

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
20 January 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)

Apologies:

None

Videoconference:

Aidan O'Brien
Conor Deasy
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Jimmy Jordan
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry
William Merriman

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary (VC)
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Pauline Dempsey, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager (VC)
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the following matters were addressed.

- 1.1. The Chair advised Council that the Director's Performance Review will be commence shortly.
- 1.2. The Chair confirmed that her Confidential Letter to the Minister of Health, together with the two Appendices as previously advised, had been sent and acknowledged.
- 1.3. A brief update on the progress by the subgroup on the complaint against PHECC

The Director joined the closed meeting.

- 1.4. The Director updated Council on the current status of Fitness to Practise [FTP] process and indicated that the review of the FTP processes and procedures was about to commence.
- 1.5. The Director also advised Council on the status of two separate complaints arising from a GVF and QRF Review. Council endorsed the Directors approach to the investigations of both complaints.

Members of the Executive joined the meeting.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees.

2.0. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of a possible conflict-of-interest had been received by the Chair nor Secretary for any agenda item.

Jason van der Velde joined the meeting.

3.0. Chairs Business

3.1. Correspondence

The Chair noted receipt of the Engagement Letter for the 2021 Audit from OCAI, adding that it would be referenced in the course of the Director's Report.

The Chair advised Council of receipt of a letter from Council Member, Don Brennan, in relation to his resignation from Council due to additional work responsibilities and commitments. The Chair, had regretfully accepted Mr. Brennan's resignation, wished him well in his continuing endeavors and thanked him for his contribution to Council affairs during his tenure on Council.

In accordance with Section 7. (b) of the vesting statute, Council was now formally being informed of his resignation. Further, with regard to S.8. of the same vesting statute [S.I. 109 of 2000], the department has also been informed of his resignation and the appointment, by the Minister of a replacement Council member for the remainder of his term is awaited.

3.2. Legislation Update

The Chair referenced the two letters sent to department officials and the Minister of Health in December 2021 regarding PHECC's legislative deficiencies. A formal reply to both correspondence is awaited.

It was noted that OCAg continue to comment on the appropriateness of Council composition as restricted by current legislation.

4.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

4.1. Draft Minutes 16 December 2021*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 16 December 2021.

Proposed: Jimmy Jordan **Seconded:** Dennis Keeley

Carried without dissent.

4.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5.0. Directors Report

5.1. Directors Report to Council*

5.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

A Risk Assessment of the office has been carried out with the subsequent action plan being progressed accordingly. Revised Covid-19, Return to Work and Visitor policies are now in place and antigen testing kits purchased have been made available to staff who require same.

Several staff continue to work from home while they isolate due to being close contacts of family members who have tested positive for Covid-19.

There have been no reported Covid-19 incidents involving, examiners, students, assessors or in relation to external reviews.

5.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard.

Following a recent meeting with the Director of the National Ambulance Service [NAS], the Director confirmed that NAS have not and do not envisage a move from the minimum crewing model during the current pandemic. If such a derogation was to be sought, NAS will engage with PHECC in advance of such a request.

NAS updated the Director in relation to their engagement with private and voluntary CPG providers in relation to emergency response, patient transfers and patient discharges. In such cases, practitioners will be privileged by their governing PHECC Licensed CPG Provider. Clarification has been provided that additional PHECC registered practitioners, being considered for recruitment from various sources as part of the NAS planned increase in practitioner resources, would be employed by, and thus privileged by NAS.

5.1.3. Potential Increase in Registrants

The Director has informed the department of the envisaged resource and financial impact of increased practitioner recruitment by NAS on PHECC.

5.1.4. Council Members Survey by IPA

All members were encouraged to respond to the recently circulated IPA Council members survey, the results of which will be presented at a forthcoming Council meeting and will advise on the progression of the relevant recommendations of the Governance Review.

5.1.5. OCAG Audit

The Director reported that he had received the Engagement Letter from OCAG in respect of their audit of 2021. The Director referenced the Letter of Representation attached thereto which will be signed by the Chair and the Director on behalf of the Council. This includes many assertions, among these, that the Code of Governance is being complied with, procedures are in place under the Protected Disclosures Act, any grants made by PHECC are in compliance with legislation and that no Council members have any interest in any grant or other contract entered into by PHECC. Council was reminded that these are onerous responsibilities undertaken on their behalf by the Chair and Director.

Additionally, the draft Management Letter for 2020 had also been received from OCAG and is currently being addressed by the Director. The response will be considered at the upcoming meeting of the Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC].

5.1.6 Request from CPG Provider

The Director has responded to previously reported correspondence from a potentially new CPG Provider confirming the appropriate course for applications for authorisation as a PHECC Licensed CPG Provider.

5.1.7 PQ in relation to RoQs

The Director reported on a Parliamentary Question [PQ] received in relation to Recognition of Qualification [RoQ] requests from the UK.

The Director reported that there were 33 RoQ applications from the UK in 2020 & 2021, 73% (24) of which received the registration level applied for. The remainder were awarded a lower level and offered a period of adaptation or compensation measures.

In reply to a question from a member, it was also confirmed that a total of 21 applications were received from South Africa in the same period and 19, (86%) received the registration level applied for, with the remaining 2 applicants being offered a lower registration level and a period of adaptation. It was further confirmed that no application had been rejected due to non-availability of educational certificates or educational documentation in cases where the education institution may have ceased trading.

All unsuccessful applications are given guidance on how to make an appeal and no appeals were received during the period 2020-2021. PHECC is unaware of any difficulties associated with the RoQ application process from any jurisdiction.

5.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report as included in Council papers was noted, highlighting that an application for CPG Provider status recognition is being progressed.

Council took a short recess (11.15am – 11.30am)

6.0. Education

6.1. Paramedicine Education*

The Chair opened the discussion referring to Council functions as specified in PHECC Statutory Instrument No. 109 of 2000 Section 4. (f) *to advise the Minister of the standards which should inform the education and training of emergency medical technicians in the State;* and Section 4. (g) *to advise the Minister of the specific content of recognised courses.*

Decisions on the questions posed by the related Expert Group at the Council meeting of 18 November last had been deferred to allow Council members sufficient time to consider and address these significant issues. Council members were requested to provide guidance to the Expert Group on the future strategic direction of paramedicine education, specifically regarding the academic level (and alignment with NFQ and QQI) at which the paramedic competency-based curriculum would be based, also on the scope of the paramedic role, particularly in relation to ALS, and on programme accessibility, in order to allow them to continue their work in developing a revised Education Standard and associated Competency Framework.

The Chair thanked all those who made submissions prior to the meeting and each Council member was provided the opportunity to make a short verbal submission during which the following themes and points were discussed and considered.

- Focus on PHECC's mission to protect the public.
- The importance of deciding the fundamental professional foundation of pre-hospital emergency care and alignment with the international definition of a Paramedic.
- The need to agree a definition of Paramedicine and scope of practice.
- A requirement to determine the desired skillset of a Paramedic prior to aligning the resulting competency framework with the appropriate EU Standard NFQ/QQI level.
- The need to be able to justify the level set and map the competency framework to the role was noted.
- Strong emphasis on the importance of significant, effective consultation and stakeholder engagement from the outset to inform future decision.
- PHECCs role in the involvement of stakeholders as part of any proposed change was stressed, while noting that PHECC's primary responsibility as the regulator is the setting and development of the education standards.
- Acknowledgment of the level of consultation already taken place when developing the Future of Paramedicine and Crowe Reports.
- The requirement for an impact statement as part of the process, considering aspects such as implementation, costs, capacity, impact on existing practitioners, training, recruitment, crewing models.
- A need for multiple routes of entry to the profession and future education pathways such as the academic CAO, Vocational, Apprenticeship, and direct entry/RoQ routes, and the potential impact of same on recruitment.
- Differing views were expressed on education level required for Paramedics currently.

- Benefits of an expanded/degree level of education on critical thinking, clinical judgement and decision making and resulting increase in confidence and competence of practitioners.
- The professionalisation of the service and equal status of the Paramedic within the multidisciplinary health care team as necessary for continued provision of safe care.
- The need for Paramedic practitioners with higher level thinking, clinical judgement and decision-making skills to respond to evolving health care service including Sláintecare and Pathfinder Projects.
- Recognition of the need to support existing Paramedics and the provision of pathways for them to expand/update their skills.
- Possible implications for patients in relation to improvements in service provision and reference was made to research on other professions demonstrating the benefit of graduate education on patient outcome.
- Protection of continuation of services in any interim/transition period.
- Acknowledgement of the existing move to degree level of Paramedic education already taking place with 80% of all newly qualified Paramedics already being at degree level.
- The need for a route for existing Paramedics to complete an ALS module, and other professional development is required or desired.
- The urgent requirement for PHECCs Education Standards and Competency Frameworks to keep pace with how the profession is already developing.
- Suggested introduction of interim Education Standards while the current standards are being rewritten.
- Consideration of the implications of changes to the Paramedic scope of practice for the other practitioner levels and the workload of the Expert Group.
- It was noted that Paramedics are the last remaining Health and Social Care Profession that are not already at degree level. This can impact on the role, confidence and status of the paramedic within the multidisciplinary team.

Fiona McDaid departed the meeting during the above discussion but did provide her submission prior to her departure.

Following an extended and detailed discussion, two proposals emerged for resolutions, with a number of wording revisions, and a vote was taken on each with those dissenting requesting that their dissent be recorded in the minutes.

Resolution: That Council endorses that all practitioner levels be aligned to the National Framework of Qualifications [NFQ].
Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** Hillery Collins
Carried by majority vote of 13:1
Jimmy Jordan requested that his dissent be recorded in the minutes.

Resolution: That Council endorses a move to a degree level-based level of practice for Paramedics which will include appropriately enhanced scope of practice.
Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** Hillery Collins
Carried by majority vote of 10:4
Jimmy Jordan, Niamh Collins, Dennis Keeley and Martin O'Reilly requested that their dissent be recorded in the minutes.

It was noted that these resolutions are collective decisions of Council and therefore required to be supported by all Council members going forward.

Council acknowledged the paradigm shift that is required to the PHECC Education Standards and Competency Framework as a result of the above resolutions, and this now needs to be communicated to the Chair and members of the Expert Group.

It was agreed to develop a position paper on moving Paramedic education to degree level which will be used as the basis for preliminary stakeholder engagement to obtain feedback. This would be initiated along with preparation for further extensive stakeholder engagement as the project progresses.

The Chair thanked all members for their contributions to this very significant decision by Council.

Council took a short recess (1.55pm – 2.30pm) during which David Menzies, Jimmy Jordan, Tess O'Donovan and Aidan O'Brien departed the meeting.

7.0. Clinical Matters

7.1. Covid-19 Vaccination CPG Updates*

Amendments to the Cominarty and Spikevax COVID-19 Vaccination CPGs and medication formulary, reflecting changes to national guidelines on booster vaccinations, age groups and interval timings, had been approved by the Emergency Decision Making Group of MAC and were now recommended to Council for approval.

Resolution: That Council approves the updated Cominarty and Spikevax COVID-19 Vaccination CPGs and medication formulary, as recommended by the Emergency Decision Making Group of MAC.

Proposed: Martin O'Reilly **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

8.0. Research

8.1. Research Committee Update

The outcome of two research related tenders, was provided to Council noting that both tenders had been awarded to Monash University. An initial meeting between PHECC and representatives of Monash University has taken place and further progress will be reported in due course.

- i) To carry out a review of existing research in pre-hospital emergency care in Ireland
- ii) To develop a strategy for the PHECC Research Committee

9.0. Quality & Safety

9.1. GVF Evaluation Update

An update on the current formal evaluation of the Governance Validation Framework, following completion of the first 3-year cycle of GVF assessments, was provided to Council. As part of this process, Council members were invited to complete a survey which will be circulated shortly. The results of the feedback from Council will be presented at the February Council meeting, together with an update of progress to date.

Council was also informed that as requested at the previous Council meeting, remove the risk rating element from all GVF reports is currently being implemented.

10.0. Governance & Finance

10.1. First Estimates Outturn 2021 Income & Expenditure

A presentation on the Estimated Management Account Income and Expenditure outcomes for 2021 was provided. While these included some caveats, further presentation of the final numbers for 2021 will be made to Council in due course.

Dennis Keeley departed the meeting.

11.0. Register

11.1. Registration Committee Membership Ratification*

Resulting from the Practitioner Expression of Interest for positions on Committees of Council, membership of the Registration Committee, as included in Council papers, was proposed.

Though the external lay position has yet to be filled, Council was requested to approve the membership as recommended.

Resolution: That Council approves the proposed membership of the Registration Committee as proposed.

Proposed: Patrick Fleming **Seconded:** Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

It was noted that all Committees of Council are now functional.

12.0. AOB


All were thanked for attending, acknowledging time given and passion demonstrated in earlier discussion of Agenda Item 6.1.

It is hoped that a face-to-face meeting will be possible in the coming months.

The next Council Meeting will take place on February 24th next at 10:00.

The meeting concluded at 15:15 approx.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 24th February 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
24 February 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)

Apologies:

Jimmy Jordan

Tess O'Donovan

Videoconference:

Aidan O'Brien

Conor Deasy

David Menzies

Dennis Keeley

Fiona McDaid

Hillery Collins

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)

Martin O'Reilly

Niamh Collins

Patrick Fleming

Tomás Barry

William Merriman

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director

Con Foley, Council Secretary (VC)

Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager

Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)

Pauline Dempsey, PHECC Manager (VC)

Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager

Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator (VC)

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the following matters were addressed.

- 1.1. The Chair updated Council that there are no further developments to report on the complaint against PHECC.

The Director joined the closed meeting.

- 1.2. The Director provided Council with a progress update on recruitment of the positions of Secretary to Council and Chair of the Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC].

Members of the Executive and Con Foley joined the meeting.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

2.0. Declarations of Interest

The Chair noted correspondence from Tomás Barry regarding a possible conflict of interest regarding item 10.2 of the agenda, from which he wished to be recused.

3.0. Chairs Business

3.1. Correspondence

The Chair noted receipt of two items of correspondence.

- i) Correspondence from a consultant pediatrician expressing concern in relation to Section 12 (Maternal) of the previous suite of PHECC Clinical Practice Guidelines [CPGs] was referred to the Medical Advisory Committee [MAC] for consideration at their next committee meeting.
- ii) Correspondence from the National Sepsis Team requesting guidance on piloting a sepsis form for use in general practice and in relation to possible PHECC representation on the group will be responded to by the Director, appointing a PHECC representative.

3.2. Legislation Update

The Chair reported having contacted the Department with regard to the appointment of Council members for the two current vacant positions on Council and also an update on the progress of addressing PHECC's legislative deficiencies.

It has been confirmed that *"a nomination of a trade union which, in the opinion of the Minister, is representative of the majority of emergency medical technicians"* is currently being sought. One further position remains vacant, *"a person appointed on the nomination of a body recognised by the Minister as being representative of emergency medical technicians"*

To date, there has been no response from the Minister regarding the Chair's recently submitted Confidential Report. The Department had no further update on the matter to report. Council expressed considerable concerns, indicating that significant development work had taken place in PHECC without any concomitant legislative response from the Department.

