

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday 11th July 2019
PHECC Offices, Millennium Park, Naas

Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chair)
Hillery Collins (Vice Chair)
Fiona McDaid
Martin Dunne
Jason van der Velde
Pat Hanafin
Conor Deasy
Tess O'Donovan
Patrick Fleming
Shane Knox
Shane Mooney
Patrick Plunkett
David Menzies

Apologies:

Thomas Keane
Stephen Brady
Jimmy Jordan
Mick Molloy

In attendance:

Richard Lodge, PHECC Director
Con Foley, Chair Compliance and Audit Committee
Brian Power, PHECC PDO
Ricky Ellis, PHECC PDO
Kathleen Walsh, PHECC PDO
Jacqueline Egan, PHECC PDO
Karen O'Neill, Council Secretariat
Margaret Bracken, PHECC Staff Representative

1. Crowe Presentation

Crowe delivered their presentation titled 'Review of Education Standards & Competency Framework Development' to Council. Following the presentation, the Chair thanked Crowe representatives and welcomed feedback from Council members.

David Menzies queried if there was scope to recalibrate current practitioner levels due to the different grades applied internationally. Crowe acknowledged that different practitioner grades are applied internationally but noted that it won't be addressed as part of the current project as it is not included in their Terms of Reference.

Martin Dunne sought clarification of the scope of the project. It was confirmed by Tess O'Donovan that the scope of the project is to review current training of the various practitioner levels, to determine any gaps between training and CPG's currently utilised and to develop a competency-based framework. Martin Dunne noted the importance of having a clear understanding of the scope of the project to produce a comprehensive report. Crowe representatives requested clear direction from Council regarding their requirements and acknowledged the need to define service expectations for the future. Kathleen Walsh reminded Council that the specification for the review had been produced in 2018 by a working group of the Education & Standards Committee and was subsequently approved by Council.

Shane Knox suggested that the foundation to move to a competency-based framework requires a literature review.

David Menzies noted that the starting point needs to be the current framework and a determination of expectations. Hillery Collins agreed with Conor Deasy and David Menzies comments that we should progress to a competency-based framework and acknowledged the need to reach a starting point to then commission a piece of work for the future. Mr. Collins asked Shane Knox, as Chair of the Education & Standards Committee, to relay Councils feedback on the review to the Education & Standards Committee.

Patrick Plunkett noted the importance of ensuring that relevant topics are both taught and understood and added that when developing a competency-based framework it is Councils responsibility to alter standards in the future, depending on requirements.

Crowe representatives outlined that the project will address how an individual demonstrates proficiency and added that gathering evidence of competency is a key element of moving to a competency-based framework.

Jason van der Velde joined the meeting at this point.

2. IPA Presentation

Dr. Nicolas Marcoux from the IPA delivered a presentation titled 'Introduction to Governance Review' to Council outlining the purpose of conducting a governance review of the organisation, the focus of the review, the process involved and the proposed timelines. Hillery Collins suggested that staff be given the opportunity to feed into the process and the Director clarified that any mention of the Executive is a reference to all staff.

It was agreed that the presentations given by Crowe and the IPA would be circulated to Council members post Council meeting.

3. Governance and Finance

3.1 Governance Review Update

As per IPA presentation in item 2.0.

3.2 Alignment of Council Committees – Policy*

Con Foley referenced a decision by Council to engage with the IPA regarding an alignment of Council & Committee Terms of Reference as part of the overall governance review. Mr. Foley referred to the proposed draft policy document as included in Council papers which had been reviewed by the Compliance and Audit Committee following input from the IPA and requested feedback regarding same.

Shane Knox commented that it would be futile to approve this document pending completion of the governance review and suggested that it remain in draft format in the interim. Patrick Plunkett noted that the document can be implemented now and changed in the future, if required. It was suggested by David Menzies that an analysis of any gaps in Committee's compliance with the proposed document be conducted in advance of adopting the policy to ensure that all are compliant upon approval.

Following a query from Shane Knox regarding a proposal that 'Chairs of Council Committees shall not be a member of an informal working group', Patrick Plunkett questioned the necessity for working groups rather than addressing said items at Committee level instead. David Menzies outlined that it may not be appropriate to address certain items at Committee meetings and it was further noted by Shane Knox that specific expertise may be required for certain topics. Shane Knox expressed his opinion that a Committee Chair should be permitted join a working group but agreed that they should not Chair the working group.

