

Education and Standards Committee



Meeting Minutes

29th May 2019

PHECC Office, Naas @ 10:00am

Present

Shane Knox (Chair)
Paul Lambert (Vice Chair)
Róisín McGuire
Gareth Elbell
Peter McDaid
Ray Lacey
Niamh O'Leary
Ben Heron

Apologies

Tom Brady
Tess O'Donovan
Chris O'Connor
Frank Keane

Absent

Adrian Murphy

In Attendance

Kathleen Walsh, PHECC PDO
Jacqueline Egan, PHECC PDO (agenda items 1, 2, 3 & 4 only)
Margaret Bracken, PHECC Committee Officer

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted. Kathleen Walsh relayed apologies from the Director.

2. Minutes from 15th April 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2019 were reviewed. Following discussion, amendments were agreed to the resolutions for agenda item 8 'EMT CPC Simulation'.

- As instructed by the Chair, for clarification purposes, the Committee was requested to consider the wording of the proposed resolution regarding the management of CPC. The members concurred that a more descriptive resolution is required as follows.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommends to Council that CPC in its entirety, design, standards, implementation and revision, should be managed by the Education and Standards Committee only and not shared between Committees. This will provide a clear line of accountability and governance.

- 'PHECC Quality Committee' to be amended to 'PHECC Exam Quality Panel' as per the following resolution.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee agree that a standard for EMT simulation be developed by the PHECC Test Item Writing group, approved by the PHECC Exam Quality Panel, and distributed to the recognised institutions to manage and implement by 1st November 2019 for the next EMT CPC cycle.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2019 subject to agreed amendments.

Proposed: Niamh O'Leary
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Peter McDaid

2.1 Matters arising

2.1.1 Jacqueline Egan, PHECC Programme Development Officer, sought clarification from the Committee regarding agenda item 8 EMT CPC Simulation resolution, recommending that the PHECC Test Item Writing (TIW) Panel develop a standard for EMT CPC Simulation. She noted her concern stating that the function of the TIW Panel is to develop NQEMT examination content only and not to develop standards. She asked if the EMT CPC assessors could prepare a draft NQEMT and responder standard for EMT CPC simulation. It was stated that a new standard is not required as there is a structure already in place and the current NQEMT EMT OSCE scenarios should be modified and adapted for EMT simulation by the TIW Panel and approved by the PHECC Exam Quality Panel. It was stated that the Education and Standards Committee will determine how many scenarios are required for EMT CPC simulation. Ms Egan sought clarification on who will assess EMT simulation and it was clarified that the recognised institutions will carry out the assessments.

The members discussed the process for the TIW Panel developing content for assessing EMT CPC simulation and suggestions were made. It was agreed that the TIW Panel will select two medical and two trauma skills from the EMT assessment skills. The Chair requested a working group of the Committee be established for this purpose. Paul Lambert and Ben Heron self-nominated to develop EMT simulation scenarios, which they will submit to Jacqueline Egan for review by the PHECC Exam Quality Panel. Ms Egan will forward the relevant material to the working group. When their work is completed, TIW will modify for use in CPC simulation. These scenarios will be submitted for consideration at the July Committee meeting as an immediate priority and once approved by the Committee will be provided to the recognised institutions for immediate effect. It was suggested that the option of EMT simulation, as an alternative to patient contacts, be communicated to practitioners and it was noted that CPC simulation is currently included in the EMT CPC handbook (November 2018).

2.1.2 Jacqueline Egan informed the members that a paramedic test item writing analysis is being carried out currently and this has a high priority in terms of Exam Quality Panel requirements. She also identified that the TIW Panel terms of reference need to be expanded to include development of CPC simulation material. She read out the terms of reference to the members. It was agreed that the TIW Panel terms of reference will be amended to include CPC. The Chair stated that the amended terms of reference should be implemented with immediate effect.

2.1.3 The Chair requested an update on the review of an audio visual process for the paramedic OSCE examinations to be carried out by PHECC, as agreed at the April Committee meeting. Jacqueline Egan provided an update informing the members that, following the April meeting, the PHECC IT officer carried out a video recording test in UL. Ms Egan read out the feedback she received from the IT officer to the group. Ms Egan stated that developing an audio visual process for the paramedic OSCEs would be a huge task for PHECC, but would have to be implemented as it is contained in the examination standard, and she suggested a request for tender for this process. She noted her concerns regarding cost of cameras and equipment. The members discussed, and the consensus was that cameras and the necessary equipment are not expensive and that a tender process is not necessary. It was advised that sound is the most important factor to be considered. The Chair stated that he will discuss the feedback with the IT officer.