Following concerns relayed by Council, it was agreed that as the matter requires escalation a series of steps will be developed to incrementally accelerate the legislative issue with the Department, and the Chair will request a definitive plan on progressing PHECC legislative change from the Department.

The return of face-to-face Council meetings was discussed and various issues raised, principally in regard to accommodating members attending virtually. It was agreed that the March meeting of Council will take place in-person at the PHECC offices, with those attending confirmed in advance.

4.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

4.1. Draft Minutes 20 January 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 20 January 2022.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Aidan O'Brien

Carried without dissent.

4.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5.0. Directors Report

5.1. Directors Report to Council

5.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive continue to modify the return to work, working remotely, office protocols and the deployment of staff in response to the recent easing of restrictions. There have been no reported COVID-19 incidents involving, examiners, students, assessors or in relation to external reviews.

5.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard.

5.1.3 OCAG Audit 2020

Having been reviewed, the Executive have submitted their responses to the Management Letter for 2020 to the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General [OCAG], with the finalised document awaited.

5.1.4. Request to Review Rules of Council

The Director has received a request to review Council Standing Orders in the matter of how resolutions are dealt with by Council in session. External consultations are underway currently to establish best practice and such recommendations arising, having been referred to FRACC for a further review, will feature on a future Council Agenda for consideration.

5.1.5. Recruitment

The Director updated Council on various recruitments in process, including four executive posts and those for a Chair of FRACC and that of Council Secretary.

The separate posts of Registrar and Director of Corporate Services/Deputy Director will follow thereafter.

5.1.6 Moving Paramedics to Degree Level

Referring to Council's decision to embark on the process of raising the education level of Paramedic NQEMT to degree level, it was highlighted that, due to the significance of the project, such an undertaking needs to be sufficiently resourced, both financially and in terms of expertise and manpower.

The drafting of a position paper and the subsequent engagement, consultation and impact assessments will inevitably involve external expertise. Options to expedite delivery of the project, including the involvement of external expertise such as outsourcing, consultancy or secondment, will need to be explored in the context of budgets for 2022 and beyond. It was noted that the 2022 Letter of Determination for PHECC is still awaited from the Department.

5.1.7 Notice of an Appeal

The Director advised Council of receipt of an appeal against a decision of the Director in relation to Approved Training Institution [ATI] status and Emergency First Responder [EFR] course approval which will now be progressed via the Appeals Panel.

5.2. Amendment to POL033 Code of Governance & Business Conduct*

The Director presented amendments to the Code of Governance and Business Conduct to Council, giving effect to the Council decision made in December 2020 regarding the prohibition of payments (except travel and subsistence allowances) for any separately engaged remunerated work to Council, Council Committee, or staff members on behalf of PHECC; with the exception of those acting as examiners, assessors, reviewers or panel members. Additionally, one-off commissioned consultancy work will not be awarded to a committee member of the committee commissioning, overseeing, or receiving the report. Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the proposed amendments to section 8. Remuneration & Expenses of POL033 Code of Governance & Business Conduct.
Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming
Carried without dissent.

5.3. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report as included in Council papers, containing data on annual responder activity for the period 2019-2021, was noted.

Council took a short recess (10.55am – 11.10am) during which Jason van der Velde, Conor Deasy and Ray Carney joined the meeting.

6.0. Clinical Matters

6.1. Medication for Listed Organisations [MLO] Revised CPGs and Formulary*

Revisions to the Medications for Listed Organisations CPG and Medication Formulary recommended by the Medical Advisory Committee [MAC] were approved by Council, thus aligning with the current suite of CPGs.

Resolution: That Council approves realignment of the Medications for Listed Organisations CPGs and Medication Formulary in line with the 2021 suite of CPGs as presented.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Jason van der Velde

Carried without dissent.

6.2. Amendment to Midazolam CPGs and Formulary*

As recommended by MAC, amendments to the Adult Seizure (5/6.6.3) and Paediatric Seizure (5/6.13.14) CPGs regarding Midazolam and additional doses were presented to Council for approval. Subject to one minor amendment, Council approved the updated documents, and the following resolution was passed.

Resolution: That Council approves the proposed amendments to the Adult Seizure (5/6.6.3) and Paediatric Seizure (5/6.13.14) CPGs regarding Midazolam and additional doses, as recommended by MAC, subject to one minor amendment.

Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

6.3. Amendment to Nitrous Oxide 50% and Oxygen 50% (Entonox®)*

Following a review of various contraindications for Nitrous Oxide (50%) and Oxygen (50%), with some additions relating to use of nitrogen when treating certain patients, Council approved the revised formulary monograph as follows.

Resolution: That Council approves amendments to the medication formulary in relation to Nitrous Oxide 50% and Oxygen 50% (Entonox®) as presented.

Proposed: Dennis Keeley **Seconded:** Fiona McDaid

Carried without dissent.

William Merriman departed the meeting.

6.4. STN029 PHECC Standard for Medication use During Pregnancy*

Amendments to STN029 PHECC Standard for Medication Use During Pregnancy advised by National Obstetrics Programme pharmacists, and subsequently reviewed by MAC, were presented to Council for approval.

Resolution: That Council approves the updated version of STN029 PHECC Standard for Medication Use During Pregnancy as presented in Council papers.

Proposed: Jason van der Velde **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

A brief update of the Community Paramedic Forum held the previous day was provided and all those who organised and contributed to the event were congratulated on its success.

7.0. Education:

7.1. Updated STN022 CFR & MLO Education & Training Standards*

In line with SI No. 530, updates to applicable CPGs to enable intranasal administration of Naloxone spray necessitated revisions to the related education and training standard (STN022).

The Education & Training Committee, at their meeting of 10 February 2022, recommended the updated standard, as included in Council papers, for Council approval.

A discussion followed regarding relative dosages of various medications supplied in the State, however it was clarified that underpinning SIs 449 & 530 specify the type of Naloxone to be administered. It was further clarified that the CPG concerned indicates the correct clinical dosage though the means by which it is administered is a training aspect. In conclusion, Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the STN022 CFR & MLO Education & Training Standards V2 as recommended by the Education & Training Committee.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Jason van der Velde
Carried without dissent.

7.2. Responder Level Re-Certification Extension*

As recommended by the Education & Training Committee at their meeting of 10 February 2022, Council agreed to discontinue the interim 3-month extension arrangement for Responder level re-certification from the end of 2022, subject to public health guidance at that time.

Resolution: That Council approves to discontinue the interim arrangement for responder level re-certification from the end of 2022, subject to public health guidance at that time.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Fiona McDaid
Carried without dissent.

From 01 January 2023, as per the current FAR Education and Training Standard, an institution may allow a short grace period if the person's responder certificate has lapsed, and they are seeking re-certification. However, this grace period should be restricted to extenuating circumstances and be considered on a case-by-case basis. This decision rests with the institution's course director. PHECC considers a maximum of 30 days to be an appropriate grace period.

7.3. Education Standards & Competency Framework Update

Council was provided with an update on progress made by the Education Standards & Competency Framework Expert Group, who are an Expert Group reporting to Council.

Feedback from the Education & Training Committee in respect of the Future of Paramedicine Education was relayed to Council by the Chair of said committee, and it was clarified that all the concerns raised had already been considered during the extensive discussion at the previous Council meeting.

Acknowledging that competency frameworks and education standards are being developed for all three divisions of the Register, these outputs from the Expert Group will be put forward to the Education & Training Committee, for their consideration in due course. It was acknowledged that the Education & Training Committee would have a role to play in both the planning of the implementation of these standards and the engagement/consultation process that has yet to be constructed.

The Chair thanked all concerned for their efforts and inputs.

William Merriman re-joined the meeting during the above discussion.

Ray Carney departed the meeting.

8.0. Examinations

8.1. Examination Update

Some questions had arisen regarding the examination and assessment of candidate's knowledge of pharmacology questions: theory, dosages, indications and contraindications. Complex issues had arisen and were brought to the Education and Training Committee for review. A synopsis of the completed review of the current PHECC MCQ question bank as detailed in Council papers was provided to Council. The review identified questions that require dosage calculations, a knowledge of obscure side effects, an over representation of paediatric, weight or age-based questions, leading to an exercise to ensure that all questions in the MCQ bank are well structured, fair and reliable for candidates.

Council was asked to resolve that the NQEMT MCQ exams continue to assess candidates' safe application of pharmacology in clinical practice and that exam questions include general theory, dosages, common indications and contraindications without the use of a field guide or other reference materials.

Following consideration Council endorsed the recommendation of the Education & Training Committee in relation to pharmacology questions in NQEMT MCQ exams and passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council resolve that the NQEMT MCQ exam continues to assess candidates' safe application of pharmacology in clinical practice and that exam questions include general theory, doses, indications, contraindications, without the use of a field guide or other reference material.

Proposed: Tomás Barry

Seconded: Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

It was noted that a review and amendment of question weightings will be conducted in Q1 2022.

9.0. Quality & Safety

9.1. Governance Validation Framework [GVF] Evaluation Update

An update on the Quality & Safety Committee structured evaluation of the GVF standards currently being conducted was provided to Council, as included in Council papers. The feedback process is in progress and an Expression of Interest [EOI] is underway which seeks to appoint a quality expert to review, collate and interpret all received feedback, review existing reports and the current GVF standards. Amendments to the standard will then be proposed to the Quality & Safety Committee prior to presenting to Council for approval.

CPG Providers have been informed during the recent engagement process that the GVF will continue in current format until the updated system is formally communicated and introduced. It was added that a review of the Quality Review Framework [QRF] will be required in tandem with the development of a revised Education Standards & Competency Framework.

10.0. Research

10.1. Research Committee Update

At their meeting on 16 February 2022, the Research Committee considered PHECC engagement in an application for a research project with the Health Research Board, as considered further under Agenda item 10.2.

10.2. Application to Health Research Board [HRB] Applied Partnership Award*

The proposal as included in Council papers, sets out to investigate “Evidence based guidance for Irish pre-hospital emergency care: enhancing content prioritisation, formulation, patient involvement and translation to practice using international evidence, national frameworks and stakeholder consultation.”

Tomás Barry and David Menzies recused themselves from this point to avoid a perceived conflict of interest, following which Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves to partner with UCD in the application proposal to Health Research Board Applied Partnership Award (2022) scheme to support evidence-based guidance for Irish pre-hospital emergency care. PHECC exposure would be 20% co-funding of the total award.

Proposed: Conor Deasy **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

Council took a short 10-minute recess.

Tomás Barry and David Menzies re-joined the meeting and were informed of Council decision.

11.0. Governance & Finance

11.1. FRACC 2021 Annual Report to Council*

Council was updated on a recent meeting of the Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC] by the Acting Chair. The draft FRACC 2021 Annual Report to Council, as included in Council papers, was considered and approved via the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee [FRACC] 2021 Annual Report as presented in Council papers.

Proposed: Dennis Keeley **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

11.2 Revisions to POL048 Conflicts of Interest Policy*

Correspondence from the Director to the Acting Chair of FRACC, regarding access to the Register of Interests of Council Members, had been considered by FRACC who now recommend to Council amending the Conflict-of-Interest Policy document to extend access to the Register of Council Members Interests to the Director in certain circumstances. Council approved this recommendation via the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves amendments to POL048 Conflict-of-Interest Policy extending access to the Register of Council Members Interest to the Director in certain circumstances, subject to one minor wording amendment.

Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Tomás Barry

Carried without dissent.

12.0. Register

12.1. Register Report

The Register Report, as detailed in Council papers, was noted by Council.

13.0. AOB

The Director brought three items for consideration.

13.1. Schedule of Fees

Council was informed of amendments to the current Schedule of Fees reflecting amendments to RUL006 Council Rules for the Recognition of Institutions and Approved Training Institutions, approved by Council in April 2021, where collection of renewal fees was approved on a pro-rata annual basis rather than a tri-annual basis.

13.2. Research Proposal:

Council was requested to consider a HRB research partnership proposal received at short notice from University Limerick [UL]. As there are no financial implications for PHECC, Council approved the partnership, which if successful would enable a one-day workshop conducted by UL on a review of pre-hospital emergency care research. Reassurance of PHECC's co-ownership of the day will be required in advance.

13.3. Complaint Received from CPG Provider

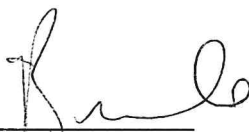
The Director made Council aware of a complaint received from a CPG provider concerning provision of services at a recent event.

During discussion the need for a re-examination of legislation and PHECC's interaction with the event industry was highlighted. It was agreed that the Event Management Sub-Committee of MAC be stood up, with Executive support.

The Chair thanked all for their participation and reminded all that the next Council meeting will take place on March 24th next at 10:00.

The meeting terminated at 15:15.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 24th March 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
24 March 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Jimmy Jordan
William Merriman

Apologies:

Aidan O'Brien
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry

Videoconference:

Conor Deasy
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator
Tom Ward (IPA) Item 6.0. Only

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the following matters were addressed.

- 1.1. The Chair updated Council on the progress of the investigation of a complaint against the Director.

The Director joined the closed meeting and updated Council on the following.

- 1.2. The Director provided Council with a progress update on recruitment of the positions of a Secretary to Council and a Chair of the Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC].

Con Foley joined the closed meeting.

- 1.3. The Director brought a pending legal case against PHECC to the attention of Council.
- 1.4. The Director also brought correspondence from the Data Protection Commission to Council regarding notice of an inquiry concerning PHECC compliance with elements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Conor Deasy, Fiona McDaid, Hillery Collins, and members of the Executive joined the meeting.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

2.0. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of a Conflict of Interest had been received for Agenda items of the meeting.

3.0. Chairs Business

3.1. Correspondence

The Chair noted receipt of correspondence from the National Sepsis Team in relation to PHECC representation at an upcoming meeting of the National GP Sepsis Pilot on 21 March 2022, which has since been attended by PHECC Information and Examinations Manager, Brendan Cawley.

3.2. Legislation Update

The Chair updated Council on recent conversations and correspondence with Department of Health [DoH] officials regarding the requirement for a revision of PHECC's legislation. It has been confirmed that the development of policy proposals to strengthen regulatory functions of PHECC, a deliverable of their Business Plan for 2022, will commence in Quarter 2 of this year. Further information as to the details and estimated dates for delivery of same has been requested.

Council welcomed the positive developments and encouraged the Chair to write to and to secure a meeting with the Minister. The Executive will also include the matter as high importance item on future Governance meetings with the Department. Additionally, a further invitation to attend a Council meeting in the near future should now be extended to Department officials.

4.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

4.1. Draft Minutes 24 February 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were approved, subject to one minor amendment to item 5.1.6.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 24 February 2022.

Proposed: William Merriman **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

Council took a short recess during which Tom Ward (IPA) joined the meeting. Item 6.0 of the meeting was addressed at this point following which Tom Ward departed the meeting.

Jason van der Velde departed the meeting, during item 6.0, due to a prior commitment.

4.2. Matters Arising

A discussion took place on item 5.1.6. of the February Minutes, clarifying the next steps to be taken following Councils' decision to raise the education level of Paramedic education to degree level, and to develop an extended scope of practise for practitioners.

