

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

6 May 2020, 10.30 am – 2pm
Video Conference

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	MB
Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC
Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
Stephen O'Flaherty	Board Member	SOF
Lynsey Perdisatt	Board Member	LP
Michael Rigby	Board Member	MJR

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

Enda Connolly	Board Member	EC
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1. Quorum

The Chairperson welcomed participants to the meeting. 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 11 March 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 11 March 2020 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. SOF proposed approval of the minutes and BC seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 11 March be approved by the Board.**

3.2 Minutes of Board meeting of 6 April 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 6 April 2020 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. JK proposed approval of the minutes and PK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 6 April be approved by the Board.**

3.3 Minutes of Board meeting of 22 April 2020

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

3.4 Formal note of e-mail decision

The email approval by the Board (15 April) of a resolution endorsing the measures adopted and undertaken by the Executive management, including those of the Chief Inspector, in response to the COVID 19 emergency, was formally noted for the minutes.

4. Review of Actions

KL provided an update on the actions arising from the meetings of 11 March, 6 and 22 April.

The Board requested that the plan for addressing the staff survey findings be brought to the next Board meeting. The Board expressed the view that staff wellbeing needs particular focus at this time as there has been considerable changes such as working remotely which may present challenges for maintaining cohesion in the workforce. It was also suggested that PQ and LP would discuss if additional strategic support for HR might be required in light of the current changes to the workplace.

The Board also suggested that there is an opportunity to continue recent innovative approaches and assess potential for reconfiguration and reengineering of functions and resources. It was agreed to include in the next strategy session of the Board to be held in October/November.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Health and safety matters

PQ advised the Board of an accident involving a member of staff. PQ advised that there are relevant policies in place and that the appropriate action has been taken.

PQ also clarified that while there are incidents included in the health and safety report, these were not reported at the time of occurrence as they were minor in nature.

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 referred the Board to the following items:

- HIQA response to COVID-19

HIQA's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) has been operational since March. A special BCP group met daily until 13 April; since then it meets 3 times weekly. PQ advised that while the initial focus was on setting up employees for home working, the focus is now on ensuring that there is appropriate ongoing support in terms of wellbeing, appropriate equipment and other service needs. In response to the Board, PQ confirmed that there are no confirmed COVID 19 cases amongst staff. He also confirmed that appropriate records of the BCP meetings are retained.

- Communications strategy – COVID 19

A communications strategy, specific to COVID 19 communications has been developed. PQ advised that the strategy was followed in relation to recent publications. The Board expressed its satisfaction for the strong response and thanked PQ for developing the strategy. It was confirmed that the strategy would be circulated to the Board.

- Work of HTA team

The HTA team is involved in significant and diverse work supporting the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). MR, Director of HTA, chairs the subgroup on Guidance and Evidence Synthesis. The Board suggested that HIQA's contributions to the work of NPHE should be catalogued and that management decisions for the redeployment of staff should be maintained as it is necessary to document the rationale for deferring various work streams.

The earlier point in relation to assessing HIQA's functions and the additional value they might provide in terms of the future broader context was noted.

- Business planning and performance management

The draft Business Plan for 2020 has been considered by the EMT in light of HIQA's changed priorities due to supporting the COVID 19 national response. It was noted that the allocation for 2020 has not yet been confirmed. A "working" business plan and performance report is on the agenda for discussion.

- Guideline Development

The Standards team made an application to carry out a project for the National Patient Safety Office on "open disclosure on Healthcare policy".

- Maternity Survey

The first survey in Ireland on antenatal, intra-partum and postnatal experience "the National Maternity Experience Survey" closed on the 30th April. It is expected that this will be published in September.

8. Chief Inspector's report

MD highlighted key aspects of her report including measures instigated in the context of the public health emergency as follows, all focused on care and safety of service users:

- The cessation of all routine inspection and issue of regulatory notices with the aim of reducing the regulatory burden on the sector
- Particular focus on processing registration inspections within a 24 hour turnaround to increase residential capacity for the wider system (provision of an additional 400 beds)
- Escalating risks regarding particular centres to the Department of Health (DOH) and the HSE at the beginning and throughout the crisis; weekly meetings with the HSE on the escalated centres
- Providing supports for the sector including logistics information to the HSE and establishing an infection control hub for providers
- data and information sharing, facilitating the identification of emerging trends and enabling liaison of providers with responsible agencies
- Establishing an assessment framework to assess the preparedness of non-COVID affected centres for managing an outbreak.

The Board discussed the current trends in residential centres and expressed the view that further consideration from a public health perspective is needed. It was suggested that HIQA consider linking with relevant agencies such as the Health Protection Surveillance Centre and the National Disease Surveillance Centre. It was noted that the HTA team is also conducting some analysis in this context.

