

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

1 December 2021, 10am – 2pm
Zoom Conference

Present:

Name	Details	Initials
Pat O'Mahony	Chairperson	POM
Jim Kiely	Board Member	JK
Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC
Lynsey Perdisatt	Board Member	LP
Michael Rigby	Board Member	MJR
Paula Kilbane	Board Member	PK
Marion Meany	Board Member	MM
Martin O'Halloran	Board Member	MOH
Danny McConnell	Board Member	DMcC
Martin Higgins	Board Member	MH
Tony McNamara	Board Member	TMcN

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
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1. Welcome and Quorum

After a Board only session to discuss the departure of the existing CEO and welcoming the future CEO, a quorum was confirmed and the Board meeting was duly convened.

PQ joined the meeting.

2. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared on any matters on the agenda.

3. Board minutes

3.1 Minutes of Board meeting of 29 September 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 29 September 2021 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. MH proposed approval of the minutes and DMcC seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 29 September be approved by the Board.**

3.2 Minutes of Board meeting of 15 October 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 15 October 2021 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. MOH proposed approval of the minutes and BC seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 15 October 2021 be approved by the Board.**

3.3 Formal note of email approval for award of a tender for managed support services (ICT)

The email approval by the Board (7 October 2021) for the award of tender for managed ICT support services to HIQA was formally noted for the minutes.

3.4 Formal note of email approval for application of the seal to the Chief Inspector certificate of authorisation

The email approval by the Board (1 October 2021) for the application of the seal to the certificate of appointment for the Chief Inspector was formally noted for the minutes.

4. Review of Actions

In relation to the action to meet with the Secretary General of the Department of Health (DoH) to provide a briefing on the Health information position paper, it was noted that HIQA's Director of Health Information and Standards will meet with Barry Lowry, Chief Information Officer at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) early in the New Year. Updates on the other actions were included on the review of actions paper.

It was noted that there are important issues requiring discussion with senior officials in the DoH including health information/eHealth agenda and changes in the nature of nursing home ownership. It was agreed that a letter should issue to the DOH in respect of the HI position paper.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Health and safety matters

There were no reportable Health and Safety matters since the last Board meeting.

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

Carol Grogan (CG) Chief Inspector (CI) 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
A communication issued to all staff in November requesting that they work from home due to the deteriorating public health situation and the statement issued by the government and public health officials. A small essential group of staff continue to work in the office for operational reasons.
- Regulation of Health and Social Care
Correspondence with the Minister on aspects of service provision in nursing homes is included in the Board papers.

The deadline for compliance with the standard relating to the physical environment of residents in nursing homes is 31 December 2021. PQ reminded the Board that the requirement to comply with these standards was deferred in 2015 by SI 293/2016. The Chief Inspector's report provides further detail on this matter.

It was noted by the Board that this is a very important milestone and will require close management by HIQA over the coming year.

- Direct provision
Meetings are taking place with officials from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DoCEDIY) on the commencement of the Inspection of Direct Provision centres. Sanction has not yet been received for the posts required to establish the function.
- Regulatory and legislative reform
Communication on regulatory and legislative reform is continuing through the bi-lateral group established by DoH. Work on the nursing home sectoral analysis is progressing and will be completed in Quarter 2, 2022. The Oversight group established to oversee the implementation of the Nursing Home Expert Panel's report is expected to be stood down early in 2022.
- Legislative commencements
A number of planned legislative commencements are being progressed including the Human Tissue Bill and the Statutory Homecare Scheme. Delays in the commencement of regulation of Children's residential centres continue and the Patient Safety Bill is likely to be commenced in early 2023.

- The HTA Directorate
Significant work is underway in the HTA directorate including -
 - o four evidence syntheses (COVID-19) requested by NPHET have been published since the September Board meeting
 - o a collaboration with the Italian HTA agency has been arranged which will provide a unique opportunity for skills transfer and information exchange and
 - o a systematic review of ethical frameworks used in policy making in the context of screening has been published.

- Health Information and Standards Directorate (HIS)

The Standards team has commenced the development of National Standards for Home Care Support services but there are concerns about the narrow scope of the draft government regulations which may lead to fragmented or partial regulation of the services.

It was suggested by the Board that a practical solution to the narrow scope could be achieved through the development of standards which would identify key components of homecare services and these could be monitored by grouping relevant themes.

PQ advised that HIQA would be taking a broader approach reflecting the approach suggested.

- Corporate Plan 2022-2024
The draft corporate plan is before the Board for approval.

- Business Plan 2022
The draft Business plan is before the Board for approval.

- HR strategic issues
Significant progress has been made on the Organisational restructure and good progress has also been made on the development of a new working model for HIQA. Detailed updates on these projects were provided at the recent Resource Oversight Committee.

