

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
06 September 2023
Kilkenny & Video Conference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chair)
Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Alison Smith
Conor Deasy
David Menzies
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Jimmy Jordan
Patrick Fleming
Tess O'Donovan
Tomás Barry
William Merriman

Video Conference:

Martin O'Reilly
Niamh Collins

Apologies:

Aidan O'Brien
Dennis Keeley

In attendance:

Con Foley, Council Secretary
Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Brian Dunne, PHECC Deputy 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

Matters discussed included an Appeal against a Decision of the Director, an update on Audit matters, a Payroll computation issue and a complaint received in relation to a recent PHECC recruitment process.

2.0. Open & Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, thanking everyone for travelling, and noted apologies received. A special welcome was extended to Brian Dunne, in his capacity as the new Deputy Director of PHECC.

3.0. Declarations of Interest

No notifications of Conflicts of Interest had been received regarding any item on the Agenda.

4.0. Chair's Business

4.1. Correspondence

Three items of correspondence were noted.

1. Formal resignation of the Chair of FRACC, Brian Dunne, who has been appointed as Deputy Director of PHECC.
2. The Chair was copied on PHECC's response to the DoH with regard to NAS's application to the DoH for a Specialist Paramedic Grade Code. Confirmation has been received from NAS that the UCC/NAS MSc course is a 2-year course, and as such complies with PHECC Standards. It was highlighted that a review of the Specialist Paramedic Interim Mechanism, approved by Council in July 2022 for a period of 1 year, is required.
3. Correspondence from a Member of Council, already discussed in the closed session, would be again referenced later in the Director's Report.

4.2. Legislation Update

No further significant developments have taken place since the last update to Council.

Item 6.0 Minutes & Matters Arising was discussed at this point.

5.0. Directors Report

5.1. Directors Report to Council

5.1.1 Blended Working Arrangements

PHECC Blended Working Policy, in accordance with the DPER and Civil Service Blended Working Guidelines, will be implemented from 01 October next. As part of PHECCs Environmental, Social and Governance [ESG] initiatives, with resulting cost saving implications, the PHECC office building will close on Fridays with all staff working remotely.

5.1.2 Staff Recruitment Update

An update on staff recruitment was provided in relation to recent appointments of a Deputy Director, a temporary Grade III Clerical Officer in Accreditation and a Finance Officer.

Separate recruitment campaigns for the positions of Secretary to Council, tendered via an open tender process as an independent contractor, and a Chair of FRACC have also commenced. The process of recruiting a HR Manager is also ongoing.

The temporary position of Research Project Officer has been formulated into a research proposal for submission to the DOH.

The requirement and options for the temporary position of Education Project Officer, to oversee the implementation of the project, has been incorporated into the tender requirements for the Education Roadmap and will be brought to Council for noting in October.

The post of Head of Registration/Registrar is currently under consideration by the DoH.

5.1.3 Potential Overpayment of Staff

Council was informed of a potential overpayment of specific staff members due to a calculation error, which is currently being investigated by the Director. Both the DoH and the Chair of FRACC have been notified of same and the correct calculation has since been applied.

5.1.4 Impact of the Recent RTE Controversy

A report from the Director, providing assurances to Council and FRACC following the recent RTE controversy is currently being prepared and will be provided to Council shortly.

5.1.5 Recruitment of Chair of FRACC

Pending the appointment of a new Chair of FRACC, the Vice-Chair, Pat Fleming, will take up the position of Acting Chair. Referencing the committee's Terms of Reference, no derogation is required from Council for this interim appointment.

5.1.6 New Paramedic Role in Dublin District Coroner's Office

A recently advertised Paramedic role with the Dublin District Coroner's office was noted as a positive step in the recognition of the Paramedic profession. As it is a non-practising role, registration with PHECC is not required as it is not under our regulation remit.

5.1.7 Terms of Appointment for Committee Members

It was clarified that Council & Committee member initial appointments are for a 4-year term with provision for extension to a second term. As there is no specific reference in the committee Terms of Reference [TOR] for instances where an appointed or nominated committee member steps down from their post, it was decided to adopt the Council position whereby newly appointed replacement members serve out the term outstanding on the original appointment. It was also confirmed that the quorum is normally 50% plus 1, or as specified in each specific TORs.

