

## Education and Standards Committee

### Meeting Minutes

6<sup>th</sup> November 2019

PHECC Offices, Naas @ 10:00am

#### Present:

Shane Knox (Chair) (absent for agenda item 4)  
Paul Lambert (Vice Chair)  
Gareth Elbell  
Peter McDaid  
Tom Brady (absent for agenda item 4)  
Niamh O'Leary  
Frank Keane  
Chris O'Connor  
Róisín McGuire  
Ray Lacey

#### Apologies:

Ben Heron  
Tess O'Donovan

#### In Attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director (present for agenda items 1, 2, 3 and 4)  
Hillery Collins, Vice Chair, Council  
Kathleen Walsh, PHECC PDO  
Jacqueline Egan, PHECC PDO (present for agenda items 1, 2 and 3)  
Margaret Bracken, PHECC Committee Officer

#### Absent:

Adrian Murphy

### 1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted. Condolences were expressed to John Lally, PHECC ICT Manager, on the death of his sister.

#### Practitioner Education and Training Standards Review - Crowe Project update

An update was provided to the Committee from Crowe representative, Hugh Sullivan, on the review and revision of the practitioner education and training standards and competency framework for all practitioner levels. A practitioner survey will be circulated in the next couple of days. Crowe invited Council and Committee members to an engagement event on 29<sup>th</sup> October in the Osprey Hotel which was very helpful to the process. The Chair thanked Mr Sullivan and asked members for any comments or questions. A conclusion date for the project was requested and Mr Sullivan relayed that February 2020 is the anticipated date. The members were invited to send any feedback or matters arising to Crowe. Mr Sullivan left the meeting.

### 2. Draft Minutes from 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were reviewed and approved by the Committee.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.**

**Proposed: Paul Lambert**

**Seconded: Peter McDaid**

**Carried without dissent**

## 2.1 Matters Arising

### Agenda item 3.3 Audio Visual Policy for Paramedic Examination

The Chair requested an update on the revision of the NQEMT Examinations Handbook and queried why the AV for paramedic examinations was not yet referred to the AV working group. Jacqueline Egan relayed that revision of the Examinations Handbook is in progress and a draft will be presented at the next Committee meeting. A Doodle poll will be circulated within the next two weeks to the AV working group with proposed meeting dates. The Test Item Writing Group are meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November.

### Agenda item 3.4 CPC Simulation

The Chair asked why the concerns of the Executive relating to queries regarding the introduction of EMT CPC simulation was not yet referred to the CPC subcommittee as recommended by the Committee. He questioned if there is a plan in place for the introduction of CPC simulation. The Director stated that he did not know why it had not been referred to the CPC subcommittee and he did not know when the subcommittee will be meeting to address the issues. Kathleen Walsh advised that a meeting of the CPC subcommittee has yet to be convened to address the issues raised. CPC simulation was further discussed under agenda item 3.2.

### Agenda item 5 FAR Overview/Status

The Chair asked the Director if an invitation was extended to the Association of First Aid Trainers Ireland (AFATI) to present to the Committee at the November meeting. The Director relayed that an invitation was extended to the AFATI to meet with the Executive and a separate invitation was extended to meet with the Committee. The AFATI accepted the invitation to meet with the Executive but have not yet replied to the invitation to meet with the Committee. The Committee expressed their concerns and disappointment that the AFATI have not replied to the invitation to meet with them. It was agreed that the Chair will correspond with the AFATI and extend a further invitation to meet with the Committee to discuss their concerns relating to the content of the FAR course and any other education concerns.

### Agenda item 11 CPC portfolios guidance to registrants

With reference to draft guidance document for registrants when completing their CPC Portfolio with respect to the Data Protection Act 2018 (General Data Protection Regulations), the Chair queried whether legal advice had been sought, as previously requested by the Committee. Ms Walsh advised that legal advice is outstanding at present. EMT CPC simulation and patient contacts was further discussed under agenda item 11.1.