Patrick Plunkett advised Committee Chairs to review their Terms of Reference to determine any conflicts versus the proposed document and discuss with the IPA during the governance review. It was

noted by Con Foley that the proposed draft document will be utilised during the governance review and highlighted that it was brought to Council upon request. It was agreed that any concerns relating to the proposed document will be relayed to Con Foley prior to the September Council meeting and it was concluded that the Alignment of Committees Policy will be adopted in principle in the interim.

3.3 Finance Update

Con Foley informed Council that the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General (OCAG) is currently on site conducting their 2018 audit and confirmed that the Draft Annual Report for 2018 will be presented to Council at the October Council meeting, following review at the September Compliance & Audit Committee meeting.

Patrick Plunkett referenced correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) regarding PHECC's delay in submitting their annual accounts and suggested that a draft set of accounts be submitted to the OCAG regardless of an audit having taken place. Council agreed with this suggestion.

Con Foley informed Council that new providers have been separately appointed to prepare annual accounts and conduct internal audits.

4. Chair's Business

No items to address.

5. Minutes and Matters Arising

5.1 Draft Minutes June 2019*

The draft minutes were presented for consideration.

Regarding item 3.2.3, Shane Knox requested that the minutes be amended to reflect the lengthy discussion on the day and highlighted that he stated that the AP programme was discussed at November 2018 Council meeting and referred by Council to the Education & Standards Committee, as stated in November Education & Standards Committee minutes. A subsequent discussion arose regarding November 2018 Council minutes and a conflict of opinion was evident. It was agreed that the June 2019 minutes would be amended reflect that this item was recorded in the November 2018 Education & Standards Committee meeting minutes subsequent to a referral by Council.

Shane Knox confirmed that there were two issues;

1. CPGs that were/were not being taught
2. Oversight of PHECC examinations

Conor Deasy queried why Council minutes are not recorded electronically and it was suggested by the Director that this was an option that could be addressed as part of the governance review.

David Menzies stated that he was happy with the June minutes as they were and reiterated his point that the UCD meeting was the Director's meeting and that it was not Council's place to direct same.

David Menzies requested that the June minutes reflect the point where he ended his teleconference call.

Regarding item 3.2.6, Hillery Collins noted that following confirmation from Shane Knox that AP practical examinations had taken place, he had asked the Director why a member of the Examination

Quality Panel had not attended the these exams, as a resolution had been passed in March to this effect. The Director confirmed that he was not aware of the AP Practical examinations that had taken place. Conor Deasy queried why PHECC would not be aware of a PHECC exam taking place and it was noted by David Menzies that the AP examinations were devolved to UCD. This item is addressed in the Director's report.

Regarding item 10.0, Jason van der Velde requested that the minutes be amended to reflect that he expressed concern that an Irish applicant is EU by definition and that other regulatory bodies are grappling with this issue at the moment also. He further noted that he had requested that the item be referred to the Education & Standards Committee.

Regarding item 11.1.2, Hillery Collins requested that the minutes be reflected to state that he had requested assurance regarding a non-Council member chairing the Compliance & Audit Committee.

Regarding item 11.1.3, Jason van der Velde noted that he enquired as to whether external mediation is required and queried should the matter be referred to the Minister of Health.

Resolution: That the Council approve the minutes of the meeting of June 2019 subject to the agreed amendments.

Proposed: Hillery Collins
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Pat Hanafin

5.2 Matters Arising

Regarding item 11.1.1, the Director noted that he had requested the Executive to produce a cover page for each report included in Council papers, outlining the context of the report, who submitted the report and the purpose of the paper i.e. for information purposes or resolution required.

The Director also acknowledged that Council minutes had not been circulated in advance of Council papers this month due to the short timeframe between June and July Council meetings.

Regarding item 11.1.2, the Director acknowledged Hillery Collins amendment to the June minutes as discussed earlier in the meeting.

