

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

30 September 2020, 10am – 1.30pm
Zoom Conference

Present:

Name	Details	Initials
Pat O'Mahony	Chairperson	POM
Tony McNamara	Board Member	TMcN
Jim Kiely	Board Member	JK
Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC
Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
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 8 July 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 8 July 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 LP seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 8 July be approved by the Board.**

3.2 Formal note of email approval of chair appointments and committee membership

The email approval by the Board for the appointment of Chairs to the Regulation, SIRT and Resource Oversight Committee was formally noted by the Board.

The email approval by the Board of the revised memberships of the Committees was formally noted by the Board.

4. Review of Actions

Key updates on the actions arising from the July Board meeting was provided including that:

- A dedicated resource is working on succession planning and strategic HR
- Work on enhancing HIQA's budget planning process is underway and
- Matters for the Board strategy session to be held in early November are being considered and prepared.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Health and safety matters

There were no matters for reporting.

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

Mary Dunnion (MD) Chief Inspector and Carol Grogan (CG) Head of Regulatory Practice Development Unit joined the meeting for this item as some items on the CEO's report are relevant to regulatory activities. PQ highlighted the following items from his report:

- **COVID-19 response – Business Continuity Plan**

The Business Continuity Team continues to meet fortnightly. In line with Government guidance, the majority of staff are working remotely. New recruits, where it is deemed essential, are office based to ensure effective induction and integration with their teams.

- **COVID-19 Nursing Home Expert Panel Report**

This report was published on 19th August and contains 86 recommendations based on 15 themes with timelines. A significant number of recommendations have been assigned to HIQA and which will require additional resources. A significant business case for additional human and financial resources has been developed for submission to the DoH, a summary of which is included in the CEO's report.

- **Evidence Synthesis (COVID-19)**

The HTA team is almost entirely allocated to COVID-19 related work. Following a review of its operations in July, NPHE has restructured so that the evidence synthesis work is now provided directly by HIQA to NPHE, rather than from a sub-group of

NPHET. It was noted that the first meeting of the new arrangement under HIQA was held on the day previous to the Board meeting and went well.

It was also noted that this development and its related challenges was discussed in detail at the SIRT committee meeting. In this context it was suggested that communication in respect of publishing evidence synthesis will need to clearly articulate that it relates to evidence at a particular moment in time and as new evidence arises, the advice will change accordingly.

- COVID 19 – additional supports

The HIS Directorate has developed an online training tool on infection control to support the implementation of the National Standards for Infection Prevention and Control in community services which has been positively received by frontline staff.

- National Maternity Survey

The results of the first National Maternity Services Survey will be published on 1 October.

- Communications and Stakeholder Engagement

- The CEO, Chief Inspector and Deputy Chief Inspector appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on COVID-19 on 7 September. The focus was on the report published by the Chief Inspector in July on the impact of COVID-19 on Nursing Homes and on the report of the Nursing Homes Expert Panel
- The Chairperson and the CEO met with the new Minister for Children, Disability, Equality and Integration on the regulation of children's services and the development of national standards for children's services and
- The CEO and the Chief Inspector met with the Minister for Health to provide a briefing on issues relating to the nursing home sector.

- Other items currently being progressed include the preparation for the Board strategy session and strategic HR projects. A presentation will be made at the next Resource Oversight Committee on the HR work.

- The CEO also drew the Board's attention to the stakeholder engagement activities and corporate governance matters outlined in his report.

8. Chief Inspector's report

MD briefed the Board on some key items contained in the Chief Inspector's report:

- COVID-19 Business Information Dashboard

With the help of the information Division, a business information dashboard has been developed which provides real time information on all regulated centres where there are suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. This new information tool is a valuable support in the management of caseloads and escalation of centres. MD explained that every morning there is a formal escalation of centres to the HSE. Inspectors can also use the dashboard to check with centres if they have adequate resources to address the outbreak.

- Nursing Home Expert Panel report

Within HIQA, a project has been initiated to address the recommendations that are within existing powers, contained in the Nursing Home Expert Panel report. It was noted that it has been highlighted to the Chair of the Implementation Group that some recommendations cannot be implemented without changes to legislation.

In response to the Board's queries, it was clarified that Nursing Homes Ireland is not on the implementation group but are members of a contributing reference group.

- Unsolicited receipt of Information

There has been an 87% increase in information received in the Directorate, many reflecting concerns associated with the impact of COVID-19 on nursing home residents and their families.

- Legal proceedings

MD updated the Board on a number of legal cases currently being managed. A brief overview of the cases is included in the Chief Inspector's report.

