

**PHECC Council Meeting Minutes**  
**18 May 2023**  
**PHECC Office, Naas & Video Conference**



**Present:**

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)  
Patrick Fleming  
Tomás Barry

**Apologies:**

Aidan O'Brien  
Conor Deasy  
Fiona McDaid  
Hillery Collins

**Video Conference:**

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)  
Alison Smith  
David Menzies  
Dennis Keeley  
Jimmy Jordan  
Martin O'Reilly  
Niamh Collins  
Tess O'Donovan  
William Merriman

**In attendance:**

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

**1.0. Closed Session**

There being no matters to discuss, the Chair opened the meeting.

**2.0. Open & Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, noting apologies received. A moments silence was observed as a mark of respect to Council member Fiona McDaid on the recent death of her father. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

**3.0. Declarations of Interest**

No notifications of Conflicts of Interest had been received in regard to any item on the Agenda.

**4.0. Chair's Business**

**4.1. Correspondence**

No correspondence had been received.

**4.2. Legislation Update**

The Chair updated the meeting on recent conversations with officials in the Department regarding progress in addressing PHECC's legislative deficiencies. Staff, in the Department, have been allocated to undertake this task although the Department expect progress to be slow. The Chair reiterated the urgency required to address known legislative deficiencies, affecting key front-line staff in the health service, and advised that she would continue to actively address this matter and highlight the risks inherent, in her Confidential Letter to the Minister for Health.

**4.3. June Council Meeting**

A number of alternative approaches to addressing the June Council meeting and a day focused on progressing the already approved Education Standards & Competency Frameworks were discussed. Further work is required to establish members availability for both meetings.

## **5.0. Minutes & Matters Arising**

### **5.1. Minutes of April Meeting\***

The Minutes of the April meeting were considered to be an accurate record thereof and were formally approved by Council.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the draft minutes of the Council meeting of 13 April 2023.

**Proposed:** Tomás Barry

**Seconded:** Patrick Fleming

**Carried without dissent.**

### **5.2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## **6.0. Director's Report**

### **6.1 Director's Report to Council**

#### **6.1.1. COVID-19 Arrangements**

There were no further developments to report.

#### **6.1.2. Staff Recruitment Update**

Interviews for the post of Deputy Director are taking place later today. Shortlisting is in progress for the post of Finance Officer. A Grade III Clerical Officer temporary post in Accreditation is also being advertised. Approval for the post of Registrar is awaited from the DoH and the post of Secretary to the Council will be the subject of an open EU tender for suitably qualified contractors. A tender will also be sought for a purposed education support role. A research proposal is being prepared which will incorporate the proposed research role. Frustrations surrounding progressing resource requirements were echoed by the Director.

#### **6.1.3. PHECC Audits**

The Internal Audit for 2022 has been completed and the process for 2023 has commenced with a review of governance arrangements. The Director awaits the final report into the management of PHECC assessor panels from the auditors concerned.

#### **6.1.4. Community Care Specialist Paramedic Education**

Council having earlier paused the publication of the Education Standards and Competency Frameworks including those for the Specialist Community Care Paramedic, was requested to approve the sharing of these standards with the National Ambulance Service College, which is in the process of organising a forthcoming course (September 2023), to develop this new specialist grade of paramedic.

The Chair referenced PHECCs SI which clarifies that PHECC have a responsibility to set and have oversight of educational standards, and therefore to consult with the Recognised Institution [RI]. This would be consistent with PHECC's ongoing responsibility to regulate RIs existing and future courses and license the successful graduates as NQEMT holders. The Executive will take steps, together with the Education & Training Committee of Council, to agree the course content as a pilot for the duration of the training period which we understand will result in an MSc for the graduates conferred by UCC.

The proposal to share the documents with NAS was approved as this would be consistent with the interim proposals relating to practitioners being privileged to deliver the new specialist CPGs relating to Community Paramedics. A successful trial will prevent the increase of a cohort of Paramedics working as Community Paramedics who have not undertaken a PHECC recognised training course.

#### **6.1.5. EFR Instructor Requirement**

As a result of having received a request from An Garda Síochána, regarding the eligibility of EFR Instructors, which is being passed to the Education and Training Committee for review, the issue of whether EFR Instructors are not required to be PHECC licensed practitioners arises. Subject to this review no change in current practice is recommended, wherein EFR Instructors are currently PHECC

practitioners. It was also noted that this requirement has always been in place and is not a new or recent change.