### Agenda item 12 AOB

Róisín McGuire questioned whether EFR OSCE skills assessment sheet cervical collar application/securing patient to long board has been removed. Jacqueline Egan relayed that the Test Item Writing Group are meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November and will be requested to review the skills assessment sheet. RIs and exam candidates will be informed accordingly.

## 3. Examinations

Jacqueline Egan, PHECC Programme Development Officer for Examinations, updated the Committee.

### 3.1 NQEMT Examination Results 2018

At the July meeting the Committee recommended to Council that the NQEMT Examination 2018 results data, as presented to the Committee, is not published. However, the request to publish examination data



was presented to Council in October and was again referred back to the Education and Standards Committee for discussion at their November meeting. Ms Egan sought consideration from the Committee to publish high level NQEMT candidate exam results data going forward. The members discussed. It was stated that there is no value in publishing NQEMT exam results data in the current format as it is not a complete and accurate reflection of individual candidate data. Ms Walsh stated that accurate exam results information would be of value to the RI as part of the PHECC Quality Review Framework assessments.

Following discussion the Committee agreed to recommend to Council that NQEMT examination data is not published. It was agreed that all historical NQEMT examination results reports be removed from the PHECC website.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee recommend to Council that NQEMT examination data is not published.**

**Proposed: Chris O'Connor**

**Seconded: Gareth Elbell**

**Carried without dissent**

### 3.2 EMT CPC Simulation and patient contacts

At their April meeting the Quality and Safety Committee recommended to Council that EMT CPC simulation cannot be presented as evidence of patient contacts in two consecutive CPC cycles. Council, at their July meeting, approved that the resolution be presented to the Education and Standards Committee for consideration. The members discussed. It was stated that there is no valid reason why EMT CPC simulation cannot be presented as evidence of patient contacts in two consecutive CPC cycles. It was stated that simulation is a witnessed occurrence and can be verified as evidence of patient contact.

The Committee agreed that it is within the remit of the Education and Standards Committee to develop a standard for CPC and evidence of CPC simulation and/or patient contacts will be referenced to the CPC standard. It was stated that the implementation of CPC is the responsibility of the Executive. Ms Egan was asked to inform the Quality and Safety Committee that the Education and Standards Committee do not accept their recommendation.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee recommend to Council that evidence of CPC simulation and/or patient contacts will be referenced to the CPC standard which is under the remit of the Education and Standards Committee.**

**Proposed: Gareth Elbell**

**Seconded: Chris O'Connor**

**Carried without dissent**

The Chair questioned why EMT CPC simulation has not been introduced and sought clarification as to when RIs and registrants will be informed, noting that it is unfair to registrants who may have difficulty completing their CPC portfolios due to difficulties obtaining 12 patient contacts, which may affect their reregistration. He referenced the EMT CPC Guide 2018 which is published on the PHECC website. Ms Egan read out the concerns of the Executive regarding the introduction of EMT CPC simulation as discussed at the September Committee meeting, which the Committee referred to the CPC subcommittee. This subcommittee had still not been convened. The Director stated that, in his opinion, the CPC subcommittee have completed their business. The Chair disagreed and stated that the Executive were asked to convene the CPC subcommittee to address the issues listed by the Executive and he expressed concern that they

had not met and that there was still no date arranged to convene this subcommittee. The Director stated that, Council at their October meeting, agreed that CPC should be implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the CPC subcommittee, this Committee, and Council.

The Chair advised that the Committee have invited the Chair of Council to meet with them to discuss serious ongoing concerns of the Committee and this invitation was accepted. The Committee are grateful to the Chair of Council. The Committee will be holding a closed session following this meeting to discuss and agree an agenda.

