

PHECC Council Meeting Minutes
20 May 2021
Via Videoconference



Present:

Jacqueline Burke (Chairperson)

Videoconference:

Aidan O'Brien
David Menzies
Dennis Keeley
Don Brennan
Fiona McDaid
Hillery Collins
Jimmy Jordan
Niamh Collins
Patrick Fleming
Tomás Barry

Apologies

Jason van der Velde (Vice-Chair)
Conor Deasy
William Merriman
Tess O'Donovan

In attendance:

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

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees.

1.0. Declarations of Interest

All were informed that Declarations of Conflicts-of-Interest [COI] had been received by the Secretary from four Council members, including the Chair, for item 4.1.3. of the Directors Report. Given the difficulties posed by the recent HSE cyber-attack, with their permission, the Secretary prepared COI declaration forms for three members of Council, one of whom did not actually attend the meeting.

In addition to the Chair, Jacqueline Burke, Hillery Collins, Don Brennan and Tomás Barry all recused themselves for Agenda item 4.1.3. The Secretary thanked all members concerned and with whom he had engaged in the days before the meeting.

Technical aspects of submitting e-declaration forms will continue to be explored.

2.0. Chairs Business

The Chair commiserated with all concerned and affected by the current cyber-attack on the Health Service Executive and related organisations. Appreciation was extended to all members for submitting their Annual Declarations and the Conflict Declarations for the present meeting considering ongoing IT challenges.

Sympathies were expressed to former Council member Prof. Patrick Plunkett on the death of his brother. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

2.1. Correspondence

The Chair referenced three items of correspondence received:

The first from David Menzies, as Network Clinical Lead for the Central Trauma Network. The Chair congratulated Dr Menzies on his recent appointment. Referring to the Trauma System Report for Ireland 2018, certain recommendations of the report in relation to patient transfers and hospital access protocols are relevant to PHECC and PHECC Licensed CPG Providers. A requirement for development of Critical Care Paramedicine was highlighted as was the relevance of hospital access protocols for all PHECC Licensed CPG Providers. Additionally, clarification of the definition of "working

under medical direction” will need to be addressed. Also for consideration is the potential for shared scope of practice with other professions outside those which PHECC regulate.

Aidan O’Brien joined the meeting.

The second was an email received from NASC regarding the approval process for Advanced Paramedics internship licenses. Council agreed that the current process should remain until such time as current policies/procedures are reviewed and amended. The Director will reply to same clarifying that the current process remains whereby signatories of both the Course Director and Medical Director are required.

Con Foley recused himself from the following discussion.

The third being correspondence dated 31 March 2021 from the Department of Health [DoH], which had been copied to the Director, in relation to 2019 Certified Financial Accounts. Further to discussion, it was agreed that the Director will respond to said correspondence and to related correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee [PAC]. As both matters are related to the OCAG 2019 Audit Management letter, it was suggested that this letter be circulated to Council for information and clarity.

Con Foley rejoined the meeting.

2.2. Committees Chair/Vice-Chair/Membership*

The Chair identified the following as Vice-Chairs of Council Committees: Niamh Collins [Education & Training], Dennis Keeley [Registration] and [Quality & Safety], Tomas Barry [MAC].

The Chair also reported that Con Foley would continue as Acting Chair of Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee [FRACC] until Expressions of Interest for the post were received and acted upon. The resulting current committee composition 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	TBC
Financial, Risk, Audit & Compliance Committee	Con Foley*	TBC
Fitness to Practise Committee	David Menzies	TBC
Preliminary Proceedings Committee	Jason van der Velde	TBC
Appeals Panel	Tess O’Donovan	N/A

*Acting

Jimmy Jordan would also join the FRACC and the Appeal Panel.

The Chair expressed her appreciation to all those who have taken on these additional roles and for their time spent engaging with her in an effort to populate the Council Committees.

3.0. Minutes & Matters Arising

3.1. Draft Minutes 22 April 2021*

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

Resolution: That Council approves the minutes of the Council meeting of 22 April 2021.

Proposed: Jimmy Jordan

Seconded: Patrick Fleming

Carried without dissent.

3.2. Matters Arising

3.2.1 The Chair commented that herself, Aidan O'Brien, Tomás Barry and Pauline Dempsey had assisted in finalisation of the Request for Tender [RFT] to Lead and Manage the PHECC 2021 Education & Training Standards and Competency Framework Project, which had since been issued with a closing date of 08 June 2021 at 12:00hrs.

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.

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*

The Chair and Council members as indicated at 1. above, recused themselves. In addition, David Menzies recused himself due to his connection with NAS and a perceived conflict that this could present. The meeting continued to be quorate with six members present. As the Vice-Chair had previously sent apologies for this meeting, Patrick Fleming was elected Chair by common consent via the following resolution:

Resolution: That Council approves the election of Patrick Fleming to Chair item 4.1.3 of the meeting in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Proposed: Niamh Collins

Seconded: Jimmy Jordan

Carried without dissent.

A summary of the present position was provided by both the Chair and Director, referring to Council resolution of August 2020 that *Council approves to roll over the current SLA with UCD to deliver an AP Programme for a period of 12 months subject to revisions and amendments of the fee structure or a minimum of 16 students.* Discussion ensued wherein the Director addressed the points of due process being followed. The need to formally end the contractual relationship with UCD and recent related legal opinion received were considered. Considering fairness to all parties involved and to ensure the efficient supply of qualified current UCD AP students to the sector, Council passed the following resolution to reach a concluding agreement with UCD:

Resolution: 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.