5.1.8 Review of PHECC Appeals Policy and Procedure

A full legal review of the PHECC Appeals Policy is currently in process, with draft amended policies expected to be presented to Council for approval at the October Council meeting. The Director is also

seeking advice on the constitutional status of the current members of the Appeals Panel.

5.1.9 Expressions of Interest for 'Panel' Members

An Expressions of Interest [EOI] is currently being prepared for potential Appeals Panel, Preliminary Proceedings Sub-Committee Panel, and the Fitness to Practise Panel members. The EOI will be extended to Council members who are invited submit their interest.

5.1.10 PHECC Audits

The 2023 Internal Audit process of PHECC ICT Security is ongoing, with the Governance Audit commencing shortly.

The Ernst Young draft report of their Deep Dive Audit into the Management of PHECC Assessor Panels has been received, prior to a meeting being arranged with same. A summary of the report, as included in Council papers, was noted.

The OCAG Audit, in respect of the 2022 financial year, is expected to commence mid-end of October.

5.1.11 PHECC ISO 9001:2015 Audit

PHECC's annual ISO Audit has been scheduled for 26th September next. The audit plan is currently being reviewed in preparation.

5.1.12 Travel Applications

Two foreign travel applications to attend clinical conferences were approved by Council.

Resolution: That Council approves the application for two members of the Priority Dispatch Sub-Committee to attend the Priority Dispatch Navigator Conference on 27th & 28th of September 2023.
Proposed: David Menzies **Seconded: Alison Smith**
Carried without dissent.

Resolution: That Council approves the application for a member of the Community Paramedic Sub-Committee and the Advisory Pharmacist of MAC to attend the College of Paramedics UK Primary Care and Prescribing Conference on 5th October 2023.
Proposed: David Menzies **Seconded: Alison Smith**
Carried without dissent.

5.2. Concerns Framework

This Policy will cover a number of areas from which concerns may be raised by the public and will cover the areas of fitness to practise, protected disclosure and other matters, all of which will be accessed by distinct portals on the PHECC website, directing the individual through different protocols, depending on the matter of concern raised. This Policy will be brought to Council for approval in the near future.

Niamh Collins departed the meeting during the above item.

5.3. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The Report was noted by Council. It was highlighted that several applications for Licensed CPG Service Provider status have been received and are currently being assessed.

6.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

6.1. Minutes of May Meeting*

The Minutes of the June 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 16 June 2023.

Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Alison Smith

Carried without dissent.

6.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

7.0. Examinations & Clinical Information Report

7.1. Examinations Update*

The Examinations Sub-Committee had met twice recently.

Additional OSCE scenarios is to be reviewed by the Exam Quality Sub-Committee and will be trialled at the next Paramedic OSCE exams. RI's will be updated accordingly.

The Committee will now begin work on developing a new Paramedic Exam Standard for 2024 and beyond. Earlier significant work will be considered as the foundation for the future iteration of a Paramedic Standard. Dr Alan Batt presented to the Committee on Scenario Based Assessments, and the Committee is considering how PHECC might incorporate this form of assessment into Paramedic Education in Ireland.

Separate tenders for supply of both EMT OSCE equipment and EMT and Paramedic OSCE patients for examinations have been awarded.

The addition of Reasonable Accommodation to the Examination Handbook, as included in Appendix 1 of the meeting papers, was approved.

Resolution: That Council approves the addition of Reasonable Accommodation section to the Examination Handbook as presented.

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

Carried without dissent.

7.2. Clinical Information Update

7.2.1. 2023 PCR Information Standard*

An updated PCR Information Standard, with amendments proposed by Council in February 2023 applied, was approved by Council.

Resolution: That Council approves the updated 2023 PCR Information Standard, with amendments agreed at the February 2023 Council meeting applied.

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

Carried without dissent.

7.2.2. Reports – ePCR and eACR

An issue of an information-gathering e-tool was raised. In discussion, it was agreed that clarification is required on exactly what data are to be collected, and more importantly the data user and purpose of use, prior to any discussion taking place in relation to funding a development project. Council requested a more detailed paper in the matter addressing the issues raised will be presented at a future Council meeting in 2024.