The Committee expressed their concerns that EMT CPC simulation has not commenced and identified this as a risk to be added to the risk register. It was agreed that the CPC subcommittee be convened as a matter of urgency to address any issues, give recommendations, and provide an update for the next Education and Standards Committee. It was agreed that a meeting is to be convened with three members of the Education and Standards Committee and three members of the Quality and Safety Committee to discuss simulation in relation to EMT CPC.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee recommend to Council that EMT CPC simulation is added to the risk register, that the CPC subcommittee is convened as a matter of urgency to address any issues, give recommendations, and conclude the process for the next Education and Standards Committee.**

**Proposed: Ray Lacey**

**Seconded: Niamh O'Leary**

**Carried without dissent**

### 3.3 Sharing candidate exam results data with RIs

At the March meeting the members sought that the RIs be informed by PHECC of candidate's NQEMT examination results. Ms Egan advised that this should be a recommendation from the Committee to Council to allow for sharing of exam results information. Ms Egan relayed that the RIs are currently being informed on request. The Chair stated that the Committee had previously agreed that following the issue of exam results to candidates the RIs be informed simultaneously. PHECC receives results data in bulk format which requires extraction of individual candidate data. This work requires the allocation of time and resources and cannot be delivered to RIs immediately. Ms Egan was asked by the Committee to confirm a process with Prometric for notifying RIs of candidate results, and in addition, for PHECC to notify all candidate results to RIs relating to non-Prometric examinations.

A suitable timeframe for issuing exam results to the RIs was discussed. The Committee agreed that the RIs be informed of candidate examination results within five working days. Ms Egan, in consultation with Prometric, will agree a process for sharing candidate results in addition to sharing non-Prometric results with respective RIs.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee recommend to Council that the RIs are informed of candidate examination results within five working days.**

**Proposed: Tom Brady**

**Seconded: Peter McDaid**

**Carried without dissent**

\* Ms Egan left the meeting.



#### 4. Recognised Institution/Approved Training Institution Report

Current RI/ATI status and course approvals was provided in the meeting papers.

##### 4.1 RI Outcome Reports – Renewals and Practitioner Course Applications

RI/ATI portal application updates were provided. There are 17 renewals in process, 6 new courses in process and 10 new ATI applications in process.

Assessment outcome report for National Ambulance Service College Advanced Paramedic Course Application, with its Academic Partner, University College Cork, was tabled for consideration. The Chair who is the Company Administrator for the submission of applications for the RI, excused himself from the meeting for this agenda item. Following deliberation, Tom Brady also excused himself from this agenda item, as a NASC employee. The Vice Chair, upon request from the Chair, chaired this agenda item. Ms Walsh provided a summary of the assessment report and the members reviewed the NASC/UCC course assessment report.

Following discussion, the Committee recommend to Council that the National Ambulance Service College Advanced Paramedic course application, with its Academic Partner, University College Cork, is conditionally approved. It was agreed that this resolution be included on the agenda for the November Council meeting as an item for its consideration. There was discussion if progression to Council should be delayed until the minutes of the next Education and Standards meeting were agreed. It was clarified that a previous resolution from Education and Standards to allow items progress without minutes being agreed was in place to facilitate workflow.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee recommend to Council that the National Ambulance Service College Advanced Paramedic course application, with its Academic Partner, University College Cork, is conditionally approved.**

**Proposed: Roisin McGuire**

**Seconded: Chris O'Connor**

**Carried without dissent**

Committee members discussed the application process for practitioner course approvals and queried whether the PHECC NQEMT equates with a higher degree level educational award as it relates to the QQI National Framework of Qualifications. Ms Walsh stated that the academic educational award is not determined by PHECC. PHECC's Statutory Instrument denotes its function to award the NQEMT certification for those completing the PHECC approved practitioner programme as per the relevant education and training standard. She referred to the need for future linkage between PHECC and QQI for awarding professional and academic qualifications and suggested that tertiary/higher education institutions should be cognisant of PHECC Standards for their programme development. The Committee discussed the partnership relationship between NASC and UCC and considered that it was a question for Council as to whether an RI's academic partner should apply to become a PHECC recognised institution. Ms Walsh asked the Committee to review the presentation and content of the practitioner assessment reports as this was the first provided to the Committee.