The Board thanked MD for her report. The Chair of the Regulation committee raised an issue which had arisen at the committee meeting on the engagement with the HSE in the context of cases emerging in nursing homes. It was noted that there has been a change in approach by the HSE which has resulted in the cessation of the regular, weekly formal engagements on regulated, residential services with the HSE. The Board expressed their concern on this and the emerging number of cases and outbreaks and a detailed discussion ensued which included issues relating to:

- Noncompliance levels with infection control within centres
- Re-emergence of a small number of COVID-19 cases in nursing homes
- Necessity for support for private nursing homes if required and
- Resourcing challenges within the HSE.

The Board were strongly of the view that this matter needs to be escalated without delay.

The Board unanimously agreed that the CEO writes, in the first instance, to the CEO of the HSE seeking assurances on the HSE's commitment to the multiagency response initiated last March/April and to providing adequate support to the sector in event of an increase in COVID cases. The Executive confirmed that this will be actioned.

The Chairperson commended MD and her team for the continued dedication and commitment shown throughout the pandemic which is evident from the work described in the Chief Inspector's report.

The Chairperson also expressed, on behalf of the Board, condolences on the recent passing of one of the Regulation Directorate's staff. It was noted that the CEO has expressed condolences to the family on behalf of the organisation and a mass is being organised to celebrate her life.

14. Scheme of delegation

It was agreed that items 14 and 15 be taken at this point in the meeting.

Carol Grogan (CG) introduced the scheme of delegation to the Board and explained that the Health Act 2007 as amended (the Act) permits the Board to delegate its functions, as appropriate, to the CEO. The Act also allows the CEO to delegate any of the CEO's functions to employees of HIQA and for the CEO to authorise the sub delegation of any of the delegated functions to other employees. The purpose of the scheme of delegation is to record and communicate the levels of authorisations for functions delegated under the Act.

CG explained that there a number of separate delegated schemes currently in place including the:

- Delegation of functions from the Board to the CEO
- Sub delegation from the CEO to Executive Directors
- Sub delegation for the MIRE function
- Delegation for the Protected Disclosure Act, 2014
- Sub delegation of functions under the Protected Disclosure Act, 2014

CG outlined a proposal for the Board's approval which is to bring together the schemes of delegations and sub delegations into one consolidated document which links to the Governance framework. A number of other elements of the proposal were included in the Board paper to which CG referred including the;

- inclusion of high level overview of functions
- updated 'principles of delegations'
- Removing reference to 'sub' delegation for the schemes except in the case of protected disclosures (keeping language in line with the Act)
- Making more explicit the reasons for revocations of a scheme or individual function
- Updating MIRE delegation to remove 'subdel' and replace with 'Director of Health Technology Assessment'
- Mandatory ELearning programme for any person in receipt of a delegation or sub-delegation (to be completed in advance of receiving the instrument of delegation/ sub-delegation) and Information for all other staff
- Consolidating the electronic registers
- Instrument of delegation template updated to bring the language more in line with the Act include HIQA logo.

CG advised the Board that work on administering these changes will commence subject to the Board's approval and the revised consolidated document will be brought back to the Board.

The Board considered the proposal to consolidate the various schemes of delegation/schemes of sub-delegation and to make the proposed changes as outlined in the document before the Board.

BC proposed approval of the proposal and TMcN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the proposal that the various schemes of delegation be**

consolidated into one document together with the additional elements described in the proposal, be approved by the Board.

15. Scheme of determination (for information of the Board)

CG summarised the purpose of the scheme of determination to the Board, explaining that it sets out the functions that may be performed by inspectors under the Act. A comprehensive review of the scheme has recently been undertaken and as a result the scheme has been updated with the main change relating to the criteria for determining the range of functions which an inspector can perform depending on their level of responsibility and training.

It was noted that certain functions may not be delegated and these are reserved for the Chief Inspector. It was also noted that the scheme of determination is a core element of the governance and legal arrangements for the Office of the Chief Inspector.

The Board welcomed the update and the governance arrangements in place.

MD and CG left the meeting at this point.

9. Report from Board Committees

Regulation Committee

The Chair of the Regulation Committee, Jim Kiely (JK), reported that a significant matter arising has been shared with the Board, resulting in the Board decision that formal escalation pathways must be reinstated so that potential outbreaks are managed promptly by the relevant agency.

In addition, he reported that notwithstanding the huge burden on the Regulation Directorate, operations are progressing well with the expectation that the business plan objectives will be delivered. It was also clear to the Committee from the information received at the meeting that there is strong strategic focus on planning for the future in an environment with significant changes from both an internal and external perspective.

A significant internal challenge relates to a number of senior members of staff that are due to retire or are moving to a new position. The importance of effective succession planning is clear. In that context, it was noted that the CEO and the Chairperson have had a number of discussions on succession approaches for these changes.

The Chair of the committee also emphasised the vital and increasing importance of the implementation of the Digital and Data Transformation Strategy to the Regulation Directorate's operations.