- HIQA's contribution to the pandemic
It was noted that HIQA's contribution in terms of the national response to the pandemic is significant and should be preserved.

- Support projects -
to enable smooth transition arrangements in the context of the major organisational changes have been identified. These include two critical work streams and are included under a separate agenda item.

- Scheme of delegation
PQ advised the Board that it will be necessary for the Board to delegate HIQA's functions to the new CEO from 1 January 2022.

The full scheme of delegation will come to the January Board meeting.

- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

In the context of the MOUs, the Board queried why the MOU with An Garda Síochána has not been finalised. PQ advised that while HIQA had written to An Garda Síochána on a number of occasions there has been no further progression on the MOU. It was confirmed that a further communication seeking to advance the MOU will be issued.

It was also noted that reasons should be provided where MOUs have been terminated (e.g. relating to discrete pieces of work).

- Details of publications, corporate governance developments, stakeholder engagement activities and complaints management are included in the report.

In the context of academic publications, it was clarified that one of the strategic objectives is to develop capacity and capability for research excellence and the development of structures to support HIQA's growing participation in research.

PQ also highlighted a number of other matters including:

- the achievement of the Excellence Through People award
- information as it relates to a personal injury award and
- the removal of the DDTS paper from the agenda, explaining that the paper was not ready yet to bring to the Board.

The Chairperson thanked PQ for a comprehensive report and noted that key items will be revisited under separate agenda items during the meeting. It was also acknowledged by the Board that this was the final report from PQ as CEO.

8. Chief Inspector (CI) report

CG referred the Board to the Chief Inspector's report and highlighted the following:

- Designated centres for older persons (DCOP)
 - o Most nursing homes have managed to contain the spread of infections to small numbers. However, despite high vaccination levels among staff and residents, COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on a small number of nursing homes
 - o Key issues such as the availability of staffing support for nursing homes during the immediate crisis, the availability of testing for staff and residents and the admission of residents to nursing homes with a COVID-19 outbreak were raised with Minister Butler at a recent multi-agency meeting and
 - o An update on the status of SI 293 which will expire on 31 December 2021 means that providers will be required to comply with Regulation 24(1) and Regulation 17 from 1 January. A report on the current compliance status of nursing homes with these regulations is being finalised and the Chief Inspector will write to Minister Butler advising on the matter.

- Designated centres for people with a disability (DCD) including
 - o A summary of the status of COVID-19 cases in designated centres for people with a disability
 - o Webinars held for providers during October 2021 on compliance with Regulation 27 (infection prevention and control) and
 - o The cancellation of registration of a centres under section 51 of the Health Act 2007.

- Children's services
 - o An overview report of foster care services was published at the end of September 2021 which showed that compliance with foster care standards had improved
 - o Following the cyber-attack in May 2021, routine inspections of foster care and child protection and welfare services were paused, but recommenced at the end of July.

The Board made a number of observations on the Chief Inspector's report and the following clarifications were provided in response:

- The narrow scope of homecare regulation needs continued engagement
- Compliance on the regulations relating to the physical environment can only be reported from 1 Jan when those regulations become legally applicable, but from that date, the focus of inspections will be on noncompliant centres
- Regulatory action may lead to centres reducing the number of beds to achieve compliance
- It will be important that there is an understanding amongst key stakeholders around the regulations in terms of the space allocation per person in nursing homes and how there is little room for personal effects
- Notifiable events includes instances of restricted practice
- A thematic inspection programme on restricted practice will be recommenced as part of overall inspection planning and
- Work is ongoing with the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF), at the request of the Minister, in relation to an analysis of the nursing home sector that should inform future planning and policy as it relates to long term residential services for older people.

The Chairperson thanked CG for her first report to the Board as Chief Inspector of Social Services. CG left the meeting at this point.

9. Report from Board Committees

Resource Oversight Committee (ROC) 25 November

The Chair of the ROC, Lynsey Perdisatt (LP), reported that the Committee had considered:

- A presentation on a gap analysis on the ISO9001:2015 quality standard which assessed HIQA's approach to quality and risk and the plans to further develop quality and risk management in HIQA
- An update on the organisational restructure project where good progress is evident
- A detailed presentation on the work underway on the development of a future blended working model for HIQA
- A report on the delivery of objectives for 2021, for which the committee provides oversight, including a human capital report
- An update on the delivery of the DDTs and in that context, LP advised the Board that she had met with the Chair of the ARGC and the Board secretary to ensure that the respective committees are reviewing relevant indicators for the DDTs programme of work such as spend and resources and
- Assurances from management on the controls for the functions carried out by Operations, Communications and the Information Division.

