the minutes to reflect this discussion.

1.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

2. Continuous Professional Competence Subcommittee

The Education and Standards Committee, at their meeting on 5th September 2017, established an expert group to develop the CPC requirements for Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic. The CPC Sub-Committee, chaired by Mr Ricky Ellis, Programme Development Officer, have held four meetings to date. A draft report with a series of recommendations from the Subcommittee to the Education and Standards Committee, prepared by Mr Ellis, was included in the meeting papers for consideration and approval. The following documents were included as attachments in the report for acceptance:

- Continuous Professional Competence Standard for registered Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Practitioners (STN017)
- CPC Guide for Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Practitioners (PUB046)
- Continuous Professional Competence Education Programme Accreditation Application (FOR063).

* Chris O'Connor joined the meeting.

2.1 Report of Subcommittee

Mr Ellis presented to the Committee and a broad discussion of the subject area ensued. The Committee discussed the implications of non-compliance with CPC and its link with registration. Communication with registrants was considered paramount. Registration linked matters were also discussed i.e. the possibility of informing CPG providers of non-compliance. This matter will be referred to Registration. The need to inform recognised institutions of the requirements of CPC was also identified. The matters discussed mostly related to the implementation phase of CPC. The Committee expressed a desire to retain control of the implementation phase of CPC until it has been embedded effectively before handing over to the Quality and Safety Committee. The Committee thanked Mr Ellis and commended him and the CPC Subcommittee on their work to date.

Resolution: that the Education and Standards Committee accept the documents and recommendations as set out in the CPC Subcommittee report and propose that the documents and recommendations be presented to Council for approval.

Proposed: Tom Brady
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Ray Lacey

* Brian Power, Programme Development Officer, joined the meeting.

3. Paramedic Examination Standard

At the January 2018 Council meeting, following a detailed discussion on the operation of the PHECC OSCEs in line with the implementation of the Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard (Interim) V1, Council approved with immediate effect, the Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard (Interim) V2, with the removal of the critical fail element and the inclusion of two examiners in each OSCE station, where possible.

A revised Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard (Interim) was included in the meeting papers. Draft terms of reference for the Paramedic NQEMT Examinations Subcommittee were also included. It was proposed and agreed by the members that Mr Chris O'Connor join the Subcommittee. Ms Jacqueline Egan, Programme Development Officer, provided an overview.

3.1 Interim Standard

The Chair proposed that a full review of the PHECC Megacode OSCEs be carried out and the report circulated to the Examinations Subcommittee and hence as appropriate to the Education and Standards Committee. Ms Egan advised the Committee that the expectation is that the development of the new Paramedic Examinations Standard could take approximately 6 months depending on availability of educational experts, evidenced material and resources. The Chair directed that it would be acceptable that the Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard be completed for presentation to the Education and Standards Committee by the end of September. The Chair also directed that the process for review of OSCE feedback must include the Examinations Subcommittee and Education and Standards Committee. Ms Egan advised the Committee of the Examinations Subcommittee meeting date of 21st March, and the feedback will be circulated for review for the members.

Mr Power notified the Committee that the Interim Standard was agreed by Council and stated that any change to the Standard will go through the approval process mechanism of Education and Standards recommendation to Council for approval. The Chair advised of the need to review the current Interim Megacode OSCE skill sheets and scenario, but not the need to amend the interim Standard agreed by Council.

3.2 Paramedic NQEMT Examination Subgroup Terms of Reference

The Chair advised that the role of the Education and Standards Committee is to nominate members to the Examination Subcommittee. He stated that the proper process was not followed by the Chair of Council. The Chair noted that no members from the Education and Standards Committee were asked to join the Examination Subcommittee. Ms Egan advised that it was agreed by the Education and Standards Committee that emailed expressions would be sought from each of the Paramedic level RIs, requesting two nominations to the Subcommittee from each RI, and that she carried out this task. Ms Egan stated that the Chair of Council nominated her as Chair of the Subcommittee and in this role she invited additional members to the Subcommittee: two members of the exam quality panel, the PHECC exam team, and Mr Brian Power for his expert education knowledge in the area of examinations. The Chair stated that the Committee is happy to continue with the Subcommittee in its current form.

The Chair proposed Chris O'Connor join the Exam Subcommittee, and all members agreed. Ms Egan welcomed Mr O'Connor to the Subcommittee, and notified Subcommittee members that the membership will be revised.

Resolution: That the Examinations Subcommittee Terms of Reference be approved by the Education and Standards Committee subject to the amendment of the membership to include Mr Chris O'Connor.

Proposed: Paul Lambert
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Tom Brady

* Brian Power left the meeting.

4. MCQ Exam results and RI notification

4.1 Refer to Practitioner Examination Handbook

The members sought that the RIs be informed by PHECC of candidate's examination results. Ms Egan advised that the PHECC relationship is with the exam candidate as this is the person who submits an exam application to PHECC. This could be a recommendation to Council to allow for exam result notification. If approved PHECC will revise the necessary application forms and processes in order that the candidate's permission is sought. Mr Collins suggested the Exam Subcommittee should look at this and discuss how to inform the RIs. Ms Egan clarified the role of the Exam Subcommittee.

Mr Lambert proposed that a candidate who is unsuccessful in the MCQ component of their Paramedic NQEMT should be allowed to go forward to take the OSCE component of the NQEMT exam. The rationale put forward was that under the current schedules deployed in the RI the timeline between the MCQ and the OSCE does not include time to facilitate an unsuccessful candidate taking the OSCE. Ms Egan notified the Committee that as Council has approved the Examinations Standard in January 2018, a period of 6 months must elapse before a resolution of Council can be amended and that this is in line with Council Standing Orders.

Resolution: that the Education and Standards Committee recommend that Council approve the Paramedic Examination (NQEMT) Standard (Interim) V3 with the removal of the requirement for a Paramedic exam candidate to be successful at MCQ before a candidate can progress to take the OSCE.

Proposed: Chris O'Connor

Seconded: Frank Keane

Carried without dissent

5. Exam scheduling for NQEMT – verbal update

Ms Egan gave an overview of the current exam scheduling procedures for the NQEMT examinations. She informed the Committee that the public view of the exam request calendar was recently closed. Instead the RIs were corresponded with by email seeking them to submit their proposed examination dates in line with their respective assessment schedules.

Ms Egan advised that they cannot always give the date requested, but that it might mean having to change the exam within a one or two day period, due to management of resources with the exam and IT team. Mr Lambert expressed that the examination dates requested by the RI should be approved by PHECC. He also expressed that he believed that PHECC do not have the resources to manage the current examination demands by the RIs and that additional support was required.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee believe that there is a need for extra resources and that there is a risk to the Organisation due to it being unable to deliver examinations as per the requirements of the RIs. Council should increase exam resources to manage exams on an ongoing basis.

Proposed: Ray Lacey

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

Carried without dissent

*Ricky Ellis, Programme Development Officer, left the meeting.

6. Provision of CPGs for views and rechecks by NQEMT candidates

6.1 POL020 Council Policy for Viewings and Rechecks

Ms Walsh provided an overview. Candidates are unable to bring anything into the Viewing and Recheck session with them. The Committee proposed that the CPGs should be allowed as a reference during the session which would benefit the candidate. Ms Walsh suggested that any change be recorded in the relevant policy and procedure documents and associated handbook. Mr Keane proposed that the CPGs should also be provided at the SWA and MCQ exams.

Mr Collins expressed that it is unfair to ask candidates to make calculations during the exam without any calculators, and that calculators or a pencil and paper should be provided for candidates to calculate accurately. Ms Egan informed the Committee that onscreen calculators are available for candidates taking the MCQ exam. The Chair proposed that a PHECC exam viewing coordinator on the day of the session, records information on a feedback spreadsheet, and that no material leaves the examination room. Ms Egan stated that feedback on the unsuccessful test items is recorded by the viewings coordinator.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee agree that the policy be amended to include provision of the CPGs and calculators at candidate viewings and rechecks.

Proposed: Frank Keane

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

Carried without dissent

7. Appeals Panel

7.1 Nomination of Committee Member

Ms Walsh briefed the Committee on the Appeals Panel and noted that Council have requested that a member from the Education and Standards Committee be nominated for the Appeals Panel.

Resolution: that the Education and Standards Committee nominated Frank Keane to join the Appeals Panel.

Proposed: Roísín McGuire

Seconded: Paul Lambert

Carried without dissent

7.2 POL019 Council Policy and Procedure for Appeals V3

Ms Walsh notified the Education and Standards Committee that Appendix 1 was updated, and Point 5 was added. The Committee asked to examine this. The Chair drew attention to points 2 and 4 within Appendix 1, and asked if point 2 could be removed from the Appendix. Mr O'Connor stated that point 4(b) does not make sense and that 4(c) is inconsistent with effective and appropriate procedure. Ms Egan notified the Committee that when the revisions are carried out the Appeals Policy, including the Appendix 1 and all associated documents, will go to Council for approval. Ms Egan also advised that the NQEMT examination handbook will be revised to reflect this and many other changes and indicated that this revision work will take place in April and May.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend approval to Council with the removal of points 2 and 4(b) from Appendix 1 and the inclusion of a new point 5 and all related documents.

