

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

23 March 2022, 10am – 2pm
Zoom Conference

Present:

Name	Details	Initials
Pat O'Mahony	Chairperson	POM
Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
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
Michael Rigby	Board Member	MJR
Jim Kiely ¹	Board Member	JK

In Attendance:

Mairin Ryan	Acting CEO	MR
Kathleen Lombard	Board Secretary and Chief Risk Officer	KL

Apologies:

Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC
Lynsey Perdisatt	Board Member	LP

1. Welcome and Quorum

A quorum was confirmed and the Board meeting was duly convened.

2. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared on any matters on the agenda.

¹ Part of the meeting

3. Board minutes

3.1 Minutes of Board meeting of 26 January 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 26 January 2022 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. PK proposed approval of the minutes and TMcN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 26 January 2022 be approved by the Board.**

3.2 Minutes of Board meeting of 14 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting of 14 February 2022 were reviewed by the Board. Subject to a minor amendment to the attendance details, it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting. TMcN proposed approval of the minutes and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 14 February 2022 be approved by the Board.**

4. Review of Actions

KL provided an update on the actions and advised that the majority have been closed. In addition, the Chairperson noted that when the new CEO commences, it will be important to have regular meetings with the Department of Health and also to arrange a meeting with the Health Research Board.

5. Matters arising

KL advised that the scheme of delegation is on the agenda for approval by the Board.

6. Arrangements for 2022 Board meetings

This was discussed under AOB.

7. Health and safety matters

MR advised that there was one notifiable incident since the last full meeting of the Board which occurred during an inspection. The incident was managed in accordance with the health and safety policy and procedure and reported to the Health and Safety Authority. The staff member has recovered from the injury.

8. 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.

MR highlighted the following items from the CEO report:

- Healthcare Regulation

- Work is ongoing in preparation for the commencement of the new function of monitoring International Protection Accommodation Services (Direct Provision). HIQA is assisting the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DoCEDIY) on the legislative framework for HIQA's role. Recruitment for required roles is underway and it is anticipated that inspection will commence in September 2022.
 - A new programme of monitoring against the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare has been progressed, with pilot inspections underway. The new methodology enables a more agile approach to inspection on the basis of risk and with a focus on human rights.
 - In terms of commencements, a number of other developments are underway with the Human Tissue Bill at an advanced stage of drafting and the Patient Safety (Notifiable Patient Safety Incidents) Bill which is indicated for commencement at the end of 2022.
- The HTA Directorate
 - The HTA team is working on a descriptive analysis of COVID-19 indicators and contextual factors across European countries
 - HIQA has been requested to provide evidence synthesis support to the work of the Public Health Reform Expert Advisory Group (PHEAG) established by the Minister to make recommendations on an operating model to optimise delivery of public health
 - In terms of European collaboration,
 - The EU Heads of HTA Agencies met for the second time earlier in March, the aim of which is the coordination of HTA agencies across European countries to support implementation of EU HTA regulation
 - The Director of HTA has been invited to join the HTA Council of the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) commencing in November 2022 and to chair the European HTA roundtable.
- Health Information and Standards Directorate (HIS)
 - A public consultation on the development of recommendations on the ICT enablement of older persons' services is underway and will be completed in April. Following consideration of the feedback, the Expert Advisory Group will meet and it is intended that this work will be ready for approval by the Board in Quarter 3 2022
 - Progress on the development of the homecare standards has slowed to ensure that they align with government regulations - these are not finalised and discussions are continuing on the scope of the regulations
 - The National Nursing Home Experience Survey is underway, having been launched on 7 March.
- Regulation: social care
 - The programme initiated by the Chief Inspector in response to the governance and oversight arrangements in CHO Area 1 in the North West has provided sufficient assurance that intervention by HIQA under Section 8 of the Act is not necessary.

- The Chief Inspector and the standards team are working with the Department of Health on the draft regulations and standards for home care services. The Chief Inspector and a member of the legal team will form part of the working group for the drafting of the legislation. The DoH has undertaken targeted consultation on draft regulations and is amending the existing draft based on that feedback.
- HR strategic issues
 - A new time and attendance system will launch at the end of March 2022 which will facilitate schemes such as flexitime and TOIL
 - While the EMT has progressed with the organisational restructure project, key elements will require approval of the new CEO
 - HIQA's new Future of Work Model is on the meeting agenda.
- Prism Replacement project
Following the Board approval of the Prism Replacement project, a meeting took place with the DoH who have sought a detailed business case which is currently being developed.
- Contracts for Board approval
A paper on large procurement competitions planned for 2022 is being prepared which will be consistent with the start of year submission and the budget for 2022. This paper will be presented at the next ARGC meeting.
- The letter of allocation has been received from the DoH and the budget for 2022 which is for Board approval is consistent with the funding allocated.