Regarding item 11.1.3, the Director confirmed that there had been representation from the Examination Quality Panel at the AP Practical examinations (OSCE) which had taken place since the resolution relating to same was passed in March 2019. The Director did note however that there was no PHECC Examination Quality Panel representation at the examination on 27 March as this was a panel exam and did not constitute a need for said representation. He also noted that PHECC Examination Quality Panel representation had been arranged for the OSCE examination which took place on 05 July, however due to unforeseeable circumstances the individual was unable to attend. Shane Knox stated that although a representative of the Examination Quality Panel was present, he was attending as an examiner and not in the capacity of an Examination Quality Panel representative. David Menzies noted that quality oversight should be supernumerary and should include both the oral and practical examination.

The Director confirmed that the Executive have been provided with a list of upcoming scheduled AP practical examinations and noted that a supernumerary member of the Examination Quality Panel will attend future oral and practical examinations.

Regarding item 11.1.4, the Director noted that he had no further update on this matter as yet.

Regarding item 11.3, the Director informed Council that in relation to Priority Dispatch a meeting has been arranged with himself, Stephen Brady and Martin Dunne for 13 August.

5.3 Correspondence

5.3.1 The Chair referenced correspondence she was copied on dated 04 July 2019 from the Director to the Department of Health, regarding legal advice, confirming the statutory function of PHECC to set standards of operation for licensed emergency service providers, and confirming that this included dispatch services.

5.3.2 The Chair read correspondence from Conor Deasy regarding Council's decision not to approve OHCA's grant application. Conor Deasy noted that the decision to refuse this grant application is at odds with PHECC's commitment to monitor standards of excellence. David Menzies agreed that although he understood the need for dispersal of PHECC funding he could not see the logic behind the decision. Patrick Plunkett stated that he did not feel it appropriate to discuss this item at Council due to a conflict of interest (Conor Deasy as Chair of OHCA and a Council member). Following a reference by the Chair to item 4(m) of PHECC's SI which specifies engagement in research of pre-hospital emergency care as a function of PHECC, Shane Knox highlighted that following a proposal in January 2017 to develop a research proposal no progress had been made and referenced previous discussions surrounding the possibility of using funding that had been allocated to UL. Tess O'Donovan noted that this was tied into the Strategy and stated that we need to remain true to the process and establish criteria, etc. The Chair noted that the decision by Council not to approve the OHCA grant application was passed by majority and needs to be respected. The Chair further acknowledged that following the planned launch of the 2019-2022 Strategy document in September research needs to be prioritised. The Director confirmed that this recommendation is included in the Strategy document and it was agreed by all that this topic will be addressed as part of the governance review. David Menzies observed that CPG development would benefit from more extensive evidence based research.

6. Director's Report

6.1 Report to Council*

6.1.1 The Director updated Council on a recent meeting with the DoH and confirmed that the 2019 Business Plan has been accepted. The proposed Schedule of Fees, and supporting business case which is being prepared currently, needs to be submitted directly to the Minister of Health for his decision.

6.1.2 The Director reported that the HR review is still progressing and that the opening meeting is planned for the week following 08 August due to staff annual leave. He assured Council that all staff will be engaged with during the process and it is envisaged that a final report will be produced by August/September.

6.1.3 The Director informed Council that a meeting with the appointed company is scheduled for 18 July to finalise the PHECC 2019-2022 Strategy document. Once finalised the document will be circulated to Council.

6.1.4 The Director noted the inclusion of a news post on the PHECC website regarding statements made by an organisation following the cancellation of an MMA event in Council papers.

6.1.5 The Director acknowledged that a status report had been received from the Civil Defence in support of their application for an extension to their licence to remain as a Licensed CPG Provider. Council agreed that the condition of their decision to grant a 1-month extension to 31 August 2019 had been satisfied.

6.1.6 The Director requested Council's advice as to whether the changes proposed by NASC to the current PHECC approved course constitute a significant change to structure, organisation or governance (as per Council rules) that may be relevant to its status as a recognised institution. He further requested guidance from Council on whether such changes warrant a new application and who makes such a decision.

It was clarified that NASC is the standalone RI with UCC as their affiliated academic partner for the Paramedic programme. Shane Knox confirmed that the course is to be amended from a 2-year Diploma to a 3-year Degree programme.

Due to their affiliation with NASC Shane Knox and Martin Dunne declared their conflict of interest in this matter and excused themselves from the meeting. Shane Knox also noted that in the event of this item being referred to the Education & Standards Committee he would recuse himself from discussions in that instance.