Proposed: Chris O'Connor
without dissent

Seconded: Tom Brady Carried

8. Terms of Reference

The Chair notified the Committee that an Exam Quality Panel Chair will be nominated at the first meeting of the Panel and directed that a meeting be convened as soon as possible in order to consider additional members. Ms Egan advised that expressions of interest would be sought for membership to all examinations related panels in line with the approval of the terms of reference by Council.

The amended Terms of Reference were included in the meeting papers and were recommended by the Education and Standards Committee for approval by Council as follows:

8.1 Examination Quality Panel Terms of Reference

Proposed: Tom Brady
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Paul Lambert

8.2 Examiner Panel Terms of Reference

Proposed: Ray Lacey
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Roísín McGuire

8.3 Test Item Writing Panel Terms of Reference

Proposed: Gareth Elbell
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Ray Lacey

* Jacqueline Egan, Programme Development Officer, left the meeting.

9. CPGs, upskilling and general considerations for education and training

Mr Lambert expressed concern to the Committee regarding currency of CPG publications, dates of release from PHECC and availability for students and practitioners as it relates to training and upskilling. Members discussed the issue of version control for the publishing of CPGs and related communications to the RIs and agreed this should be prioritised to address any potential risks identified. The Chair noted this matter including synchronisation of the education and training standards, CPGs, and examination materials, was previously reviewed by Council in 2017. It was suggested by Mr Collins that the Chairs of the Committees meet and propose recommendations for Council for managing this risk.

Ms Walsh updated the Committee on the field guide, and informed the members that it is currently being printed.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee propose to Council that the Chairs from each of the Committees meet and propose recommendations to Council for future alignment of CPGs, standards and exam materials.

Proposed: Paul Lambert
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Frank Keane

10. FAR Education and Standards Review

10.1 Recommendations from Working Group – Summary Document

Ms Walsh presented the summary document which included the recommendations from the Working Group as was included in the meeting papers. Committee members discussed the various recommendations particularly a change of the student/instructor ratio and duration of the re-certification course. Ms McGuire noted that the recommendations put forward were to provide positive actions in the short term to support the transition process for OFA to FAR. Ms Walsh noted improved data collection from RIs re FAR courses could contribute to future revisions for the FAR standard. Mr O'Connor suggested a blended learning approach with online programme could be employed to possibly reduce duration of the course. It was queried whether PHECC could develop online programmes for FAR. Ms Walsh shared that there have been several RIs looking at such developments and the Committee agreed any such proposals should be supported by PHECC. Mr Collins suggested that the pass rate for the MCQ presently at 80% should be reconsidered to change to 60% pass rate and review the FAR standard 12 months onward. The Chair advised the Committee that the report by Audrey Kirwan previously presented to the Committee should be reviewed again regarding its recommendations, and submitted to Council for consideration.

10.2 Revised Standard document

Ms Walsh presented the revised draft FAR Education and Training Standard completed by the Working Group. The Chair advised that 'caring attitude' referred to under attitudinal objectives was not measurable and suggested this reference be removed from each learning outcome but be included at the start of the publication as an overall objective. Ms Walsh noted that the Working Group removed reference to 'special circumstances' in the Standard as there were no indications that these were utilised in the training for FAR responders.

Resolution: That the Working Group will further revise the draft FAR standard based on the recommendations as per the summary document and in view of the above discussions. The draft will then be presented to Council for its review and approval.

Proposed: Ray Lacey
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Peter McDaid

11. Quality Review Framework (QRF)

11.1 Interim Evaluation Report – Paul Collins (QRF Panel Chair)

Ms Walsh briefed members of the Interim Evaluation Report which was included in the meeting papers.

11.2 RI Survey

Ms Walsh advised the Committee that the RIs were asked to provide feedback of their experience and views of the QRF, through completion of the online RI Survey. To date 14 responses have been received.

12. Recognised Institutions

12.1 RI applications, Status Update and course approvals

A current listing of recent RI and course approvals was provided for information purposes for the Committee.

12.2 Responder Certification Activity – 2017

A copy of the responder certification activity for 2017 was included in the meeting papers for the Committee.

12.3 Online RI portal – Status

Ms Walsh advised the Committee that the online portal for managing RIs will be going live in the next few weeks. It will be supported by a user manual and also consider future supports eg webinars to assist applicants and RIs.

12.4 RI Engagement Event

Ms Walsh shared feedback from the RI engagement event held the previous day, including the group discussions focusing on the QRF and its implementation. Ms Walsh referred to several of the Committee members who were present at the event and asked if they had any observations to share. Mr Keane suggested that there is a need for a graduated approach to the QRF as it may be onerous for smaller Organisations and that future event planning may need to deliver to separate groupings re responder and practitioner levels.

12.5 March Information Session for OFA providers

The invitation was included in the meeting papers and Ms Walsh advised the Committee on the number of attendees from the regional sessions held to date and the general feedback and themes/issues raised by participants.

13. Recognition of Professional Qualifications

13.1 Application Update

Ms Walsh gave an update on the statistics for the application process. Mr O'Connor and Mr Collins queried how applications were assessed and criteria utilised by the Assessors Panel. Ms Walsh offered to prepare information for the next meeting providing an overview of the process to include reference to EU directives and Irish regulations.

13.2 2016 Stats submission to Department of Education and Skills

The statistics were included in the meeting papers for the Education and Standards Committee as per previous request and Ms Walsh gave an overview.

14. Working Group on Research

Ms Walsh gave an overview and summary of the first meeting held in February. The Chair advised the Committee that Council are in the process of developing a new strategic plan including considerations for research. He requested that the Working group establish its terms of reference and recommendations to proffer to the Committee and then on to Council. Ms Walsh informed the Committee that a Working Group for Research meeting was in the process of being scheduled.

Recommendation: That the Education and Standards Committee propose Chris O'Connor as Chair for the Working Group on Research.

Proposed: Frank Keane
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Paul Lambert

15. AOB

15.1 The Chair stated that he was questioned recently about his 'stewardship' of the Committee and his ability to act in this role in a neutral and unbiased manner. He requested members to discuss whether they had any concerns about how he chaired the meetings, and if he presented in any biased or unfair manner. He asked for the Vice Chair, Mr Lambert, to manage the discussion. The Chair excused himself from the meeting at this point.

The Chair and PHECC staff were asked to rejoin the meeting after a brief Committee discussion. The Vice Chair, Mr Lambert, stated that among the Committee there was an unambiguous and unanimous agreement and that The Chair has the full support of the Committee to continue as Chair. The Chair thanked Mr Lambert and the Committee for their support.

15.2 Mr McDaid expressed his concern over the significant number of items on the agenda, and queried if additional meetings are needed could this be facilitated by PHECC staff. Ms Walsh acknowledged the lengthy agenda and important items for discussion and action, she noted that additional meetings may be necessary however resources would need to be assigned and managed.

15.3 Mr Collins proposed that at some stage in the future that he would like to discuss the Interim Standard and the examination process.

The meeting concluded. The Chair thanked all for attending.

The next meeting of the Education and Standards Committee will take place in the PHECC Office on Wednesday 9th May @ 10am.

Signed: _____

Chair

Date: _____

Education and Standards Committee Meeting Minutes 11th June 2018

Present

Shane Knox (Chair)
Peter McDaid

Melissa Redmond
Róisín McGuire
Niamh O'Leary
Paul Lambert (Vice Chair)
Adrian Murphy
Tom Brady
Gareth Elbell
Chris O'Connor

In Attendance

Kathleen Walsh, PDO
Jacqueline Egan, PDO
Joanne Byrne, Support Officer

Apologies

Ray Lacey
Ben Heron
Frank Keane
Tess O'Donovan

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted.

1.1 Minutes from May 2018 meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th May were reviewed. A Committee member queried item 5 relating to the FAR MCQ examination pass rate. The Chair explained the decision for the change.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2018.

Proposed: Róisín McGuire

Seconded: Peter McDaid

Carried without dissent

2. Quality Review Framework Evaluation – Final Report

Ms Walsh noted that this item was deferred from the May meeting. She presented the common themes from the feedback obtained from the survey and group discussions conducted with the recognised institutions. The members discussed the findings and recommendations of the report with particular points of attention for:

- Improved alignment with other PHECC guidance, for example between the QRF and Governance Validation Framework and submission of documentation, and Teaching Faculty Framework
- Composition of the Quality Review Panel - expanding membership utilising practitioner and responder expertise
- The importance of monitoring courses delivered by RIs, i.e. announced visits versus unannounced visits
- Eliminating redundancy of various standards within the framework
- Future QRF requirements for the two levels of responder and practitioner RIs are introduced, acknowledging sole trader involvement
- Support for RIs for conducting internal verification, including tools and training from PHECC as it may be resource intensive

- Establish a register/database of instructors and the implications of GDPR for this
- Ensuring adequate resources for QRF with reference to PHECC's schedule of fees

The future revision of the QRF and its implementation was highlighted as a priority to members in view of the growing numbers of RIs, and need for continued quality assurance by PHECC.