It was agreed that PHECC will prepare a position paper outlining the rationale for the Council decision, acknowledging the significance of the wider implications for both the PHECC RIs [Recognised Institutions] and PHECC Licensed CPG Providers and providing an outline structure for engagement and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

It was agreed that a specific meeting of Council members would be scheduled to provide a forum for discussion. The Executive have already identified a number of related work streams, and Council members were requested to submit details on areas of potential concern or requiring clarification, to the PHECC Education Programme Manager, in advance of that meeting. It was also agreed that the Director will request that the Chair of the Expert Group provide a progress update at the April Council meeting.

5.0. Directors Report

5.1. Directors Report to Council

Items 5.1.1. and 5.1.2. were covered in the Closed Session.

5.1.3. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive continue to modify the return to work, working remotely, office protocols and the deployment of staff in response to the recent easing of restrictions. There have been no reported COVID-19 incidents involving, examiners, students, assessors or in relation to external reviews. The current increase in the level of infections is being monitored carefully.

5.1.4. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard.

5.1.5 Request to Review Rules of Council

The Director has written to the Acting Chair of Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC] with a request to review the current Council Standing Orders pertaining to the proposing, drafting, and voting on resolutions or motions put before Council, including obtaining external expert opinion as to best practice. FRACC will respond in due course with their recommendations on the matter.

5.1.6. Recruitment

Interviews are continuing to take place for the permanent Grade III and Grade IV Clerical Officers and the Specified Purpose Grade VI Approved Training Institution [ATI] Officer. The matter of recruiting a HR Manager continues to be challenging due to limited applications.

Interviews are also being arranged for the Chair of FRACC position.

5.1.7. Notice of an Appeal

An appeal against a decision of the Director has been received from an organisation applying for [Approved Training Institution] ATI recognition status and EFR course approval. An Appeal Panel is currently being assembled and a hearing date scheduled to examine the matter.

5.1.8. Response to OCAG Management Letter

The Management response to the OCAG Management Letter was discussed at the recent FRACC meeting and submitted to OCAG thereafter. As a result, the Audit Certificate for 2020, the Audit Completion Memorandum and the agreed Management Letter had been received from OCAG. It has been confirmed that the PHECC 2020 Financial Statements have been laid in the Houses of the Oireachtas. The Executive were congratulated on the speed and efficiency of the process this year.

5.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

Highlighting the conditional approval of a new PHECC Licensed CPG Provider, the report as included in Council papers was noted.

Council took a short recess.

6.0 Council Member Survey – Tom Ward (IPA)

6.1. Results of 2022 Council Member Survey

6.2. Comparison with 2019 Council Member Survey Results

6.3. Review of The Implementation of 2019 IPA Governance Review Recommendations

Tom Ward presented and facilitated discussion of the outcomes of the recently conducted survey of Council members, a repeat of the 2019 survey conducted as part of the IPA Governance Review. Outcomes in terms of both quantitative and qualitative measures compared with 2019 were discussed, and improvements registered in virtually all areas surveyed were noted.

Mr Ward recognised and complimented PHECC on significant progress made to date in implementing the Recommendations of the 2019 Governance Review given the considerable amount of work involved.

Following discussion, Council agreed that Recommendation 1 of that Report, referencing mediation or facilitation, would now no longer be required given the views of the current Council membership, the new Executive composition and the opinions expressed in the outcomes of the survey. Mr Ward communicated that the IPA supported Council's decision not to implement Recommendation 1.

The remaining recommendations will be addressed further by new processes already in place and additional training for Council, which is planned for the current year.

The Chair thanked Mr Ward for his and his colleague's assistance to PHECC. The Chair also thanked Council Members for participating in the Survey and hoped that the Council might have the opportunity to further reflect on these outcomes, collectively, later in the year. The survey is expected to be repeated every 2 years going forward.

Council took a short recess.

7.0. Quality & Safety

7.1. GVF Evaluation Update – Council Member Survey

The results of the recent Council member survey conducted as part of the evaluation of the GVF process were shared with Council. An expert in the development of health and social care standards has been commissioned to correlate and analyse stakeholder feedback and literature and report recommendations.

A final draft of the revised GVF standard will be presented to the Quality and Safety Committee and, subsequently, to Council.

David Menzies departed the meeting due to a potential Conflict of Interest.

7.2. Motorsport Rescue Services GVF Report for Approval

It was agreed that, as with Quality Review Framework [QRF] Reports, Governance Validation Framework [GVF] Site Assessment Reports would be presented to Council for noting, rather than resolution going forward.

As such the Motorsport Rescue Services GVF Report, as included in Council papers, was noted by Council.

8.0. Governance & Finance

8.1. Management Accounts to 28 February 2022

Management Accounts for the two months to end February were presented to Council together with comparatives for 2021. It was noted that PHECC continue to await the Letter of Determination from the DoH for 2022.

David Menzies re-joined the meeting during the above presentation.

8.2. IPA Webinar – Cyber-security – Some Learnings

A brief summary of two presentations at a recent IPA-sponsored webinar was presented, including an analysis of the HSE cyber-attack in 2021.

Key issues identified for general application were the random opportunism of “hackers”, the corporate response and readiness to repel cyber-attacks beginning at Board level and Board-led leadership and culture were critically important. Slide packs of both presentations are available for Council Members.

9.0. Register

9.1. Register Report

The Register Report, as detailed in Council papers, was noted by Council.

10.0. AOB

The Chair thanked all for attending, whether in-person or virtually and reminded all that the next Council meeting will take place on April 21st next at 10:00.

The meeting terminated at 13:40hrs.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 21st April 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
21 April 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley

Video Conference:

Aidan O'Brien
Alison Smith
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Jimmy Jordan
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry
William Merriman

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary (VC)
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Pauline Dempsey, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the following matters were addressed.

- 1.1 The Chair informed Council that a report on the investigation of a complaint against the Director would be made available to Council imminently.

The Director joined the closed meeting

- 1.2 The Director updated Council on two matters in the Directors report previously reported to Council in March 2022. Item 6.1.1. regarding a pending High Court action, and item 6.1.2.; an inquiry by the Data Protection Commissioner. The Director reported that the latter matter is now closed and that PHECC have received a reprimand from the Data Protection Commissioner.

Mr Brian Dunne and members of the Executive joined the meeting.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received. A special welcome was extended to newest Council member, Ms Alison Smith, whose appointment was further referred to under Agenda item 4.1. of the meeting. The Chair thanked Ms Smith for attending today's Council meeting at such short notice.

Tess O'Donovan joined the meeting.

The Chair welcomed and introduced Mr Brian Dunne who, following an open recruitment process, has been appointed to the position of Chair of the Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee [FRACC]. Mr Dunne, a qualified accountant, provided a summary of his extensive experience to date in both the private and public sector, including HSE finance, internal audit, the management of external audit and interactions with OCAG. Mr Dunne confirmed that a FRACC meeting will be convened within the next month, the date of which has yet to be finalised.

The Chair acknowledged the tremendous contribution made to PHECC by the outgoing Chair of FRACC, Con Foley. Con had served as the Chair of the Compliance and Audit Committee for a significant number of years and had been fundamental in steering PHECCs development in this sphere. The Chair thanked Con for agreeing to act as Interim Chair of the newly constituted FRACC until such time as a permanent Chair was appointed and for all his work during his tenure on both committees.

Mr Dunne departed the meeting.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of a Conflict of Interest had been received for Agenda items of the meeting.

4.0. Chairs Business

4.1. Correspondence

The Chair noted receipt of correspondence from the Minister confirming the appointment of Alison Smith to Council in accordance with Article 5 (1) (b) of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Establishment Order (S.I. 109 of 2000), a person appointed on the nomination of a trade union which, in the opinion of the Minister, is representative of the majority of emergency medical technicians. Ms Smith's appointment took effect on 12 April 2022.

4.2. Legislation Update

The Chair summarised the contents of a recent letter she had sent to the Minister for Health regarding the fundamental weaknesses in PHECC's current legislative position and the need to radically revise same. The Chair also informed the Council that though she has not, to date, received a formal reply from the department or the minister to her recent written communications, she hoped that she would be in a position to provide an update at the May Council meeting.

Agenda item 4.3. was addressed later in the meeting, after item 6.4.

4.3. Appointment of Chair of FRACC*

As referred to earlier in the meeting, Council ratified the appointment of Mr Brian Dunne as the Chair of FRACC by passing the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council ratifies the appointment of Mr Brian Dunne as Chair of the Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC].

Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

4.4. Agenda Update

The Chair reported that, having received feedback on the matter, the intention is to stick more rigidly to the timings indicated on the Council Meeting Agenda as included in the meeting papers.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 24 March 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the meeting of 24 March 2022.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

It was confirmed that the matter of a future meeting to discuss the Paramedic Education Standard and the provision of an update by the Chair of the related Expert Group will be addressed under Agenda Item 6.3.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

Items 6.1.1. and 6.1.2. were covered in the Closed Session.

6.1.3 COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive continue to modify the return to work, working remotely, office protocols and the deployment of staff in response to the recent easing of restrictions. There have been no reported COVID-19 incidents involving, examiners, students, assessors or in relation to external reviews. The current increase in the level of infections is being monitored carefully.

6.1.4 Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard.

6.1.5 Request to Review Rules of Council

Following a request from the Director, a report on the review of current Council Standing Orders in relation to the proposing of resolutions will be presented at the June Council meeting, including expert opinion and recommendations.

6.1.6 Staff Recruitment

Following an open recruitment process, permanent positions have been filled at Grade III and Grade IV Clerical Officer levels. An appointment has also been made at Grade VI ATI Officer level, on a specified purpose contract. The Grade VII HR Manager recruitment process has been extended and expanded due to lack of applicants.

6.1.7 Notice of Appeal

A hearing in relation to an appeal against a decision of the Director took place the previous day, 20 April. As per PHECC Appeals Policy POL019, the appellant and the relevant officer within PHECC will be furnished with the report of the Appeals Panel setting out their decision and reasons for same. Council will be informed of the panel's decision at the May Council meeting.

6.1.8 Ukrainian Displaced Persons and PHECC Registration

This matter has been discussed at a number of fora recently with several common issues, such as lack of familiarisation with the Ukrainian EMS systems. Though no such applications for PHECC recognition have been received to date, it was agreed that, given the non-availability of evidence, flexibility will be applied to any future applications. A 2018-dated WHO Report detailing the governance and structure in the practice of paramedicine in the Ukraine, including a requirement for a BSc level-degree at entry since 2019, is available by request from the Director.

6.1.9 Licensed CPG Service Provider

It was agreed to include the word "service" in the term Licensed CPG Provider to align with the description in SI 575 of 2004 regarding the delivery of CPG-based services more accurately. The new term 'Licensed CPG Service Provider' will be applied to all current documentation and utilised going forward.

6.1.10 Letter of Determination

PHECC has received its Letter of Determination for 2022. Funding remains unchanged from our 2021 allocation at €2,587,000.

6.1.11 Meeting with Department of Children, Disability, Integration & Youth

Council was updated on a meeting between PHECC and the Department of Children, Disability, Integration & Youth to discuss SI449 and training for childcare providers.

The potential suitability of a 1-day course comprising of CFR elements and medication management as well as other specific additions was discussed. It was accepted that, as this was the first meeting in a process the soon to be stood up Responder Sub-Committee of MAC will consider this area going forward.

6.1.12 Submission to deliver all aspects of examinations

A proposal from a provider has been received in this matter, which has been acknowledged indicating that in the event of any future outsourcing of these processes a tender will be issued as per procurement guidelines.

6.1.13 DoH Quarterly Meeting

A quarterly governance meeting between PHECC and the Department of Health is scheduled for Friday 29 April 2022.

6.1.14 Grant Application – Ukrainian Project

An application for aid for a humanitarian medical mission to the Ukraine was considered sympathetically by Council, though it was agreed that it is not in PHECC's remit to make such donations and Council wished them well in their endeavours.

6.2. Revision of Committee Generic TORs*

A Draft of the Generic Terms of Reference for all Council Committees were presented to Council. These have been revised to reflect Council decisions on Sub-Committees, Expert Groups, terms of office for members and how these are Chaired and governed within the committee structure together with addressing gender balance.

Subject to two minor amendments, firstly, the terms of the DPER Guidelines on Gender and Diversity (September 2020) being specifically referenced at point 10 and secondly, to deleting the requirement to return committee papers at the end of members' terms of office at point 18; the requirement for confidentiality however will remain. Council approved the amended version which will now be reflected in all Committee TORs.

Resolution: That Council approves the amended Generic Terms of Reference for all Committees of Council as presented in Council papers, subject to two further amendments to item 10. and 18.

Proposed: Martin O'Reilly

Seconded: Tess O'Donovan

Carried without dissent.

6.3. PHECC Proposals for a Position Paper and Consultation Framework on Movement to Degree Level Paramedic Education*

As directed by Council, the Director presented an outline proposal for a position paper and consultation framework. Also presented in the paperwork were two submissions received from Council members, and the Directors response to both. It was clarified that all correspondence and papers presented at Council, remain confidential to Council.

During discussion it was noted that:

- The strategic decision to move to degree-level education for Paramedics has already been decided by Council
- A Position Paper will be required for wider dissemination to all stakeholders
- The identification of all pertinent stakeholders is required
- External assistance will be required for a structured consultation/engagement process with all stakeholders. Also, in addition there will be a requirement for external assistance with change management expertise and potentially project management expertise from the same or separate sources.
- Clarity on direction of travel would be of benefit to some Council members.
- The details and answers to some of the known queries will only become apparent during the engagement process.

It was confirmed that the Director will prepare a draft Position Paper, and present back to Council for consideration, prior to moving to the next consultation and engagement stage.

The Chair suggested that a specific session of Council could be arranged for September, as part of a wider strategy day, to provide clarification on any existing ambiguity in relation to the agreed transition to degree level education for Paramedics. This meeting will take place in-person in conjunction with the September Council meeting.

6.4. Delegated Decisions of the Director

Council was updated that since the circulation of Council papers, an organisation had been granted conditional recognition as a new PHECC Licensed CPG Service Provider. The report, including four GVF Site Assessment Reports, was noted.

6.5. Request from Prometric for Engagement with Dubai Ambulance Corporation:

A request had been received by the Director from Prometric (which administers the examination process for EMTs), regarding a proposal to share PHECC's exam (MCQ) bank with the Dubai Ambulance Corporation [DAC]. On consideration, Council's advice was to decline the offer; the Director was also asked to inform the Department of the approach from DAC in line with earlier guidance.

Council took a short recess.

7.0. Education

7.1. Education Standards & Competency Framework Project Update*

A progress report on the Education Standard and Competency Project, prepared by the Chair of the Expert Group [EG] and the PHECC Education Manager was presented to Council. Competency Frameworks for EMTs and Paramedics have been completed, with an Advanced Paramedic Competency Framework nearing completion.

