

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF THE
HEALTH INFORMATION AND QUALITY AUTHORITY**

11 March 2020, 10.30 am – 2pm
VC Cork and Dublin

Present:

Name	Details	Initials
Pat O'Mahony	Chairperson	POM
Paula Kilbane	Board Member	PK
Martin Sisk	Board Member	MS
Tony McNamara	Board Member	TMcN
Jim Kiely	Board Member	JK
Molly Buckley	Board Member (by phone)	MB
Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC

In Attendance:

Phelim Quinn	CEO	PQ
Kathleen Lombard	Board Secretary and Chief Risk Officer	KL

Apologies:

Enda Connolly	Board Member	EC
Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
Stephen O'Flaherty	Board Member	SOF
Lynsey Perdisatt	Board Member	LP
Michael Rigby	Board Member	MJR

1. Quorum

The Chairperson welcomed Ms Bernadette Costello to her first meeting as a HIQA Board member. It was noted that a quorum was present and the Board meeting was duly convened.

2. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

3. Board minutes

3.1 Minutes of Board meeting of 22 January 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 22 January 2020 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. MB proposed approval of the minutes and TMcN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 22 January be approved by the Board.**

3.2 Minutes of Board meeting of 20 February 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 20 February 2020 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. It was noted that MS had been unable to attend the February Board meeting due to a family bereavement. The Board extended their sympathy to MS and noted that this be recorded accordingly in the apologies for the meeting.

PK proposed approval of the minutes and TMcN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 20 February be approved by the Board.**

4. Review of Actions

KL provided an update on all the actions arising from the meetings of 22 January and 20 February, indicating that completed actions are marked in blue. PQ advised that a number of actions will be deferred, given the changed priorities arising from immediate public health concerns. It was noted that:

- Securing a temporary resource to work on the assessment of needs standards will be delayed
- The CEO and the Chairperson are scheduled to meet with the CEO of the HRB to explore areas around technology research
- An initial meeting between HIS and HTA Directorates has occurred to explore working together on areas where information and technologies disciplines intersect
- Some actions are included as agenda items including a paper on revised monitoring approaches in acute healthcare settings and the report on the CICER review
- Other actions will be removed from the action list including the action on the HR operational model which will form part of wider organisational considerations and the legal advice regarding HSE resources, given that it is an action that HIQA cannot progress on its own.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Health and safety matters

PQ advised that arrangements are underway for COVID-19 preparedness.

7. CEO's Report – key strategic and operational matters

MD, Chief Inspector joined the meeting for this item as some items on the CEO's report are relevant to regulatory activities. PQ briefed the Board on the following:

- COVID-19 outbreak preparedness

A cross directorate group has been working on organisational preparedness for an outbreak of the COVID-19 virus which include a range of actions to ensure that HIQA continues to operate appropriately, proportionately and in line with statutory requirements. In this context, a number of temporary adjustments are being made to the programme of inspections and a notification communicating this to providers will issue shortly.

The Board explored in detail the implications associated with HIQA's inspection programme and debated whether the cessation of the inspection programme should be considered. The Chief Inspector clarified that inspections will be prioritised for the registration of providers wishing to open or extend a designated centre. In addition, the situation will be monitored closely and further adjustments made where necessary and when new public health advice is issued.

In response to the Board's questions, PQ clarified that the arrangements included the following;

- a dedicated member of staff has been assigned to co-ordinating responses across the various directorates in HIQA
- a member of staff is a member of the National Public Health Emergency Team
- a test of remote working capacity had been carried out to ensure that remote working can be facilitated effectively
- all non-essential travel has ceased
- ongoing communications are issued to keep staff informed on the evolving situation
- the draft business plan for 2020 will be reviewed as a number of planned objectives will need to be deferred.

In addition, consideration is being given to how HIQA might provide assistance as part of the wider health and social care system's response to the outbreak and PQ is in contact with the HSE in this regard.