Standards Information Research and Technology Committee (SIRT)

The Chair of the SIRT committee, Michael Rigby (MJR), outlined his intention that the SIRT committee will meet every 2 months approximately 2 weeks before Board meetings as there is a significant volume of work and a broad range of topics being managed by the two Directorates for which the Committee has oversight responsibility.

He reported on his intention that the committee provides support to the Executive in terms of thinking on certain important matters such as the degree to which principles are enshrined in legislation, how best to optimise the voice of the public and influencing to achieve change. He advised that it is the intention to include in his report two or three points that have been distilled through the Committee's discussion for consideration by the Board.

Resource Oversight Committee (ROC)

The Chair of the ROC, Lynsey Perdisatt (LP), reported on the main items that were considered at the recent ROC meeting. She advised that the Committee has requested the Head of Communications and Stakeholder engagement to develop an approach for a strategic integrated approach on communications. The Chief Information Officer provided an update on the implementation of the Digital and Data Transformation Strategy and the Committee has requested a detailed update to be presented at the next Board meeting against the original approved strategy.

In addition, there had been a report from the Acting Chief Operations Officer on strategic and operational HR matters. Additional support has been secured to work on a succession plan for HIQA.

The Chair also reported that the Committee had received reports on:

- Projects managed by the Programme Management Office
- Governance arrangements for managing Joint Working Agreements and
- Risks relevant to the remit of the Committee.

Audit Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC)

The Chair of the ARGC, Caroline Spillane (CS), reported that the Committee had received a very clear and thorough report on a review of cyber security controls, including a clear roadmap in terms of addressing areas identified for improvement. In addition, staff from the information directorate presented their plan on implementing the recommendations arising from a penetration testing exercise which had been provided to the Committee at their previous meeting. Again, it was clear that there is a comprehensive approach to progressing this work.

The Chair also advised the Board that the Information Division had reported on outstanding internal audit recommendations. The Committee were assured that there are no major items omitted and that many have since being subsumed or updated as part of subsequent reviews.

In addition, the committee had received a clear presentation on the arrangements governing procurement in HIQA.

The Chairperson thanked the Committee Chairs for their reports and for their scrutiny of important items in terms of the Board's governance and oversight function.

10. Finance Report – end July 2020

SA presented the financial report to the end of July 2020. He explained that drawdown, income and expenditure figures are slightly at variance but are timing related. As requested by the Board, SA included an update on expenditure by function and also by category.

He drew the Board's attention to the summary set out in the report and confirmed that the full grant from the Department of Health (DoH) will be utilised this year.

In response to the Board's questions SA confirmed that:

- A full reforecast has been conducted and the necessary adjustments made to budget
- Work has commenced on planning for 2021. In this context, business cases have been submitted for additional staff in light of the additional work arising in HTA and arising from the Nursing Homes Expert Panel's report
- ICT capital funding is rolled forward if not spent in the current year. It is expected that the bulk of ICT capital spend will be in 2021 and
- External expertise is providing advice and support in terms of HIQA's budgeting and planning approach, the outcome of this will come to the next meeting of the ARGC.

The Board thanked SA for a clear report on HIQA's financial position.

11. Corporate Performance Report

SA highlighted the summary on the delivery of the 2020 business plan objectives and advised that the majority of objectives will be delivered by year end. For those that are not on track, a rationale is provided within the report.

It was noted that the performance of the various functions and operations had been reviewed in detail by the Committees.

12. Risk report

KL summarised the recent changes to the corporate risk register including additions, removals from the register and where risk rating was increased or decreased.

It was noted that there are a lot of ongoing changes in both the internal and the external environment with related impacts on HIQA's risks. Therefore, ensuring that there is ongoing emphasis on the monitoring of HIQA's risks and mitigation strategies.

13. Standards and Guidance prioritisation process

Rachel Flynn (RF) Director of Health Information and Standards joined the meeting for this item and for the item on the Survey on Maternity Services. RF explained that as the demand for standards and guidance had increased, the Directorate had instituted a prioritisation process so that resources are deployed where the greatest impact can be gained.

Niamh O'Rourke (NOR) Head of Standards presented a statement of assurance to the Board on the selection process and criteria used in the prioritisation process. NOR outlined the outcome of the process together with a recommendation to the Board that National Standards for Home Support Services be prioritised for development.

In response to the Board, it was confirmed that this process is carried out approximately every two years which allows for new subjects to be considered and therefore priorities may change following the assessment process.

The Chair of the Standards, Information, Research and Technology (SIRT) committee advised that the committee had considered this item in detail at their meeting and commends both the process and the proposal to the Board for their approval.