## **6.2. Annual Report 2022\***

The Draft Annual Report for fiscal 2022 was laid before Council for approval, the Financial Statements contained therein having been previously approved by Council.

The Director confirmed that no Fitness to Practise [FTP] cases were heard during 2022. It was also confirmed that complaints are not screened and that all FTP complaints will progress to the Preliminary Proceedings Sub-Committee [PPSC].

The Draft Annual Report was approved, subject to some minor amendments.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the Draft 2022 Annual Report, subject to some minor amendments.  
**Proposed: Patrick Fleming**                      **Seconded: Tomás Barry**  
**Carried without dissent.**

## **6.3. Business Plan 2023\***

Having received the Letter of Determination from the DoH, in the amount of €2.951m and recent Council approval of the budget for 2023, the Business Plan for 2023 was brought for Council approval. Following a number of queries and clarifications, Council approved the Plan.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the Draft Business Plan for 2023.  
**Proposed: Dennis Keeley**                      **Seconded: Tess O'Donovan**  
**Carried without dissent.**

It was agreed that time will be allocated at a future Council meeting to discuss the development of CPC, noting that the progression of CPC for Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic levels is a priority for Council in the current Strategic Plan.

## **6.4. PHECC Mission Statement**

A recent review revealed that there are a number of small variations in the PHECC Mission Statement currently in use. Council agreed that a review of the mission statement would be incorporated into the preparations for the Strategic Plan 2024 – 2027.

The correct current mission statement was clarified as *“The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council protects the public by independently co-ordinating, developing, reviewing, regulating and governing standards of excellence for the safe provision of quality pre-hospital emergency care.”* and will be reflected in all publications until such time as a further review takes place.

The 2022 Annual Report and Business Plan for 2023 will be updated to reflect the above.

## **6.5. Delegated Decisions of the Director**

The Delegated Decisions of the Director were reviewed by Council and the contents noted. The Director advised that an organisation, having been conditionally approved, had withdrawn from the GVF process and would therefore no longer be considered a PHECC Licenced CPG Service Provider.

## **7.0 Clinical Report**

### **7.1. Cardiac First Response COVID\_19 Advice\***

Following the onset of the pandemic, it was advised by the HPSC, for lay rescuers, that compression-only CPR be performed. Recently, mask and other PPE mandates in healthcare settings are being withdrawn post the pandemic and the issue of the reinstatement of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation has arisen.

Referring to a recent memo from the American Heart Association [AHA], Council approved the advisory



**Resolution:** That Council approves the updated version of the Secondary Survey Trauma – Adult CPG, as recommended by MAC.

**Proposed:** Tomás Barry

**Seconded:** Jason van der Velde

**Carried without dissent.**

#### **7.5. CCP Clinical Practice Procedures\***

Clinical Practice Procedures (CPP) are designed to guide practitioners in the performance of specific skills with the aim of enhancing patient safety by providing a standardised procedure and reduce risk when performing high acuity procedures.

The development of CPPs has commenced with a focus on HALO procedures (High Acuity, Low Occurrence), performed at critical care paramedic level.

Three CPPs, as recommended by MAC, were approved by Council subject to two amendments i) inclusion of the line “and/or blood sampling” and ii) replacement of the line “Gives further oversight to APs privileged for critical care CPGs” with a preface.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the Clinical Practice Procedure 7.CPP.01 Emergency Front of Neck Access, as recommended by MAC, subject to the amendments noted above.

**Proposed:** Jason van der Velde

**Seconded:** Tess O’Donovan

**Carried without dissent.**

**Resolution:** That Council approves the Clinical Practice Procedure 7.CPP.02 Arterial Line Insertion, as recommended by MAC, subject to the amendments noted above.

**Proposed:** Jason van der Velde

**Seconded:** Tess O’Donovan

**Carried without dissent.**

**Resolution:** That Council approves the Clinical Practice Procedure 7.CPP.03 Central Venous Line, as recommended by MAC, subject to the amendments noted above.

**Proposed:** Jason van der Velde

**Seconded:** Tess O’Donovan

**Carried without dissent.**

#### **7.6. Ketamine Monograph Amendment\***

Due to an advised product shortage, the Ketamine monograph has been amended from a standard presentation to a generic concentration, allowing for alternative products to be supplied. As there are no implications for the Seventh Schedule, Council approved this amendment.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the proposed revisions to the Ketamine Monograph, as recommended by MAC.