PQ also advised that HIQA's Director of HTA, Dr Mairin Ryan will be working in the Department of Health (DoH) for the foreseeable future to provide evidence synthesis and support in the development of guidance around Covid-19.

- Issues relating to overcrowding in acute hospitals

A paper is included in the Board papers for the Board's consideration on this matter.

- Non-compliance of designated centres

The Chief Inspector acknowledged that there has been a number of discussions on this matter over the last two Board meetings and set out clearly the key issues and emerging trends relating to designated centres. MD explained that policy on infrastructural requirements and in other key areas has not been implemented. She advised the Board that this circumstance will be stated as a regulatory finding in future reports.

- Direct provision centres

PQ updated the Board on his response to the Department of Justice (DoJ) regarding a potential role for HIQA in the inspection of the International Protection Accommodation System. No further communication has been received at this point.

- Maternity services review

PQ advised that the relevant reports relating to the maternity services review were published since the last Board meeting.

- Management of the Receipt of information

PQ advised that a comprehensive report was presented at a recent meeting of Regulation Committee on how information received from members of the public and service users is managed. Currently consideration is being given to how information is recorded which should enable better understanding to external parties in relation to HIQA's role and management of concerns.

- Response to staff survey

A detailed action plan is being developed in response to the findings arising from the staff survey conducted in Quarter 4, 2019. This will be brought to the May Board meeting.

- Board reporting

The Executive Management Team are currently reviewing the Board information pack in order to provide the best information that enables the Board's understanding and engagement.

In the context of operational matters, PQ highlighted the following;

- Risks associated with HIQA's IT system

PQ updated the Board on discussions with the DOH in relation to funding for a project to stabilise the current ICT system. The DoH confirmed that the business case for the project will be forwarded to the Dept. of Public Expenditure and Reform with a recommendation for early sanction of funds.

- Budget 2020

The CEO and the Head of Corporate Services attended a meeting with the DoH where the budget allocation for 2020 was clarified. PQ advised the Board that the allocation indicated by the DoH will not enable the implementation of the current draft business plan and that the business plan will have to be revised to align with the funding available. The Board emphasised the need to prioritise the key statutory functions and to manage the budget tightly throughout the year.

8. Chief Inspector's report

MD highlighted key aspects of her report including an overview of compliance in the areas of older persons' centres and centres for people with disabilities. She referenced the revised regulatory plan for inspection of designated centres during the outbreak of COVID-19, which will focus on facilitating the registration of new centres rather than on routine inspections. This approach complies with the Chief Inspector's statutory remit and public health advice.

In addition, MD provided a summary of the status of cases where there is ongoing enforcement activity.

In relation to the publication of the maternity services review, the Board queried what arrangements are being made to ensure that services respond to the report. It was noted that the current public health environment will impact on broader service areas and that HIQA's focus on the findings will be recommenced when the current emergency passes.

8.1 Paper on overcrowding in Emergency departments

MD, Director of Regulation advised that further to the discussion at the January Board meeting on the overcrowding situation in Ireland's acute hospitals, a paper had been prepared for the Board's consideration outlining a proposed approach consistent with HIQA's role and remit. MD explained that HIQA has previously made recommendations for the provision of emergency care at national and individual hospital level but that these recommendations remain largely unimplemented and that HIQA does not have the power to enforce this.

The paper provided to the Board outlines a proposed monitoring approach against the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare which will focus on the quality and safety of services provided to older patients who avail of unscheduled hospital care. MD clarified that this approach will be aligned with the intentions set out in the Sláintecare Service Framework for an integrated pathway of care for older people. MD advised that she had met with Sláintecare representatives who indicated interest in being involved in HIQA's approach. The timeline for piloting this approach was initially planned for Quarter 4, 2020. However, since developing the paper it is acknowledged that the timeline will have to be reconsidered in light of COVID-19.

The Board discussed the approach described in the paper in depth. It was agreed that elements of the paper can be further developed and that the approach refined when it is the appropriate time to continue with the initiative.