The matter of RI application and course approval outcomes and change in current processes from delegated decisions by the Director to be submitted to the Education and Standards Committee for practitioner level courses was raised. Ms Walsh shared that in anticipation of the QRF being amended it would be advantageous to have this completed in advance of this changeover.

Resolution: That the Final Report be recommended to Council for its approval with amendments to Section 3.2.1 Recommendation 4 composition of the quality review panel; Recommendation 10 change to announced visits to RIs with a panel of experts and consideration of legal advice to explore the establishment of a register or database for instructors.

Proposed: Niamh O'Leary
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

3. Paramedic Examinations Standard – Subcommittee Update

The Chair welcomed Ms Egan to provide an update of the subcommittee activities for the Paramedic Examinations Standard. Ms Egan explained that a subgroup was recently convened as per Council direction following on from a recommendation from the Audit and Compliance Committee to review and amend the OSCE scoring tool, and following external validation, draft recommendations for the Exam Quality Panel. Representation from each of the 3 RIs providing the paramedic programme are involved. She envisioned that 2-3 meetings would suffice for revising the OSCE exam rating, with timings for the stations to be conducted the next day. The Chair queried the validation process for this activity and who should be involved. Committee members who are on the subgroup provided their views regarding quality assurance. Ms Egan noted that because of the present focus for the OSCE, scenarios, process and scoring, the work of the subcommittee for establishing a Paramedic exam standard was now on hold. The Chair directed that this time delay be communicated to Council on Thursday 14th June 2018 and that a revised timeframe, back to the original, is set for September for the completion of the new full examination standard.

4. Update on current Paramedic interim OSCE

This item was discussed in association with agenda item 3 as above.

5. RI Portal -Feedback on use

Ms. Walsh presented the compiled feedback regarding the RI portal. She explained that the number of applications for RI status and courses represented included those that were commenced in error by applicants. A discussion took place on the process for documentation uploading and that more instructions should be provided to users, particularly in relation to sections referring to the QRF criteria.

The Chair expressed that invoicing for RI fees while not affecting most users should be available as a payment method. Ms. Walsh commented that the paypal module was being finalised for use and that an alternative will be made available for those RIs that are not able to make payment by credit card or paypal.

Ms. Walsh informed the Committee that there are sixteen-time slots available monthly for prospective RIs to meet with PHECC staff for pre-application meetings. The issue of allowing for additional company administrators or permission levels for portal data entry was raised and Ms Walsh will follow this up with the ICT.

6. Education and Training Standards Review

Ms. Walsh gave an update to the Education and Training Standards Review informing the Committee that she will be communicating with nominated members shortly to discuss criteria for the RFT due for the end of the month. Committee members discussed the timeline for its preparation and the need for a comprehensive document to inform this work. It was agreed an additional six weeks should be allotted for this purpose with the end of July being the target for the RFT.

7. CPC Status Update

The Chair provided an update to the Committee from Council discussions on CPC at its May meeting. He referred to and commended Mr Ricky Ellis and the subcommittee's report and the progress on this matter in a short period of time. He noted the Council agreed to include in its business plan for 2019 with CPC to be introduced in 2019/2020, with a business case and proposal to go to the Department of Health. Discussion took place about ensuring CPC remains topical with registrants and others.

8. POL020 - Council Policy for NQEMT Examination Viewings and Rechecks – V – 2.2

Ms. Egan presented the revised policy for NQEMT Examination Viewing and Rechecks. She highlighted the areas amended as per the Committee's previous review and discussion. The Chair noted the changes to the policy.

Ms. Egan informed members that the NQEMT Examination handbook is being revised at present.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend POL020 - Council Policy for NQEMT Examination Viewings and Rechecks – V – 2.2 to Council for approval.

Proposed: Tom Brady
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Paul Lambert

7. Recognised Institutions

7.1 RI applications/course approvals

Ms. Walsh informed the Committee of new RI applications and course approvals. She explained that the RIs are only added to the approved list when they have completed their induction meeting with PHECC staff, once this is completed they are then added to the website.

8. Recognition of Professional Qualifications

8.1 Stats update

It was reported that there were currently 8 applications being processed for recognition of qualifications, no outcomes occurred since the May Committee meeting.

9. Naming convention for Responder certificates

The naming convention for responder certificates relating to First Aid Response and Cardiac First Response Instructor courses was raised by Ms. Walsh. She informed the Committee that historically the CFR Community instructor qualification was assumed within the instructor qualification of FAR. However with the transition of OFA to FAR a request was made by a RI to delineate the CFR C instructor status and included as part of the FAR certificate. Permission was granted to the individual RI. Ms Walsh is now seeking to implement the naming convention for all future certificates for the FAR instructor course issued. The Committee discussed the current situation regarding the need to ensure consistency of naming by all RIs for certificates and implications for fees charged by PHECC for certificates. Ms Walsh shared that the fee schedule is to be examined by Council.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee agree that the naming convention for responder certificates for FAR Instructor also states CFR Community Instructor, and that this be communicated to all RIs.

Proposed: Paul Lambert
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Gareth Elbell

10. A.O.B

The Chair asked if members had any items they wished to raise. A Committee member queried about the Irish Heart Foundation response regarding its criteria for CFR A instructors. Ms Walsh stated she will be reverting to the RI on the matter and expects to provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

A Committee member queried when the 2017 Medications Field Guide will be issued. Ms. Walsh told the Committee that the RIs have been notified that the field guides are available for collection. Discussion took place about the field guide App and a proposed timeframe for its availability. Ms. Walsh stated this was explored by Brian Power, PDO, and it was determined that the cost was prohibitive.

Rescheduling for July meeting was discussed and agreed. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday the 18th of July at 10am.

The Chair thanked all for attending.

Signed: _____

Chair

Date: _____

18/7/18

Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes 18th July 2018 PHECC Office, Naas

Present

Shane Knox (Chair)
Peter McDaid
Paul Lambert (Vice Chair)
Gareth Elbell
Niamh O'Leary
Tess O'Donovan
Adrian Murphy
Chris O'Connor
Roisin McGuire
Mary O' Neill
Ray Lacey
Tom Brady
Melissa Redmond
Shane Mooney

In Attendance

Brian Power, Acting Director
Kathleen Walsh, PDO
Jacqueline Egan, PDO
Joanne Byrne, Support Officer

Apologies

Ben Heron
Frank Keane
Adrian Murphy

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted. The Chair went on to welcome the Acting Director, Mr Brian Power, and Mary O'Neill from UL, attending the meeting as a replacement for Frank Keane.

1.1 Minutes from June 2018 meeting

The draft June minutes were presented for consideration.

Resolution: The Education and Standard Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2018.

Proposed: Gareth Elbell
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Tom Brady

Ms. Walsh verbally updated the Committee that the Quality Review Framework Evaluation Report had been accepted with amendments during the July Council meeting.

2. Paramedic Examinations Standard – Subcommittee Update

Ms Egan informed the members that the Council established an examinations subgroup in May. The subgroup was established to review, amend, apply weightings and agree changes to the current PHECC Paramedic OSCE content, in conjunction with Exam Quality. The subgroup consisted of one nomination from each of the paramedic level RIs and chaired by the Chair of Council, Dr Jacqueline Burke.

- Due to immediate requirements of the subgroup, the Examination subcommittee meetings were paused but will be rescheduled for September.
- Revised generic assessment scoring sheets, both medical and trauma were included in the meeting papers for information for Committee members. Paramedic candidates who recently sat the NQEMT OSCE were examined using the recently developed content.
- An examiner workshop took place on the evening prior to the OSCE. The examiners and Exam Quality found it to be very beneficial to the assessment of the candidates on the exam day. An interrater reliability exercise was carried out as part of the workshop and the finding will be presented to the Committee in due course.

The following points were made by Committee members:

- The new scoring methodology worked very well – from Chris O'Connor, Committee member, who is also an examiner.
- Does the new OSCE methodology give a correct reflection of the competency of the candidate? Following discussion, informed by examination subgroup members present a Committee member who is also an examiner, it was felt that the competency of the candidate was appropriately assessed.
- The Committee questioned if there was any feedback from the candidates. Ms Egan made them aware that feedback is currently not collected from candidates at OSCEs but is at MCQs. Feedback is collected from both examiners and Exam Quality and when all feedback is reviewed it will be circulated to the Education and Standards Committee.
- The Committee went on to express their compliments and thanked Ms. Egan.
- The Committee suggested that the option of providing feedback should be given to the candidate. Ms Walsh highlighted that the candidate is not obligated to give feedback. The Committee expressed that the initial reaction is what is needed to capture the most accurate feedback. A Committee member suggested the placement of two iPads outside the exam to collect feedback from the candidate(s). Ms Egan stated that there needs to be a clear understanding of what information we want to glean from the candidate, ensuring that it can be utilised as part of a quality improvement process for the OSCE component of the exam. Brian Power stated that it is important to ask for the student's experience of the OSCE process.