**Proposed:** David Menzies

**Seconded:** Jason van der Velde

**Carried without dissent.**

It was agreed to refer to MAC the risk highlighted by Council in relation to medication supply issues in the future. It was also noted that MAC continues to have an emergency standing committee to approve CPGs. Council has also maintained an Emergency Decision-Making Sub-Committee of Council for intervals between Council meetings in its Standing Orders (S.18.6).

#### **7.7. Oxytocin Medication Formulary Entry\***

The Oxytocin monograph was presented for further amendment in regard to the need for refrigeration being removed in some presentations. Generic advice to check product for storage conditions has been substituted in the monograph.

Council approved this amendment, as per MAC recommendation.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the proposed amendments regarding refrigeration to the Oxytocin Monograph, as recommended by MAC.

**Proposed: Patrick Fleming**

**Seconded: Alison Smith**

**Carried without dissent.**

### **7.8. Ibuprofen Monograph Amendment\***

Following advice from the HSE advising to avoid the administration of Ibuprofen in cases of varicella infection, in line with the product's SPC and subsequent expert advice received, amendments to the Ibuprofen Monograph, as recommended by MAC, were presented to Council for approval. Council approved the document subject to the replacement of "chicken pox" with "varicella" and the removal any specification to children only.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the proposed amendments to the Ibuprofen Monograph, as recommended by MAC, subject to replacement of the words "chicken pox" with "varicella" and any specification of children only.

**Proposed: Jimmy Jordan**

**Seconded: Tess O'Donovan**

**Carried without dissent.**

### **7.9. Clinical Care at Events MAC Update**

A sub-committee of MAC has been formed to set standards for Clinical Care at Events. Data collection is under way with key stakeholders, including patient representatives, with a view to informing and publishing a set of standards in 2024. The data collection form will be circulated to Council members shortly for information.

### **7.10. Priority Dispatch MAC Update**

A sub-committee has also been established in this case and preliminary work has progressed well. A postponed initial meeting will be re-scheduled. Appreciation was extended to staff of the NAS National Emergency Operations Centre and the DFB Eastern Regional Control Centre who provided detailed insights into the operations of the respective control centres as part of a recent visit.

The implementation of EMS Priority Dispatch Standard v5 (Issued August 2021) will be an agenda item for the first meeting.

*Council took a short recess during which Ray Carney departed the meeting.*

## **8.0 Quality & Safety Report**

### **8.1. Complaint Policy Framework\***

A draft Complaints Policy Framework, developed by the Quality & Safety Committee to enable their remit of monitoring complaints and compliments that the Executive receive/process, was presented to Council with a recommendation that a legal review of the document be conducted. A number of amendments were suggested in discussion and Council approved the Committee's recommendation to obtain legal advice, following the revision of specific wordings, as agreed.

### **8.2. Assessment Cancellation Policy GVF/QRF\***

A draft Assessment Cancellation Policy, developed by the Quality & Safety Committee to manage the process of GVF and QRF assessment in a more efficient and transparent manner, with defined outcomes and responses should certain situations occur, was presented to Council. A number of amendments were suggested by Council for further review and it was agreed that the draft policy will be re-submitted for approval in due course.

### **8.3. POL003 Policy for Recognition to Implement CPGs\***

This key policy, governing the recognition by PHECC of CPG Service Providers has been updated to reflect the changes to the GVF standard and other Governance matters. Changes indicated relating to the Medical Director Standard, Clinical Indemnity Insurance, the Cancellation Policy, the ability to

undertake assessment and justification of retention of higher-level recognition were reviewed by Council. Subject to two suggested minor amendments, these amended Rules were approved by Council.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the proposed amendments to POL003 Policy for Recognition to Implement CPGs as recommended by the Quality & Safety Committee, subject to two minor amendments.

**Proposed: Niamh Collins**

**Seconded: Patrick Fleming**

**Carried without dissent.**

## **9.0. Examinations Report**

### **9.1. Examinations Committee Update**

Council was notified that the inaugural meeting of the Examinations Sub-Committee, the membership of which was detailed in Council papers, will take place on May 31st. The sub-committee will initially focus on enhancing the current Paramedic Exam Standard, relying on work previously undertaken by Dr Andy Newton, to develop a new standard for 2024 and beyond.