It was noted that an audio visual process will support the appeals process, as video evidence can be provided. The members agreed that consent and agreement from patients, candidates and examiners, to video record OSCEs will need to be sought. It was stated that candidates should be informed when starting a course that their OSCE exams will be video recorded. Jacqueline Egan stated it would be helpful to view

audio visual policies and specifications from other organisations. It was noted that DFB, NAS and UL have policies and standards in place for this process which can be provided. The Chair stated that if this process is successful for paramedic OSCEs it could be used for EMT OSCEs also.

The Chair suggested forming a working group with one representative from each of the paramedic RIs, the PHECC IT officer and Jacqueline Egan, to carry out a review and develop an audio visual policy and specifications. The members agreed. Ms Egan will present a draft audio visual policy with specifications to the Committee at the July meeting for review.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee agree to form a working group to develop an audio visual policy and specifications for implementation initially with paramedic NQEMT and other levels as appropriate.

Proposed: Peter McDaid
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Ray Lacey

3. Terms of Reference of Committee – Review

TOR015 Education and Standards Committee terms of reference were included in the meeting papers for review. Kathleen Walsh provided an overview. At the April Committee meeting members were informed that Council have directed that it is timely for all Committees to carry out a review of their terms of reference, and amendments are to be recommended to Council for approval.

The members reviewed the terms of reference and amendments were suggested and agreed.

Terms of Reference:

1 (b) Faculty standards for practitioner level assistant tutors, tutors and facilitators and responder level instructor. Ms Walsh advised that 1 (b) may change following the current review of the Teaching Faculty Framework.

1 (e) Add 'Approved Training Institutions';

Monitoring of compliance of the Quality Review Framework and Education and Training Standards by Recognised Institutions and Approved Training Institutions.

1 (i) Amend to; Continuous professional competence (CPC) in its entirety, design, standards, implementation and revision.

Membership:

Ms Walsh notified the members that a replacement patient representative was sought from the HSE National Patient Forum and they were unable to provide a person. She suggested that the reach be extended for seeking a replacement. She advised that a patient representative was originally sought through an expression of interest. It was agreed that Ms Walsh will circulate to members the expression of interest criteria previously used for patient representation. It was suggested that alternative members could be considered on a temporary basis for those members who are having difficulty attending meetings due to work commitments or ill health.

The members discussed the construct of the current membership. Róisín McGuire proposed that responders be represented on the Committee. The members agreed that an expression of interest be circulated to the approved training institutions for nominations.

As agreed (3.12) will be added to the membership;

One member from an approved training institution at instructor level (Expression of Interest).

The Chair shared that Council recently approved a recommendation from the Priority Dispatch Committee to add three members at the Chair's discretion to their terms of reference for membership. He noted the Medical Advisory Committee terms of reference also includes this membership criteria. He stated that Council agreed that this addition to the membership be reflected across all Committees. Ms Walsh advised that she sought clarification from the Compliance & Audit Committee who, at Council's request, are reviewing all Committee terms of reference as part of an overall review of PHECC's governance. The C&AC have stated that no further appointments to Committees are to be made until the completion of this review. Ben Heron expressed his concern regarding the Chairs of Committees nominating three members at their own discretion as this could potentially have a large influence on the direction of the Committee. The members were in agreement.

It is noted that the Committee expressed concern that nominations are available to the Chairs across all PHECC Committees. The Committee agreed that if it is the case that a Chair of a Committee can have three nominations, as agreed by Council, then this should apply to all Committees.

Frequency of Meetings:

Frequency of meetings and attendance was discussed. Ms Walsh advised that the current requirement for 'no less than 75% attendance at meetings' is not being met by some members. It was suggested to contact members who had not attended three consecutive meetings to confirm their membership of the Committee.

The members agreed the following amendment to frequency of meetings.

Following 'Attendance at each meeting is expected but no less than 75% is acceptable' add; 'over a 12 month period'. If three consecutive meetings are missed the Committee Chair will confirm individual's membership of the Committee. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis. Regarding members who have been nominated by organisations and are absent due to extenuating circumstances, the organisation should be asked for a temporary replacement for that member.'

Governance and Accountability:

The following amendment was agreed.