The Chair stated that he is aware that the deadline for the completion of the new PHECC Paramedic Examination Standard has been extended until the end of September and Ms Egan confirmed this. The Chair expressed that a lot of work has been completed on the Paramedic Interim Standard to date, and complimented Ms Egan for same.

3. Expansion of Panel Membership – Update

Brian Power spoke to the agenda item. He expressed his concern that this activity for expanding panel membership involved a significant amount of time and staff resources and resulted with 156 people submitting an interest.

The Chair stated that the selection process for expanding the panel had not been agreed by the Committee, nor had any information on criteria for selection of examiners been discussed or presented to the Committee. Mr Paul Lambert stated that this process did not reflect the previous process for expanding panel membership and that the Committee were not made aware of the new selection process.

Mr Power questioned the process for the decision making and the authority for the Committee to request the PHECC Executive to withdraw the expression of interest. The Committee were concerned that a different process for selection applied without first being agreed by the Committee.

In the opinion of Mr Power, as the item was presented under AOB at the May meeting, he believed it should have been deferred to an agenda item at the next meeting with the responsible PDO in attendance and to allow for a full discussion of the matter.

The Chair stated that the Committee had a discussion on this and made a decision and that decision was recorded. The Chair also noted that information relating to this item, the emails circulated etc were not available to discuss at this meeting.

Mr Power added that he was aware that the Committee had not accepted the Standing Orders of Council however until such time that the Committee implements a new standing order these orders should be in effect to direct Committee processes. Ms Egan noted that she was not at the previous meeting when the item was raised under AOB. She explained that she had a lack of resource capacity to re-conduct the expression of interest at this time. On questions put to her by the Committee regarding the approval process for panel membership, the information circulated seeking additional membership, the fact that the correspondence included that the current panel would 'expire' and the lack of approval from the Committee for this criteria, she informed the Committee that under the terms of reference, the appointments to the panels would be approved by the Education and Standards Committee. This would be facilitated by the circulation of a matrix with all nominations and criteria listed for decision by the Committee. The criteria for each panel are laid out in the Terms of Reference for the Committee, which was approved by Council on the recommendation of the Education and Standards Committee.

The Committee then discussed the following points:

- Can the nominating process previously undertaken by PHECC be reintroduced?
- Greater clarity needed on the number of places available
- Greater transparency for the process
- Transparency on the requirements for membership of a panel
- Panel membership periods should be staggered, avoiding complete panel reformation

Actions points to be progressed:

1. Existing panel members seeking to continue panel membership need to be endorsed by a RI or licensed CPG provider as a criterion for an expression of interest
2. Identify a matrix and weighting for scoring of EOI candidates
3. There should be appropriate distribution of panel members from RIs
4. Proposal to support panel expansion should be developed with the above considerations.

Ms Egan agreed to present amended criteria to the September meeting.

4. Education and Training Standards Revision – Update re: Tender Development

Ms Walsh updated the Committee members on the tender development including supplier engagement activities and linking the revisions with a future competency framework for practitioners. The Chair questioned the proposed timelines for finalising and posting of the tender. Committee members discussed various challenges of commencing this programme work including the complexity of the various levels of education standards. It was agreed to provide additional time to be allocated to this project for drafting of the tender. The Chair requested an update at the next Committee meeting.

5. CFR Advanced Instructor Criteria – RI correspondence

Ms Walsh made the Committee aware that this agenda item followed on from AOB item from the May meeting. Ms Walsh wrote to The Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) as per Committee's discussion regarding IHF Instructor criteria for CFR Advanced training. The response from the IHF was reviewed by the Committee. While it was accepted that RIs have a right to establish additional criteria above the PHECC standard it was considered that EMTs possess the skills and knowledge to instruct on the CFR Advanced course. Concern was raised about the RI's criteria – not accepting CFR A instructor certification from other PHECC RIs. Members expressed that this should be addressed with the RI as an unacceptable standard. Ms Walsh is to communicate this concern to the IHF.

6. Recognised Institution Status

6.1 RI applications/course approvals – Updates

Ms Walsh informed the Committee of new RI applications and course approvals. She explained the process of RI approval, being finalised only after the organisation's induction meeting was conducted by PHECC staff. She also referred to recent additional RI portal improvements to support RI usage and operability. The Chair added that while the introduction of the portal is a good initiative there were still issues with its user interface.

7. Recognition of Professional Qualifications

7.1 Stats update

It was reported that there were currently 8 applications being processed for recognition of qualifications. One outcome for EMT recognition status had occurred since the June Committee meeting.

8. AOB - to be submitted to Chair prior to meeting

Ms Walsh spoke to the Committee regarding Committee membership substitution and/or replacement. A tabled document was circulated with a proposed amendment for the Committee's terms of reference addressing membership replacement. The Committee discussed and agreed the amendment should be recommended to Council for approval.

Recommendation: That the proposed addendum for Committee Terms of Reference addressing membership replacement be submitted to Council.

Proposed: Tess O'Donovan
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Ray Lacey

Signed: Marc Lopez
Chair

Date: September 20, 2018



Education and Standards Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes 20th September 2018 PHECC Office, Naas

Present

Shane Knox (SK) (Chair)
Peter McDaid (PMcD)
Paul Lambert (PL) (Vice Chair)
Gareth Elbell (GE)
Niamh O'Leary (NOL)
Ben Heron (BH)
Tom Brady (TB)
Chris O'Connor (COC)
Roisin McGuire (RMcG)
Ray Lacey (RL)

In Attendance

Kathleen Walsh (KW), PDO
Ricky Ellis (RE), PDO
Jacqueline Egan (JE), PDO
Ray Carney (RC), Acting PDO
Marion O'Malley (MOM), Acting Secretary

Absent

Adrian Murphy

Apologies

Tess O'Donovan
Melissa Redmond
Mary O' Neill
Brian Power

1. Minutes from 18th July meeting

The Chair welcomed members and apologies were noted. KW offered the sympathies of the Committee to the Chair following his recent bereavement. Draft minutes from the June 2018 meeting were presented for consideration. COC requested that minutes be circulated sooner than one week in advance of meetings. KW confirmed that for future meetings there would be a two-week turnaround for dissemination of minutes. KW informed the Committee that a new Director was appointed to PHECC, Mr Richard Lodge.

Resolution: The Education and Standards Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2018.

**Proposed: Roisin McGuire
Carried without dissent**

Seconded: Niamh O' Leary

2. Matters arising

Irish Heart Foundation update – correspondence sent to IHF and PHECC are awaiting feedback. KW to liaise with the Acting Director and report back to the next Education and Standards meeting.

3. EMT CPC - Update

Included in the papers was the CPC End of Cycle Report. Omar Fitzell, CPC Coordinator, presented the findings of the report to the Committee and sought approval from the Committee to implement the recommendations of the CPC subcommittee as outlined in the report.

Some discussion ensued around the implications on practitioners if they did not engage with the CPC process or did not meet the standard. The CPC Coordinator informed the Committee that the Registrar confirmed that these practitioners would not be allowed re-register and that legal opinion is being sought in relation to informing RIs and licensed CPG providers of practitioner status. COC suggested that the CPC subcommittee look at the NREMT (US) policy for inactive registrants.

It was agreed that, as a matter of urgency, a policy should be developed to address:

- Inactive practitioners
- Practitioners not returning to practice
- Practitioners who failed to meet the CPC standard
- Practitioners who failed to engage

The CPC Coordinator informed the group of the benefit of the roadshows in 2017 and it was highlighted that specific roadshows should be aimed at the RIs and licensed CPG providers going forward. RE suggested that along with the roadshows, an e-learning platform should be made available to EMTs for CPC purposes. It was agreed that, in the interim, a dedicated CPC page on PHECC website should be developed to include updates on CPC activities, relevant information and CPC articles.

Discussions took place around the proposed change to the 'patient contact requirement'. It was recommended by the CPC subcommittee that a simulation assessment would take place if the EMT did not have the required number of 12 patient contacts per year. It is proposed that this assessment would be RI driven but must be developed further as the process has not yet been designed.

It was agreed to seek legal opinion regarding 'Reflective Practice' following a recent case in the UK. RE to follow up and bring back to the next Committee meeting.

The Chair complimented the CPC Coordinator, CPC subcommittee and PHECC staff on their dedication and hard work in developing CPC for EMTs.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend to Council that a policy be developed to address inactive practitioners, practitioners not returning to practice, practitioners who fail to meet the CPC standard and practitioners who fail to engage in the CPC process.

Proposed: Ray Lacey

Seconded: Gareth Elbell

Carried without dissent

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee endorse the recommendations of the 2016/2017 Emergency Medical Technician Continuous Professional Competence – End of Cycle Report.