Hillery Collins, Vice Chair of Council, noted that the Committee previously requested that a PHECC representative, independent of the Quality Panel member, attend NQEMT AP OSCEs and this should be the case for the current course approval.

\* The Chair and Tom Brady returned to the meeting.

\* The Director left the meeting.

## **5. Quality Review Framework (QRF) Cycle 2 – Status**

Kathleen Walsh provided an overview. PHECC Executive met with members of the HSE National Emergency Medicines Programme on 11<sup>th</sup> September, and with Directors of Nursing of the Hospital Groups on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, to share with these key stakeholders PHECC's statutory role in education and training standard setting, and in particular, monitoring for NQEMT programmes as part of the QRF. She referred to the importance of collaboration and partnership between the regulator, employers and education providers, particularly in the provision of student experiences for clinical placement and internships.

Eleven onsite reviews are being conducted over a 4 week period which commenced on 21<sup>st</sup> October and conclude on 15<sup>th</sup> November. It is anticipated that Panel's Composite reports, and the RIs/ATIs' associated feedback and Quality Improvement Plans for these onsite reviews will be available to the Education and Standards Committee for its review early in Q1 2020. RIs and ATIs which are not undergoing an onsite review for 2019 have been directed to submit their yearly Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan before the end of the year.

Ms Walsh advised that going forward Council and Committees need to be cognisant of PHECC interaction and the level of work involved in the QRF process. She noted the importance of feedback from the QRF assessors and from the RIs/ATIs who are being assessed. The Chair suggested an online discussion forum or mechanism for feedback and interaction could be helpful.

## **6. FAR Overview/Status**

Kathleen Walsh updated the Committee. The PHECC Director and Ms Walsh met with the Health and Safety Authority Executive and members of its Board on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Points of discussion included duration/cost of FAR certification and recertification, the potential for online/blended learning programme development by HSA for FAR recertification training to reduce costs to employers, overview of PHECC Quality Review Framework and monitoring of RIs/ATIs and their instructors, and HSA guidance to employers for selecting FAR provider, including instructor verification and HSA monitoring of compliance for FAR certification in the workplace. The PHECC Executive are meeting with the Association of First Aid Trainers Ireland on 19<sup>th</sup> November and an invitation has been extended to the AFATI to meet with the Education and Standards Committee.

Recently PHECC surveyed RIs/ATIs regarding online/blended learning content for FAR courses. To date 15 ATIs/RIs have responded positively, stating that their organisations are in the planning or development stages for FAR online course delivery. Thus this is an emerging area for curriculum design and delivery for PHECC and its growing network of RIs and ATIs providing the FAR course. Ms Walsh asked if the Committee believed blended learning programmes should be presented to PHECC for approval. The Chair noted that the RIs/ATIs should be trusted to develop and deliver such content. It was suggested that a survey could be uploaded to the PHECC website to collect feedback from RIs/ATIs on the FAR course and content. It was suggested that a link to the survey could be included on FAR certificates.

## **7. Review/Revision of Practitioner Education and Training Standards - Crowe**

Kathleen Walsh provided an overview. Crowe Project Team hosted a workshop on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019 for all PHECC Council and Committee members, particularly those who may not have previously participated in engagement/consultation activities with PHECC. A total of 15 persons attended the afternoon event. The workshop focused on the emerging themes to date, competency frameworks with discussion of the principal domains for same, and values and principles for building competency frameworks.



The Practitioner Survey has been drafted by Crowe seeking PHECC registrants' views/input for the review of the practitioner standards and development of a competency framework. At the time of preparing Committee papers the survey consisting of 24 questions was due to be circulated by the 1<sup>st</sup> November (after final formatting). The survey is due to close on the 15<sup>th</sup> November. Ms Walsh requested members to send any feedback to her for sharing with Crowe.

