

**PHECC Council Meeting Minutes**  
**10 September 2020**  
**PHECC Office, Naas**

**Present:**

Jacqueline Burke (Chair)  
Pat Hanafin

**Apologies:**

Conor Deasy

**Video Conference:**

Hillery Collins (Vice Chair)  
Jason van der Velde  
Shane Mooney  
Mick Molloy  
Thomas Keane  
Niamh Collins  
Patrick Fleming  
Fiona McDaid  
Jimmy Jordan  
William Merriman  
David Menzies  
Tess O'Donovan  
Aidan O'Brien  
Dennis Keeley

**In attendance:**

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director  
Barry O'Sullivan, Deputy Director & Registrar  
Brendan Cawley, PHECC PDO  
Jacqueline Egan, PHECC PDO  
Con Foley, Council Secretary (VC)  
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

**1. Chair's Business**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting apologies received, and thanked all for attending.

**1.1 Correspondence**

Correspondence included in Council papers was referred to under item 1.3.

**1.2 Council Appointments**

A special welcome was extended to the two newly appointed Council members, Mr Aidan O'Brien and Mr Dennis Keeley, both appointed from recognised institutions on the nomination of the heads of those institutions.

Mr Aidan O'Brien was a joint nomination by St. John Ambulance, the Order of Malta and the Irish Red Cross and Mr Dennis Keeley was nominated by Dublin Fire Brigade [DFB] - Royal College of Surgeons Ireland [RCSI].

All vacant positions on Council have now been filled.

**1.3 Conflicts of Interest**

The Director referenced his correspondence to the Chair of the Compliance & Audit Committee [C&AC] of 20 August 2020, wherein he has requested the C&AC to review the situation of unresolved difference of opinion over perceived conflicts of interests at Council and the potential risk it poses to PHECC.

*Con Foley joined the meeting during the above.*

Following consideration, Council passed the following resolution;

**Resolution:** That Council approve engaging an independent body/external governance expert to provide external assistance to a subgroup of the C&AC in order to review and redraft the current PHECC Conflict of Interest policy, using any learning points from the current situation in the implementation, training and monitoring related to that policy.

**Proposed:** Pat Fleming **Seconded:** Pat Hanafin

**Carried without dissent**

The Chair of C&AC notified Council that he would not be taking an active part in the above process.

**1.4** The Chair noted that she had replied to the Vice-Chairs e-mail of 28 August 2020 and was awaiting a response. The Vice-Chair replied that he had acknowledged the response and was currently seeking advice before reverting.

## **2. Minutes & Matters Arising**

### **2.1 Draft Minutes 17 August 2020\***

The draft minutes were presented for consideration and the following resolution was passed;

**Resolution:** That the Council approve the minutes of the meeting of 17 August 2020.

**Proposed:** Pat Hanafin **Seconded:** Shane Mooney

**Carried without dissent**

### **2.2 Matters Arising**

The Director informed Council that correspondence has been issued to both the Department of Health and UCD informing them of Council's resolution of 17 August 2020, "to roll over the current SLA with UCD to deliver an AP Programme for a period of 12 months subject to revisions and amendments of the fee structure and a minimum of 16 students". Clarity has also been provided that no agreement is in place between PHECC and UCD until such time as the terms of a revised SLA have been agreed between the parties. We await a formal response.

The Director confirmed that, at the request of the Department of Health, he is also addressing PHECC related aspects of correspondence from UCD to the Minister of Health of 27 July 2020.

Confirmation has been received from The National Ambulance Service College [NASC] that their MSc Specialist Paramedic (Advanced Paramedic) will commence on 14 September 2020.

It was confirmed that Crowe have conducted a review of the Education Standards and Competency Framework and the Education & Standards Committee have the matter in hand.

*Mick Molloy joined the meeting from this point.*

### **3. Directors Report**

#### **3.1. Directors Report to Council\***

##### **3.1.1. Ongoing Review Updates**

An update on the Crowe Education Standards review will be provided under item 4.2 of the agenda. The PHECC Examination Standard, currently under review, is expected to be considered at the next Education & Standards Committee meeting.

