

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
17 June 2021
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)

Videoconference:

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)

Aidan O'Brien

Conor Deasy

David Menzies

Dennis Keeley

Don Brennan

Jimmy Jordan

Niamh Collins

Patrick Fleming

Tess O'Donovan

William Merriman

Apologies

Fiona McDaid

Hillery Collins

Tomás Barry

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director

Con Foley, Council Secretary (VC)

Barry O'Sullivan, Deputy Director/Registrar (VC)

Brendan Cawley, PHECC Manager

Pauline Dempsey, PHECC Manager (VC)

Ricky Ellis, PHECC Manager

Ray Carney, PHECC Manager (VC)

Karen O'Neill, Council Administrator

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees. Congratulations were extended to Tomás Barry on the birth of his daughter Isabelle and to Ray Carney who had become a father again, to twin boys.

1.0. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of a Conflict-of-Interest had been received for any Agenda item.

2.0. Chairs Business

2.1. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Minister of Health, dated 14 June 2021, informing of the following was noted:

Reappointment of Jimmy Jordan 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; Effective from 29 June 2021

Appointment of Martin O'Reilly in accordance with Article 5 (1) (h) of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Establishment Order (S.I. 109 of 2000), a person with a special interest or expertise in pre-hospital emergency care; Effective from 14 June 2021

Due to the short timeframe, it was not possible to extend an invitation to the meeting to Mr. O'Reilly, however, the Chair congratulated both on their appointments.

It was noted that one final position on Council remains vacant.

Correspondence had also been received from the Director confirming that Robert Morton has been appointed Director of the National Ambulance Service [NAS] pending the appointment of a permanent Director. The former director, Mr. Martin Dunne, has taken up the position of Deputy CEO of the Lifeline Ambulance Service Ltd. The Director will write to both congratulating them on their recent appointments.

2.2. Committees Chair/Vice-Chair/Membership*

The Chair identified the following further Vice-Chairs of Council Committees: Conor Deasy [Research], Patrick Fleming [FRACC].

It was agreed that in addition to the recently appointed Chairs of Fitness to Practise [FTP] Committee and Preliminary Proceedings Sub-Committee [PPSC], two further Council members will be appointed to each and may be called on to act as Vice-Chairs in the event of a potential conflict-of-interest.

The resulting concluded committee status is as follows:

Committee/Panel	Chair	Vice-Chair
Medical Advisory Committee	David Menzies	Tomás Barry
Education & Training Committee	Aidan O'Brien	Niamh Collins
Quality & Safety Committee	Fiona McDaid	Dennis Keeley
Registration Committee	Hillery Collins	Dennis Keeley
Research Committee	Patrick Fleming	Conor Deasy
Financial, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee	Con Foley*	Patrick Fleming
Fitness to Practise Committee	David Menzies	N/A
Preliminary Proceedings Committee	Jason van der Velde	N/A
Appeals Panel	Tess O'Donovan	N/A

*Acting

The Chair expressed her appreciation to all those involved.

3.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

3.1. Draft Minutes 20 May 2021*

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, and subject to a minor amendment to item 4.1.3, Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 20 May 2021.

Proposed: Jimmy Jordan **Seconded:** William Merriman

Carried without dissent.

3.2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4.0 Directors Report

4.1 Directors Report to Council

4.1.1 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 most recent restrictions. There have been no reported COVID-19 incidents involving staff, examiners, students or in external reviews. A staff survey is underway in relation to Working from Home [WFH], prior to the formulation of a related policy.

4.1.2 COVID-19 Crewing Model

The situation remains whereby no requests have been received from CPG providers to change the current minimum crewing level standard.

4.1.3 Future UCD AP Programme*

Correspondence is ongoing with UCD in relation to the outcome of Council's deliberations and corresponding resolution (20 May 2021) *'That Council approves the Director engage with our legal advisors to formulate a new timebound agreement with UCD to conclude the education of current AP students'*. A formal response is expected shortly which will determine next steps.

Department of Health [DoH] officials have been informed of the above resolution and have concluded that it represents a reasonable outcome to the matter.

Dennis Keeley joined the meeting.

4.1.4 Cross Border Working

Discussions continue with the Professional Regulation Unit [PRU] of the DoH/Health Competent Authority Regulators Forum on the matter of cross-border working. Mutual recognition is not considered to be a likely outcome due to possible contravention of EU legislation, however DoH officials continue to explore viable options to resolve the situation. Further updates will be provided as the matter progresses.

4.1.5. Fitness to Practise [FTP] Process Review

A Request for Tender [RFT] for a review of the PHECC FTP Policy and Procedures, is expected to be published in the coming weeks.

4.1.6. Committee Terms of Reference [TOR]*

Draft TORs are being considered under Agenda items 5.1 Medical Advisory Committee [MAC]; 6.2 Education & Training Committee; 7.1 Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC].

As the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Registration and Research Committees have now been appointed, draft TORs for each are expected to follow. There are no plans to amend the FTP and PPSC TORs at present as these will be reviewed as part of FTP review in item 4.1.5.