Shane Mooney noted that if the course is approved two different Paramedic standards will exist. Patrick Plunkett commented that it is a delegated authority of the Director to bring a decision to Council. Brian Power welcomed the move to a degree status but noted an anomaly in that students will be PHECC registered at the end of year 2 upon successful completion, although they will still be required to complete 1 additional year internship to achieve their degree qualification. The Chair referenced the nursing profession and stated that if PHECC standards are met she had no issue with the proposed change to the course, this was echoed by Jason van der Velde.

Kathleen Walsh referred to earlier concerns raised regarding curriculum standards and noted that consideration needs to be given to what is involved in the Quality Review Framework. Kathleen also noted that timelines for implementation had not been received as yet and highlighted that the course is due to begin in September 2019. Both Patrick Fleming and David Menzies stated that an official submission in writing from NASC detailing the changes to the course, timelines for implementation and the justification for same is required to make an informed decision.

The Chair confirmed that the determination whether the proposed changes constitutes a new application or not should be a delegated decision of the Director and if it is decided that a new application is warranted it will be directed to the Education & Standards Committee who will then direct the matter to Council for decision.

The following resolution was passed;

Resolution: That the Director seeks written confirmation of the proposed changes and timelines for implementation of the NASC Paramedic programme and is given delegated authority to determine whether these are significant enough to require a new application or not.

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

Carried without dissent

Regarding item 6.2.5 'NASC AP Programme', Hillery Collins queried if Stage 1 'Review of the application in relation to determining if the application criteria had been completed and submitted in full' had been completed by the Executive. Kathleen Walsh confirmed that several items for clarification have been sent back to the RI and that PHECC are waiting for the RI to respond.

Shane Knox and Martin Dunne re-joined the meeting.

6.1.7 The Director noted that there has been a significant positive change in DoH regarding the need to amend PHECC legislation and referred to the exchange with the DoH as included in Council papers as follows;

"The Minister wrote to the Chairperson of PHECC on 29 March 2019 acknowledging the need for legislative review, particularly in relation to fitness to practice and protection of title issues and, also noted PHECC's reservations regarding the 2008 Government decision, that PHECC in the context of the rationalisation of health agencies, should be integrated into CORU.

As Acute Hospital Policy Division 3 is currently working on developing a detailed appraisal options paper on PHECC, the Minister deferred a meeting with PHECC until this review has been finalised. This review is expected to be completed in the next few months.

The detailed review includes looking at options to strengthen the legislation regarding PHECC's regulatory role in the delivery of pre-hospital care in Ireland and, also to assess the current composition of the Council."

6.2 AP Programme

6.2.1 The Director noted the commercially sensitive nature of the financial information included in Council papers regarding the AP Programme and stressed the confidentiality requirement of same.

David Menzies and the Chair declared their potential conflict of interest in this matter and offered to recuse themselves for the duration of the discussion. Following discussion, it was agreed that there was no conflict of interest.

Regarding Council papers item 6.2.4 'Future Funding of the AP Programme', the Director referred to his submission in Council papers which provided a summary of the history of PHECC's funding of the AP Programme, and outlined his thoughts on a suggested way forward. David Menzies agreed that if PHECC decide not to fund the programme Council should make recommendations as to how the programme should be funded going forward. Shane Knox referenced NASC's programme and the two elements involved i.e. supply (funding) and accreditation. Patrick Fleming noted the risk involved in deciding not to fund the programme going forward and Patrick Hanafin referenced the work involved by all stakeholders at the time in starting the AP programme. Following discussions, the following resolution was passed;

Resolution: That the Council decide to cease funding the AP Programme at the end of the current SLA and enter discussions with the DoH as to the appropriate mechanisms to support the continued need for such education.

Proposed: Patrick Plunkett

Seconded: Conor Deasy

Carried without dissent

Council adjourned for lunch.

Jacqueline Burke, Martin Dunne and Conor Deasy left the meeting at this point.

The Vice Chair, Hillery Collins chaired the meeting from this point.