MR invited comments and questions from the Board on the CEO report. The Board made a number of observations and the following clarifications were provided:

- The business case required by the DOH in support of the Prism replacement project is likely to take a number of months to progress through approval and will also require consideration by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER). BK has been engaging extensively with relevant parties to develop the business case
- A procurement process for cybersecurity surveillance is currently underway. A paper outlining our current arrangements will be provided to the Resources and Oversight Committee.
- Supplier costings remain fixed until November 2022
- The implications of the commencement of the Patient Safety legislation will not significantly impact on existing monitoring programmes. As it extends into private sector licensing, additional resources will be required. However, the regulatory impact assessment has yet to be carried out. It was agreed that the Regulation committee will maintain oversight of impacts on existing functions arising from the introduction of new ones.

The Chairperson thanked MR for the report and noted that key items will be revisited under separate agenda items during the meeting.

9. Chief Inspector (CI) report

CG introduced her report by reflecting that it had been a very busy start of year and highlighted the following:

- Designated centres for older persons (DCOP)
 - COVID-19 continues to impact on nursing homes with increasing numbers of positive cases since the removal of public health measures and a growing number of nursing homes outbreaks
 - The majority of residents and staff are reporting as asymptomatic or with minor symptoms
 - There has been an increase in Inspection staff contracting the virus
 - The regulations where the highest levels of non-compliance in nursing homes are governance and management, infection prevention, fire safety and the physical requirements of premises.

- Designated centres for people with a disability (DCD)
 - There has been an increase in the number of residents and staff being reported as having COVID-19 in DCDs
 - There has also been an increase in Inspection Staff affected by the virus.
 - The number of DCD centres is increasing and to date in 2022, an additional 22 new centres have been issued with a notice of proposed decision to register
 - A report on CHO area 1 has been issued to the HSE for factual accuracy.

- Children's services
 - To date in 2022, 12 inspections have been carried out and the overall trend of positive compliance with the national standards is continuing. Noncompliance issues frequently relate to staffing and have been raised with the Tusla and DCEDIY
 - The lack of suitable care placements for children has been escalated to the Tusla and a new residential strategy is due later this month
 - The Chief Inspector and Head of Children's programme has met with DCEDIY to discuss the emerging situation in Ukraine and the potential requirement for placements for unaccompanied minors seeking international protection.

- Information handling centre
 - An analysis of the numbers and breakdown of information received by the Chief Inspector is included in the report
 - When information is submitted that is outside the remit of the Chief Inspector, support is provided to those submitting the information to enable them to engage with the appropriate body.

In response to the Board's observations, CG provided additional detail or clarifications as follows:

- Tusla has a process for investigation of circumstances where children have died while in care. It was agreed that this process would be sought from Tusla and circulated to the Regulation committee for information.
- The Executive Management Team (EMT) will consider the potential impacts of the emerging Ukraine situation on HIQA and on organisational activity. Engagement will continue with DoCEDIY and Tusla to understand the impact of incoming refugees on services
- The increasing volume of FOI requests together with the main sources and potential drivers of these requests
- The challenges of integrating new staff are mitigated by significant support from the relevant team, a comprehensive induction programme, theoretical and experiential training and a mentoring programme.

The Chairperson thanked CG for her report and the responses to the Board. CG left the meeting at this point.

10. Report from Board Committees

Resource Oversight Committee (ROC) 10 March 2022

POM, in the absence of the Chair of the ROC reported that significant work has taken place on the organisational restructure but progress has slowed to align with the filling of key posts and the start date of the CEO.

The Committee were updated on the status of the future working model for HIQA and because of its strategic significance to the organisation, had asked for a full presentation to come to the Board. This is on the Board agenda.

Audit Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC)

KL, in the absence of the Chair of the ARGC, reported that the Committee had:

9 February 2022:

- Reviewed the draft annual accounts for 2021 prior to the Board's review/approval and prior to submission to the C&AG
- Reviewed the start of year submission for 2022 for ICT projects, prior to the Board's review/approval.