A recommendation to endorse an extension of the current project timelines, with resultant costs, to encompass the revisions as detailed in Council papers was proposed. This will allow for a more comprehensive input from the existing EG into the Education Standards, facilitate the potential for review by external education experts, the incorporation of Critical Care and Community Care into the existing project and would result in the formulation of a complete set of ten joint, educational standards and competency frameworks, one set for each of the potential registration levels (EMT, Paramedic, Advanced Paramedic, Community Paramedic [CP], Critical Care Paramedic [CCP]).

Council's advice was to extend the current contract with the Expert Group, in line with procurement guidelines, in order to complete the current work.

Resolution: That Council approves to extend the existing contract to complete the current project to develop competency frameworks and education standards for EMTs, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics, Community Paramedics and Critical Care Paramedics, and to present a report on same at the September Council meeting.

Proposed: Hillery Collins

Seconded: Tomás Barry

Carried without dissent.

Further discussion will take place following presentation of the Expert Group's report. It was confirmed that an emphasis on the practical based clinical element and internship has been incorporated into the draft standards.

Related discussion on both Community Paramedicine and Critical Care Paramedicine was deferred to Agenda Item 11.0.

8.0. Clinical Matters

8.1. Amendment to TOR012 MAC TORs*

A Draft version of the MAC TOR, updated to include the addition of a geriatrician to the Committee (point 10.10) was approved by Council via the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approve the Medical Advisory Committee Terms of Reference V7, updated to include the addition of a geriatrician to the committee's membership, as presented in Council papers.

Proposed: Hillery Colins

Seconded: Jason van der Velde

Carried without dissent.

8.2. MAC Sub-Committee TORs*

Draft specific Sub-Committee TORs, drawn up to support the activities of sub-committees of MAC, were presented to Council.

Upon consideration it was agreed that the Secretary to Council would liaise with the Chair of MAC to determine if specific sub-committee TORs are necessary given that their governance is covered by the overarching MAC Terms of Reference.

Jimmy Jordan departed the meeting.

9.0. Governance & Finance

9.1. Management Accounts to 31 March 2022

Management Accounts for the period to end March 2022 were presented to Council. As the Letter of Determination had only recently been received, comparators were drawn with fiscal 2021 and details of variances, year-on-year presented. It was noted again that the departmental grant to PHECC would remain the same in 2022 as that for 2021.

9.2. Updated POL049 Decisions Delegated to the Director*

Recent Council decisions leading to further delegation of decisions to the Director, tabled as amendments to the Appendix to this Policy (POL049), were presented to Council. Subject to the insertion of a clause "consistent with the PHECC Strategic Plan" and the removal of a specific budget sum deemed not necessary in the delegation regarding discretionary spending, Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves updates to Appendix 1 of POL049 Delegated Decisions of the Director, subject to two minor amendments as agreed.

Proposed: Pat Fleming **Seconded:** Aidan O'Brien

Carried without dissent.

10.0. Register

10.1. Register Report

This was presented and noted by Council.

11.0. AOB

11.1 Community Care Paramedics

It was pointed out by the Vice-Chair that there are regulatory concerns in relation to the continuing practice of Community Care Paramedics.

It was also pointed out that Council had emphasised at earlier meeting(s) that Paramedics or Advanced Paramedics, practising in these roles were under the specific guidance of their Medical Director. As the existing Register is limited to recognition of EMTs, Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics only, Community Care Paramedics remain registered as Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics only irrespective of any additional courses they may have completed.

It was concluded that, though the earlier agreed completion of the CP & CCP Competency Frameworks require urgency, together with legislative change, the scheduled progress report of the Expert Group requires consideration first. Until then the status quo must remain, and any extended practice can only be under the direct supervision of the appropriate Medical Director.

It was agreed to review previous discussions at Council and re-visit this again at a future Council meeting.

11.2. September Council Meeting

The Chair restated the need to start to hold more face-to-face meetings, as previously agreed, and the need for specific sessions on strategy and training for Council members.

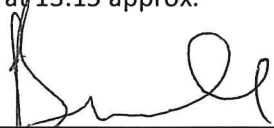
It is therefore intended to hold an additional face-to-face away day, the day prior to the September Council meeting which would allow time for discussion regarding the transition to degree-level education for Paramedics and presentations from external governance/finance experts. The event will be held at a suitable venue with dinner and overnight accommodation provided for those members available to stay overnight. The Council meeting would be held the following day at the same venue.

The Chair thanked all for attending.

The next meeting of Council takes place on May 19th at 10:00.

The meeting concluded at 13:15 approx.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 19th May 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
19 May 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
David Menzies
Fiona McDaid

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
Hillery Collins
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Tess O'Donovan

Video Conference:

Aidan O'Brien
Alison Smith
Dennis Keeley
Jimmy Jordan
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tomás Barry
William Merriman

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Pauline Dempsey, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator
Brian Dunne, Chair FRACC (item 8.0 only)

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the Chair updated Council on the following matters.

- 1.1. The outcome of a hearing of the Appeal Panel, to consider an appeal against a decision of the Director to refuse an application for Approved Training Institution [ATI] status and EFR course approval, has resulted in the decision of the Director being upheld. The report of the Appeal Panel has been furnished to the appellant.
- 1.2. A report on a complaint against the Director is being prepared imminently.
- 1.3. The newly appointed Chair of FRACC, Mr Brian Dunne, met with Council and will present Agenda Item 8.0 following Agenda Item 5.0.

The Director and members of the Executive joined the meeting.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

Correspondence from Tomás Barry, offering to recuse himself from item 6.1.3. of the meeting, was noted though his recusal was considered un-necessary.

4.0. Chairs Business

4.1. Correspondence

It was agreed that correspondence from the Vice-Chair, Jason van der Velde, would be addressed under Agenda Item 11. AOB.

4.2. Legislation Update

There will be a meeting of the regulatory section of the DoH, scheduled to take place in the coming weeks, on the matter of addressing PHECC's legislative deficiencies. Additionally, a meeting is scheduled with the PHECC executive focusing on Specialist Paramedicine. Further feedback will be

provided at the next Council meeting. The matter of which professions are covered by the Professional Regulation Unit of the Department was also discussed and further clarity on this will be sought at the above meetings by the PHECC executive.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 21 April 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 21 April 2022.

Proposed: William Merriman **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

6.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive, in accordance with the DPER and Civil Service Blended Working Guidelines, are developing a Blended Working Policy using the templates provided. There have been no reported COVID-19 incidents involving, examiners, students, assessors or in relation to external reviews.

6.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard.

6.1.3. Correspondence from UCD in relation to UCD AP Programme

Correspondence from UCD to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, seeking funding for their AP Programme was passed to the Department of Health which, in turn, has sent it to the Director “for consideration”. As Council had previously decided that funding education was not the role of the Regulator, and the DoH had reduced PHECCs funding accordingly, this was now a matter for the DoH.

6.1.4. Committee and Sub-Committee Terms of Reference [TOR]

Following further consideration, it was deemed not necessary to develop specific TORs for Sub-Committees or Expert Groups set up by Council Committees.

6.1.5. Irish PHECC Registrants operating in the Ukraine or Poland

Following an approach to PHECC, the matter of whether PHECC should post an advisory on its website regarding travel and practice in the Ukraine or Poland during the current crisis was considered. While it is thought prudent for PHECC practitioners to travel only to the area as part of an existing non-governmental organisation [NGO] or charity with experience in the provision of support in such areas, it was decided that putting an explicit advisory on our website was beyond the scope of PHECC’s remit as a Regulator.

6.1.6. UCC-NASC AP Programme Review

Having reviewed the UCD AP Programme in 2019, Council intended that a similar review be conducted of the UCC-NASC Programme. Due to delays largely caused by the pandemic, it is thought appropriate to initiate such a review in Q3 of 2022. Both UCC and NASC have been advised accordingly.

6.1.7. DoH Quarterly Meeting

The DoH quarterly meeting, initiated on 29th April last and which was suspended due to time pressures, will continue virtually on 21st May focusing on Specialist Paramedicine. Matters discussed included budgets, business plans, legislative deficiencies, the need for direct engagement with the Medicines Unit of the Department, potential funding issues arising from pensions payments and the increased need for additional resources due to the increase in examination activities.

Ray Carney joined the meeting.

6.1.8. Ukrainian Displaced Persons and PHECC Registration

Engagement with the Professional Regulation Unit of the Department and various regulator forums in relation to Ukrainian nationals applying for recognition is ongoing. In line with EU Recommendation, Council supported the Director to correspond with the Department requesting ministerial approval to waive the PHECC Recognition of Qualification application fee. Related conversations with NAS in relation to registration and practise have also taken place.

6.1.9. GDPR

While follow-up correspondence has been received from the Data Protection Commissioner [DPC], PHECC Executive has already engaged with the newly appointed Data Protection Consultants and agreed a series of actions arising from the recommendations of the 2021 GDPR Audit. This will result in further engagements and training for PHECC staff.

6.1.10. Potential Pensions Funding Issue

As pensions payments under the Local Government Pension Scheme are made out of current income, the total value of these has increased substantially over recent years due to both deaths-in-service and retirements. While the DoH subvents the Retirement Lump Sums, PHECC is liable for the ongoing payments which have increased by €100,000 per annum, over the past two years. PHECC will be seeking additional funding from the Department to address this increased liability. This matter has also been referred to FRACC and has been added to the Risk Register.

6.2. Draft 2022 Business Plan*

The Director introduced the Business Plan for 2022, including the revised staffing structure contained therein, highlighting the significant increase in costs for the year ahead. Council was informed that an approach is being made to the Department for additional funding to offset same. Following consideration, and a number of minor amendments to oversight of various core actions, Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the 2022 Business Plan, incorporating the revised staffing structure, as presented in Council papers.

Proposed: David Menzies **Seconded:** Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

The approved Business Plan will now be submitted to the Department and filed with the Office of the Comptroller General.

It was confirmed that the forthcoming review of PHECCs Fitness to Practise policies and procedures will include a review and update of PHECCs Code of Conduct to include ‘poor professional conduct’/ ‘poor professional performance’.

6.3. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report as included in Council papers, highlighting the conditional approval of National Emergency Medical Control Ltd. [NEMC] as a PHECC Licensed CPG Service Provider, was noted.

Also noted was the Director's approval of Wilton Event Medical Services Ltd/T/A Event Medical Services GVF report, which will now be published on the PHECC website.

Item 8.0 of the meeting was addressed at this point, following which the Chair of FRACC departed the meeting.

Council took a short 15-minute recess.

7.0. Examinations

7.1. Examination Update

Council was provided with an examination update, highlighting that the largest EMT OSCE to date had taken place since the last Council meeting, with in excess of 150 candidates examined. Congratulations were extended to all those involved in the successful completion of same.

A very small number of GCS questions incorrectly assigned to EMTs have been corrected, with a resulting further review of the MCQ examination bank currently taking place. Examination candidates whose results may have been affected have been, or are in the process of, being reviewed.

An EU tender to seek a provider to deliver PHECC MCQ Examinations has been developed and released.

8.0. FRACC

The Chair of FRACC updated Council on a recent meeting of the committee which had taken place on 16th May last. Agenda items deferred will be addressed at the committee's next meeting when full attendance is anticipated.

8.1. Draft Year-End Accounts 2021

The Draft Statutory Accounts for 2021 were presented by the Chair of FRACC and recommended to Council for approval, noting the earlier timeframe for presenting. There being no queries, Council approved the accounts as presented which will now be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General [OCAG] for audit.

Resolution: That Council approves the Draft 2021 Year-End Management Accounts as presented in Council papers.

Proposed: David Menzies **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

8.2. Management Accounts to 30th April 2022

Management Accounts for the period to 30th April, reviewed by FRACC at their recent meeting, were presented and noted by Council.

The changes made to the accounting systems in PHECC during 2021 will make the reporting of management information easier and more flexible.

Correspondence has been sent from the Chair to the outgoing Chair of FRACC, Con Foley, and from the new Chair of FRACC, Brian Dunne, to PHECC staff member Beth Breslin, thanking them for their dedication and work on FRACC to date.

9.0. Council Secretary Matters

9.1. Excerpts from IPA Seminar

The Secretary to Council gave a brief review of a recent governance webinar which had raised issues of assurance, both given and received, by State Boards-

9.2. Recent Relevant Seminars

The Chair also referenced two recent webinars she had attended; the first on the subject of Fitness to Practise, the other on changes proposed by the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Bill (published in February 2022). A recording of each will be circulated to all Council members for their information.

10.0. Register

10.1. Register Report

The Register Report, as detailed in Council papers, was noted by Council.

11.0. AOB

11.1. Email from Vice-Chair re Handover

The Chair introduced an email from the Vice-Chair regarding the matter of handover of patient care from a Registrant at a higher level to another Registrant at a lower clinical level. It was agreed that this matter be reviewed by MAC to determine if already covered under existing policy. The need for a scope of practice decision-making framework was again highlighted.

11.2. Pentrox

Two issues arising from the use of Pentrox were raised; the first a potential FTP issue; the second the need to determine if changes to the classification of said drug are required. It was agreed that MAC would consider the potential implications with regard to the use of Pentrox or, indeed, any other drug which may be potentially misused.

11.3. Face-to-Face Council Meetings


The Chair reminded Council of its recent commitment and policy to hold at least four fully face-to-face Council meetings each year. The Chair, recognising the continued existence of Covid-19, encouraged members to attend the next two Council meetings in-person.

The September meeting will include an overnight stay in a hotel on September 7th prior to the Council Meeting on September 8th, to allow for training and other inputs, including a review of the Strategic Plan.

The Chair thanked all for their participation and reminded all that the next Council meeting will take place on June 16th next at 10:00.

The meeting terminated at 12:15.

Signed:


Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 16th June 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
16 June 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Alison Smith
Hillery Collins
Jimmy Jordan
Patrick Fleming
William Merriman

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
Fiona McDaid

Video Conference:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Aidan O'Brien
Dennis Keeley
David Menzies
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Tomás Barry
Tess O'Donovan

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary (VC)
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

1.0. Closed Session

There were no items for discussion during a closed session.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of possible conflicts of interest had been received.

4.0. Chairs Business

4.1. Correspondence

As outlined in an email from the Chair of FRACC, the Chair informed Council of the agenda items of the FRACC meeting taking place later that day. A further report on the outcome of the meeting will be provided to Council at the July meeting.

The Secretary to Council provided an explanation of changes to the design of the Council meeting Agenda going forward which now indicates each item's classification; For Information, For Noting or For Resolution. The cumulative outputs of these activities would be reported to Council and to other stakeholders, as appropriate, as Key Performance Indicators for the Governance of Council. A review of the activities for the first six months will be presented to Council at the July meeting for further comment.

4.2. Legislation Update

The Chair advised Council of the appointment of Mr. Keith Comiskey as Principal Officer of the Trauma

and Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Policy Unit in the Department. Separate initial conversations have taken place between Mr. Comiskey and both the Chair and Director, and both welcome the opportunity for further engagement.

A formal letter of thanks will be issued from PHECC to previous Principal Officer, Mr. Eoin Dunleavy, for his endeavours on PHECC's behalf, in particular assistance in recruitment of replacement Council appointments, during his tenure.