There was a discussion relating to the private nursing home sector and the factors contributing to the outbreaks in these centres. MD advised that the centres operate as homes rather than hospitals and noted that a number had been previously identified as non-compliant with regulations relating to infection prevention and control. In

addition, private providers are at a greater remove than statutory providers are from the HSE. While some centres had sourced PPE (personal protective equipment), many hadn't. In response to the Board's discussion MD confirmed that;

- HIQA had provided logistical information to the HSE on adversely affected centres to enable assistance to be provided from the HSE..
- The establishment of the infection control hub provided direct advice and support to providers also.
- Appropriate records of information provided by HIQA has been retained.

MD also advised that the inspections under the new assessment framework had proved useful and has ensured that those centres know how to contact the necessary supports in the local Community healthcare (CHO) area. She added that emerging concerns now relate to the loneliness and isolation experienced by residents. She also reported that there had been an increase of COVID related information received from family members and staff.

The Board enquired about the impact on regulatory staff. MD confirmed that good structures have been established to provide support and to ensure good communications.

The Board thanked MD for her leadership during these weeks and expressed appreciation for the volume and quality of work carried out by the Regulation Directorate within a short space of time.

9. Corporate Performance Report and Indicative Business Plan 2020 (item 15)

SA joined the meeting at this point. The Chairperson welcomed SA to the meeting and expressed the Board's appreciation of the work carried out by Operations Division facilitating and supporting the wider organisation during the current circumstances. He advised SA of the Board's earlier discussion about ensuring appropriate supports for staff and for ensuring that strategic HR is optimal and that this be discussed further by LP and PQ.

MD left the meeting.

SA explained that the corporate performance report is closely linked to the indicative Business Plan 2020 at item 15 on the agenda. SA advised that the performance report highlights that a considerable number of the objectives in the draft business plan, previously considered by the Board, will not be achieved due to external factors. He also explained that a number of new objectives have been included in the Business plan before the Board today to reflect new activities arising from HIQA's work on the COVID 19 national response. The Board discussed the performance report and the indicative Business Plan and recommended that the Executive management give careful consideration to;

- HIQA's succession planning and structure to ensure delivery of those objectives that are currently on track

- ensuring that adequate and appropriate resources are deployed to areas which are deemed high priority
- that an analysis of the role and functions of HIQA in light of COVID related issues, be prepared for the next Board strategy session
- prioritising improvements to the IT system and allocating sufficient resources, given the role this function has played in recent days and will continue to play.

It was noted that the letter of allocation confirming HIQA's funding for 2020 had not yet been received but that HIQA is operating on the basis of the amount indicated by the DoH in early March. It was agreed that the Business plan will be further reviewed and brought back to the Board when the allocation is received.

10. Finance Report

SA presented HIQA's current financial position, explaining that in the absence of the letter of allocation confirming 2020 funding, that HIQA is working to a draft budget based on previous indications from the DOH.

SA outlined the differences between 2019 and 2020 spend to date specifying where expenditure had increased or decreased and that overall spend was in line with indicative funding.

The Board made a number of observations including;

- that contingency plans be considered for longer term home working arrangements should additional "waves" of COVID 19 occur; the Executive were asked to give consideration to allocating resources to ensure that working from home arrangements are safe in the longer term
- that a year to date indicative budget column be included in future reports until funding allocation is confirmed
- that the budget and spend is kept under review.

SA confirmed that the Business continuity group are working on contingency arrangements should longer term working from home arrangements prove necessary and that the budgeting and expenditure will be closely monitored.

11. ICT report

BK joined the meeting for this item and provided an update on developments relating to the Digital and Data Strategy. Areas highlighted during his brief included planned projects which have been impacted due to COVID 19 factors and additional priority activities undertaken to enable and support staff and new initiatives. BK outlined these for the Board.

BK also advised the Board that the scope of the Prism Sustain project and the planned objectives for 2020 will be reviewed in line with the capital budget. This will entail re-scoping and re-prioritising certain projects.

It was agreed that BK will present a paper on the revised Prism Sustain project to the Board at its next meeting.

The Board thanked BK on the work that had taken place over the last couple of months and acknowledged the efficiency of the team in responding quickly to the demands of the business.

12. Risk report

PQ advised that the Executive are monitoring impacts in relation to COVID 19 and these have informed current changes to the corporate risk register.

KL summarised the recent changes to the risk register, highlighting that one risk was removed and a new one added. In addition, the likelihood of two risks had been increased with the result that the risk rating had also increased. The Board queried the increase in likelihood the risks. KL clarified that there are specific definitions which informs the likelihood but that the Executive management will reflect on this when next reviewing the corporate risks.

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

13. Health and Safety Report

SA presented the annual Health and Safety report to the Board. The report outlined HIQA's health and safety framework, the training and risk assessment activities and the responsibilities of the health and safety officer. SA also reported on the number and nature of accidents during 2019. The Board asked that consideration be given to considering the criteria for escalating health and safety issues to the Board. SA confirmed that he will examine this with the Health and safety Officer.