6.2.2 The Director informed Council that a meeting had taken place with the AP Programme Course Director. Due to the impromptu nature of the meeting, as the majority of attendees were on site for a Medical Advisory Committee meeting, the Director extended his apology to Shane Knox as he was not present that day and therefore not at the meeting as planned. Shane Knox acknowledged that he had no issue with such decision. The Director referenced the minutes of the meeting as included in Council papers. It was noted by David Menzies that the AP Programme Course Director had confirmed that there is no cohort of students that were not taught certain skills. Shane Knox queried if there was a plan in place for skills that are not being covered and it was confirmed by David Menzies that none was in place.

Patrick Plunkett raised his concern regarding the statement in the meeting minutes that the RI in question does not have the facilities to teach paediatric intubation skills. David Menzies outlined that access to theatre time is an issue for RIs and accepted that no RI probably has the ability to teach paediatric intubation skills at an acceptable level. He also noted that there is less of a concern regarding other CPGs involved as these have been made non-core CPGs recently. Shane Knox accepted the points made but queried why an exclusion from teaching IV paracetamol and paediatric intubation would be accepted, particularly in an RI that is funded by PHECC. David Menzies stated that it had been confirmed by the AP Programme Course Director that these CPG's are taught but are not utilised/practised, however Shane Knox expressed his opinion that if they are taught they should be implemented. It was highlighted by David Menzies that a potential conflict exists as this situation may be as a result of lack of funding and noted that PHECC only fund to a certain point. Shane Knox commented that the role of PHECC is undermined if these CPGs are not taught. The Director advised that correspondence will be issued to the AP Programme Course Director informing him that it is Council's expectation that all core elements of PHECC CPG's are taught and practiced.

6.2.3 The Director informed Council that correspondence had been issued to the relevant individuals and feedback received regarding the specification for an independent review of the current AP Programme. A further update will be provided at September Council. Kathleen Walsh noted that timelines for the review are extremely tight, starting in July and an expected completion by the end of September, as per Council's direction. Hillery Collins requested an update for the September Council meeting.

6.2.4 A discussion on this item took place earlier in the meeting to facilitate Council members absence due to conflict of interest.

The Director confirmed that a Travel Policy has been drafted and outlined the levels of authorisation. He further explained that the protocol includes a detailed application form.

Hillery Collins noted that, following Council's decision to amend the policy for claiming travel/subsistence expenses, there has been a delay in receiving payments due from employers and referenced CORU's policy where the Council/Committee member applies to CORU directly rather than to their employer. Tess O'Donovan agreed to act as a point of contact for all HSE employee queries in relation to outstanding expenses payments.

Contents in Council papers were noted. Following a query from Jason van der Velde regarding recognition status of CPG providers, it was confirmed by Ricky Ellis that any reference to 'Full Recognition' refers to full recognition of what they had applied for only. It was agreed that future reports will display exactly what level (EMT/P/AP) each CPG Provider is recognised to provide.

Shane Mooney referenced the recommendation from the Education & Standards Committee regarding a minimum requirement of CPG compliance and current certification at CFR-A level to be eligible to return to registration and noted that this item is also being addressed at the Quality & Safety Committee. Brian Power noted that reference needs to be made to individuals being upskilled to current CPGs to limit any future appeals. The following resolution was passed;

The recommendation from the Education & Standards Committee that CPC in its entirety, design, standards, implementation and revision should be managed by the Education & Standards Committee only and not shared between Committees was discussed. The Director relayed his concern regarding the proposal and highlighted that the role of any Committee is not to manage projects but to provide advice and guidance to Council. He further highlighted that Committees do not manage or direct staff and so are unable to manage projects or be involved in the management or implementation of same.

The Director agreed that the CPC process should fall under the remit of a single Committee of Council to provide clear lines of communication and oversight.

Patrick Plunkett referenced the Medical Council standards in relation to CPD noting that it is part of the registration function and suggested that the design and standards remain with the Committee while process, management and implementation remain with the Executive. Shane Knox agreed that currently CPC does not sit with any Committee and it was suggested by Jason van der Velde that it be allocated to a single Committee. Shane Mooney noted, as Chair of the Quality and Safety Committee, that he was happy that the Education & Standards Committee will design the standards and process while Quality and Safety Committee will police the industry and liaise with registration. The following resolution was passed;

Resolution: That the Council approve the Education & Standards Committee to design the CPC standards and process, whilst management and implementation of the CPC process will lie with the Executive.