The Director took the opportunity to report on his meeting with the DoH on 20 May last, (with Eoin Dunleavy), wherein PHECC emphasised the impact of the legislative deficiencies across the entire range of PHECCs regulatory obligations. The Director was informed that the matter of PHECCs legislation was being addressed.

PHECC requested direct access to the Medicines Unit in relation to several specific medications that require inclusion in the Seventh Schedule as part of the development of both Community and Critical Care Paramedicine. PHECC are currently seeking legal opinion in relation to the provisions of the current Seventh Schedule in particular to the potential 'prescribing' of medications, by specialist paramedics, in addition to 'holding' and 'administering' medications.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 19 May 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 19 May 2022.

Proposed: Aidan O'Brien **Seconded:** Dennis Keeley

Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

6.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive, in accordance with the DPER and Civil Service Blended Working Guidelines, are developing a Blended Working Policy using the templates provided.

6.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing model standard, of 'two PHECC Registrants, one of which must be at Paramedic level'. It was agreed that this standing item will be removed from the Director's monthly report going forward and Council will be notified of any future requests in this matter.

6.1.3. DoH Quarterly Meeting

This item had been addressed earlier during Agenda Item 4.2.

6.1.4. New Principal Officer in DoH

As above, this item had already been addressed during Agenda Item 4.2.

6.1.5. Ukrainian Displaced Persons and PHECC Registration

In common with other organisations, PHECC is proposing to provide a Ukrainian translation of its Registration /Recognition of Qualification procedures on our website. Though two enquiries have been received, no formal applications have been received to date. Engagement will continue with the DoH Professional Regulators Unit with progress updates provided weekly.

6.1.6. Poor Performance of an ATI in QRF Process

Due to poor performance in their recent QRF assessment, resulting in an overall compliance rating of 'Not Met', the Director advised Council that in accordance with Delegated Decisions of the Director he will be removing approval from the ATI in question. This is the first time that this provision has been activated as a direct result of a QRF Review.

6.1.7. Complaints in relation to Licensed PHECC CPG Service Provider or Recognised Institution

While PHECC have a well-developed Fitness to Practice [FTP] process, (currently under review), there is no corresponding mechanism to facilitate a complaint that is made against either a Licensed CPG Service Provider or an RI/AT in between GVF reviews. It was agreed that this could be considered part of PHECCs role in "protecting the public". It was agreed that to further inform discussion the Director would consult with HIQA and legal advice would be sought as to the scope of PHECC's jurisdiction in these matters, under the current legislation. The potential resource implications for PHECC to administer same were acknowledged as being considerable and beyond PHECCs current capabilities.

6.1.8. Covid-19 Temporary Registration Cessation

Notification has been sent to all remaining COVID-19 Temporary Registrants and Licensed CPG Service Providers that, in accordance with DOH instruction, these temporary licences will expire at midnight on June 30th next. The processes required to apply for registration thereafter in the appropriate Division of the PHECC Register have also been communicated.

6.1.9. Changeover to 6-Digit PIN for Registrants

Feedback received since the notification to organisations of the agreed implementation of the new 6-digit PIN number for Registrants was provided. It was clarified that to avoid confusion existing PIN numbers will not change but will be preceded by 00 and the format of all new, randomly allocated numbers, will begin at 500 XXX. The start date for issuing the new 6-digit numbers has yet to be decided, but due to the rapidly diminishing numbers of existing 4-digit numbers, this will need to be imminent.

6.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report as included in Council papers, was noted highlighting that conditional recognition is given to those organisations which have not yet had a GVF review but had passed the initial screening review.

7.0. Clinical Matters

7.1. MAC Sub-Committee Enactment

Council was informed of the recent enactment of three new sub-committees of MAC, Cardiovascular Sub-Committee; Clinical Care at Events Sub-Committee; Responder Sub-Committee, and the Trauma Sub-Committee. While Sub-Committee Chairs have been appointed in all cases, the Committees will be populated in line with the Terms of Reference for their committee via nominations and open EOI. Appreciation was extended to all those who have volunteered to sit on these sub-committees. The

potential for additional workload for the Executive was noted, given the formation of these sub-committees, as was the potential completion of the current work being carried out by both the Community Paramedicine and Critical Care Paramedicine Sub-Committees.

7.2. Methoxyflurane Administration & Management

Following the recent conviction of a PHECC Registrant of serious offences, which involved the illegal use of methoxyflurane, the MAC considered changing the designation of methoxyflurane to that of a controlled substance. It was concluded that there was no requirement to recommend a change to the designation of methoxyflurane, but rather, the emphasis on appropriate medication management and monitoring systems be in place in Licensed CPG Service Providers was to be reviewed. It was therefore recommended that the Quality and Safety Committee consider these matters under the Governance Validation Framework to ensure robust inspection measures are in place to examine medication management and oversight policies and procedures in Licensed CPG Service Providers. It is expected that this matter will be re-visited by Council when this work is complete.

Council took a short recess during which Jason van der Velde departed the meeting

8.0. Education

8.1. Education & Training Committee Update

The Chair of the Education & Training Committee updated Council on two matters that had been raised at a recent E&T Committee meeting.

Firstly, the potential for misalignment of CPGs with Practitioner Education & Training Standards; CPGs had been developed and changed, however the practitioner training had not always kept pace with this. It was agreed that a mechanism be developed to update practitioner competency frameworks with new skills and knowledge from future CPGs, prior to their publication, to ensure both work streams remain synchronous.

Secondly, a related discussion on the minimum duration of practitioner courses recognised that courses are being extended; these are also being redesigned and potentially extended, to accommodate the continuous cycle of CPG publications. While the timing for such changes may not be immediate, it was agreed that the ongoing education project under Dr Newton would explore a move away from PHECC setting minimum tuition hours towards “outcomes-based education” and “indicative learning hours” or allocating “ECTS” (European Credit Transfer System) to allow more flexibility for the institutions and ensure quality learning experiences for students.

9.0. Examinations

9.1. Examinations Update

The Examinations Schedule for the Third Quarter of 2022 was presented to Council. The significant increase of students undertaking examinations was noted by Council and has also been communicated to the Department.

10.0. Research

10.1. Research Committee Update

An update of the Research Committee meeting of 24 May last was provided, highlighting progress of the development of the Health Research Applied Partnership Award scheme application, the MAC Medication and Skills Survey output results and library access for PHECC staff and committee members.

An update was also provided on the progress of the two projects in the area of the development of a research strategy for PHECC and a review of pre-hospital research undertaken to date.

It is expected that work on both projects will be completed in time for the Committee meeting, early in September.

11.0. Register

11.1. Register Report

The Register Report, as detailed in Council papers, was noted by Council. Further analysis of the Register is currently being undertaken and a more in-depth exposition will be presented in the near future.

12.0. AOB

12.1. Certificates

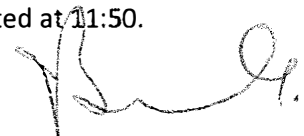
The Director reported on delays in the supply of PHECC licensing certificates. While the on-line register remains up to date, it is expected that the matter of certificate provision will be resolved in a matter of days.

The Chair thanked all for attending, both in person and virtually. The next meeting will take place on July 14th next at 10:00. In person attendance was encouraged.

Development of the location and agenda for the meeting in September continues.

The meeting terminated at 11:50.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 14th July 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
14 July 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Alison Smith
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
David Menzies
Jimmy Jordan

Video Conference:

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Aidan O'Brien
Dennis Keeley
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tomás Barry
William Merriman
Tess O'Donovan

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Council Secretary
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the Chair updated Council on the following matters.

- i. The Chair reported on the progress of a Complaint against the Director confirming that a Report from the Sub-Committee is awaited and expected in a matter of weeks. A further communication had been received from the complainant which would be dealt with under "Correspondence" below.
- ii. The Chair also provided some details on the forthcoming combined Strategy and Council meeting, being held in Kilkenny on the 7th and 8th of September.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

The Chair asked both Council and Council Committees, in setting their Agendas and Meetings for 2023, to consider not holding any meetings in either the months of July or August and to re-instate the January meeting.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of possible conflicts of interest had been received.

4.0. Chairs Business

4.1. Correspondence

The Chair reported the receipt of a further communication from the Complainant in the matter of a Complaint against the Director. It is anticipated that the Report of the Panel investigating this matter will be available and provided to the complainant within a month.

4.2. Legislation Update

Correspondence, previously submitted to the DoH regarding PHECC's legislative deficits has been forwarded to the newly appointed Principal Officer at the Department.

The Chair also reported that she had received a call from the previous incumbent during which the Chair had taken the opportunity to thank him again for his support to PHECC during his tenure.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 16 June 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 16 June 2022.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Alison Smith

Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

It was confirmed that an interruption in the supply of practitioner certificates (Item 12.1.) has been resolved.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

6.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive, in accordance with the DPER and Civil Service Blended Working Guidelines, are developing a Blended Working Policy using the templates provided.

6.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

While no requests have been received from Licensed CPG Service Providers to move from the current PHECC Minimum Emergency Ambulance Crewing Level Standard, a number of enquiries have been received from Practitioners on the matter.

It was reaffirmed that the current PHECC Minimum Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model Standard is two PHECC Registered Practitioners, one of whom is at the level of Paramedic or higher and that the ideal crewing model for those emergency calls which may require the Paramedic standard of care, is two PHECC Paramedics or higher.

Related correspondence from the Director of NAS regarding the impact of any changes to the current arrangements on service pressures and future workforce challenges was noted.

Acknowledging that Council had agreed in July 2021 that the Crewing Model Standard be revisited in the final quarter of that year, when hopefully the current phase of the Pandemic would have passed, it was agreed that a review was now timely and should be conducted in the near future. Any review should be evidence-based and take account of current literature and also how current protocols are being met together with any changes or difficulties which have arisen during or after the Pandemic.

It was requested that the crewing models in relation to Protocol 37 also be included in any such review.

Fiona McDaid & Tomás Barry joined the meeting during the above discussion.

Due to time pressures, further discussion of this item suspended while Council considered Agenda Item 8.0 and 9.0., at which time the agreed Agenda was resumed.

6.1.3. DoH Quarterly Meeting

A meeting with the Department is scheduled for July 15th at which the matters of legislation and specialist paramedicine will feature prominently on the agenda.

6.1.4. CPG Update Training Anomaly

Referring to Council's previous decision to limit AP CPG update training on the 2021 suite of CPGs to RIs approved to deliver Paramedic or AP level training only, several factors in relation to the training, that may not have been significant issues in 2017, have since arisen post the development of the current 2021 suite of CPGs.

Limited options for Licensed CPG Service Providers to become compliant and challenges for those AP Practitioners with no clearly defined training pathway were acknowledged.

Following consideration, Council approved the Director's recommendation that the Education & Training Committee examine potential pathways for AP level CPG update training that could apply to Paramedic level also.

6.1.5. Potential Data Breach Following Q&S Committee Meeting

Council was informed of the circumstances of an unintentional data breach following a meeting of the Quality and Safety Committee on 29 June 2022. An outline of actions taken, which included notification of the minor infringement to the Data Protection Commissioner, was provided.

The Chair commended the rapid response of both the Executive and the Council Committee to this incident. Current policies and procedures will now be reviewed to identify opportunities for further learning. A full Report from PHECC's Data Protection Officer is awaited in addition to the interim report already received.

6.1.6. Poor Performance by an ATI in the QRF Process

A positive meeting has taken place with the ATI concerned wherein shortcomings of the Quality Review Composite Report were acknowledged and the suspension of approval, in accordance with current Council Rules, was confirmed. Undertakings have been received that no courses will be run by the ATI during the period of suspension.

6.1.7. COVID-19 Temporary Register Cessation

As previously indicated, the COVID-19 Temporary Register has now ceased, and former temporary Registrants have been invited to contact PHECC should they wish to pursue restoration of their previous registration status or have completed the Recognition of Qualifications process and wish to apply for registration on that basis.

6.1.8. Temporary Education Management Arrangements

Due to the temporary absence of Education Programme Manager, the Examinations and Clinical Information Programme Manager will take over responsibility for the day-to-day management of the department while the Clinical Programme Manager will continue to take the lead role in the development of the new Education Standards and Competency Framework development project.

The Chair thanked both for undertaking these additional duties.

6.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report as included in Council papers, was noted.

7.0. Quality & Safety

A series of interconnected documents, as recommended by the Quality & Safety Committee, were presented to Council for approval. Following a number of clarifications and minor wording amendments, the following resolutions were agreed.

7.1. Quality Assurance Programme

7.1.1. STN034 Governance Validation Framework Standard V.2*

Resolution: That Council approves and holds for release at a future date, STN034 GVF Standard V2.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

7.1.2. GUI046 GVF Standard Guidance for Licensed CPG Service Providers*

Resolution: That Council approves and holds for release at a future date, GUI046 GVF Standard Guidance for Licensed CPG Service Providers.

Proposed: Aidan O'Brien **Seconded:** Martin O'Reilly

Carried without dissent.

7.1.3. STN035 Assessment Rating System V1*

Resolution: That Council approves and holds for release at a future date, STN035 Assessment Rating System V1.

Proposed: Alison Smith **Seconded:** Martin O'Reilly

Carried without dissent.

7.1.4. POL033 Council Policy for Recognition to Implement CPGs V8*

Resolution: That Council approves and holds for release at a future date, POL033 Council Policy for Recognition to Implement CPGs V8.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Alison Smith

Carried without dissent.

7.1.5. STN032 Licensed CPG Service Provider Medical Director Standard (Roles & Responsibilities)*

Resolution: That Council approves for immediate release, STN032 Licensed CPG Service Provider Medical Director Standards (Roles & Responsibilities) V1.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Aidan O'Brien

Carried without dissent.

7.1.6. STN033 Requirements for Privileging PHECC Practitioners V1*

Resolution: That Council approves for immediate release, STN033 Requirements for Privileging PHECC Practitioners V1.

Proposed: Aidan O'Brien **Seconded:** Alison Smith

Carried without dissent.

7.1.7. GUI045 Small Scale Clinical or Research Audit Project V1*

Resolution: That Council approves for immediate release, GUI045 Small Scale Clinical or Research Audit Project V1.

Proposed: Jason van der Velde **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

Further important documents to support the task of aligning the GVF and the QRF assessment systems into a common structure will be presented to Council in due course.

The Chair acknowledged the level of work involved in developing and updating documentation presented and thanked all those involved in the process.

Niamh Collins and William Merriman departed the meeting during the above discussion.

7.2. CPG Upskilling

Due to unique circumstances presented because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council was asked to approve the extension of the time-limit for upskilling by Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics from 18 months to 24 months for those CPGs approved by Council in August 2021. Upon consideration, Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves to extend the time-limit for upskilling by Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics on the new 2021 suite of CPGs, as detailed in POL018 Council Policy for Implementation Timeframes for CPGs, by 6 months to 31 August 2023.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Aidan O'Brien

Carried without dissent.

8.0. Clinical Matters

8.1. Community Paramedicine Framework*

The Framework, submitted to MAC by the Community Paramedicine Sub-committee and considered at their meeting on 28 June 2022, was now recommended to Council for approval.