The members discussed. Some observations were made and queries raised as to the purpose of the review. It was stated that details, identifying competencies and gaps with PHECC CPGs, practitioner scope of practice, and examination material, as opposed to a general overview of the standards, is what the Committee require from this review. Ms Walsh was asked to follow up with Crowe and ensure that they are progressing in line with the brief set out in the tender and request that they clearly outline what they consider a competency framework to be.

### **7.1 HSE Palliative Care Educational Competency Framework - for inclusion in Education and Training Standards at NQEMT level**

Supporting document 'HSE Palliative Care Educational Competency Framework' was included in the meeting papers for information.

## **8. Evaluation of AP Programme – Project update**

Kathleen Walsh provided an overview. The Evaluation of the AP Education Programme delivered by the RI, University College Dublin Centre for Emergency Medical Science, was awarded to Professor Andy Newton, Cloud Consulting. The project commenced in mid-September with Professor Newton and his project team. The team have engaged with AP students, past and present, key personnel of the statutory bodies associated with the AP programme – Defence Forces, Dublin Fire Brigade and National Ambulance Service, and UCD course faculty and administration. It is anticipated that the project will conclude its activities in December with the final report prepared for Council and presented to the Education and Standards Committee in January 2020.

## **9. Teaching Faculty Framework Working Group (TFFWG) - update**

Kathleen Walsh provided an update. Members of the Teaching Faculty Framework Working Group last met on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The focus of the meeting was to agree the proposed level of Instructors – Responder, Educator and Facilitator, and agree the criteria for subject matter expert selection by RIs/ATIs in the provision of courses. Significant work was progressed for establishing the learning outcomes for the Responder Instructor Standard. Educator and Facilitator Standards learning outcomes are to be addressed at the next meeting of the TFFWG scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> November. The current hold on applications for Educational Award (EA) holders was noted by the TFFWG and it was noted that several RIs are awaiting the reopening of the applications by PHECC. It was determined that the application process should recommence immediately as there are a significant number of applicants awaiting certification. Consideration was also given to the establishment of a facilitator group (conducted through a future Expression of Interest) to review future applications and supporting documentation. This will be pursued with PHECC Executive along with determining external support of project completion for a revised Teaching Faculty Standard. Ms Walsh advised that putting a structure and process in place for a facilitator group and expression of interest will take time.

Draft Interim Forms for 'Application for Educational Award Nominations' and 'Renewal of Educational Award Application' were presented for review by the Committee. The forms were revised based on previous recommendations from Appeal Panel 2018 hearing and recent survey responses from facilitators about the EA application documentation and assessment processes. Following discussion and suggestions from members it was agreed that the application process for EA holders should be reopened immediately for those currently who have completed their coursework, using the current application forms. Interim forms should not be introduced at this point.

## **10. Recognition of Professional Qualifications – Stats**

A summary of recent activities in the area of recognition of overseas qualifications was presented. There are eleven applications currently being assessed. The members discussed and sought clarification on the application process. Kathleen Walsh clarified the process noting that the outcome of applications is based on the current PHECC Education and Training Standards and NQEMT certification requirements.

## **11. CPC – update**

### **11.1 CPC portfolios guidance to registrants**

Kathleen Walsh provided an update. At the September Committee meeting discussion took place regarding updating of CPC portfolio guidance to registrants and assessors and key areas for follow up were identified by the Committee. Legal advice remains outstanding at present with regard to recording dates and incident numbers from ACRs/PCRs. Draft GDPR guidance for assessors has been incorporated into the current version of the CPC assessors manual but must not be confirmed until we receive specific legal advice. Guidance for registrants when completing their CP portfolio with respect to the Data Protection Act 2018 and Draft GDPR Policy for Assessors are to be incorporated, following legal advice, into the next version of the EMT CPC booklet for 2020.

The Committee noted their concerns that legal advice has not yet been sought as requested at the September meeting, and identified this as a risk. The Committee agreed that the guidance to registrants document cannot be endorsed by the Committee without proper legal advice.