Audit Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) 23 November

In the absence of the Chair of the ARGC, BC and KL reported that the Committee had, at its recent meeting:

- Met with DHKN, who were contracted by the Comptroller and Auditor General, to audit the 2020 audit accounts. DHKN reported on the audit and it was noted that it was a positive audit report with no significant findings
- Received a follow up report on previous internal audit recommendations presented the internal auditor
- Received an update on a number of audits underway including audits of internal controls, project management and cyber security. It was noted that the audit on internal controls is more comprehensive than previous audits
- Received a detailed presentation on financial performance to the end of October – which is included in the Board papers under the finance report item and
- An annual assurance report from the CEO on the controls in place for managing the business of HIQA.

SIRT Committee 17 November

The Chair of the SIRT Committee, Michael Rigby (MJR), advised the Board that the quality and quantity of the work presented to the SIRT committee was excellent. He advised that key items that the Committee reviewed are before the Board for approval including:

- The Draft National Standards for Children's Social Care services and
- The process outline for the HTA of Immunodeficiency (SCID) to the National New-born Bloodspot Screening Programme.

The committee had also received assurances on the management controls for the HTA and HIS functions.

Regulation Committee 19 November

The Chair of the Regulation Committee (JK) reported that much of what the Committee considered had been discussed during the Chief Inspector's report which included the concerns on the scope of draft scheme for homecare regulation and the issues being experienced in nursing homes such as availability of staffing support, the availability of testing and the admission of residents to nursing homes with a COVID-19 outbreak. The committee noted that these issues were appropriately escalated.

In addition, the committee received assurances on the management controls for health and social care functions.

The Chairperson thanked the Committee Chairs for their reports and acknowledged the value of the oversight work in supporting the work of the Board.

Change to ARGC Committee

The Chairperson advised the Board that the appointment period of three years for the Chair of the ARGC expired at the end of November. He expressed his gratitude to CS for her work in chairing the committee. He proposed that BC would be appointed as the new chair of the committee for a period of three years. TMcN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that BC be appointed as Chair of the ARGC for a period of three years be approved by the Board.**

It was noted that the appointment period will commence from 1 December 2021.

10. Corporate plan 2022-2024

SA joined the meeting at this point. PQ advised the Board that this is the final version of the corporate plan, which has taken account of the feedback from the public consultation process.

SA advised that a summary of the feedback from the internal and external consultation was included in the papers for the Board.

It was suggested that monitoring points for the implementation of the plan should be specific. In addition it was agreed that third party accreditation would be sought in relation to HIQA's quality approach.

It was noted that once approved the Corporate Plan would be forwarded to the Minister for his approval.

MOH proposed that the corporate plan 2022-2024 be approved and LP seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the corporate plan 2022-2024 be approved by the Board.**

11. Business Plan 2022

SA introduced the draft business plan for 2022, advising that this will be the first annual plan of the new corporate plan. SA also clarified that the business plan can only be finally approved when the funding allocation for 2022 is confirmed. In the meantime, Board approval is sought to submit the draft plan to the DoH.

In response to a query regarding the December 2022 timelines for many of the objectives, it was clarified that there are a number of milestones underpinning the objectives which are tracked on the new performance reporting system.

TMcN proposed approval of the draft Business plan for 2022 and MM seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the draft business plan 2022 be approved by the Board.**

Items 16 (Finance report) and 17 (Corporate performance report) were taken at this point while SA was in the meeting.

12. Corporate support projects

PQ advised that given the significant changes at senior level, including a new incoming CEO in January 2022, a new Chief Inspector and a new Director of Healthcare, together with an ongoing organisational restructure, a range of significant corporate projects and a number of new legislative commitments, two projects were identified to ensure effective support during the transition period as follows:

12.1 Regulatory support project

This project consists of

- A resource to support key elements of the Prism replacement project to assist with change management arrangements, developing a high level road map, managing interdependencies and developing training
- This resource will also support preparation for the commencement of monitoring of International Protection Accommodation (Direct provision) services including a resource to develop the methodology and framework, a detailed workforce plan, and a communication and a stakeholder engagement plan.

POM proposed approval of the Regulatory Support project and PK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the procuring of a resource to assist management with key elements of the prism replacement project and the commencement of the monitoring function for Director Provision services be approved by the Board.**

12.2 CEO Transition project

Due to the delay in the sanction for the post of the CEO, the timely appointment of a new CEO was impacted with the consequence that there is no overlap with the new

CEO to ensure the transfer of organisational knowledge. It was therefore proposed that PQ be retained for 1.5 days per week for a six month period:

This project will consist of the following

- The provision of coaching to the two new executive Directors to support the further development of those Directorates
- To provide support to the ongoing organisational restructure project and to
- Support knowledge transfer to the new CEO

POM proposed approval of the CEO Transition project and TMcN seconded the proposal; accordingly **it was resolved that the CEO Transition project be approved by the Board.**

13. Draft National Standards for Children's Social Services

RF introduced Deirdre Connelly (DC) Standards Development Lead who led on the development of standards and Linda Weir (LW) Standards Manager who oversees the development of these and the National Overarching Standards for the Care and Support of Children, which are currently being developed.