This should include: The Committee shall nominate a Vice-Chair, elected by its members. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall chair the meeting. If neither are available, the Committee shall nominate a Chair from amongst themselves, for that meeting.

Attendance:

It was agreed to move the criteria for 'Attendance' from underneath 'Governance and Accountability' to underneath 'Frequency of meetings' and amend as follows;

Add 'Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis. For those members nominated by organisations who are non-attending due to extenuating circumstances a temporary replacement will be requested'.

Ms Walsh will make the amendments to the terms of reference as agreed and circulate to the members.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend revised terms of reference to Council for approval subject to the changes agreed.

Proposed: Róisín McGuire

Seconded: Ben Heron

Carried without dissent

4. Paramedic Examination Standard - Update

The Draft Paramedic NQEMT Examination Standard was revised in line with the recommendations of the Committee at their April meeting. Jacqueline Egan provided an update to the Committee on the expression of interest (EOI) seeking an educationalist to review and prepare a report for consideration by the Committee. A copy of the EOI, tender specifications and awarding criteria, were included in the meeting papers. Ms Egan advised that she has received one enquiry to date.

The Chair sought clarification regarding the criteria and specifications of the EOI from Ms Egan. Ms Egan read out the details of the EOI contained in the meeting papers. She noted that the closing date for submissions is 31st May and the award will be made the week of 3rd June based on criteria specified in the EOI document. The expectation for completion of review and report is four weeks and a report will be presented to the Committee at the July meeting. The Chair asked Ms Egan who is reviewing the tender applications. He suggested, for the purpose of transparency and due process, that a working group be convened to review the tender applications with Ms Egan. He sought nominations from the members present and Paul Lambert self-nominated. The Chair instructed Ms Egan to also seek nominations from the recognised institutions at paramedic level. The Chair thanked Ms Egan and commended her for the level of work she has done on this project to date. Ms Egan will update the Committee at the next meeting in July.

* Jacqueline Egan left the meeting.

5. Education and Training Standards Revision RFT – Status Update

Kathleen Walsh provided an update. The evaluation of tenders for a supplier for the review and revision of the EMT, P and AP Education and Training Standards was conducted on 2nd May 2019. Two tenders were submitted and evaluated, with the company Crowe awarded as the successful tender. Along with detailing the award criteria and tender specifications, Ms Walsh noted the background for Crowe. Further updates will be provided at the next Committee meeting.

6. Return to Registration Considerations; CPC

The Committee at its April meeting agreed to recommend to Council that the minimum requirement of CPG compliance and current certification at CFR A level should be met by the applicant seeking to return to registration. Ms Walsh advised that this recommendation will be submitted to Council for its June meeting. She stated that the Quality and Safety Committee are currently examining various issues associated with return to registration. She asked members for its consideration of other elements for return to registration, noting that the Committee had stated at its last meeting that CPC needs to be introduced in its entirety across all practitioner levels before these issues can be considered. Gareth Elbell advised that without CPC in place across all levels it is unfair to have a vehicle to remove or suspend EMTs from the Register with no mechanism in place for Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics.

Mr Elbell referenced the Committee's resolution from the April meeting recommending to Council that CPC should be managed by the Education and Standards Committee only and not shared between Committees. Ms Walsh noted that the resolution will be recommended to Council for approval at their June meeting.

7. Teaching Faculty Framework Working Group Activities

7.1 Critique Guidance for Educational Award Forms

7.2 FOR 023 Educational Award Nomination Form

7.3 FOR 041 Educational Award Renewal Form

Kathleen Walsh informed the members that the working group for the Teaching Faculty Framework (TFF), now chaired by Róisín McGuire, met on 22nd May 2019. Ms Walsh referred to a recent meeting with QQI staff exploring alignment of PHECC courses with QQI's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The TFF working group is seeking Committee members' comments on the existing EA Nomination Form and Renewal Form, to inform Executive's revision of these forms, and EA processes for application and assessment. Application forms were provided in the meeting papers. The Chair requested Ms Walsh to circulate the application forms to the members, for their feedback to Ms Walsh by 14th June. Ms Walsh stated that a temporary hold on accepting and processing EA applications is being initiated in view of the revision work for the application process and will be communicated to stakeholders.