### **11.2 DRAFT Return to Practice Framework V0.3**

Draft Return to Practice Framework requirements for EMT and Paramedic practitioners developed by the Quality and Safety Committee was included in the meeting papers for consideration of the Committee. Following discussion it was agreed that the draft return to practice framework requires further discussion and review. It was agreed to convene a small group of both Committees and invite the Chair of the Quality and Safety Committee to meet with members of this Committee. Chris O'Connor, Niamh O'Leary and Paul Lambert volunteered. Kathleen Walsh will liaise with Jacqueline Egan, PHECC PDO for Quality and Safety Committee, and confirm a suitable date to meet and then revert back to the Committee.

## **12. AOB**

12.1) Correspondence from Chris O'Connor, with two items for discussion, was tabled.

12.1.1) Individuals who have commenced their Assistant Tutor training programme prior to the establishment of the ongoing review of the Teaching Faculty Framework have been unable to make their applications to gain recognition as Assistant Tutors and it is proposed that these instructor-



candidates be allowed the opportunity to progress with their applications without undue delay. As discussed under agenda item 9 the Committee agreed that the application process for Educational Award holders be reopened immediately.

12.1.2) Currently, students are required to have successfully completed both MCQs and OSCEs prior to commencing supernumerary clinical placements. This issue creates significant difficulties for both students and teaching faculty as it is difficult to assimilate this schedule into the academic calendar. It is proposed that successful completion of all PHECC exams prior to commencement of the 12-month Internship would be reasonable. The members discussed. It was noted that, for students who fail their MCQ or OSCE, getting a date for a repeat exam before commencing their clinical placements may be a concern. Chris O'Connor stated that, in the interim, students should not be penalised because they are unable to start their undergraduate placements before passing their exams. He proposed that students be allowed to commence supernumerary placements without having passed their MCQ and OSCEs. The Chair advised that clarification needs to be sought on PHECC requirements with regard to clinical placements and current legislation. It was agreed that this discussion will be an agenda item for further discussion at a future Committee meeting.

12.2) Correspondence from Tom Brady requesting that PHECC take back the process of selecting and allocating the examiners for NQEMT EMT OSCEs was tabled for consideration. He noted the present arrangement where the RI selects the examiners may be less than optimal in terms of fairness and impartiality. Following discussion the Committee agreed that staff within PHECC should assign examiners for NQEMT EMT OSCE examinations. It was agreed that PHECC manage this process. It was suggested that a Doodle poll with upcoming exam dates could be circulated to all PHECC examiners to give their availability. It was noted that the PHECC examiner database will show the number of OSCEs for each examiner.

**Resolution: That the Education & Standards Committee recommend to Council that staff within the PHECC assign examiners for NQEMT EMT OSCE examinations.**

**Proposed: Tom Brady**

**Seconded: Gareth Elbell**

**Carried without dissent**

12.3) At the September Quality and Safety Committee meeting the Committee recommended to the Education and Standards Committee that Level 1 training on the Palliative Care Competence Framework be included in the new PHECC Education and Training Standards and consideration be given to including Level 2 training for appropriate PHECC practitioners. It was advised that the Medical Advisory Committee are currently reviewing the Palliative Care CPG as part of their review of all PHECC CPGs. The Committee agreed to await the outcome of this review from the MAC and to await the final report from Crowe on the review of the education and training standards before making any decision regarding this recommendation.

12.4) It was queried whether an educationalist for the review of the NQEMT Paramedic Standard had been concluded. Kathleen Walsh noted that the Executive anticipated that following consultation with Crowe, this would be sourced to conduct the review.

12.5) Kathleen Walsh's status as Programme Development Officer will terminate at the end of November 2019. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, made a presentation to Ms Walsh and thanked her for her

valuable input to the work of the Committee during her period with PHECC and wished her well in her future endeavours.

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 15:30pm approximately.

The Chair thanked all present for their attendance.

Meeting dates for 2020 are to be confirmed.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4<sup>th</sup> March 2020