RF highlighted that there is a risk relating to the approval of the standards and explained that the DCEDIY requested an assessment and judgement framework be developed before submitting the standards to the DCEDIY.

MJR, Chair of the SIRT committee advised the Board that the Committee reviewed the Standards in detail. He emphasised that the Standards are significant in that they are framed from the perspective of the child and he commended the innovative approach used in their development. As Chair of the Committee, MJR recommended the approval of the Standards by the Board, noting that the request for tools to support implementation from the DCEDIY will be addressed but stressing the importance of submitting to the Minister with delay.

The Board expressed their strong support for submitting the Standards, given that they are finalised and that other development work will follow in the normal way.

The Board also highlighted that all standards should be developed and framed with the user in mind. It was clarified that the standards team are currently looking at the standards development process and that this approach will be applied to standards, as they are revised on a prioritised basis.

MJR proposed approval of the Standards for Children's Social Services and MM seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the Standards for Children's Social Services be approved by the Board.**

14. HTA process outline for a HTA of Immunodeficiency (SCID) to the National New-born Bloodspot Screening Programme

MR, Director of HTA introduced Patricia Harrington (PH) Deputy HTA Director and Dr Laura Comber (LC) Senior HTA Analyst, to the Board. LC presented on the project background and nature of this HTA.

MJR declared that he is a member of the National Screening Advisory committee which is the independent advisory committee established by the Minister to consider population based screening in Ireland but clarified that he has no input into the HTA other than receiving information at the SIRT committee.

He advised that the Committee were satisfied with the HTA process outline and recommended its approval by the Board.

JK proposed approval of the HTA process outline and PK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the HTA process outline for a HTA of Immunodeficiency (SCID) be approved by the Board.**

15. Digital and Data Transformation strategy (DDTS) – next steps

As highlighted by PQ in his report to the Board, the detail around this item has not yet been finalised for presentation to the Board. It was noted that this item will be deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

16. Finance Report

SA referred the Board to a detailed report that was included with the Board papers which set out the financial position at the end of October 2021. It was noted that the finance report was reviewed in detail at the ARGC meeting and that the net point is that there is a variance underspend currently that is likely to continue year end.

17. Corporate Performance and Human Capital Reports

SA presented the exception based corporate performance report which identified the objectives at variance with planned delivery. A short status note is included in the report which explains the variance. Those objectives that have not been delivered as planned will be included as carried forward projects to 2022 business plan.

SA also presented the human capital report to the Board which provides an overview of staff numbers, leavers and joiners, absence rates and sick leave. It was noted that the turnover rates will be kept under review.

The Board thanked SA for the report.

18. Corporate Risk Report

KL presented the corporate risk report and highlighted the main changes to the corporate risk register including the closure of 2 risks, together with the rationale for closing these risks.

The Board noted the risk report.

19. Chairpersons report

The Chairperson's report was noted.

20. Any other Business

KL advised that the Board and committee evaluations process was about to commence and that all Board members complete the relevant questionnaires.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

Signed

Pat O'Mahony
Chairperson

Kathleen Lombard
Board Secretary

Actions arising from Board meeting on 1 December 2021

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	Issue a letter to the DOH in respect of the HI position paper	PQ	Before end Dec
2	a further communication to an Garda Siochána seeking to advance the MOU will be issued	PQ	Before end Dec
3	Reasons should be provided where MOUs have been terminated (e.g. relating to discrete pieces of work).	PQ	Before end Dec

Carried forward actions from previous meetings

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	Arrange meeting with the Secretary General of the DoH for CEO and Chairperson to provide a briefing on the position paper	RF	As an alternative a meeting with B Lowry, CIO in Jan
2	Meet with the Secretary General and the Minister to raise the significance of acquisition of nursing homes by large companies	PQ/POM	When meeting can be arranged
3	Regulation committee to maintain oversight of developments on OPCAT. A report will come back to the Board at the appropriate time.	JK/KL	When appropriate

On hold actions

1	Further develop elements of the paper on emergency department overcrowding revisit at the appropriate time	MD	On hold
2	CEO and Chairperson to meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in the area of technology research	POM/PQ	deferred
3	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	Following the prioritisation process this item emerged as third, so will not be progressed in the near future – RF has discussed with Children’s Ombudsman – may be revisited