Proposed: Tom Brady

Seconded: Paul Lambert

Carried without dissent

4. Civil Defence Proposal re: CFR, FAR and EFR Responder Instructors

Included in the papers was a proposal from Civil Defence regarding the delivery of courses and re-certification period for CFR, FAR and EFR responder instructors. RMcG detailed the proposal and then was recused from the meeting to allow for discussion and decision of the Committee.

There was general consensus that a CFR, FAR or EFR instructor must deliver a minimum of 4 courses over a two-year period and that this could be a combination of CFR, FAR or EFR courses at which the instructor is certified.

Some discussion ensued around instructors being monitored and signed off on at least one course they deliver. It was agreed that the monitoring should be undertaken by an assessor with a higher qualification than the instructor, e.g. EFR instructor to be signed off by an EMT, and that the instructor must be assessed on the highest-level course they deliver. It was suggested that a modified version of the Teaching Critique Form (contained within the Teaching Faculty Framework) could be used as a monitoring form template.

It was also agreed that the re-certification period for EFR instructors be reduced from three to two years.

These proposed amendments to the standard are to be applied to all RIs.

JE recommended that the Executive bring a proposal back to the Committee regarding the implications of the agreed recommendations. This was declined by the Chair and agreed by the Committee.

This agenda item highlighted the urgent requirement for the revision of the Education and Training Standards.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend to Council the following interim changes to the CFR, FAR and EFR Education and Training Standards:

- **A minimum of four courses to be delivered over a two-year period, this can be a combination of CFR, FAR or EFR courses**
- **Re-certification period for EFR instructors to be reduced to two years**
- **Instructors must be monitored on at least one course in the two-year period, on the highest-level course they deliver**
- **Assessors must hold a higher qualification than the instructor being assessed.**

Proposed: Gareth Elbell

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

Carried without dissent

5. Education and Training Standards Revision - Update

Included in the meeting papers was a summary document for tender development for the revision of the Education and Training Standards. This paper was developed by a sub-group of the Education and Standards Committee whose discussions focussed on key considerations for the project including approach, timelines, milestones, specifications and deliverables. The Chair thanked the sub-group for their work to date. The

Chair agreed with the details of the summary document but felt that the priority was for the standards to be revised in the first instance, followed by the development of a practical framework/toolkit to assist PHECC in establishing mechanism and processes for future reviewing the standards acknowledging implications involving clinical practice developments e.g. CPGs, policy development e.g. scope of practice and specialisations, etc.

There was a discussion regarding terminology and it was agreed to use the term 'framework' instead of 'toolkit' for clarity purposes to guide its development.

It was decided to progress with a tender for the revision of the Education and Training Standards with practitioner standards as the priority issue and to concurrently develop a practical framework. This will include international literature review, reviewing current standards, engaging stakeholders and feedback.

Resolution: That PHECC Executive progress, immediately with the tender for the revision of the Education and Training Standards to include the development of a practical framework as detailed in the summary document.

Proposed: Tom Brady

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

Carried without dissent

6. Examiner Panels – Update

JE informed the Committee that the EOI for exam panel membership was previously withdrawn at their request.

Included in the papers was a process for seeking nominations to exam panels. JE detailed the process explaining the rationale for expanding the Exam Quality Committee, Examiner Panel and Test Item Writing Panel.

Nominations for each of the panels will be brought back to the Education and Standards Committee for ratification.

It was agreed that existing panel members will remain in place until sign-off of new members, following appropriate mandatory training is complete. JE to write to panel members to confirm their interest in remaining on panels.

It was confirmed that panel members on the TIW group will now be reimbursed for their time.

The Chair suggested that a member of the Exam Quality Panel should be in attendance at SWA corrections and review a sample of SWA corrections. JE confirmed that she will review the procedure with a view to including an exam quality panel member at all corrections.

7. Paramedic Examinations Update

JE presented the update on the paramedic examinations. A subcommittee of this Committee met to discuss the draft 'Towards PHECC Paramedic NQEMT Standard'. It was a very productive meeting with positive discussion and outputs. There are 21 recommendations in the document, all of which were agreed, with no dissent, however all recommendations do need to return to this Committee for discussion and approval. One of the recommendations in the report is that the SWA component is to be removed from the paramedic assessment.

A further meeting of the subcommittee will be scheduled and the full report and recommendations from the subcommittee will be brought to the next Education and Standards meeting for consideration and approval

Review of recent paramedic OSCE results

JE provided a table of recent OSCE examination results. A new assessment and scoring methodology, devised by a subgroup of Council and approved by exam quality was implemented at the recent OSCEs and feedback was very positive. JE agreed to circulate the feedback electronically from examiners and exam quality members.

8. Modifications of PHECC Terminology of RI Status at Responder Level

KW informed the group that legal advice was sought regarding temporary status and issue of approving RI status before full status is received. Excerpts from the PHECC composite SI were included in the meeting papers.

The advice given to PHECC stated that the phrase 'recognised institution' relates only to institutions delivering NQEMT courses.

KW requested that the Committee agree to a name change for responder level institutions, suggesting that they should be referred to as 'approved training institution'. She noted that assistance would be sought to draft the appropriate wording to ensure consistency of terminology with the SI.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend to Council a change in terminology for responder level institutions from 'recognised institution' to approved training institution'.

Proposed: Tom Brady

Seconded: Paul Lambert

Carried without dissent

9. RI Status – Update

9.1 Listing and approvals

Included in the papers was a table detailing all the RIs and their approved courses. Servisource have recently been approved at responder level.

PL asked if UCC have accreditation with PHECC. The Chair explained that the accreditation of the NASC paramedic programme with UCC as a new academic partner was discussed by Council and this was given interim approval.

PL referred to a previous decision of the Committee where all applications at practitioner level are to go to the Committee before Council. KW confirmed that the delegated decisions of the Director which includes RI and course approvals needs to be amended by Council before applications are brought before the Committee. It was agreed to seek clarification from Council regarding this.

It was highlighted that there is no existing policy to cover a change of partnership in academic partners and this will be developed as per Council resolution.

9.2 Course Report Development

Included in the papers was a draft course report at responder level to monitor new RIs who are not yet part of the QRF cycle. The completion of this report is an interim measure as the QRF is currently being revised. KW requested feedback from the Committee regarding contents to guide RIs in their report writing.

It was suggested that as part of course feedback participants should be asked if they agree to be contacted by the regulator for quality purposes. There was general agreement for this.

It was agreed that the existing draft was too detailed for responder level institutions and that it be revised to remove the 'additional criteria' element and include the question regarding the regulator contacting participants.

9.3 RI Applications Assessor Panel

KW informed the group that a RI applications assessor panel is being developed through an EOI process. This is due to the increasing volumes of applications, course approvals and renewal applications. KW detailed the requirements to become an assessor.

10 Quality Review Framework Revision – Update

KW informed the group that PHECC recently ran a Request for Tender (RFT) for the Revision of Quality Review Framework for PHECC Recognised Institutions based on the evaluation of the QRF and subsequent Council recommendations. This tender was recently awarded. It is anticipated that a draft revision will be available for the next Committee meeting.

11 Recognition of Qualifications – Update

Included in the papers was an update on the number of applications through the ROQ process. Some discussion ensued regarding the outcome of some of the applications. KW confirmed that the standards are not comparable between Ireland and other countries and informed the group that many applicants do not have the 'post graduate internship' requirement of the PHECC standard.

12 AOB

COC requested an update regarding the Research Working Group. The recommendations of the group were reported to the Education and Standards Committee and then passed to Council in July. This feeds into new Council Strategy. PHECC executive are awaiting direction from Council.

The development of CPC for paramedics and advanced paramedics was again highlighted as a priority. The Chair shared that CPC was not included in PHECC's Business Plan for 2018, however, Council have agreed that CPC will be supported and funded next year. TB suggested that it be included as an item on the risk register and be brought to Councils attention.

Resolution: That the delay in the development of a CPC standard for paramedics and advanced paramedics be included on the risk register and brought to the attention of Council.

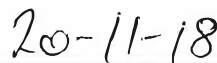
Proposed: Niamh O'Leary
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on 7th November at 10am in PHECC office. There being no further business the meeting concluded.



Signed by Chair



Date



Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes

20th November 2018

PHECC Office, Naas

Present

Shane Knox (Chair)

Paul Lambert (Vice Chair)

Mary O'Neill

Melissa Redmond

Róisín McGuire

Chris O'Connor

Ben Heron

In Attendance

Richard Lodge Director, PHECC

Kathleen Walsh, PDO, PHECC

Ricky Ellis, PDO, PHECC

Jacqueline Egan, PDO, PHECC

Ray Carney, Acting PDO, PHECC

Hillery Collins, Vice Chair, Council (part meeting)

Liz Dempsey, Examinations Officer, PHECC (part meeting)

Margaret Bracken, Support Officer, PHECC

Paul Collins, Chair, Quality Review Panel (Agenda item 5 only)

Apologies

Peter McDaid

Niamh O'Leary

Tess O'Donovan

Gareth Elbell

Ray Lacey

Tom Brady

Absent

Adrian Murphy

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. The Chair welcomed the recently appointed PHECC Director, Mr Richard Lodge, to the meeting and introductions were made by the members. As per request from the Chair to accommodate the preparation of the QRF presentation this meeting was rescheduled from Wednesday 7th November to Tuesday 20th November and the Chair thanked the members for their understanding. Condolences were expressed

to Brian Power, PHECC Programme Development Officer, on the death of his mother, and to John Lally, PHECC IT Officer, on the death of his brother in law.