9. Collaboration in Ireland for Clinical effectiveness Reviews (CICER) – interim review and sustainability

Michelle O'Neill (MON), Health Economist, joined the meeting for this item and presented the review of the CICER programme which was carried out by an international expert panel. She explained the background to the programme whereby the Health Research Board awarded funding to HIQA for clinical effectiveness reviews to support the activities of the National Clinical Effectiveness Committee appointed by the Minister. The review was very complimentary of the work of CICER, finding that it was of high quality, efficient, demonstrated good engagement with relevant stakeholders and had a flexible and supportive approach. The review also found that increased funding may be required if the same level of quality and collaboration is to be maintained and improved upon.

MON set out the recommendations that were also made by the review panel and advised that the CICER team is already progressing the implementation of these. She highlighted that the current funding model expires in 2022 and set out two options to ensure that the CICER programme can continue beyond that date for consideration by the Board, with the associated advantages and disadvantages. MON summarised the options; to seek direct funding from the Department of Health (DOH) or to continue with the HRB funding model. The Board agreed that the options set out need to be carefully examined and that they would be given further consideration at a future meeting.

It was noted that the Chairperson and the CEO would be meeting the CEO of the HRB later this month where this matter would be discussed.

10. Finance Report

SA joined the meeting for this item. It was noted that a discussion on the 2020 budget took place earlier in the meeting and that finances will have to be managed very tightly with activities tailored to ensure that funding allocation is not exceeded. It was agreed that the business plan for 2020 should be revised in accordance with the funding allocated that has been indicated by the DoH and the impact of COVID-19.

11. Corporate Performance Report including HR report

SA summarised the corporate performance report, highlighting that all objectives are currently on track. However it was noted that given discussions throughout the Board meeting, the draft objectives included in the report will have to be re-examined in light of the budget allocation and the implications for HIQA's work given the immediate public health circumstances.

12. DDTS Strategy

BK joined the meeting for this item and provided an update on key aspects of the strategy for both the Prism sustain project and the longer term strategy projects. BK clarified what elements of the strategy have been completed, are in progress or are being planned. In response to the Board's queries on recruitment and the adequacy of human resources, BK clarified that the necessary resources can be acquired through scaling up or scaling down appropriate support from the external provider. It was agreed that there will be a more granular update on the various work streams from the strategy at future Board meetings.

13. Risk report

KL summarised the recent changes to the risk register, highlighting that a new risk relating to the COVID-19 outbreak has been added in recent weeks. Contingency planning arrangements are in progress and an update has already been provided to the Board in this regard. It was noted that arrangements for future Board meetings will be agreed on a meeting by meeting basis.

The Board noted the status of the other risks included in the report.

14. Business case for Galway office

SA joined the meeting for this item and explained that an accommodation strategy had been approved to plan for HIQA's long term office requirements and outlined the significant space restrictions that exists in both the Cork and Galway offices. SA explained that the business case before the Board is in line with the accommodation strategy and is required for the necessary expansion of HIQA over the coming years, to reduce the need for long distance travel by inspectors, to facilitate internal and external meetings with service providers and to improve environmental conditions for staff.

SA explained that HIQA had secured a small office in Galway in 2015 to accommodate staff operating in that region. That space is no longer adequate and while a number of measures had been taken to mitigate the current unsuitability of the premises, it is evident that there is a need to increase the capacity of the Galway office.

SA outlined the options for addressing office accommodation needs in Galway, the indicative costs for increased accommodation and the risks relating to the proposed expansion. He advised the Board that a property consultant had been engaged by HIQA to carry out a systematic search for premises against specific criteria. A prioritisation process took place on a list of potential premises and HIQA has identified a preferred site. Currently discussions are taking place with the landlord to identify lease terms and associated costs. Should these discussions be fruitful, the business case for Galway office premises will be refined and presented again to the Board before any further action is taken. At this point, SA explained that he is seeking approval in principle from the Board to proceed with the acquisition of office premises as outlined.