4.1.7. Temporary COVID Register

Resulting from correspondence from Minister of Health informing of his decision to extend the COVID-19 Special Division of the Regulators Register, the Director has extended the PHECC COVID-19 Temporary Register to the 31 December 2021, as per related Council Resolution of 20 May 2021.

4.1.8. Freedom of Information [FOI] & GDPR Data Access Requests

Two separate investigations by both the Office of the Information Commissioner [OIC] and the Data Protection Commission [DPC] have concluded, resulting in PHECC's approach and disclosure of information being upheld. PHECC were reminded in both cases of the need for timely resolutions to requests.

4.1.9. Core/Non-Core CPGs – Discussion Document

A summary of the discussion document seeking clarification from an education perspective on some aspects of core and non-core CPGs, as included in Council papers, was provided by the Director. It was agreed to defer this discussion until later in the meeting to allow consideration of related Agenda item 5.4.

4.1.10. 2019 Management Letter

The OCAg 2019 Management Letter of 11 May 2021, as included in Council papers, was noted. Additional related correspondence from the DoH dated 31 March 2021 circulated prior to the meeting was also noted. Following consideration of the Management Letter in detail various clarifications and assurances were provided to Council.

OCAg have since engaged with the Executive in relation to commencement of the 2020 Audit.

Council took a short recess.

4.2. Strategic Implementation Plan

A status update of the Strategic Implementation Plan approved by Council on 14 November 2019 was provided, as included in Council papers. During consideration of same it was explained that several items had been delayed due to the pandemic. Referring to item 2.0 of said plan 'Effective Legislation', it was suggested that further related correspondence with the DoH is required as this requirement is currently the highest risk identified on our Risk Register. The importance of having a social media policy was also noted throughout discussions.

An update report of the plan will be brought to Council again in September this year.

4.3. Delegated Decisions of the Director

The report as included in Council papers was noted as was a planned review of the Recognition of Qualifications [RoQ] process.

Ray Carney joined the meeting.

5.0. Clinical Matters

5.1. MAC Membership & Terms of Reference [TOR] *

Following Council resolution of 20 May 2021, whereby Council approved the Medical Advisory Committee [MAC] Terms of Reference [TOR] and membership, amendments to same were brought back to Council for approval. Following consideration, several suggested amendments were agreed, including noting that the Chair will have an additional casting vote in the case of a tied vote, and the subsequent resolution was passed:

Resolution: That Council accepts the MAC TORs proposed subject to agreed amendments to items 10.3, 10.4, 10.10, and the Chair's casting vote.
Proposed: William Merriman **Seconded:** Niamh Collins
Carried without dissent.

The Director will explore the mechanisms for advertising one central Expression of Interest [EOI] inviting submissions from PHECC Registrants for the various applicable committee positions. The urgency of populating committees and application of a robust screening process was noted. Upon appointment, each committee member will be reminded of attendance requirements.

5.2. 2021 CPGs – Project Update

A progress report and timeline of estimated delivery dates for the publication of the 2021 CPG edition, as included in Council papers, was noted. A heavily watermarked edition has been provided to Recognised Institutions, for developmental purposes only, in advance of full release.

It was agreed that a copy of the Obstetrics CPGs will be provided to all nationwide obstetric units and to the Chair of the Obstetrics Committee.

Aidan O'Brien joined the meeting during the above discussion.

5.3 Critical Care Paramedic Stakeholder Engagement & Revised Standard*

Following their approval of the Critical Care Paramedic Standard on 10 September 2020, Stakeholder engagement has since taken place resulting in a report on same and the updated Standard, as included in Council papers, being presented to Council.

The Standard outlines foundation competencies for Critical Care Paramedic to be achieved within the educational programme with additional post-qualification modules for enhanced competencies or

specialist modules.

During discussion, a number of observations were raised in relation to the education pathway, minimum entry criteria, scope of practice and competencies required. It was noted however, that the Standard had been developed and approved by MAC and approved by Council in December 2019.

The use of core and non-core CPGs was considered as a temporary solution to privileging thus highlighting the need for a scope of practice decision-making algorithm.

The expected timeframe of three years before a Specialist Paramedic is eligible to practice will provide sufficient time to explore options for and to address the areas of education, registration and privileging. Referring to the December 2019 resolution, whereby Council proposed the creation, through primary legislation, of a fourth division of the practitioner register at the grade of specialist paramedic, it was suggested that legal advice be sought, as the creation of a specialist division on the register would require primary legislation and as such could take a number of years.

Council endorsed the amendments proposed by passing the following resolution:

Resolution: That Council accept the suggested changes to the Critical Care Paramedic Standard, as approved by Council in September 2020, and the referral of education and registration elements to the related Education & Training/Registration Committees. Council will continue to advocate for legislative change to support this initiative.

Proposed: William Merriman

Seconded: Dennis Keeley

Carried without dissent

Tess O'Donovan departed the meeting during the above discussion prior to the resolution being passed.