14. Committee structure and terms of reference

KL reminded the Board that as part of its governance arrangements, that committees and their terms of reference are reviewed periodically. She also highlighted that following a recent evaluation of the Board, a number of recommendations were made relating to committees including;

- a review of the terms of reference for the Audit Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) and the Resource Oversight Committee (ROC)
- better alignment between committee meetings and the Board meetings
- that the Standards Information Resource and Technology (SIRT) committee provide a greater role in reviewing items in detail prior to going before the Board.

Since then, members of the ARGC and the ROC committees met and reviewed their respective terms of reference; these have been attached for Board approval.

SOF proposed approval of the terms of reference for the ARGC and the ROC and BC seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that revised terms of reference for these committees be approved by the Board.**

Members of the SIRT and Regulation Committees met to consider their roles and the possibility of merging the two committees into one. The members recommended that the current committee structure be retained, given that current indications are that HTA and HIS work is growing in volume and relevance. In addition, it was considered that HIQA's priorities and focus in the aftermath of COVID-19 and the potential changes to the health and social care environment will need to be examined at the next strategy session of the Board and this may have implications for HIQA's oversight and governance structure.

The Board agreed with the recommendation and the SIRT and Regulation Committees' roles remain unchanged.

15. Indicative Business plan 2020

This item was discussed in conjunction with item 9 (corporate performance report)

16. Heads of terms for lease of new Galway office

SA reminded the Board that a business case for new offices in Galway was approved at the March Board meeting. The offices provide for HIQA's expansion over the coming years, reduces the need for long distance travel by inspectors currently based in Cork or Dublin, facilitates internal and external meetings with service providers and improves environmental conditions for staff.

SA advised the Board that the paper before the Board sets out the preferred site and the proposed lease terms, rental and associated costs.

The Board had an in-depth discussion on the proposed lease and debated the pros and cons of the terms. The Board asked that some aspects of the proposed lease be revisited with the potential landlord. SA agreed to progress this discussion with the landlord and will report back to the Board.

17. Chairperson's report

The Board noted the Chairperson's report.

18. Board Committee Report

CS advised the Board that the ARGC committee had reviewed an internal audit report on the National Inpatient Experience Survey. In the main, the findings were minor and many of the recommendations had been already implemented. A review of the effectiveness of the internal audit function was also undertaken and an action plan had also been put in place to address the findings.

The committee report was noted.

19. Any other Business

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 6 May 2020

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	Re strategic HR; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bring plan for addressing the staff survey findings to the next Board meeting - PQ and LP to discuss additional HR strategic support, if required 	PQ/SA/LP	July Board meeting
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Board to examine opportunity to continue recent innovative approaches and assess potential for reconfiguration and reengineering of functions and resources b. an analysis of the role and functions of HIQA, in light of responses to COVID be prepared for Board strategy session c. HIQA's priorities and focus in aftermath of COVID-19 to be examined, including potential changes to the health and social care environment and any implications for HIQA's oversight and governance structure. 	PQ/EMT	Board strategy session: Sept/Oct
3	Circulate communications strategy to the Board	KL	immediate
4	HIQA's contributions to the work of NPHET to be recorded, together with management decisions for the redeployment of staff	PQ/MD	immediate
5	Re Business planning, the Executive management to consider; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - succession planning and structure to ensure delivery of on track objectives - that resources are deployed to areas which are deemed high priority - prioritise improvements to the system and allocate sufficient resources - the Business plan to be reviewed by the Board when the allocation is received. 	PQ/SA	immediate
6	Re finance item, the Executive to consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the allocation of resources to ensure that working from home arrangements are safe in the longer term - a year to date indicative budget column be included in future reports until funding allocation is confirmed - that the budget and spend is kept under review 	SA/BK	immediate
7	Board paper on the revised prism sustain	BK	July

8	likelihood of two risks to reviewed by the Executive management	KL/EMT	June
9	Consider criteria used for escalating health and safety issues to the Board	SA	July
10	further discussions should take place with the potential landlord on the proposed lease	SA	July

Carried forward actions from previous meetings

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	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
6	CEO and Chairperson to meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in the area of technology research	POM/PQ	deferred
7	HIS and HTA to explore working together on standards development in areas where information and other technologies meet	RF/MR	In progress
8	Keep plan to address the staff survey findings on the Board's agenda - Business plan objective 2020 includes actions to address the findings.		July Board meeting
9	The Executive to explore a more advanced budgeting and financial modelling system.	SA	March Board meeting
10	greater focus and scrutiny of budgetary planning and expenditure during 2020	PQ/SA	ongoing
11	session with the Board on risk to be arranged	KL	May
12	stakeholder engagement report to be presented differently e.g. stakeholder heat map	PQ/COB	When appropriate