The Chair informed the members of a change in the sequencing of the agenda with item 5 Quality Review Framework presentation from PC, Chair of the QRF Panel, following on from Matters Arising.

1.1 Minutes from 20th September 2018 meeting

The draft minutes from September were presented for consideration.

Resolution: The Education and Standards Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2018.

**Proposed: Róisín McGuire
Carried without dissent**

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

2. Matters arising

Agenda item 4

Following discussion on a proposal from Róisín McGuire, Civil Defence, regarding the delivery of courses and re-certification period for CFR, FAR and EFR responder instructors, the Committee recommended interim changes to the CFR, FAR and EFR Education and Training Standards to Council. Council recently approved these changes and she thanked the Committee for the decision.

3. Education and Training Standards Revision RFT

Kathleen Walsh provided an overview about the PHECC Executive's progress for the revision of the Education and Training Standards. She informed the members that the Request for Tender (RFT) "Review and Revision of the Education and Training Standards of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council and Development of a Review Model of these Standards on a Triennial Cycle" has been published on the etender.gov.ie website. The RFT criterion and specifications were drawn from the work of the subgroup of the Committee and Committee decisions as determined at the September Committee meeting. The experiences and advices from other healthcare regulators, educationalists, researchers and practitioners involved in similar projects also informed the drafting of this tender.

A summary of the components of the tender setting out the main criteria, requirements and specifications, was included in the meeting papers. A discussion ensued. The Chair raised a query in relation to the main criteria and he noted that there was no requirement in the tender criteria for Irish practitioners. Kathleen Walsh explained that an essential requirement is identifying and accessing Subject Matter Experts. Kathleen Walsh advised that tenderers are required to describe the existing networks which they have in place, for identifying and accessing Subject Matter Experts and there is a requirement that tenderers must provide current supporting CVs/resumes of the core project team and other key personnel.

Kathleen Walsh informed the members that the closing date for receipt of submissions is Monday 17th December 2018 and it is anticipated that the contract may be awarded on Friday 4th January 2019.

A process for reviewing the tender submissions including the scoring matrix was discussed. Kathleen Walsh shared that she has pursued reviewers to assist in the review of the submissions. The Chair suggested, to the agreement of the members, that Kathleen Walsh and two members from the Education and Standards Committee, form a subgroup to review the submissions. The subgroup will not be restricted to practitioners, and members who have submitted a tender application will be excluded from joining the subgroup. Kathleen Walsh will send out an expression of interest to Committee members to join the subgroup.

4. Paramedic Examination Standard

Jacqueline Egan provided background. Following recommendation from Council earlier this year that new exam content should be developed a Paramedic Examination subgroup was convened to develop this content. In parallel the Paramedic Examination subcommittee continued to examine current paramedic assessment schedules under the terms of reference, and put forward 19 recommendations, as set out in the draft document 'Towards PHECC Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard', which was included in the meeting papers for consideration and approval of the Committee. The Chair advised that more time is required for the members to review the draft standard and he advised that the document be circulated to the relevant RIs for feedback within two weeks.

Jacqueline Egan informed the members that 11 of the 19 recommendations were agreed by the subcommittee with no dissenters and that 8 recommendations require further refinement before the document can be approved by the Committee. The members discussed. The consensus was that wider feedback would be beneficial. Richard Lodge, Director, stressed the importance of specifying the two-week deadline in the feedback request to the RIs. The Committee agreed that the Paramedic Examination subcommittee should be reconvened to work on the remaining 8 recommendations and reach a consensus.

Chris O'Connor expressed his concern that there is no provision in the Paramedic Examination Standard for students with learning difficulties. JE advised that provision is made for this in the NQEMT Examination Handbook. The Chair noted that the Examination Handbook sets out the procedure for students with learning difficulties who are taking the MCQ and SWA exams but does not include OSCE exams. He noted that this is worth reviewing by the Examination subcommittee. Róisín McGuire stated, on behalf of the Civil Defence, that there have been no issues to date with PHECC regarding Civil Defence students with learning difficulties and PHECC are always very accommodating. Chris O'Connor stated that, in his experience, provision of extra time for students with learning difficulties can be an issue. The Chair noted that refusal of extra time has never been brought to his attention and noted that PHECC provide a reader for SWA exams when this is requested.

The Chair queried the use of actors for OSCE exams and questioned if actors are standard across the board for EMT and Paramedic exams. Jacqueline Egan advised that actors are being used as an interim measure until the Paramedic Examination Standard is approved, and the expense of continuing to use actors on an ongoing basis cannot be justified.

The members raised a concern regarding the duration of the OSCE exam days and Jacqueline Egan stated that plans are in place to address the length of the exam day going forward. This concern is based on feedback they have received from candidates and examiners. The Chair questioned if CPC points could be collected by practitioners acting as patients for OSCE exams. Jacqueline Egan noted that a panel of trained patients for OSCEs will be considered.

A recommendation in the Paramedic Examination Standard that PHECC adopt the Borderline Regression Method to decide the pass mark for each clinical scenario OSCE station was discussed. It was suggested that experts in this field be invited to present at the next Examination subcommittee meeting. Jacqueline Egan sought the approval of the Committee to invite known experts to present to the Examination subcommittee rather than seeking an expression of interest. The Committee agreed.

The Chair commended Jacqueline Egan on the very progressive and substantial work carried out on the Paramedic Examination Standard in a short period of time.

5. Quality Review Framework (QRF) Presentation

At the September Committee meeting Kathleen Walsh informed the group that PHECC recently ran a Request for Tender (RFT) for the Revision of Quality Review Framework for PHECC Recognised Institutions based on the evaluation of the QRF and subsequent Council recommendations. This tender was recently awarded to Mr Paul Collins. Draft revision documents were included in the meeting papers. The revision takes into account the recommendations approved by the Education and Standards Committee and Council.

Paul Collins presented to the members and provided some background to the QRF. The first round of the QRF was carried out in 2014. External reviews with the RIs were conducted over the following three years. The second iteration will be rolled out next year. Drafts of two revised documents: Quality Review Manual and Self-Assessment Report were sent to Committee members. Paul Collins provided a one page document providing the key changes to both documents. He highlighted that the purpose, principles underpinning the QRF, and compliance rating system, have been revised, also a section on non-compliance has been added.

Kathleen Walsh noted there was a discussion at a previous Committee meeting about terminology identifying practitioner level organisations as Recognised Institutions (RI), and responder level organisations as Approved Training Institutions (ATI). KW noted that these terms have been approved by Council and are now incorporated into the revised QRF documents. Paul Lambert noted that there are distinct differences regarding capacity, size, and courses being delivered by RIs and ATIs.

Paul Collins informed the members that when carrying out reviews he found that some RIs viewed faculty as staff and not as external contractors. He stated that a clear distinction needed to be made between practitioner and responder.

The Chair noted that under RI and ATI course delivery in the revision document EMS Dispatcher and EMS call taker are listed under RI practitioner. It was agreed to add a separate line underneath RI and ATI course listings, including both ATI responder and RI practitioner, and add EMS Dispatcher and EMS call taker. The Compliance Ratings, which are designed to establish a baseline, measure on-going progress and to encourage continual quality improvement was discussed. Paul Collins pointed out that there are huge variances within the ratings and these ratings become self-evident when going through the process. The QRF redesign has been completed to create alignment with the Governance Validation Framework used with licensed CPG providers.

Paul Collins informed the members, for external reviews, a definitive date will be agreed between the quality review panel and the institution to deal with issues which may be identified e.g. there is a requirement now in QRF that when new faculty are taken on they must be supervised in the beginning. The consequences for the RI/ATI of noncompliance may include immediate withdrawal of approval. Paul Collins pointed out that the timeline for conducting the external reviews have

changed to a twelve week period, the duration of review visit will change to incorporate internship and clinical placement sites. The members discussed the issue of site visits to these areas and whether all sites should be visited to get a true representation. Kathleen Walsh advised that it would take a significant period of time to visit all, especially remote sites, and the resources are not currently available. She stated that this point needs to be reviewed with the RIs/ATIs.

Ricky Ellis noted that this issue had been identified with the GVF process. He stated that there is an option to take a random sample or carry out rolling reviews. Kathleen Walsh noted that the GVF and QRF processes will marry up eventually, but the two frameworks remain distinct. The Chair questioned are we duplicating with the GVF and QRF and Ricky Ellis clarified that whilst the two assessment processes do contain similar elements, i.e. the organisation name, address, etc, the substantive items of both assessment frameworks concern different domains and could not be considered duplications.