Proposed: Niamh Collins

Seconded: Jimmy Jordan

Carried without dissent.

It was agreed that the Director will bring any new contract to Council as a formality only. Council's continued support of the earlier Council motion [Dec 2019) regarding engagement with all

stakeholders to discuss the future continuity of Advanced Paramedic education was noted. The Chair thanked all those present for partaking in the discussion.

Council took a short recess.

Jimmy Jordan and Dennis Keely departed the meeting.

The recused members returned, and the above resolution was reported.

Pat Fleming was thanked for his Chairmanship of the discussion.

4.1.4 Cross Border Working

It was noted that this matter is now an agenda and action item of the Health Competent Authorities/Regulators forum. Dual recognition of qualifications on either side of the border, although the ultimate outcome, is thought to be an unlikely option at this time. An interim option being explored is that of 'mutual recognition', which requires legal definition and stress testing.

4.1.5. Fitness to Practise [FTP] Process Review*

Step one of the two-step approach endorsed by Council at their meeting prior, for a review of PHECC FTP Policy and Procedures, is expected to be published in the coming week.

4.1.6. Committee Terms of Reference [TOR]*

It was clarified that the Relative Committee Membership spreadsheet circulated with the draft TORs reflected current practice only and was not intended as a recommendation for the way forward.

Incoming committee Chairs/Vice-Chairs are now considering their relevant committee specific TORs, particularly in relation to the skillset required for their committee and the selection of its members. These will then be brought back to Council for formal adoption at subsequent Council meetings as they become available.

A question in relation to the desire to have registrants from each of the three PHECC registration classes (EMT, P & AP) on some committees was addressed. It was agreed to attempt to fill the required skill set at the outset and having done this, if the three PHECC registration classes are not represented in the membership, specific individuals will be recruited to meet those requirements. A similar approach could be taken to include representation from statutory/private/voluntary service providers or RIs/ATIs.

4.1.7. Registrants' PINs

As the pool of Registrant PIN numbers has almost reached capacity, it was agreed to move from a 4-digit to a 6-digit PIN. An information campaign to inform all key stakeholders of this planned change and the mechanics of same will be implemented in advance of the changeover date of 01 January 2022.

4.1.8. Temporary COVID Register*

With all temporary licences of the COVID Register due to expire on 30 June 2021, Council passed the following resolution to allow for the provision of adequate notice to all relevant stakeholders.

Resolution: That Council approves to extend the PHECC Covid-19 Temporary Register to the end of Dec 2021, if required.
Proposed: Fiona McDaid **Seconded:** Niamh Collins
Carried without dissent.

4.1.9. HSE Vaccinators

It has been reiterated to HSE Vaccinator Manpower Planning officials, that PHECC recommend requesting proof of PHECC registration and a current CFR-A certificate, as these are employment requirements for HSE Vaccinators. All PHECC registrants should then be required to complete the

- The need for diversity of membership.
- The requirement for General Practitioner [GP] representation unless this expertise is already provided by an appointed MAC Committee member.
- The provision for up to four PHECC practitioners to include members from the statutory, voluntary and private CPG providers, noting this may use some of the 'Chair's nominations'.

The following resolution was passed:

Resolution: That Council approves the Medical Advisory Committee [MAC] Terms of Reference [TOR] and membership as proposed in Council papers.
Proposed: Hillery Collins **Seconded:** Aidan O'Brien
Carried without dissent.

6.0. Governance & Finance

6.1. Management Accounts to 30 April 2021*

Financials to end of April 2021 were presented demonstrating comparison to Budget and 2020. The impact of the withdrawal from the UCD-AP Programme and the funding thereof was highlighted.

6.2. Conflict-of-Interest Annual Declaration

It was reported that of the 15 Council Members, 13 Annual Declarations had been received. Members were thanked given the current difficulties with communications.

7.0. Register

7.1. Register Report

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

7.2. EMT CPC Report*

A summary of the EMT CPC Report 2019-2020 included in Council papers was provided by the Deputy Director, which involved an overview of the assessment of the CPC cycle for that period, including the first use of the e-Portfolio system for both collection of data and to assess the submissions. Positive results of same were acknowledged.

All those involved in the production of this very comprehensive and interesting report were thanked.

The urgent requirement to develop a RTP course and related policy was highlighted to Council. This and the issue of patient contacts will be addressed by the newly formed Registration Committee.

8.0. AOB

8.1 All were made aware of correspondence expected from DoH in relation to the development of Critical Care Paramedic [CCP] and Community Paramedic [CP] practitioners. The DoH endorse PHECC's commitment and approach to progressing same. The need for related primary legislation will again be highlighted to the DoH in a response from the Director. It was confirmed that the development of CCP and CP practitioners and the mechanism for their implementation will also be a priority for MAC in the coming months. The use of Core CPGs was recognised and approved as the optimum interim arrangement to facilitate the implementation of same.

8.2 A presentation on Cyber Security was provided by the Deputy Director. Assurances were provided to Council, that as PHECC have no external portals and all data stored in the "cloud", our situation remains relatively secure. The Executive are currently revising ICT policies and developing an ICT

Strategy Plan for 2021. An external tender for Staff ICT Security Training is expected to be awarded tomorrow, meanwhile, vigilance remains a high priority.

The Chair thanked all for attending.

The meeting concluded at 14:55hrs approx.

Signed: Jacqueline Burke . Date: 10th May 2021.
Jacqueline Burke
Chairperson