21 March 2022:

- Reviewed the **internal audit report on cyber security**, with key points being the importance of regular security penetration testing, usefulness of cyber security training for the Board, ensuring a full security review of the incoming replacement solution for Prism and, notwithstanding the existence of good processes, development of procedural documentation
- Reviewed the **internal audit programme 2022** with the timing and format of the culture audit agreed, comprising 2 phases spanning from 2022 to Q1 2023

- Reviewed in detail the **budget for 2022**, with key points being the timing of assimilating the funding for the Nursing Home Expert Panel work stream into the core annual budget and the timing of moving the costs of I.T. licenses out of capital into annual operational costs. A project is underway on this and will be reported back to the committee
- Reviewed a report on the late accrual of project costs to the 2021 annual accounts.

Regulation Committee - 24 February 2022

KL, in the absence of the Chair of the committee, JK, advised that in addition to the standard items on performance oversight and risk management, there was an in-depth discussion of Emergency Department (ED) waiting times, together with the monitoring approach that focuses on the wider hospital. A pilot inspection programme of the new monitoring approach is planned, where ED's will form a part.

SIRT Committee - 22 February 2022

MJR, Chair of the SIRT committee reported that the Committee considered the following:

- The Health Information and Standards (HIS) Strategy, which is included in the Board papers for information
- The Process outline for Home Care Standards - as outlined in the CEO report, the development of homecare standards has slowed to ensure alignment with government regulations
- Emergency Departments (ED) and HIQA's approach to ED challenges. The Regulation Committee will provide oversight in the context of the monitoring programme planned by the healthcare directorate
- The interim report on the HTA Evidence Synthesis Strategy which reviewed progress on the strategy. An action plan to deliver the remainder of the strategy was also presented to the Committee
- The HIS Knowledge Sharing and Impact Report which outlined the progress of the Directorate in terms of evaluating the impact of the Directorate's work
- A presentation on Student Research – HIS and Regulation, outlined the benefits and the resulting academic outputs. Plans for research were also highlighted in the context of HIQA's corporate plan.
- The HTA Quality Assessment Framework (QAF), which is recommended by the committee for approval and is on the agenda.

The Chairperson thanked the Chairs of the Committees for the significant work in overseeing and supporting HIQA's activities.

11. Future of working – interim blended model

Susan Montgomery (SM) HR Manager joined the meeting at this point. MR introduced this item as a substantial project involving significant engagement with the EMT and

staff across the organisation. The EMT are satisfied that the plan is achievable but the model includes review mechanisms which will be monitored during implementation.

SM presented in detail, the interim blended work model for HIQA employees which is based on three specified role "personas". SM outlined the methodology and process applied to its development, key considerations, related work streams and the terms on which staff choose to opt in to the blended arrangement.

The following considerations were raised by the Board and clarified by SM:

- Working locations are confined to home office or HIQA offices only
- Technical issues such as cyber security and broadband strength must be in place and appropriate and form part of the employee's opt in declaration
- It is being clearly communicated that this is an interim working model with no contractual or acquired rights
- Where there are role changes, the new role will be considered afresh to ensure it aligns to the model's requirements
- Provision for flexibility is incorporated in the role personas where the needs of the business require it
- Home office inspection to ensure compliance with health and safety is addressed and
- The model will be adjusted when the government framework for blended working is published.

The Board thanked SM for the presentation and the detail it provided. The Board also indicated satisfaction with the approach outlined and the ongoing review process to ensure it meets HIQA's organisational needs.

SM left the meeting at this point.

12. Report on Board and Committee evaluations 2021

KL presented to the Board the outcomes of the Board and committee evaluations and summarised key points as follows:

- The Board and committees of the Board are required to undertake an annual performance evaluation in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of state bodies. HIQA's evaluations take place at intervals a little longer than a year to allow new members to become sufficiently familiar with the Board and its committees to respond fully
- Results of the committee evaluations have been presented to the individual committees
- The evaluation of the Board is very positive across all themes
- Proposed actions are included in the paper and the presentation before the Board and
- Actions for the Board and its committees will be tracked and reported back at a future meeting of the Board/each committee.

The positive results arising from the process for the Board and its committees were welcomed and the actions outlined in the presentation were agreed.

The Board thanked KL for coordinating the evaluation process.

13. Corporate Risk review

KL advised that the Board had provided a range of suggestions in advance of the Board strategy day in February. The EMT had considered each of these and a paper proposing changes to the corporate risk register was presented.

The Board agreed to submit any additional comments on the EMT's responses. The risk register will be amended accordingly and presented to the next meeting of the Board.