Kathleen Walsh noted that it would be beneficial from an educational point of view to review how faculty and students are being supported and to have more interaction with them. Chris O'Connor stated that we need to guarantee that students are getting the benefit from their clinical placements and if it is necessary to visit all clinical placement sites to guarantee this, then this needs to be considered. Kathleen Walsh reiterated that this is not realistic for the resources currently available. The Chair suggested engagement with RIs and subgroups. Kathleen Walsh noted it is generally the regulator's role to inspect clinical placement sites as part of the quality assurance for students' learning and experiences. Jacqueline Egan advised that requirements for clinical placement sites are defined in the NQEMT Paramedic Examination Standard.

Róisín McGuire queried if there are plans to visit external sites where training is being provided and KW confirmed that this should be considered. Paul Collins advised that moving from OFA to FAR will highlight more sites where training is taking place and will identify satellite sites. Róisín McGuire questioned the benefit of having software available to avoid duplication of information with the QRF and GVF processes. Kathleen Walsh explained that this will eventually be dealt with by the iMIS software system, via a portal and all data will be linked but this needs to be developed.

Paul Collins noted the main difference with the self-assessment toolkit is that it is simpler and easier to use. Instead of just stating what they need to do it allows organisations to present evidence at review stage. He stated that duplication has been removed and the same evidence can be used for more than one area which is not duplication. The self-assessment toolkit is linked to Council rules, Teaching Faculty Framework, Education and Training Standards, and NQEMT Examination Handbooks.

Paul Collins highlighted the necessity to make comparisons and carry out analysis and determine if feedback being collected and used. He stated that the RI/ATI is fully responsible for quality assurance of every programme they deliver. The questions need to be asked; where the evidence observations took place and what are these observations; do you have competent staff, competent to do what and what systems are in place for this, do you have a data protection policy and is it up to date. Collaborative provision is important as not all faculty are staff and organisations are collaborating externally.

Paul Collins noted that authentication is a key component around assessment; the question is where is the onus with external authentication and who does it sit with. Best practice has to happen for every certification period and there needs to be a mechanism in place for external authentication. He made reference to the Quality and Qualifications Ireland requirements for its approved education

providers for external authentication processes. The Chair questioned how external authentication is going to be introduced for OFA/FAR level as thousands are applying for FAR. Kathleen Walsh advised that the Teaching Faculty Framework makes reference to it. The Chair stated there is benefit in having external authentication. Paul Collins noted that Educational Training Boards are now putting together panels of external authenticators. The Chair questioned should PHECC be considering an external authenticators panel. Should this panel be selected by the organisations or by PHECC. Paul Collins suggested that PHECC recommend the criteria for external authenticators and the onus should be on the organisations to implement. Jacqueline Egan asked should an external authentication panel be considered for the EMT examination process and the Chair stated that it is not necessary as the Examination Quality Group are experts in this field.

The Chair thanked Paul Collins for his presentation and commended him on a great piece of work.

* Hillery Collins left the meeting.

6. RI Status – update

- **RI Listing**

A table detailing all the RIs and their approved courses and delegated decisions by the Director from November's Council meeting was included in the meeting papers. Kathleen Walsh informed the members that there have been three pre-submission meetings attended in October and four new applications are currently under review.

At the September Committee meeting Paul Lambert referred to a previous decision of the Committee where all applications at practitioner level are to go to the Committee before Council and Kathleen Walsh confirmed that the delegated decisions of the Director, for RI and course approvals, needs to be amended by Council before applications are brought before the Committee. It was agreed to seek clarification from Council regarding this. Paul Lambert queried if clarification was sought from Council and Kathleen Walsh advised that clarification will be sought at the next Council meeting in December. The Chair stated that this function comes under the terms of reference for this Committee.

- **RI Applications Assessor Panel**

At the September Committee meeting Kathleen Walsh informed the group that due to the increasing volumes of applications, course approvals and renewal applications, an RI Applications Assessor Panel is being developed through an expression of interest process.

* Ray Carney excused himself for this agenda item.

Kathleen Walsh briefed the members and informed them that an expression of interest has been circulated to join the RI Applications Assessor Panel. Currently 28 applications have been received and the majority of submissions are from practitioners. The Panel will consist of 10 members. The Chair noted that it is great that the expression of interest has been circulated and has generated a lot of interest. KW informed the members that training for the Panel will commence in the New Year. PL queried if training will take place on site and KW advised that this would be the preference, but resources need to be reviewed.

* Ray Carney returned to the meeting.

* Liz Dempsey joined the meeting.

7. ISO NQEMT EMT Survey Report

SUR002_NQEMT EMT Exam Process Survey Report 2018 was included in the meeting papers. Jacqueline Egan provided an overview. At their November meeting Council raised some queries and Jacqueline Egan discussed with the members; (4.7) regarding 40 candidates who responded that they were not satisfied with the re-application process. Jacqueline Egan clarified that the comments from the candidates do not always relate to the question being asked and in this case 37 candidates who responded are not referring to the re-application process; (4.9) regarding 18 candidates who stated that they were not satisfied with the delivery of the OSCEs. Jacqueline Egan reminded members that all feedback is included in the report in the meeting papers.

* Hillery Collins joined the meeting.

Hillery Collins questioned could examiners be surveyed in the same way as we have surveyed EMTs and Responder level RIs. LD advised that feedback is received from examiners after each exam and recorded on our feedback database for action if required. The Chair raised a query regarding feedback received from candidates and examiners at exams and how this is dealt with. Jacqueline Egan explained that all feedback received is categorised and circulated as appropriate.

Hillery Collins stated that one third of candidates are unsatisfied with exams and queried if there is any research we can benchmark our performance against. Jacqueline Egan stated that complaints and compliments will always be received and PHECC will always address them. She stated that we have never benchmarked against other exam bodies, but it may be a worthwhile exercise.

The Chair raised the issue regarding the difficulties candidates are experiencing in booking places at Prometric test centres for their MCQ examination. Jacqueline Egan informed the members that often candidates leave it to the last minute to book their places and therefore there are limited places available to choose from. The Chair asked if there are any alternative centres to Prometric. Jacqueline Egan informed that a tender was carried out recently and generated a lot of interest but only one organisation submitted a tender application. Currently Prometric are the only organisation who meet our criteria for delivery of the MCQ exams. RIs could be surveyed to determine if suitable facilities and equipment are available for the MCQ exam to be provided in the RI. The Chair noted that there were less issues with the MCQ exams before Prometric. JE advised that invigilation of the exams and confidentiality are issues. Mary O'Neill stated that the RIs should be trusted to invigilate the MCQ exams.

Jacqueline Egan informed the meeting that responder level RIs are currently being surveyed with regard to electronic access being provided for examinations. Róisín McGuire noted that the Civil Defence send out a survey monkey to their candidates for the responder examinations and this works very well for Civil Defence. Civil Defence officers are invigilating the exam. A start time and a closing time for the exam is given within which students log on and take their responder exam.

Róisín McGuire requested that the first group of candidates at the NQEMT OSCE be given a provisional result at the end of their exam to avoid having to wait until the end of the day to be notified of results. Liz Dempsey advised that all the results are collated at the end of the day following all exams. She advised that if the first group of candidates are given a provisional result after their exam they will have longer to prepare for a resit which will disadvantage candidates in the last group who will not have as much time. It was also noted that sufficient time is required for results review and validation.

Chris O'Connor noted that there should be a better way to use technology in the delivery of OSCE exams. The Chair suggested that the PHECC IT Officer be consulted on this. Security issues and the quality of wifi in the hotels where the OSCEs are held was highlighted. Paul Lambert reiterated the importance of the inclusion of Exam Quality in the OSCE exam process. RE noted that mistakes can be made if this process is rushed. The Chair acknowledged that the system is in place to accommodate candidates in every way.

8. NQEMT Examination Results/Statistics 2017

A report on NQEMT Examination Results 2017 Paramedic and EMT levels was included in the meeting papers. The members queried why SWA results for UL for 2017 were not provided in the report and Liz Dempsey confirmed that UL sat their first SWA exam in January 2018.

8.1 Recording of NQEMT exam fail versus not attending

At the October Council meeting an issue was raised regarding the policy on 'no-shows' for organisations and how currently same were being recorded as a 'fail'. The Chair queried if all results recorded as fails include nonattendance. Jacqueline Egan advised that nonattendance at exams is recorded on the examinations database but not included in the annual NQEMT statistics published.

The Chair stated that exam related reports must be shared with the Education and Standards Committee prior to Council.

9. NQEMT Exam Panels Nominations Update

Jacqueline Egan informed the members that an expression of interest to join the NQEMT exam related panels was circulated early in the year, but this Committee was not involved in establishing the selection criteria and requested that all RIs be contacted for nominations to the exam panels instead. A listing of nominated examiner panel and test item writer panel members was tabled and provided to the members. Jacqueline Egan stated that training will be provided for all current and new members. The Chair queried if there is a plan in place for examiner training and Jacqueline Egan advised that it is anticipated that training will be provided in the first quarter of 2019 and experts will be sought to provide the training in addition to the current Exam Quality experts.