Proposed: Patrick Plunkett

Seconded: Tess O'Donovan

Carried without dissent

8 Quality and Safety

8.1 Adjustment of GVF Framework to accommodate recent PHECC Clinical Information Standards Update POL043*

Following reference to the document included in Council papers the following resolution was passed;

Resolution: All Council policy documents shall reflect the current version of Council policies.

Proposed: Jason van der Velde

Seconded: Patrick Plunkett

Carried without dissent

8.2 Publication of GVF Reports*

The various options of publication of GVF reports was discussed and opinions relayed. During the discussion it was highlighted by Ricky Ellis that the purpose of the inclusion of the report in Council papers was to ensure transparency and that Council are fully informed of any risk involved when making their decision regarding the publication of such reports. Following discussion, the following resolution was passed;

Resolution: That the Council accept a recommendation from the Quality & Safety Committee to publish completed GVF reports, to include any quality improvement plan proposed by the organisation, and update on a quarterly basis.

Proposed: Patrick Plunkett Seconded: Pat Hanafin

Carried without dissent

It was agreed that following a GVF inspection, any action plans submitted by the CPG Provider will be included the report upon agreement with the CPG Provider.

It was agreed that future GVF reports will be included in Council papers as an appendix.

8.3 Publication of PCR Information Standard & Associated Patient Care Report

Jacqueline Egan gave an overview and the contents of the standards in Council papers were noted.

9 Clinical Matters

9.1 Updated Clinical Practice Guidelines* (see Appendix 1)

The updated CPG's as included in Council papers were noted. Following a query from Shane Mooney regarding page 33 of Appendix 1 Council members were instructed to direct any feedback to the Medical Advisory Committee in relation to the CPGs in question.

Resolution: That the Council approve the proposed updated versions of the EFR CPGs, Adult & Paediatric Pain Management CPGs, Stridor CPG and Tachycardia CPG.

Proposed: Shane Knox Seconded: Shane Mooney
Carried without dissent

9.2 National Pre-Alert Guidelines* (see Appendix 3)

It was noted by Brian Power that the National Pre-Alert Guidelines as included in Council papers have been approved by the Emergency Medicine Programme and will be presented for final approval to the Medical Advisory Committee in September and subsequently to Council in October.

10 Register

The Register Report as included in Council papers was noted.

11 Risk

The Director noted that at the last Compliance & Audit Committee it was agreed to provide an update on the Risk Register on a quarterly basis and asked Council if they were happy with this process. Fiona McDaid suggested that any high-risk items be referred to Council as they occur, this was agreed by Council. It was further suggested by Jason van der Velde that the Risk Register be included as an appendix in all future Council papers. Con Foley highlighted that the Risk Register has reduced substantially following revision and only 3 high level risks exist, all of which are categorised under litigation and occur due to the limitations of PHECC's SI.

12 AOB

12.1 Registration – UL Paramedic Candidates* (see Appendix 4)

The Director referenced recent correspondence from the University of Limerick in relation to a student registration anomaly. Following consideration by Council the following resolution was passed;

Resolution: That the Council recommends that a registration anomaly mentioned in correspondence be corrected.

Proposed: Shane Knox Seconded: Jason van der Velde
Carried without dissent

David Menzies left the meeting at this point.

12.2 The Director informed Council that at a recent Brexit meeting in the DoH all regulators have been requested to inform all CPG Providers whom they regulate that in the event of a no deal Brexit their UK driving licence will not be recognised as a valid licence in Ireland.

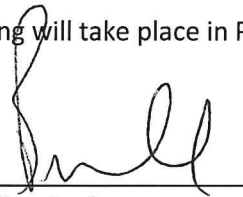
12.3 The Chair thanked Kathleen Walsh and all involved in the recent QRF Assessor Panel workshop. Kathleen Walsh added that Jacqueline Burkes perspective as a reviewer and reviewee was very beneficial.

12.4 Hillery Collins suggested that the Director discuss assigning timeframes to agenda items with the Chair and it was highlighted by Patrick Plunkett that time allocated to agenda items is determined by the Chair.

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm approximately.

The next Council meeting will take place in PHECC offices on Thursday 12th September at 10.00am.

Signed:


Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson

Date:

09/10/2019