MR proposed approval of the proposal to develop National Standards for Home Support services and JK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the development of National Standards for Home Support Services be approved by the Board.**

NOR left the meeting at this point.

14. Scheme of delegation

This item was covered immediately after the Chief Inspector's report

15. Scheme of determination

This item was covered after the Chief Inspector's report.

16. Results of the Maternity Survey

PQ advised the Board that the National Maternity Experience Survey 2020 is the first time that service users' experiences of maternity services have been surveyed.

RF gave a brief overview of the survey and explained that this is part of a wider strategy with a range of experience surveys planned over the coming years. RF clarified that as part of this strategy it is intended that;

- the next time that maternity services are reviewed, those who have experienced a loss will be included
- next year the survey will focus on in-patient experience
- end of life care experience will also be reviewed.

The Board observed that the survey, in the main, shows positive findings. In response to a question posed on the survey findings vis-à-vis the status of implementation of the National Maternity Strategy, RF clarified that the survey gives the perspective of women experiencing the services rather than a review of the services. It was noted that this should be clearly communicated when the survey results are launched.

RF informed the Board that the survey will be launched on the next day following the Board meeting and outlined the plans for the launch using online platforms. Key partners will feature at the launch including the Minister for Health and the CEO of the HSE.

RF left the meeting at this point.

17. Chairperson's report

The Board noted the Chairperson's report. The Chairperson also reminded Board members if there are any issues they wish to raise with him on a one to one or group basis that he is always available to discuss.

18. Correspondence

A number of items of correspondence was included for the Board's attention.

19. Any other Business

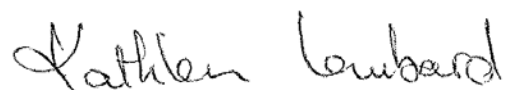
The Board raised a concern relating to restrictions on visiting practices in long term residential centres with the result that residents are experiencing isolation and loneliness. PQ advised the Board that this is something that the Executive has been concerned about and have sought detailed guidance from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre. HIQA has input into the development of this guidance which is about to issue. PQ confirmed that this matter will be kept at the forefront of discussions with relevant parties.

It was suggested that this is a subject where empirical research would be of benefit. It was agreed that the Chair and the CEO will discuss this further.

Signed



Pat O'Mahony
Chairperson



Kathleen Lombard
Board Secretary

Actions arising from Board meeting on 30 Sept 2020

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	A presentation will be made at the next Resource Oversight Committee on the HR work	PQ	Nov 2020
2	CEO to write to the CEO of the HSE seeking assurances on the HSE's commitment to the multiagency response initiated last March/April and to providing adequate support to the sector in event of an increase in COVID cases.	PQ	immediate
3	the revised consolidated scheme of delegation to come back to the Board	PQ	

Carried forward actions from previous meetings

1	further strategic discussions to take place on models of working as staff return to office based working and for future staff requirements	SA	Part of HR strategy
2	the importance of conducting a study to develop principles for record-keeping for children's health, balancing confidentiality, accountability, and appropriate sharing to be considered	RF	For consideration as part of business planning 2021
3	fresh emphasis to be given to adult safeguarding and raise with the Minister and Secretary General of the DoH when meeting is arranged.	PQ	A copy of the LRC submission was sent to the Minister with a letter from Chairperson.
4	revised dates to be provided in future corporate performance reports for those objectives that have been delayed.	SA	Reporting system being procured
5	<p>a. Board to examine opportunity to continue recent innovative approaches and assess potential for reconfiguration and reengineering of functions and resources</p> <p>b. an analysis of the role and functions of HIQA, in light of responses to COVID be prepared for Board strategy session</p> <p>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.</p>	PQ/EMT	<p>Board strategy session: Nov</p> <p>Engagement with EMT and Board in advance</p>

6	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	Expertise sourced to develop succession plan and assist with strategic HR and org structure
3	Further develop elements of the paper on emergency department overcrowding revisit at the appropriate time	MD	On hold
4	options set out in relation to the sustainability of the CICER programme to be given further consideration at a future meeting	PQ/MD	On hold
5	Provide a more granular update on the various work streams of the DDT strategy at future Board meetings	BK	Future board meetings
6	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
7	CEO and Chairperson to meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in the area of technology research	POM/PQ	deferred
8	HIS and HTA to explore working together on standards development in areas where information and other technologies meet	RF/MR	To be explored as part of business planning for 2021
10	greater focus and scrutiny of budgetary planning and expenditure during 2020	PQ/SA	Report pending
11	session with the Board on risk to be arranged	KL	To be part of strategy session Sept 2020
12	stakeholder engagement report to be presented differently e.g. stakeholder heat map	PQ/COB	A review has commenced of how stakeholder engagement is captured in the CEO's report. However, since outbreak of COVID, resources needed on time sensitive publications work