14. Annual Health and Safety report - 2021

SA re-joined the meeting at this point and presented the annual Health and Safety report which sets out HIQA's health and safety governance arrangements and framework, training, risk assessment and other activities.

The Board reviewed the report and acknowledged the positive approach of management to health and safety in HIQA.

15. HTA Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)

Conor Teljeur (CT), Chief Scientist from the HTA Directorate joined the meeting to present the revised QAF to the Board. CT explained that the purpose of the QAF is to direct and control the quality of outputs from the Directorate. He advised that with the expansion of the Directorate in terms of resources and activities, it was timely to revise the QAF which is designed to be more user friendly and to align with ISO accreditation requirements. The QAF will be reviewed at the end of the year and findings will inform any design changes required.

The Board thanked CT for the presentation and the related documents and welcomed the approach of refining and improving the framework regularly.

PK proposed approval of the revised HTA QAF and TMcN seconded the proposal; accordingly **it was resolved that the HTA QAF be approved by the Board.**

CT left the meeting.

16. Contracts for Board approval

There were no items requiring Board approval.

17. Scheme of Delegation

CG re-joined the meeting for this item and explained that the scheme comprises of 4 discrete parts that reflect particular parts of the Health Act, as amended, and the

Protected Disclosures Act. The scheme is reviewed on a bi-annual basis or if needed outside of the scheduled review.

CG referred the Board to the list of changes to the scheme detailed in the cover paper (included in the Board papers) and in particular the delegation of functions to the new CEO from 28 March 2022. It was noted that the Chairperson will sign the scheme of delegation on Monday 28th March.

In response to a query on the seal of the Authority, it was clarified that there is a procedure for use of the seal which is currently being reviewed.

MOH proposed approval of the Scheme of Delegation and PK seconded the proposal; accordingly **it was resolved that the Scheme of Delegation dated 23 March 2022 be approved by the Board.**

18. Budget 2022

SA presented the budget for 2022 and explained that it had been reviewed in detail by the ARGC at their recent meeting. A detailed paper on the budget was circulated with the Board papers which was developed on the basis that income and expenditure will break even over the year.

SA advised the Board that to balance the budget, assumptions have been made in respect of the timing of staff leaving and joining the organisation. In response to the Board's queries SA also clarified that inflation costs are reflected in the budget including increased energy costs based on guidance from the OPW.

The Board thanked SA for a clear and comprehensive presentation on the budget. MH proposed approval of 2022 budget and TMCN seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the budget for 2022 be approved by the Board.**

19. Corporate Performance

SA presented the corporate performance report which summarised the status of each business plan objective for 2022 to date. It was noted that the majority of objectives are on target at this early point in the year with a small number highlighted in the performance exception report as deviating from plan.

19.1. Human Capital Reports

SA 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 there had been an increase in sick leave due to current rates of COVID-19 infection amongst staff.

20. Chairpersons report

The Chairperson sought views from Board members on the level of detail in the Chairperson's report. It was agreed that there is sufficient detail in the report which the Chairperson supplements whenever additional information is sought or where a relevant matter arises.

21. Correspondence

Correspondence referenced in the CEO report was included for ease of reference.

22. Any other Business

The Chairperson referred to item 6 on the agenda on arrangements for future board meetings during 2022 and sought Board members views on this matter.

It was agreed that a range of factors should inform the decision around future meetings including:

- Board meetings should reflect the hybrid arrangements that will apply to staff
- The benefits of face to face meetings given the significant changes at senior management level and within the organisation
- The significant rate of COVID-19 infection currently and
- The geographical location of HIQA offices.

Overall, it was agreed that there should be a balance of face to face and virtual meetings. The Chairperson advised that he will discuss with the absent members of the Board and together with the Board secretary revert with an outline schedule for the remainder of the year.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

Signed



Pat O'Mahony
Chairperson



Kathleen Lombard
Board Secretary

Actions arising from Board meeting on 23 March 2022

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	Investigation process to be circulated to the Regulation committee for information.	CG	May Regulation meeting
2	EMT to consider potential impacts of the emerging Ukraine situation on HIQA and on organisational activity.	CEO	Immediate
3	Outline schedule for 2022 Board meetings to be developed	KL/POM	Immediate

Carried forward actions from previous meetings

No	Action	Person Responsible	Time-frame
1	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	CEO and Chairperson to meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in the area of technology research	POM/PQ	deferred
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