### **9.2. Examination Tender**

Following an Expression of Interest, two separate tenders have been developed and are currently in process for the supply of EMT OSCE equipment and the supply of EMT and Paramedic patients.

## **10. Research Report**

### **10.1. Research Proposal**

A job description is currently being developed for the Research Project Officer, to support the work of the Research Committee and MAC. The creation of the role will be presented to the DoH as part of a full research proposal, seeking to obtain both the funding and headcount to enable the appointment, initially on a 2-year trial period. The importance of academic support for this role, possibly from a research unit, was highlighted.

### **10.2. Research Consultation Tender**

Following agreement at the March 2023 Council meeting, a tender was developed and is now live to complete a consultation exercise with stakeholders other than paramedicine professionals [EMTs, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics], to inform the research priorities for Pre-Hospital Emergency Care, the PHECC Research Committee and *the Future of Paramedicine Research in Ireland*.

### **10.3. Research Event**

A PHECC sponsored research event will take place in November 2023. The event will involve presentations on relevant research abstracts, along with both national and international speakers from the paramedicine research field. Further updates will be provided to Council once details are confirmed. The possibility of combining the event around the scheduled November 16th Council meeting will be considered when arranging.

As approved, PHECC representatives will attend the UK EMS Research Conference in Manchester in June, with a report on the event to follow.

## **11. Education & Training Report**

### **11.1 ERC Delegate Attendance Application**

At the April meeting of the Council, it was agreed that Council would consider further applications from PHECC Executive, Council or Committee members to attend the ERC Congress in Barcelona in November 2023. An application for one further delegate, representing the Education & Training Committee was considered and approved by Council. attendance was approved.

**Resolution:** That Council approves the application for one further delegate to attend the European Resuscitation Council meeting in November 2023.

**Proposed:** Niamh Collins

**Seconded:** Tess O'Donovan

**Carried without dissent.**

## **12. FRACC Report**

### **12.1. FRACC Report**

#### **12.1.1. Financial Update**

The departmental budgets for 2023 (in line with the Business Plan) have been presented and approved by FRACC, forecasting a breakeven situation at year-end with no specific risks highlighted.

Management Accounts to March end, approved by FRACC, report no significant variances from the budget.

#### **12.1.2. OCAG Audit/Management Letter**

The 2021 Management Letter has been returned to OCAG, with findings and recommendations accepted. On-going reporting with regard to their implementation will be a part of the Director's reports to FRACC as standard for 2023.

#### **12.1.3. Internal Audit**

Pinnacle Consulting have submitted their Internal Audit reports for 2022, with the final reports subject to a number of minor changes. These will be shared, either in summary or detail, to Council, as required, once finalised. The Auditors have commenced their 2023 Internal Audit activities, the schedule of which was detailed in Council papers.

#### **12.1.3. Assessor Panels Deep Dive Audit**

As referenced earlier in the meeting under the Director's Report (item 6.1.3), having reported verbally in February, FRACC are concerned that the written report is not yet available for the purpose of implementing recommendations. FRACC have recommended that management write to the auditors concerned as soon as possible in order that work can commence on implementing recommendations.

#### **12.1.4. Risk**

The Risk Register has been reviewed and no changes have been reported nor incidents recorded.

## **13.0. Registration Report**

In line with RUL007 PHECC Registration Rules, Council noted the addition of those individuals detailed in the Registration Report to the PHECC Register, as approved by the Director via delegated decision (Ref. POL049 Delegated Decision of the Director).

## **14.0. AOB**

### **14.1 Review of Advanced Paramedic Programme**

The Director flagged an issue with a scheduled programme review of the NASC/UCC AP Programme, resulting that the review is unlikely to progress within agreed timelines. The Director is assessing potential cost implications and will progress matters with the Director of NAS and the external review team. Council requested an update to be presented at the June Council meeting.


## **15.0 Time and Date of Next Meeting**

Noting her absence at the next meeting, the Chair thanked all for attending the meeting, whether in person or virtually, and advised that further contact will take place regarding the June Council Meeting and the Review of the new Paramedic Education Standards and related Competency Frameworks, also scheduled for June.



The next meeting will take place on June 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00hrs.

The meeting concluded at approximately 1.15pm.

Signed:   
Jason van der Velde  
Acting Chairperson

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023