8.0. Research Report

8.1. Research Update*

8.1.1. Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Research in Ireland Conference – November 15th 2023

Council was updated on the developments in planning the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Research in Ireland Conference on November 15th next. This would encompass both an Education Committee meeting on 14th November and the Council meeting on November 16th.

8.1.2 Research Projects Update*

Reports on progress on various Research Projects were also delivered. Completed reports had been included in the meeting papers as Appendices for reference.

Upon consideration of data access challenges being faced, thus limiting progression of the 'Patient Handover Times at Hospital Emergency Departments Project', it was agreed to amend the scope of the project.

Resolution: That Council approves amending the output scope of the Patient Handover Times at Emergency Departments Project to a comparison of international best practice.
Proposed: Tess O'Donovan Seconded: Tomás Barry
Carried without dissent.

8.1.3 UK EMS Research Conference, Manchester

A report of the recently attended UK EMS Research Conference in Manchester on June 20th and 21st last was noted.

8.1.4 Research Funding – Applications and Process

An application process for Research funding will be developed by the Research Committee over the coming months.

8.1.5 Research Project Officer

A draft Research Business Case, encompassing a Research Project Officer post, has been prepared by the Executive and will now be submitted to the DoH for approval.

9.0. Clinical Report

9.1. MAC Medication Shortage Sub-Committee*

Following recent discussions and highlighting of ongoing medication shortages, Council requested that MAC consider the risks associated with medication supply issues into the future (Council meeting May 2023, item 7.8).

The Medication Shortage Sub-Committee, an Emergency Standing Sub-Committee (ESSC) to review and make recommendations for replacement medications where existing supplies are affected, is proposed by MAC. Proposed membership will be drawn from MAC: Chair, Medical Directors of both NAS and DFB, a PHECC practitioner and an advisory pharmacist.

Council approved the creation of this Committee, noting that Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee will be presented in due course.

Resolution: That Council ratifies the establishment of the Medication Shortage Sub-Committee as an Emergency Standing Sub-Committee of MAC.
Proposed: Jimmy Jordan Seconded: Jason van der Velde
Carried without dissent.

9.2. Priority Dispatch Sub-Committee Update*

Following an initial meeting, this Committee brought its Terms of Reference to Council for approval. Council approved same, as presented at the meeting.

Resolution: That Council approves the Terms of Reference of the Priority Dispatch Sub-Committee.
Proposed: Jason van der Velde Seconded: Patrick Fleming
Carried without dissent.

9.3. Field Guide Changes to 2023 CPG Update*

To support the 2023 CPG updates and introduction of the Trauma Triage Tool CPG, several required changes related to Ketamine and the Trauma Triage Tool had been applied to the Field Guide PDF and

mobile app. These presented changes were approved by Council.

Resolution: That Council approves the proposed amendments to the Field Guide and Trauma Triage Tool, as recommended by MAC.

Proposed: Hillery Collins

Seconded: Jimmy Jordan

Carried without dissent.

9.4. CPG Categorisation and Implementation Guidance*

To reflect changes in the 2023 update to CPG 2021, the CPG Categorisation and Implementation Guidance document has been updated and was now recommended by MAC to Council for approval.

Council approved the amended document as presented.

Resolution: That Council approves the updated CPG Categorisation and Implementation Guidance document as recommended by MAC.

Proposed: Jason van der Velde

Seconded: Tomás Barry

Carried without dissent.

9.5. CPG Implementation Policy*

Council recently considered the implementation of CPG updates following a request for an extension to the previously agreed timeframe for implementation of 2021 CPGs by PHECC Licensed CPG Service Providers.

The CPG Implementation Policy has been reviewed by MAC and changes were recommended to Council in the amended document presented to Council for approval.

Council approved the amended document.

Resolution: That Council approves the amendments to POL018 CPG Implementation Policy as recommended by MAC.

Proposed: Hillery Collins

Seconded: David Menzies

Carried without dissent.

10.0. Register 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). It was noted that the report includes all those approved since the June Council meeting.


11.0. AOB

The Chair thanked all for participating in anticipated events in the Education Strategy Day to follow on 7th September.

The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday 12th October, 2023 at 1000, Naas.

The meeting concluded at approximately 6.50pm.

Signed:


Dr Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date: 12th October 2023