The Chair thanked the Sub-Committee for the significant work involved in bringing the project to its current state. It was acknowledged that it will be a "living document" and will, as a result, be subject to further changes post the planned stakeholder consultation.

Following several observations, Council endorsed the Framework via the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council adopt the Community Paramedicine Framework as presented and proceed with general consultation.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Jason van der Velde

Carried without dissent.

8.2. Interim Mechanism for Specialist Paramedics*

Recognising that the proposed Frameworks for Critical Care and Community Paramedics does not fit fully within current legislation and that a separate engagement is underway to introduce legislative changes to enable developments in pre-hospital emergency care, an interim mechanism was proposed to facilitate the continuation of and to provide interim regulatory oversight of future Specialist Paramedics, including the current Community Paramedicine and Critical Care Paramedic services. Upon consideration Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: In the absence of legislative change, Council endorses the interim mechanism to facilitate the ongoing development of specialist paramedic practice for a period of 1 year.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Fiona McDaid

Carried without dissent.

Pat Fleming and Dennis Keeley joined the meeting during the above discussion.

Council took a short recess. Tomás Barry departed the meeting as planned.

9.0. FRACC Matters

Several items, considered and approved by FRACC at their meeting of 16 June last, were presented to Council by the Vice Chair of FRACC.

9.1. POL053 Fixed Asset Policy*

The Policy, which outlines the maintenance and creation of a Fixed Asset register together with related Depreciation and Disposal policies was considered by Council and Approved.

Resolution: That Council approves POL053 Fixed Asset Policy, as approved by FRACC and presented in Council papers.

Proposed: Hillery Collins

Seconded: Fiona McDaid

Carried without dissent.

9.2. OCAG 2020 Management Letter Tracker Update

An update on outstanding actions of the OCAG 2020 Management Letter were presented to Council, noting that closed items have now been removed from the updated document.

9.3. Risk Register

The updated Risk Register highlighting amendments since the previous version was presented and noted by Council. As recommended by FRACC, all low category risks will be removed from future presentation to Council, though will be retained on file for future reference.

The meeting reverted to Agenda Item 6.1.3.

10.0. Secretary Matters

10.1. Council Activity & KPI Metrics

The Council Secretary presented a number of slides on the development of Key Performance Indicators for Council which may be used in communications and in giving assurances to other stakeholders.

Council requested that meeting preparatory time and Council Committee involvement be considered in future metric reporting.

11.0. Register

11.1. Register Report

The Register Report, as detailed in Council papers, was noted by Council. Further developments in the presentation of data were signalled by the Director.

12.0. AOB

12.1. Patient Handover at Emergency Departments

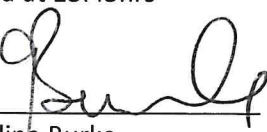
The Vice-Chair raised the issue of safe patient handover protocols at Emergency Departments [EDs] and the extent to which these were being complied with, given reports of extensive delays taking place at EDs. It was considered important that PHECC engage with this issue in the cause of protecting the public. It was suggested that evidence-based data are available on this matter which should be sought by PHECC and brought to the attention of the Department of Health. It will feature as a future Council agenda item once evidence-based data have been obtained.

The Director left the meeting, as planned, during the above discussion.

In closing the meeting the Chair reminded all that the next meeting will take place in Kilkenny on September 7th and 8th next with further details to follow.

The meeting terminated at 13:45hrs

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 8th September 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
08 September 2022
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Alison Smith
David Menzies
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tomás Barry

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
Dennis Keeley
Jimmy Jordan
William Merriman

Video Conference:

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Aidan O'Brien
Martin O'Reilly
Tess O'Donovan

In attendance:

Con Foley, Council Secretary
Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the Chair and Director updated Council on the following matters.

- i. The Dates and content of Council Meetings for the remainder of 2022.
- ii. Recruitment for Deputy Director and Registrar positions.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of possible conflicts of interest had been received for any matter on the Agenda.

4.0. Chairs Business

4.1. Correspondence

The Chair reported that correspondence had been received from the Medical Council regarding their public consultation on the revised draft standards for medical and education training. PHECC are happy to participate in the co-ordinated response requested. The draft standards will be circulated to Council members and the collated responses submitted.

4.2. Legislation Update

Following discussion surrounding the very little progress to report on the issue of addressing PHECC's legislative deficiencies, it was agreed that the Chair would follow up on her previous correspondence to the Minister requesting an urgent meeting in relation to same. The importance of protection of the public and the limitations imposed by PHECC's vesting legislation, was again emphasised.

Martin O'Reilly joined the meeting.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 14 July 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 14 July 2022.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Fiona McDaid

Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

6.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

The Executive, in accordance with the DPER and Civil Service Blended Working Guidelines, have developed a Blended Working Policy using the templates provided.

6.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

No requests have been received to move from the current minimum crewing level standards.

An Expressions of Interest and Request for Tender is being prepared for interested parties to carry out an Irish evidence-based review of current standards, to include crewing models in relation to Protocol 37. It was suggested that input from the Research Committee would be appropriate.

6.1.3. Patient Handover Times at Hospital Emergency Departments

The Director has written to the emergency ambulance services seeking data in relation to reported delays in patient handover at Emergency Departments, as requested by Council. PHECC-developed standards in regard to patient handover have been in place since 2013.

6.1.4. PHECC Compliment/Complaint Form

A draft on-line Compliment/Complaint form, providing a system to formally record both compliments and complaints and monitor the progress of complaints received, was tabled for consideration. It was noted that this form is separate to the procedures already in place for submitting Fitness to Practise complaints against PHECC practitioners. At Council's request, the Director will seek advice on the appropriateness of accepting and processing anonymous complaints.

The matter of PHECC's scope for complaint investigation, in line with current legislation, is expected to be included on the agenda for the Strategy event in December.

6.1.5. COVID-19 Temporary Register:

The Covid-19 Temporary Register has now ceased.

6.1.6. Introduction of 6-Digit Registration Number

The new 6-digit registration numbers have now been introduced, with no resulting untoward impacts reported to date.

6.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report, as included in Council papers, was noted and it was agreed that going forward providers which have been delisted should continue to be identified as such in the report.

Martin O'Reilly departed the meeting.

7.0. Quality & Safety

7.1. Quality Assurance Programme

A suite of documents consisting of both revisions of existing and new documentation, reflecting Council's decision to align the Quality Review Framework and Governance Validation Framework into a single accreditation process, were presented.

Each document was reviewed, and various suggestions and amendments proposed to the Executive for consideration were agreed. A language anomaly regarding the use of 'General/Specialist' in terms of Medical Director registration was identified, which will be reflected in all related documentation,

including the previously approved Medical Director Standard. The Medical Director Standards Policy will be resubmitted to Council for approval, having been suitably modified in line with the agreed amendments.

7.1.1. TEM025 Draft GVF Report*

Resolution: That Council approves TEM025 Draft GVF Report, subject to two agreed edits.

Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

7.1.2. POL045 Draft Delist Policy V2*

Resolution: That Council approves POL045 Draft Delist Policy V2, as included in Council papers.

Proposed: Patrick Fleming **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

7.1.3. FOR027 Draft Statutory Declaration PHECC Licensed CPG Provider V5.1*

Resolution: That Council approves FOR027 Draft Statutory Declaration PHECC Licensed CPG Provider V5.1 as included in Council papers.

Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

7.1.4. FOR060 Draft Declaration for Renewal as a PHECC Licensed CPG Service Provider V2.1*

Resolution: That Council approves FOR060 Draft Declaration for Renewal as a PHECC Licensed CPG Service Provider V2.1 as included in Council papers.

Proposed: Patrick Fleming **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

7.1.5. FOR054 Draft Application Form Licensed CPG Service Provider V8.1*

Resolution: That Council approves FOR054 Draft Application Form Licensed CPG Service Provider V8.1 as included in Council papers.

Proposed: David Menzies **Seconded:** Hillery Collins

Carried without dissent.

7.1.6. LIS021 Draft Licensed CPG Service Provider Annual Report V2_1*

Resolution: That Council approves LIS021 Draft Licensed CPG Service Provider Annual Report V2_1

Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** David Menzies

Carried without dissent.

The committee and all those involved in preparing the extensive documentation were thanked.

Council took a short recess during which Martin O'Reilly re-joined the meeting.

Due to time constraints, Items 10 and 11 on the meeting Agenda were taken next.

8.0 Registration Matters

8.1. Register Report

The Register Report was tabled and noted by Council.

8.2. Fitness to Practise Review

The tender process, an Expression of Interest [EOI], for the review and update of current Fitness to Practise [FTP] policies and procedures has now closed. The appointment of the successful applicant is being finalised and will be made in the coming week. It is proposed that a panel of expert and interested parties will consider and review the draft policies and procedures prior to making a recommendation to Council.

8.3. Assistance with Preparation of FTP Complaints

The tender process, an Expression of Interest [EOI], has also been closed for the contract for assisting PHECC in the preparation and presentation of outstanding Fitness to Practise cases to both Preliminary Proceedings, and if appropriate, FTP hearings. These cases have been delayed due to both legal uncertainties and other issues. An appointment will be made in the coming week.

8.4. Registration Committee Meeting

The newly composed Registration Committee will consider the above and other matters at its inaugural meeting on September 29th next.

9.0. FRACC Matters

9.1. FRACC Update

9.1.1. Internal Audit

Having selected a new contractor to provide Internal Audit services, the Committee will meet with same in late September to draft a new internal audit plan for the remainder of 2022 and 2023, with a view to establishing a rolling three-year audit plan.

9.1.2. Audit of Managed Payment Services

Following an evaluation of tender submissions received, a meeting is being arranged between the OGP, FRACC members and the preferred organisation, to provide clarification concerning the scope and resources required as part of the project.

9.1.3. Income/Expenditure to July

The 2022 accounts to July, as reviewed by FRACC at their recent meeting, were presented to Council indicating that year-end outcomes will be as budgeted.

9.1.4. OCAG Audit of 2021

OCAG have advised that, due to their scheduling delays, their audit of 2021 accounts will commence in September with the main body of work being completed in October/November.

9.2. POL054 Travel & Subsistence Policy*

A revised Policy on Travel and Subsistence was tabled and approved by Council. The matter of ongoing sustainability was discussed as far as travel is concerned.

Resolution: That Council approves POL054 Travel & Subsistence Policy, as included in Council papers.

Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** Fiona McDaid

Carried without dissent.

10.0. Secretary Matters

10.1. Council Induction Programme Presentation REM

The Secretary presented a summary of the Council members' current Induction Presentation highlighting changes made to same and updating members on matters of current interest in the Governance space.

11.0. Governance & Finance

11.1. Board Members Roles & Responsibilities Presentation

The Chair welcomed Dr. Deirdre Bane, Senior Finance Specialist at the Institute of Public Administration, who made a presentation to Council on matters of Governance with an emphasis on financial reporting, internal control, and audit matters.

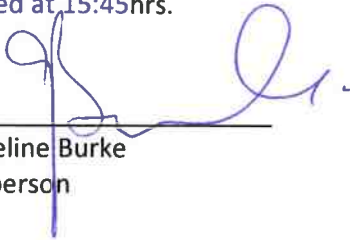
Tess O'Donovan departed the meeting.

12.0. AOB

In thanking the Council members and Executive for their attendance, the Chair expressed the intention that the programme for the deferred Review of Strategy will soon be available to members.

The meeting terminated at 15:45hrs.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 13th October 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes

13 October 2022



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Fiona McDaid
Tomás Barry

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
Jimmy Jordan
Tess O'Donovan

Video Conference:

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Aidan O'Brien
Alison Smith
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley
Hillery Collins
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
William Merriman

In attendance:

Con Foley, Council Secretary
Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the Chair reported on a complaint received by PHECC.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received. It was noted that the Vice-Chair would assume the Chair of the meeting at 12:00 approximately upon the Chair's departure.

A period of reflection was called for by the Chair for the deceased and other casualties of the recent tragedy at Creeslough, Co. Donegal. The Chair recognised all those who responded to the incident, both lay and professional, and commended all the first responders and practitioners involved.

Condolences were expressed to Patrick Fleming on his recent family bereavement.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of possible conflicts of interest had been received for any matter on the Agenda.

4.0. Chairs Business

The Chair reported that the Finance Manager had given notice of resignation, with regret. The Director has commenced the recruitment process for the position.

4.1. Correspondence

The Chair referenced the Closed Meeting above wherein Council was briefed on correspondence which had been received in regard to a Freedom of Information request.

4.2. Legislation Update

The Chair reported on an extended call she had with the Department regarding PHECC's legislative deficiencies and the considerable time which had elapsed in addressing these. Correspondence detailing more definitive progress is expected from the Department by the November Council meeting. Council will consider this correspondence prior to agreeing further action.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 08 September 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 08 September 2022.

Proposed: Jason van der Velde

Seconded: Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

6.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements

The blended working policy, using the templates as developed, are being pursued cognisant of sustainability and energy saving measures. The increasing levels of Covid-19 and influenza were noted.

6.1.2. Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model

A request for expressions of interest [EOI] from appropriate parties to carry out an evidence-based review, taking account of current literature on the subject, is being prepared with the active involvement of the Research Committee.

6.1.3. Patient Handover Times at Hospital Emergency Departments

Council approved that the Director, in conjunction with the Research Committee, urgently progress an EOI for appropriate parties to carry out an evidence-based review of the related current data and the impact on patients. The question of impacts on practitioners of extended waiting times at EDs was also raised. It is hoped that the outcome of the project, a report on clinical risk posed, will be available within 2 months of the project being awarded.

6.1.4. Meeting with the DoH Medicines Unit

A request for an informal meeting with the Unit is currently being pursued with a view to identifying matters of mutual interest before drawing up a formal meeting agenda.

6.1.5. PHECC ISO 9001 Accreditation

Post a successful two-day audit, PHECC's ISO 9001 Accreditation has been renewed, with no non-compliances noted and the governance structures and frameworks complimented by the auditors. The Chair, and Council, congratulated all involved on the successful renewal of the ISO certification.

6.1.6. Notification to the Licensed CPG Providers of the Interim Arrangements for the Community and Critical Care Paramedics

The Director and the Chair of MAC are jointly engaged in producing a communication to all Licensed CPG Service Providers detailing interim arrangements, as agreed by Council, to enable practise at Community and Critical Care Paramedic levels. This communication will rely on the powers conferred in S.5, (j), ss. (q) and (r) and (s), of SI 575, (THE PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CARE COUNCIL (ESTABLISHMENT) ORDER, 2000 (AMENDMENT) ORDER) 2004 as follows.

(j) by the addition of following sub-articles the to Article 4:—

(q) prepare standards of operation for pre-hospital emergency care service providers to support best practice by pre-hospital emergency care practitioners.

(r) recognise, in accordance with rules made by the Council, those pre-hospital emergency care service providers which undertake to implement the clinical practice guidelines prepared pursuant to sub-article (o) of this Article.