Ray Carney departed the meeting.

Conor Deasy joined the meeting.

5.4 GUI026 CPG Categorisation & Implementation Guidance*

An updated version of GUI026 CPG Categorisation & Implementation Guidance, revised in line with the 2021 CPG edition and included in Council papers, was noted and accepted by Council via the following resolution:

Resolution: That Council approves the updated version of GUI026 CPG Categorisation & Implementation Guidance, as included in Council papers.

Proposed: William Merriman

Seconded: Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

Council took a short recess.

The Vice-Chair attended the meeting intermittently from this point due to a medical emergency.

6.0 Education, Training & Examinations

6.1. 2021 CPGs Training Course Approval – RI Application Procedure*

Following the April 2021 Council meeting, an RI application procedure for the approval of the delivery of CPG training courses to registered practitioners was prepared in conjunction with the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Education & Training Committee. The resulting document, included in Council papers, outlining the procedure and application form requirements for approval of such applications was considered. It was accepted that every RI must apply to teach all skills and knowledge from the suite

of 2021 CPGs for EMT and Paramedic level, however foundation and elective elements of CPGs may be applied at AP level, thus highlighting the need for a robust decision-making framework in relation to scope of practice. Complexities of having various scopes of practice and resulting administrative implications for Licensed CPG Providers and practitioners, to be incorporated into the GVF process, were also highlighted.

It was agreed that the Executive will work to determine the transition of CPGs from core/non-core to foundation/elective.

In conclusion, Council passed the following resolution:

Resolution: That Council approves the application for approval to deliver CPG Training Courses to registered practitioners as detailed in Council papers.

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

Carried without dissent.

Don Brennan rejoined the meeting during the above discussion.

6.2. Education & Training Committee Membership & TOR*

Proposed membership composition and the unchanged TOR of the Education & Training Committee, as included in Council papers, was considered. Subject to the inclusion of an independent education specialist, a nomination from a PHECC Approved Training Institution [ATI] and at least one additional Council member, the proposed membership was approved via the following resolution:

Resolution: That Council approves the Education & Training Committee Terms of Reference as included in Council papers, subject to the agreed amendments.

Proposed: David Menzies **Seconded:** Dennis Keeley

Carried without dissent.

6.3. Examinations Update

An update on examinations, which included the examination schedule to end August 2021, was noted. Additional EMT examinations have taken place to address the backlog built up due to pandemic public health restrictions. A review of examination content has commenced, in line with the new 2021 CPG edition, and is expected to be changed from September and examined at MCQ & OSCE level from November 2021. Examination viewings will recommence from 21 June and a review of reasonable accommodation is currently taking place to support the development of a more robust policy for same.

7.0 Governance & Finance

7.1. FRACC Terms of Reference [TOR]*

Terms of Reference for the Finance Risk Audit & Compliance Committee were presented to Council, noting the addition of the financial aspect, and approved via the following resolution:

Resolution: That Council approves the Finance Risk Audit and Compliance Committee Terms of Reference as included in Council papers.

Proposed: Jimmy Jordan **Seconded:** Niamh Collins

Carried without dissent.

The agreed membership of 3 Council members and 3 external members, one of which will be the Chair, were appointed as follows:

Con Foley (Acting Chair) [External], Pat Fleming (Vice-Chair) [Council Member], Jimmy Jordan [Council Member], William Merriman [Council Member], Patrick Clifford [External].

The Chair of FRACC, not being a member of Council, would be invited to attend Council meetings periodically, to report on various FRACC-related matters. Progress on the recruitment of said position was provided by the Director. The remaining external member position will be recruited via an EOI.

Both Hillery Collins and Ricky Ellis were thanked for serving on the committee to date.

With urgent business to be concluded, the committee is expected to convene before month-end.

7.2. Management Accounts to 31 May 2021

Council was presented with the Management Accounts to end May 2021. The impact of the absence of the UCD/AP Programme was again noted in terms of both income and expenditure. The Executive was asked to revert to Council on the deviation from budget in 2021 in relation to pay costs.

8.0. Register

8.1. Register Report

The report, as included in Council papers, was noted.

9.0. Risk

9.1 Risk Register

An updated Risk Register, as included in Council papers with amendments highlighted, was considered. It was noted that there being no standing FRACC until this time, it was not possible for their consideration of the Risk Register in advance of presentation to Council.

An observation that the descriptor of the risk be amended to set out the consequence of a particular failing will be considered by the newly appointed FRACC.

Referring to the issue of cyber-security, it was recommended that this be included in an upcoming session of the Council training programme.

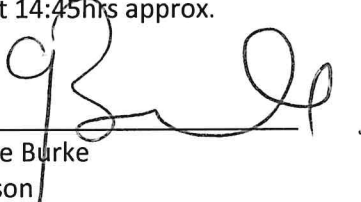
The report was noted by Council.

10.0 AOB

There being no other business the Chair thanked all for attending.

The meeting concluded at 14:45hrs approx.

Signed:


Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date:

15th July 2021