##### **3.1.2. COVID-19 General Arrangements**

PHECC continue to maintain reduced footfall levels in the office. Feedback from staff on the wearing facemasks in the office is currently being obtained.

##### **3.1.3. COVID-19 Crewing Model**

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received from Licensed CPG Providers to move from the current minimum crewing level standard, though several enquiries have been received.

##### **3.1.4. Launch of the PHECC Strategic Plan 2020-2023**

Discussions on plans for the launch of the PHECC Strategic Plan in October/November 2020 via a webinar event continue.

##### **3.1.5. Public Sector Magazine, Excellence in Business Award**

PHECC are being awarded the Public Sector Magazine 'Award for Excellence in Ensuring the Quality and Safety of Pre-Hospital Emergency Care'. The resultant advertorial opportunity will incorporate the launch of the PHECC Strategic Plan, which is hoped will be endorsed by the DOH.

##### **3.1.6. CPG Pre-Publication Review – Expression of Interest [EOI]**

A requirement for a comprehensive version control mechanism to track CPG changes agreed by the Medical Advisory Committee was acknowledged.

Following an Expression of Interest [EOI] for the non-clinical pre-publication review of the new suite of PHECC CPGs, interviews have taken place resulting in nine successful applicants being selected. These include two at Responder, EMT, Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic level and a Quality Assessment Reviewer.

##### **3.1.7. Staff Recruitment Update**

An Expression of Interest is currently being prepared for a HR Consultancy company to manage recruitment, in relation to new staffing structure, and to provide ongoing HR support until the end of 2020, pending a permanent HR function solution.

##### **3.1.8. Department of Health Quarterly Review Meeting**

The previously scheduled Governance meeting with DOH, cancelled at short notice, has since been rescheduled for Wednesday 16 September. The main emphasis of the meeting is expected to be budgetary related, focusing on both our projected 2020 outturn position and 2021 budget.



It was confirmed that all Government Departments are under financial pressure due to Covid-19 expenses.

The involvement of PHECC in future national manpower planning discussions was welcomed.

### **3.2 Delegated Decisions by the Director**

An explanation of aspects of the Recognition of Qualification [ROQ] and Licensed CPG Provider reports was provided by the Director. It was noted that there is no Advanced Paramedic level on the UK HCPC Register, only Paramedic level, however UK-trained Paramedics applying to join the Register in Ireland may be admitted at Paramedic or Advanced Paramedic level, subject to having achieved the required clinical internship experience. Where no clinical internship has been completed, they may be offered EMT status on the PHECC Register.

## **4. Education & Standards**

### **4.1. NQEMT Examination Schedule**

An overview of the examination schedule, as included in Council papers, was provided to Council. Appreciation was extended to all parties involved in successfully conducting examinations, while adhering to Government guidelines, over recent months.

### **4.2. Crowe Review**

An update on the progress of the Education Standards & Competency Framework Review, as included in Council papers, was provided to Council. Revisions to the DRAFT Education Standards & Competency Framework document are currently being carried out and the next iteration of the document will be presented by Crowe as required, and next steps agreed. The next meeting of the Education & Standards Committee is tentatively scheduled for 16 September 2020.

Referencing the fact that a quorum was not achieved at the recent Education & Standards Committee meeting, the Chair of said committee highlighted her concerns regarding committee member attendance and the resulting risk when items are unable to be progressed to Council.

The option of a sub-group engaging external individuals/organisations, with related expertise, to progress certain items was proposed.

### **4.3. Update to QRF Process**

Council were informed of the main adaptations to the process for conducting QRF's, as included in Council papers, to allow recommence of same in the coming months. It was agreed that, where necessary and following a risk assessment, site visits will take place, otherwise online mechanisms and a more extensive desktop review will be utilised.