(s) establish and maintain, in accordance with rules made by the Council, a register of pre-hospital emergency care practitioners (in this instrument referred to as the register) who are holders of the N.Q.E.M.T. at the level of competence of

emergency medical technician, paramedic or advanced paramedic, as the case may be, which register shall be divided into three divisions which shall be known as the emergency medical technician division, the paramedic division and the advanced paramedic division.

6.1.7. Matters in relation to PHECC Licensed CPG Service Providers Privileging PHECC Registrants

Following a number of issues which had developed over recent years, amendments have been made to the STN032 “Licensed CPG Provider Medical Director Standard” wherein the responsibility for privileging practitioners is now a joint responsibility of the CEO/Director and the Medical Director of a CPG Service Provider and applies to practitioners who are “acting on behalf of the licensed PHECC CPG Service Provide as an employee, contractor or volunteer”. A detailed list of oversights has also been included which the CPG provider is obliged to supply and observe in relation to all privileged practitioners.

6.1.8. Matters in relation to PHECC Licensed CPG Service Providers and non-PHECC Licenced CPG Service Providers “Transporting Patients”

In response to a request for clarification on this matter, a communication is being prepared for all PHECC Registrants in the matter of “working” for a non-PHECC-licensed CPG Service Provider.

6.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report, as included in Council papers, was noted including a Licensed CPG Service Provider GVF Site Assessment Report.

7.0. Education Report

7.1. Endorsement of QQI Principles*

A summary of the Quality & Qualifications Ireland [QQI] published ‘Principles for Professional Engagements with Education Providers, including Programme Validation, Professional Accreditation and Approval’ document, as included in Council papers, was provided. The principles have been agreed widely and PHECC Executive has actively engaged in the process. Acknowledging the obvious benefit from inclusion being the alignment of the qualification leading to EMT status with QQI, Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the Education and Training Committee recommendation to endorse the QQI Principles for Professional Engagements with Education Providers, including Programme Validation, Professional Accreditation and Approval.

Proposed: Fiona McDaid

Seconded: Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent

The proposed endorsement statement below was also approved by Council.

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council has considered the principles and values set out in the document Principles for Professional Engagements with Education Providers, including Programme Validation, Professional Accreditation and Approval and agrees to act in accordance with and in the spirit of these principles in conducting its validation/accreditation/approval activities and any other relevant activities.

8.0. Clinical Report

8.1. Malpresentations CPG Update*

Following consideration of related correspondence to the Chair of Council, dated 14 January 2022, the Medical Advisory Committee [MAC] presented the updated Malpresentations CPG for Council consideration. Council approved the CPG via the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the updated Malpresentations CPG, as presented to Council.
Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Tomás Barry
Carried without dissent

It was agreed that an acknowledgement will be sent to the Consultant who initially made the representations, in correspondence referenced above, resulting in the amendment.

8.2. Paediatric Stridor CPG Query & Update*

An explanation of the suggested updates to the Paediatric Stridor CPG was provided to Council and the following resolution passed.

Resolution: That Council approves the updates proposed to Paediatric Stridor CPG as presented in Council papers.
Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Jason van der Velde
Carried without dissent

8.3. PR Route for Paramedics – CPG Updates*

Amendments to three CPGs relating to Paracetamol administration by paramedics via the PR route were considered. A further amendment was suggested, and it was agreed that the amendment would be further considered by MAC before re-submitting to Council for approval at the December Council meeting.

8.4. Major Trauma Centre Triage Decision Tool CPG*

Following the 'Trauma Care Ireland Report' of 2018 and subsequent decision to open two major trauma centres in Ireland, MAC developed and recommend the presented Trauma Triage Tool CPG for Council approval.

Resolution: That Council approved the Major Trauma Centre Triage Decision Tool CPG as presented in Council papers.
Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Tomás Barry
Carried without dissent

8.5. Non-Conveyance Self-Care Instructions

Council was informed that an expert group will be formed to review minimum content and provide a framework for non-conveyance self-care instruction leaflets, while enabling Licensed CPG Service Providers to provide additional relevant information. Final content will be recommended by MAC to Council for approval.

9.0. Quality & Safety Report

9.1 STN032 Medical Director Standard Update*

Following the review of the Draft Medical Director Standard brought to the September meeting, the amendments and suggestions have now been incorporated and the amended draft was laid before Council for approval.

Resolution: That Council approve the updated STN032 Medical Director Standard.
Proposed: Tomás Barry **Seconded:** Niamh Collins
Carried without dissent

10.0 Secretary Report

10.1 Review of S.1.8. of LEG012 Council Standing Orders*

An explanation of amendments to Section 1.8 and 18.6 of Council Standing Orders, as detailed in Council papers, was provided. This amendment allowed for the retention of the Emergency Decision Making Group of Council. Section 1.8. will be deleted and an amended Section 18.6 was tabled for approval. Council passed the following resolution, and an amended Standing Orders document will be laid before the Council meeting in November.

Resolution: That Council approves the amendment to Section 18.6 of LEG012 Council Standing Orders.

Proposed: Fiona McDaid

Seconded: David Menzies

Carried without dissent

Council took a recess. Jacqueline Burke departed the meeting.

The Vice-Chair, Jason van der Velde, chaired the meeting from this point.

11.0. Registration Report

11.1. Registration Committee Update

The Chair of the Registration Committee gave a briefing to Council arising from the inaugural meeting of the Registration Committee which had taken place on September 29th last. This included induction matters, membership, committee terms of reference, roles, an outline work plan, and other specific matters. Three Expert Committees would be formed, specifically: Continuing Professional Competency; Return to Registration; Registration Classes.

It was agreed that the Chair of the committee and the Director will review costings and resources to progress CPC at P and AP levels. The topic will be included in further strategic discussion at the upcoming Council meeting.

Council was updated that two recent FTP related contracts have been awarded.

11.2. Register Update

The updated Register Report was presented to Council including new presentations on various high-level analyses of the Register. This information will be expanded for the next Council meeting.

It was agreed that a list of new individuals being added to the register will be presented to Council for noting purposes going forward.

12.0. FRACC Report

12.1. FRACC Update

The Chair of FRACC joined the meeting and provided an update to Council on the following matters:

12.1.1. Financials: Based on the end July figures already supplied to Council for noting, the Chair reported that the August and September actual figures to hand indicated, as set out in the July report, that the year-end financial outcome for PHECC will show a break-even position.

12.1.2. 2021 OCAG Management Letter: of the 19 items indicated by OCAG, to date 15 have been fully resolved. The appointment of a Human Resources manager is the only outstanding issue as the other three items are in the course of being addressed.

12.1.3. OCAG Audit of 2021 Financials: This audit is currently underway but will not conclude until after the departure of the Finance Manager. A number of requests from OCAG are currently being followed up.

12.1.4. Internal Audit Programme: Pinnacle Consulting have been appointed after a competitive tender. An Internal Audit Programme has been agreed for 2022, 2023 and 2024.

12.1.5. Assessors Panel Deep-Dive: Ernst & Young have been appointed to undertake this task, the results of which will include recommendations and draft policies and procedures for the future management of this panel. An initial report is expected in early 2023.

12.1.6. Policies: Policies for Travel and Subsistence and Fixed Assets have been approved by Council. Drafting of the new procurement policy was to have been completed in 2022 when new procedures were implemented. It is now scheduled for completion in early 2023. It was agreed by FRACC to allow the new procurement procedures to bed in, and possibly be modified, during 2022, before drafting the new policy

12.1.7. Risk Register: The Register has been reviewed at each FRACC meeting with no material changes noted. The addition of the impending vacant Finance Manager position will be included in Risk Register.

Three FRACC meetings have already taken place and further two meetings are scheduled before year end.

13.0. AOB

The Council Secretary indicated that contact would be made, at an early date, with Committee Chairs regarding the gathering of KPI data for their committees for the third quarter of 2022.

The Chair thanked Council members and Executive for their attendance.

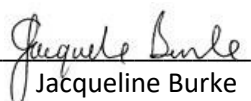
The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday 17th November at 10:00AM at the Killashee Hotel, Naas and will be the last full Council meeting for 2022.

A meeting of the Strategy Steering Group, which comprises the Chair and Vice Chair of Council and the Chairs of Standing Committee of Council, will take place at the same venue on the evening prior to the Council meeting.

The Strategy Meeting of Council will take place in the Lyrath Hotel, Kilkenny on December 7th and 8th next. It is not planned to conduct any normal Council business at this meeting; however, provision may be made for urgent items that need to be addressed prior to the January 2023 Council meeting.

The meeting terminated at 13:20hrs approx.

Signed:


Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 17th November 2022

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes 17 November 2022

**Present:**

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Alison Smith
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry
William Merriman

Video Conference:

Aidan O'Brien
David Menzies
Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
Jimmy Jordan
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Dennis Keeley

In attendance:

Con Foley, Council Secretary
Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator
Brian Dunne, Chair of FRACC

1.0. Closed Session

During a closed session the Chair reported on the completion of a report regarding a complaint received by PHECC and thanked the members of the group for their assistance with the matter.

The Director joined the meeting.

The Director updated council in relation to a recent report in the media concerning the governance structure of a PHECC recognised CPG Service Provider. The report also referenced an incident, which occurred in 2018, concerning a registrant which subsequently resulted in a criminal prosecution.

As Council wished to discuss the matter, Hillery Collins and Aidan O'Brien withdrew from the meeting, citing potential conflicts of interest.

Following discussion, the Director was asked to communicate with the CPG Service Provider concerned to determine if significant changes had been made to the governance of the CPG Service Provider concerned, and to provide further details of the timelines as they pertained to PHECC. Council will consider the matter again at the December meeting as a matter of urgency.

Hillery Collins and Aidan O'Brien re-joined the meeting.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and noting apologies received.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

Apart from two earlier recusals as noted in the closed session, there were no Declarations of Conflicts of Interest for any items on the agenda.

Due to time pressures, the FRACC Report (Item 13) was considered, following which Brian Dunne departed the meeting.

4.0. Chairs Business

4.1. Correspondence

The Chair had received two items of correspondence internally which she had passed to the Director for follow up. Both had been addressed by the Director.

- 1) PHECC's consideration of Sir John Saunders report of the Public Inquiry into the Attack on Manchester Arena has now been referred to MAC for consideration.
- 2) The absence of Emergency Medical Science/Paramedicine in the Higher Education Authority [HEA] Expression of Interest [EOI] 2022 regarding workforce planning and potential new and additional education courses. The Director gave a brief update on the current situation.

4.2. Strategy Steering Group

The Chair reported on the inaugural meeting of the Strategy Steering Group which had taken place the previous evening. The Group, consisting of the Chairs of the Council Committees, had agreed Terms of Reference which would be key in reviewing progress to date on the 2020- 2023 Strategy, but would also create a framework for the next corporate Strategic Plan for the years 2024 – 2027.

This matter will be developed further at the December meeting and consideration will be given to the overall level of time demands on Council members and resource requirements.

4.3. Legislation Update

The Chair again reported that she had been in contact with the Department and that assurances had been provided that some work had commenced on the matter of PHECC's legislative deficit. Fundamental progress is envisaged by end of 2023. However, the Chair pointed out that this may not meet the expectations of Council members who are frustrated by the lack of progress to date. A meeting with the Minister for Health may be required to give further impetus to the matter of addressing these deficiencies. The importance of legislative change in order to protect the public was reiterated.

5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

5.1. Draft Minutes 13 October 2022*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 13 October 2022.
Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Hillery Collins
Carried without dissent.

5.2. Matters Arising

Committee Chairs and the Executive were thanked for their responses to the request for data on the Council Committee's activities for the Third Quarter.

It was clarified that Council members may provide comments on the draft minutes from the time of circulation to the time of approval at the subsequent Council meeting, however, if these comments are provided prior to the distribution of the Council papers, they can be included in the revised minutes and thus greatly reduce discussions at Council.

6.0. Directors Report

6.1. Directors Report to Council

6.1.1 COVID-19 Arrangements

In accordance with the DPER and Civil Service Blended Working Guidelines, a blended working policy is being developed.

6.1.2 Emergency Ambulance Crewing Model & Patient Handover Times at Hospital Emergency Departments

Both projects have been considered by the Research Committee and a more detailed update is contained in item 10.1.

6.1.3 Staff Recruitment Update

Following a successful process, a HR Manager has been recruited on a part-time basis and a Finance Manager recruited on a full-time basis. Both appointees will commence employment in January next. The DoH has been advised of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff, in particular, with public sector experience, on a temporary basis, while awaiting DoH approval for permanent posts. The recruitment process for a Deputy Director will commence in January for this established post.

6.1.4 Meeting with the DoH Medicines Unit

The Director will follow up with the Medicines Unit for an informal meeting regarding amending the Seventh Schedule and progressing plans leading to paramedic prescribers.

6.1.5 PHECC Audits

Three separate audits, all currently underway in PHECC, are creating significant demands on PHECC staff, with the absence of a Finance Manager a further complication.

- i) Internal Audit 2022
- ii) Review of PHECCs Management of Assessor Panels.
- iii) OCAG 2021 Annual Audit.

6.1.6 Workforce Planning

At a recent meeting of the Healthcare Regulators Forum Workforce Planning Group, it was apparent that there are a number of separate un-connected workforce-planning projects underway in this space. The Regulators are currently compiling a commonly agreed dataset. Referring to earlier correspondence noted under Agenda Item 1.0, the Director will separately request clarity from the Higher Education Authority [HEA] as to why paramedicine was not included in a recent call for expressions of interest in building capacity in various health-care settings. The Director also brought this EOI request to the attention of the Health Regulators Forum.

Clarification will be sought on the HEA's awareness of PHECC's decision to move paramedic education to degree level.

Martin O'Reilly joined the meeting during item 6.1.6.

6.1.7 Quarterly Meeting with DOH

A routine quarterly governance meeting took place with the DoH on October 21st. The Director and Clinical Manager attended.

6.1.8 FOI Request

A recent Freedom of Information Request has been addressed within the required timelines.

6.1.9 Pathfinder Service Pilot Project

Following the success of this pilot project, a collaboration between the National Ambulance Service [NAS] and Beaumont Hospital Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Department, the service is being expanded to five other locations nationally.

It was agreed that, while the APs involved are following current CPG practice, an issue of possible overlap and differentiation with the Community Paramedic Scope of Practice may arise. Receipt of the current Pathfinder programme from NASC was welcomed and will be considered at the upcoming MAC meeting next week. The outcome of the discussion will be provided to Council in due course.

6.1.10 DOH 2023 Budget Forecast Request

The Director tabled a letter sent to the DoH setting out details of additional funding requirements for PHECC for the fiscal year 2023. A response from the Department is awaited.

Referring to the cross-border funding element, it was noted that the situation of clinical indemnity in relation to this area has not been resolved.

6.2. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report, as included in Council papers, was noted. It was clarified that “Conditional Recognition” was the standard status awarded to successful new applicants, pending a first full GVF assessment. In the current listing it refers to a new CPG Service Provider who is currently not operational.

Council took a short recess at which time Martin O'Reilly departed the meeting.

7.0. Education Report

7.1. Education Standard & Competency Framework Update

Council was updated that the Expert Groups, tasked with the development and review of education standards and competency frameworks for EMT, paramedic, advanced paramedic, community paramedic and critical care paramedic, have now concluded their work.