Jacqueline Egan advised that we need to make use of electronic access for using an electronic/on-line calendar for exams going forward and a portal could be developed for scheduling exam dates and examiner availability. The appropriate time to put this in place will be after training. She informed the members that over the next two weeks all RIs will be contacted and exam dates for 2019 requested. The Chair highlighted that current practices and procedures for examiners need to be reviewed and reinforced because members had concerns with regards to examiner awareness of candidate RI during the OSCE exam process.

Requirements for being reinstated onto the examiner panel was discussed. Paul Lambert noted that there was a time when the examiner panel list on the PHECC website included inactive examiners. Ray Carney noted that the RIs might not be aware that an examiner is inactive as they may not be notified in a timely manner. The Chair asked how we address this issue and JE stated that this issue will be rectified when the examiner availability is managed via the PHECC website. It was recommended to contact examiners who have become inactive within the last 3 years. The Chair stated that RPL for examiners who have been used by RIs for the purpose over the previous years needs to be pursued. This was agreed by the Committee and these examiners (although not PHECC examiners) will be included in upcoming examiner training/refresher courses.

The members questioned whether examiners must be nominated by an RI or can they self nominate. The examiner panel terms of reference terminology was discussed. The Director stated that the terminology needs to be very clear. The members agreed the following amendment to the examiner panel terms of reference.

‘May be nominated by a licensed CPG provider or recognised institution’ to be amended to ‘Must be nominated by a licensed CPG provider or recognised institution’.

Kathleen Walsh queried if responder level RIs can nominate examiners if they are not recognised at practitioner level. Ben Heron stated that affiliation with responder RIs is not an issue as PHECC examiners are examining based on their clinical level. He stated that examiners are PHECC’s examiners and not the RI’s examiners and should examine at the level they are trained at. The Chair noted that the RI nominates examiners to the panel.

The Committee approve the new members to the examiner panel and test item writer panel. Jacqueline Egan will make the agreed amendment to the terms of reference for the examiner panel and will take this to Council for approval if appropriate.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee approve the new members to the Examiner Panel and Test Item Writer Panel and approve the amendment to the Examiner Panel terms of reference as agreed.

Proposed: Ben Heron
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Róisín McGuire

* Liz Dempsey left the meeting.

10. EMT CPC Booklet

Ricky Ellis provided the background. An updated CPC Standard for Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Practitioners was approved by Council in May 2018. Following feedback from EMT practitioners provided at the last Committee meeting, the Education & Standards Committee approved the production of a CPC guide for the EMT clinical level for 2018 cycle. This was produced by the EMT CPC Co-ordinator based on the Standard as approved by Council. This EMT CPC booklet was included in the meeting papers for the approval of the Committee.

Hillery Collins queried the status of CPC for P and AP. The Chair advised that CPC for P and AP was approved by Council and has been deferred to next year. He noted the business plan for 2019 with a request for two additional CPC staff members as opposed to the 5 staff positions requested in the CPC plan for P and AP, has been approved by Council subject to the business plan being submitted to the DoH for 2019. The Chair advised that CPC has been identified as a risk on the risk register for Council as a priority. He stated that CPC has been on the agenda since 2004 and needs to be implemented in its entirety. The Director queried the possibility of a phased approach for this for the full staff complement approved in principle by Council.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee, based on the recommendations of the CPC Subcommittee, as approved by Council, accept the modifications to the EMT CPC Guide 2018 for Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Practitioners.

* Melissa Redmond left the meeting.

11. Recognition of Qualifications – Update

An update on recognition of overseas qualifications was included in the meeting papers. There are currently thirteen applications at various stages of assessment. Kathleen Walsh noted that there is a requirement to expand the recognition of qualifications assessment panel in 2019. She informed the members that the PHECC Executive was invited to attend a meeting for all health care regulators by the DoH on Friday 9th November. The main agenda item was the ongoing discussion of planning for qualification recognition post-Brexit. Kathleen Walsh advised that it is anticipated there will be an increase in UK applications after Brexit and the DoH is keeping us informed. The members discussed the implications of Brexit.

Hillery Collins noted the implications this might have for CPC for registrants practising outside Ireland.

The triple lock system for practitioners was discussed. Paul Lambert stated that the triple lock system applies if practitioners intend to practice but they can remain on the register without the triple lock system. Kathleen Walsh stated that this may need to be dealt with as a registration issue.

12. Paediatric First Aid – Child Minding Ireland Correspondence

Kathleen Walsh provided an overview. Childminding Ireland Executive has sought PHECC guidance and support for developing a bespoke first aid course targeted to child minders in the home environment who are currently not regulated. It was shared that this may be an area of consideration for future regulation/government oversight. This is a different focus from TUSLA regulated providers (e.g. creches, early education centres).

In discussions with Childminding Ireland in early 2018 PHECC Executive encouraged the organisation's representatives to draft a proposal for consideration by PHECC Council and the relevant Committees (Education and Standards and Medical Advisory Committee) for consideration of a bespoke first aid course. A proposal was recently submitted by Childminding Ireland which was included in the meeting papers for information. The MAC will consider this proposal also as it relates to defining scopes of practice for this specific area of first aid/responder training and advising Council on clinical matters.

Over the past 2 years, (during the transition of OFA to FAR as the national education standard for first aid training in the workplace) the PHECC Executive has engaged in discussions with the Dept of CYA, TUSLA – Child and Family Agency and most recently Child Minding Ireland about the development of a paediatric first aid course.

The members discussed. It was considered whether to develop a paediatric first aid standard or an add on module to the FAR course. Ray Carney informed the members that currently the UK, Wales and Scotland, run a two-day training programme for FAR with a paediatric module. It was noted that the resources are not currently there in the industry for a standalone course and that a module within the FAR course would be a better way to approach this. Kathleen Walsh noted that there is not a significant amount of data available on paediatric accidents. She requested Ray Carney to bring the issue of the scope of practice of paediatric first aid to the Medical Advisory Committee to

discuss the clinical issues involved. The Chair advised that a standard needs to be developed before CPGs can be developed.

The Chair suggested a one day FAR course based on the UK model with an add on module for paediatric emergencies. Paul Lambert suggested an e-learning programme. Ray Carney stated that it might be worth considering modifying FAR to the paediatric environment.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee are committed in principle to reviewing and introducing a paediatric first aid module.

Proposed: Ben Heron

Seconded: Paul Lambert

Carried without dissent

13. AOB

13.1 Hillery Collins informed the members that he expressed his concerns at the November Council meeting regarding the absence of a member of the PHECC Exam Quality Panel at AP exams. HC questioned what quality assurance is in place for the AP programme. He added that PHECC have taken back responsibility for the Paramedic exams and why not do the same for AP. The Chair noted that PHECC always supplied 3 examiners but never sent a member of the Quality Panel to attend AP OSCE and panel exams. He stated that we need to take these concerns into consideration and put a process in place with reference to addressing the risk and subsequent actioning for quality oversight required for the AP programme, encompassing its examinations and skill deficits. The Chair suggested this be referred to Jacqueline Egan as PDO for examinations, to consider what is appropriate going forward and be referred back to this Committee.

Kathleen Walsh noted the devolvement of the AP exams to the RI. She stated that the QRF review conducted with the RI made reference for an evaluation of the AP programme as it is funded by PHECC, this was accepted by Council and the Education and Standards Committee previously and this needs to be actioned.

The Committee recommend that a member of PHECC Quality Committee should attend each PHECC AP panel and OSCE examination within UCD.

13.2 Chris O'Connor raised a number of issues regarding the Teaching Faculty Framework (TFF). He requested that the TFF be revised. Kathleen Walsh informed the members that an educational award appeal (re: TFF) took place recently and the report will be brought to the next Council meeting. She stated that the Appeal Panel, as part of its report, suggested that the teaching faculty framework should be reviewed, and proposed recommendations. The Chair noted that rather than go to tender it would be better to set up a subgroup to revise the framework in line with the education and training standards and submit a draft to this Committee for consideration. The Chair suggested that Chris O'Connor chair the subgroup and Chris O'Connor agreed. Kathleen Walsh will liaise with Chris O'Connor and an expression of interest will be circulated to Committee members to join the subgroup.

13.3 Kathleen Walsh brought to the attention of the members a DPER circular regarding travel and subsistence costs for employees of public bodies and advised that PHECC is following its requirements regarding payments for Committee members.

13.4 The Chair informed the members that a grant submission from IHF for 2019 incorporating 2018 was discussed at the November Council meeting. Previous discussions of the Committee regarding IHF restrictions for EMTs instructing on its EFR courses should inform future service level agreements between PHECC and IHF for grant monies.

13.5 Proposed dates for 2019

Proposed dates for 2019 will be circulated to Committee members after Council have approved their meeting dates for 2019.

The meeting concluded at 14:20 approximately.

The Chair thanked all for attending the meeting and wished everyone a happy Christmas.

Chair's Signature: 

Date: 26/02/2019