### **4.4. Education & Standards Committee Membership**

Following a request by the Chair of the Education & Standards Committee, to fill vacant positions on that committee, details of which were provided in Council papers, Council passed the following resolution, acknowledging that all Committee Terms of Reference are expected to be redrafted in early 2021.

**Resolution:** That Council approve the filling of vacant positions on the Education & Standards Committee, through an Expression of Interest, keeping in mind that the Terms of Reference will be redrafted for 2021.

**Proposed:** Pat Hanafin

**Seconded:** Tess O'Donovan

**Carried without dissent**

#### **4.5. Education Awards\***

Upon consideration of the Chair of the Education & Standards Committee's request to process an outstanding RI Facilitator application, completed during the time the process was initially closed but not submitted with other applications, Council passed the following resolution;

**Resolution:** That Council approve the processing of an outstanding RI Facilitator application.

**Proposed:** Hillery Collins

**Seconded:** Jimmy Jordan

**Carried without dissent**

Council supported the view of the Executive that an urgent review of the role and application process of Facilitator is required and subsequently passed the following resolution.

**Resolution:** That Council approve an urgent review of the role and application process for Facilitator via an Expression of Interest.

**Proposed:** Hillery Collins

**Seconded:** Pat Hanafin

**Carried without dissent**

*Council took a short recess.*

#### **5. Clinical Matters**

##### **5.1. PHECC Standard for Critical Care Paramedic\***

The Chair of the Medical Advisory Committee provided an introduction of the two appendices accompanying Council papers. Acknowledging the level of work involved, appreciation was extended to all those involved in the production of same.

Greater flexibility provided by the proposed levels, where skills can be selected depending on location/environment, was recognised. The need for future proofing legislation to allow development of these levels on the Register was noted.

Council passed the following resolution;

**Resolution:** That Council approve the 'Standard for Critical Care Paramedic', included in Council papers, as the updated PHECC Standard and the progression of discussions with stakeholders and the Education and Standards Committee.

**Proposed:** Pat Hanafin

**Seconded:** Niamh Collins

**Carried without dissent**

##### **5.2. Introduction of Community Paramedicine into Ireland Report\***

Following a brief discussion surrounding the establishment of a sub-group under MAC to set clinical standards for the Community Paramedicine Programme, as detailed in recommendation 7 of the report, it was agreed to amend the list of representatives involved in such a group "to include representatives of acute, primary and community care".

**Resolution:** That Council adopt the recommendations of the 'The introduction of Community Paramedicine into Ireland' report included in Council papers as recommended by the Medical Advisory Committee.

**Proposed: Shane Mooney**

**Seconded: Jason van der Velde**

**Carried without dissent**

## **6. Register**

### **6.1. Register Matters\***

An update report on current Fitness to Practise cases was provided by the Registrar. To ensure compliance with Council Standing Orders, the Chair decided to adjourn further discussion on the matter pending consideration of suspending Council Standing Orders to allow the use of videoconferencing in relation to Fitness to Practise inquiries.

The Register report, including COVID-19 Temporary Register figures, was noted.

*Jimmy Jordan departed the meeting at this point.*

### **6.2. CPC Roadshows**

A summary of EMT CPC Roadshows currently taking place was provided to Council. Though attendance is restricted due to COVID-19 arrangements, these events are progressing well.

## **7. Risk**

### **7.1. Risk Register**

The Director apologised for the delay in circulating the revised Risk Register and provided Council with a synopsis of revisions to same

The need for clarification of who will provide the internship element of both the UCD and NASC AP Programmes, was noted.

## **8. AOB**


The Chair thanked all Council members, in particular those newest to Council, for their forbearance during the pandemic and related impositions, such as virtual meetings.

Also referenced and thanked was Eoin Dunleavy in the Department of Health for expediting the new Council appointments and avoiding lacunae in Council activity such as have occurred in the past.

The October meeting will continue to be a virtual meeting, taking place on October 8th next at 10.00hrs.

The meeting concluded at 12.45pm.

**Signed:**

  
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**Jacqueline Burke**  
**Chairperson**

**Date:**

8<sup>th</sup> October 2020