The draft reports will be provided to Council as soon as available. The Chair of the Expert Group will present to Council, incorporating initial observations of the Education & Training Committee, at its December meeting. Consideration of the implications of and implementation of the report will take place at a future Council meeting. It was suggested that a high-level summary of the current education programme would be beneficial when considering the report.

8.0. Quality & Safety Report

8.1. CPG Service Provider Engagement – Updated GVF Standard

Feedback on a series of meetings which have taken place to introduce Licensed CPG Service Providers to the updated GVF Standard (STN034) and the accompanying suite of documentation was provided to Council, noting the positive reaction received.

Assessor workshops are planned in the coming weeks, and it is hoped that the new standard will be fully implemented in Q1 of 2023. The development of a new QRF framework and the alignment of both accreditation systems will follow. The Chair commended the progress to date.

9.0. Examinations Report

9.1 Examinations Update

An update was provided on the transition to a new MCQ examination delivery provider, which commenced on November 1st last and will run for a ten-week period.

A review of the PHECC MCQ examination banks has concluded will be rolled out in 2023. The intellectual property in these remains with PHECC.

Some 80 new examiner candidates nominated by Recognised Institutions have attended an induction workshop in early November. New members of the Exam Quality Panel are now also being identified.

10.0. Research Report

10.1 Research Committee Update

Council was provided with an update of the recent Research Committee meeting of 19 October last which included a progress report of the two ongoing research-related projects. Both projects are expected to be completed as envisaged, with final reports expected in February 2023. The potential for positioning PHECC centrally in pre-hospital research was acknowledged.

The Director had also asked the Research Committee to urgently progress two projects which have since been discussed by the committee. The first, in relation to Emergency Ambulance Crewing, has commenced and with the report expected for review early in the New Year. The importance of the electronic dataset in informing the epidemiology presentation of pre-hospital was noted.

The second project, in relation to patient handover times at Emergency Departments, has resulted in an EOI being sought for a suitably qualified and experienced candidate to carry out a review of existing data from an array of stakeholders. It is envisaged that the research project will compare data from the past ten years and identify any trends. This project is also expected to be available for review early in the New Year.

The feedback report of a recent Health Research Board funding application in the area of community paramedicine is awaited and will inform next steps.

Martin O'Reilly re-joined the meeting.

11.0. Secretary Report

11.1. Updated LEG012 Council Standing Orders

A copy of the updated Council Standing Orders was brought to Council for noting following the changes approved at the October 2022 Council meeting in regard to the Emergency Decision-Making Group of Council. The amended Standing Orders were signed by the Chair.

11.2. Protocols for the holding of Virtual or Hybrid Council Meetings (Appendix 3 to POL033)*

Appendix III of the Code of Governance for Council sets out protocols for Virtual or Hybrid Council meetings which were developed in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. These have served the Council well in the interim but were required for a review before the end of 2022. In the continuing circumstances, Council was asked to extend the current protocols until the end of December 2024.

Resolution: That Council approves updates to Appendix III of POL033 Code of Governance & Business Conduct in relation to Protocols for Virtual or Hybrid Council meetings.
Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Patrick Fleming
Carried without dissent.

12.0. Registration Report

12.1. Register Update

The Register report was brought for noting by Council. Some wording changes were suggested for the Membership Ratification List of the Register and will be implemented. The format of presentation of will be reviewed going forward.

13.0. FRACC Report

13.1. FRACC Update

The Chair of FRACC updated Council on the progress of several audits, currently in progress. The Internal Audit has commenced with programmes for 2022,2023, and an outline programme for 2024 agreed by FRACC. The Internal Audit Charter has also been signed. The audit of managed payment services has also commenced and is progressing. The Office of the Auditor & Comptroller General [OCAG] have also commenced their audit of 2021 financials, with no concerns expressed to date.

The recently approved Travel & Subsistence Policy will be disseminated to all staff in December.

The Management Accounts to end September 2022 were presented to FRACC at their November 7th meeting and current indications are that income and expenditure outcomes at year-end will be as budgeted. A reduced drawdown is predicted mainly due to the Deputy Director vacancy.

13.2. Revised FRACC Terms of Reference

At the meeting of November 7th, FRACC proposed that their Terms of Reference be amended to reflect a quorum "based on greater than 50% of the number of persons on the Committee"

Council approved this amendment for a period of one year, to be reviewed in December 2023.

Resolution: That Council approves the proposed revision to quorum requirements of the FRACC Terms of Reference for a period of one year, to be reviewed again in December 2023.

Proposed: Tess O'Donovan

Seconded: Tomás Barry

Carried without dissent.

13.3. Risk Register

The Risk Register as reviewed by FRACC at their most recent meeting was brought to Council for a quarterly review. It was highlighted that as previously agreed, high-risk items only will be presented to Council going forward. It was agreed that the Risk Register would be amended in contemplation of earlier closed session discussions.

14.0. AOB

14.1. Council Meeting Dates 2023


Proposed dates for 2023 Council meeting dates were provisionally approved. The Chair committed to examining further steps to mitigate the workload on both Council and Council Committees for members and thanked all for their commitment to PHECC.

Next meeting is to be held at the Lyrath Hotel in Kilkenny on December 7th and 8th.

The Chair thanked Council members and Executive for their attendance.

The meeting terminated at 13:40hrs approx.

Signed:



Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 12th January 2023

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
07 & 08 December 2022
Strategy Event
Lyrath Hotel, Kilkenny



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Aidan O'Brien
Alison Smith
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Martin O'Reilly (8th only)
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry
William Merriman

Apologies:

Conor Deasy
Jimmy Jordan

In attendance:

Con Foley, Council Secretary
Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager
Ray Carney, PHECC Manager
Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager
Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator
Robert Morton, Director NAS (Item 2.2, Day 1 only)
Andy Newton, Cloud Consulting (Item 1, Day 2 only)

Day 1 (Thursday, 7th December)

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, thanking all for taking the time to attend in-person. It was noted that urgent Council business would be addressed at the meeting and all standard Council matters would be deferred to the January 2023 meeting.

1. Urgent Council Business

Aidan O'Brien and Hillery Collins recused themselves for item 1.1. only.

1.1. Report on Incident Involving PHECC Registrant

The Director reported that following correspondence with the PHECC recognised CPG Service Provider, it was confirmed that there were no governance changes that affected PHECCs recognition of the CPG Service Provider. The Director also provided Council with a summary of timelines related to an incident concerning a PHECC registrant and a potential FTP incident.

Following discussion, the Director was requested to commission an external review to ensure that the original complaint was handled appropriately by PHECC. Due to a potential conflict of interest, it was agreed that PHECC's current legal advisors would not conduct said review.

Resolution: That Council directs the Director to commission an external review of PHECC's handling of a complaint received regarding a PHECC registrant, the recommendations of which will instruct further action.

Proposed: Tess O'Donovan **Seconded:** Tomás Barry

Carried without dissent

It was noted that PHECC are currently implementing a formal complaints procedure and that, separately, the entire FTP process is undergoing a complete review.

1.2. Department of Health Matters

The Director reported that of the funds requested of the Department for 2023, detailed at the November meeting, almost 50% (€364k) had been given provisional approval, covering increased operating costs (exams), pensions, increased property rental cost and other inflation-affected costs. Business cases are to be furnished for the remaining items making up the original total. Although this news is to be welcomed, the additional funding is to meet increased costs that have already been incurred by PHECC.

The Director also reported that a meeting will be held with the Department in early 2023 to discuss PHECC's legislative deficiencies.

2. Strategy Review

2.1. Review of "The Future of Paramedicine Document" (2016)

The action points of the Future of Paramedicine report were reviewed, highlighting those currently incomplete.

2.2. National Ambulance Service Strategic Highlights

The Director of the National Ambulance Service [NAS] delivered a review of the organisation's own Strategic Plan and highlighted the following matters:

- Demography of the Republic of Ireland and impact of health-care delivery
- Significant development of NAS capacity in the next 10 years
- Front-loading of this plan a feature means addressing capacity at all levels
- Capacity to educate and develop paramedics is key
- Development of specialist paramedics also key to achievement of plan
- Other models of care are being developed for primary care
- Primary legislation is urgently required to address PHECC legislative weaknesses
- Looking to other countries with similar recognition of paramedicine for other developments

Impact on PHECC of above developments discussed including educational matters and the recent decision by PHECC to regard paramedicine as requiring a level 8 qualification (degree) was also referenced in the context of the developments outlined by the Director of NAS.

2.3. PHECC Steering Group for Strategic Plan 2024 – 2027

The Chair provided an update of the Strategy Steering Group meeting of 16 November last, summarising the draft minutes and outlining the Terms of Reference of the group, both of which will be presented at the next Council meeting.

An expression of interest will be required for external assistance with the development of the next strategic plan – 2024-2027.

The actions set out in the Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023 were tabled and reviewed as to completion or otherwise at the end of 2022. The outcome was summarised as having completed approximately 68% of actions required at this time.

2.4. Methodology for the Creation of a new Strategic Plan

The methodology for the creation of a new Strategic Plan was discussed at length, noting the importance of stakeholder engagement in the process. The transition of Council members with regard to the new strategic plan taking effect was highlighted, though it was noted that the plan is a rolling

document and not specific to the current Council.

This part of the meeting concluded at 1800 approx.

The meeting was adjourned until 0915 on Thursday, December 8th.

Day 2 (Thursday, 8th December)

1. Report on New Education Standards:

Dr. Andy Newton presented an update on the Review of Education Standards to Council in the context of the Strategic Planning Review. The developments at Council regarding paramedic education were addressed together with the question of educational alignments with Quality & Qualifications Ireland [QQI].

It was suggested that the process should now move to a stakeholder review by all participants. The full Education Standards and associated Competency Frameworks will be circulated with the January meeting papers and it was suggested that each level be considered separately at future Council meetings.

2. Investigating Non-FTP Complaints made to PHECC

The Director presented a review of the range of complaints which PHECC were currently receiving, and the appropriate actions required. These were set against the known shortfalls in PHECC's legislative under-pinnings. Other Issues raised included the role of the Ombudsman. It was agreed legal opinion is required.

It was noted that although this topic is distinctly separate to any FTP considerations, the issue of the right to work as set out in the Irish Constitution (in the case of withdrawal of privilege to practice), differs significantly from the situation in the United Kingdom where the right to work does not exist statutorily, was also considered. It was noted that while Council standards support practitioners in relation to their practice, PHECC's fundamental role is to protect the public.

3. Developing PHECC's Establishment Legislation

The Director also made a presentation on this topic and further discussion arose regarding Council Rules and Exemptions in relation to 'non-core CPGs and the "Triple-Lock" mechanism. It was agreed legal opinion is required.

4. Strategy Steering Group – Committee Chairs' Reviews of Progress

Each Committee Chair presented to Council on the following on behalf of their committee.

- Achievements of 2020-2022
- Priorities for 2023
- Thoughts for 2024-2027 Strategy

Summary as follows:

FRACC: The following developments, many of which are, and will remain, on-going were noted.

- The commencement of a comprehensive 3-year internal audit plan.
- The revisions to the budgeting and financial reporting processes.
- The introduction of the procurement report.
- The Potential increase in the limit for procurement tenders in line with EU thresholds was noted.
- The commencement of the deep dive review into the management of Assessor Panels.

- The adoption of a formal process for the assessment of the effectiveness of PHECCS internal system of controls., and compliance with the Code of Conduct for State Bodies.
- On-going development of the Risk management processes.
- Development of a new procurement policy. The purchase of new procurement software was noted.
- On-going development of new policies (Travel and Subsistence) and updating of existing policies was noted.

Research: It was noted that this new committee had made considerable progress in a short time.

- A small high level committee is in place.
- The research strategy is almost complete.
- The assessment and cataloguing of all available EMS researching is also nearing completion.
- 2 new small research projects have been commissioned.
- The requirement and options for an in-house research resource were raised.
- Other issues such as ethical reviews of research proposals, transparency and publication issues were noted.

Quality & Safety: The following were noted.

- Progress on the continuous development and standardisation of QFR and GVF.
- The rationalisation of GVF standards in relation to privileging and the role of the Medical Director.
- The development and implementation of delisting policies for both CPG providers and RI/ATI.
- The recruitment and training of additional assessors.
- A new complaint form is now available on line and in use, the complaints process is being documented and a policy developed.
- The issue of English language proficiency was also discussed. Currently proficiency in English language is a GVF standard and is therefore a function of the Licensed CPG Service Provider in relation to privileging. Other healthcare regulators include this as a registration requirement, as per SI 8 of 2017. This issue is already on the agenda for the registration committee for further consideration. It was agreed that this issue is referred to registration committee for follow up in 2023.

Education & Training: The following developments were noted

- The completion of the revision of the Education standards of Competency Frameworks
- Opening of discussions with QQI and HEA
- Revision of Teaching Faculty Framework
- The revision of Examination methods and processes.

Future work areas

- Engagement with stakeholders in relation to PHECCs decision to raise Paramedic registration to degree level.
- Further engagement with QQI & HEA
- Revision of ROQ, RPL, compensation measures.
- Aligning CPG development and education programmes.
- Further development of CPG update training
- Provision of research resources

MAC: The following developments were noted:

- Completion of CPG suite
- Provision of expert Pharmacology advice.
- Completion of Covid CPGs
- Development of Specialist level 'standards', scope of practice and CPGs.
- Establishment of Sub-committees.

Future initiatives

- Further development of Sub-committees

- Non-conveyancing and alternative care pathways
- Reviewing resource requirements
- Provision of research resources

Registration: It was noted that this is a new committee that recently held its first meeting.
Priorities for 2023.

- Divisions of the Register - criteria for registration at levels above AP (specialist P, consultant P)
- CPC roll-out at P and AP level, this was considered a priority
- Cross-border working arrangements
- Return to registration/practise
- Resignation from the Register
- Fitness to Practise, it was noted that there is an external review of the entire FTP process currently underway.
- Proficiency in English language as a registration requirement

All were thanked for their input, acknowledging the achievements of each committee in the past year.

5. Corporate Services

It was noted that many of PHECCs essential business support structures are currently inadequate.

The Director set out the priority staffing issues for 2023.

The matter of a new Customer Relations Management system, (CRM) to replace the elements of the current disparate systems in place, was acknowledged as a key priority.

6. Business Priorities for 2023

The meeting discussed the interlinking of the existing Strategy with the Business Plan for 2023 and the continuing necessity to develop the Plan for the period 2024 – 2027 during 2023.


This would include reconciling the longer-term-aspects with the 2023 business plan, drafting a list of priorities for the period 2024 – 2027 and initiating the tender for such external assistance which the Strategy Steering Group will require during 2023.

The Chair thanked all for attending the two-day meeting and there were expressions of appreciation for the form of the meeting and the opportunity to relate, on a face-to-face basis, with other Council members and the hope that this model might be repeated again before the end of 2023.

There were also many expressions of thanks to the Director and to Karen O'Neill for their organisation and preparation of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 15:15 approx.

Signed:



 Jacqueline Burke
 Chairperson

Date: 12th January 2023