Róisín McGuire provided an overview stating that the role of the TFF working group is now to look at the instructor/tutor qualifications and the levels needed. Comparisons amongst the various levels and the requirements for each level, and responsibilities of the RI/ATI, will be undertaken. Education courses on the NFQ that currently meet the PHEC TFF criteria for educational awards will be examined. Ms McGuire stated that when this preparatory work is done it will be ready for future PHECC engagement with QQI. She stated that the learning outcomes for each level will be presented to the Committee for review at the next Committee meeting.

8. AP Programme Status – Evaluation

Kathleen Walsh stated that discussion took place at Council's May meeting regarding the status of the current AP programme. The Executive, as directed by Council, is seeking further clarification from the AP Programme Director regarding specific identification of any gaps of skills deficits for the students. Ms Walsh advised that while information was received and brought to Council a comprehensive list has not yet been provided.

The Chair urged the Committee to discuss it as a matter of urgency, stating this was highlighted at the November 2018 Committee meeting and there has been no action since. Niamh O'Leary stated that it should be added to the risk register. The Chair concurred. He advised that clarification needs to be sought from the education provider of the list of skills and medications of current CPGs which are not being taught to AP students. Ray Lacey stated that advanced paramedics being trained presently are not permitted to do skills that previously trained APs are permitted to do. IV paracetamol was given as an example. Ben Heron queried the date that PHECC first consulted with the RI on this matter. The Chair recalled that, Council had initially communicated with the RI in December 2018. The Committee agreed that they considered the matter a patient safety issue and it should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee agree that the current provider needs to identify educational skills and medications deficit and a corrective action plan as a matter of urgency.

Proposed: Niamh O’Leary

Seconded: Gareth Elbell

Carried without dissent

9. Recognised Institution / Approved Training Institution Stats

9.1 Outcome reports

A summary of current RI/ATI status and course approvals was provided in the meeting papers. The Chair questioned the detail of information currently reported citing GDPR implications. The members agreed that it is sufficient to list the name of the company, its location, and the approval dates and outcome, for ATI reports.

A tabled report on a PHECC engagement event which was held on Wednesday 17th April for RIs and ATIs was circulated to the members for information. The event focused on sharing and discussing the revised Quality Review Framework and commencement of the 2nd quality assurance cycle with the organisations. Ms Walsh informed members that there was a good attendance at the event with 54 organisations represented at practitioner and responder levels. Róisín McGuire shared her observations from attending the event, suggesting future events should include greater opportunities for group/table discussions and questions. A summary of the feedback from the event will be circulated to the members.

10. Recognition of Qualifications – Stats – March – May

A summary of recognition of qualification status was included in the meeting papers. Ms Walsh informed members that PHECC have not had any recent meetings with the DoH in relation to Brexit due to the postponement of a decision on Brexit to 31st October.

11. Legal Advice concerning Reflections in CPC portfolios (UK case)

PHECC Registrar sought legal advice about clinical reflections that may be contained in e-portfolios maintained by PHECC registrants, and the potential implications of maintaining these for registrants, including the inter relationship between these and the fitness to practice/complaints process. Copy correspondence from PHECC’s legal advisors to the Registrar was included in the meeting papers. Ms Walsh provided an overview. The advice from the legal advisors is that PHECC should advise registrants to ensure that any clinical reflections are thoroughly anonymised. A discussion ensued among the members. Gareth Elbell sought clarification regarding the purpose of PHECC seeking this legal advice. The Chair clarified that a recent court case in the UK, where the e-portfolio of a doctor was used against her, resulted in the doctor being struck off the register by the General Medical Council.

Paul Lambert advised that even if clinical reflections are anonymised the data can still be used in a potential court case. It was suggested that portfolios be deleted once assessed. Kathleen Walsh advised that guidance needs to be provided to the CPC assessors and to registrants. The Chair suggested that a summary guidance document, addressing the key points, be requested from PHECC’s legal advisors. Ms Walsh will communicate this request from the Committee to the PHECC Registrar. Gareth Elbell noted this information should be made available for upcoming EMT CPC roadshows.

12. AOB

Frank Keane, who was absent from the meeting, submitted a request for consideration of the Committee, to hold Committee meetings on Wednesday afternoons from September to the end of the year, due to teaching commitments. The Committee considered his request and agreed that the meeting dates already confirmed will not be changed. However they agreed that an alternative person may attend in Mr Keane's absence.

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 15:00pm approximately.

The next scheduled meeting of the Education and Standards Committee is 24th July @ 10.00 am in PHECC office.

Signed: 
Chair

Date: 24th July 2019