PK proposed approval of the business case for office accommodation in Galway and JK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the business case for office accommodation in Galway be approved by the Board.**

15. Committee structure and terms of reference

It was agreed that this item be deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

16. Project outline: recommendations for implementing a National Electronic Patient Summary programme

Kevin O'Carroll (KOC) Health Information Manager (technical standards) joined the meeting for this item and presented the process outline to the Board for the development of recommendations for the implementation of a national electronic patient summary in Ireland.

KOC explained that in 2018, HIQA had developed a National Standard on Information Requirements for a National Electronic Patient Summary and the recommendations that will be developed as part of this project are intended to advise the Minister on best practices for implementation of the electronic patient summary. KOC outlined the process to be followed and that when complete, the recommendations will be presented to the Board for approval. It was noted that this is currently scheduled for Quarter 3.

JK proposed approval of the process outline for developing the recommendations for implementing a National Electronic Patient Summary programme and TMcN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the process outline be approved by the Board.**

17. Process outline for economic burden of anti-microbial resistance (AMR) on public acute hospitals

Patricia Harrington, Head of Assessment, joined the meeting for this item and presented the process outline to the Board for the costing study for the economic burden of anti-microbial resistance (AMR) on the public acute hospitals. PH explained that the DoH requested HIQA to undertake this analysis to inform policy decisions.

PH outlined the background and the deliverables of the project and that an Expert Advisory Group has been established. However, it was highlighted that many of the members of the group will be involved to some extent in the current COVID-19 outbreak and it likely at this point that the timelines for the project will be delayed.

It was also noted that PH will deputise for MR, Director of HTA, while she is working with the DoH on COVID-19 related activity.

MS proposed approval of the process outline for the costing study for the economic burden of anti-microbial resistance (AMR) on the public acute hospitals and JK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the process outline be approved by the Board.**

18. Position paper on ED overcrowding

This item was discussed under 8.1.

19. Chairperson's report

The Board noted the Chairpersons report.

20. Board Committee Report

The committee report was noted and relevant aspects from the meetings had arisen and been discussed during the Board meeting

21. Any other Business

It was noted that PQ had updated the Board on a HR related matter during the Board only session and that the matter was now concluded. There was no other business and the meeting was closed.

Signed



Pat O'Mahony
Chairperson



Kathleen Lombard
Board Secretary

Actions arising from Board meeting on 11 March 2020

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	Further develop elements of the paper on emergency department overcrowding revisit at the appropriate time	MD	To be arranged
2	options set out in relation to the sustainability of the CICER programme to be given further consideration at a future meeting	PQ/MD	To be arranged
3	the business plan for 2020 to be revised to reflect the funding indicated by the DoH	SA	March 2020
4	Provide a more granular update on the various work streams of the DDT strategy at future Board meetings	BK	Future board meetings
5	the discussion on the Committee structure be deferred to a future meeting of the Board	KL	To be arranged

Carried forward actions

No	Action	Person Responsible	Timeframe
1	Explore securing a temporary resource to work on the AON standards. (Chairperson and CEO to raise the matter with the Secretary General of the DoH at their upcoming meeting)	PQ/RF	Deferred until appropriate time
2	CEO and Chairperson to meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in the area of technology research	POM/PQ	Meeting scheduled
3	HIS and HTA to explore working together on standards development in areas where information and other technologies meet	RF/MR	Initial meeting took place
4	Keep plan to address the staff survey findings on the Board's agenda - Business plan objective 2020 includes actions to address the findings.		May Board meeting
5	PQ to report back to Board on a meeting with the DoJ to discuss HIQA's role in inspection of the International Protection Accommodation System	PQ	March Board meeting
6	The Executive to explore a more advanced budgeting and financial modelling system.	SA	March Board meeting
7	greater focus and scrutiny of budgetary planning and expenditure during 2020	PQ/SA	ongoing
8	session with the Board on risk to be arranged	KL	May
9	stakeholder engagement report to be presented differently e.g. stakeholder heat map	PQ/COB	When appropriate