

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

28 January 2026, 10am – 2pm
HIQA Dublin and MS Teams

Present:

Name	Details	Initials
Martin O'Halloran	Board Member	MOH
Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC
Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
Leonie Clarke	Board Member	LC
Marion Meany	Board Member	MM
Martin Higgins	Board Member	MH
James Kiely	Board Member	JK
Daniel McConnell	Board Member	DMC
Lynsey Perdisatt*	Board Member	LP
Clíodhna Foley-Nolan*	Board Member	CFN
Frank O'Donnell	Board Member	FOD

In Attendance:

Name	Details	Initials
Angela Fitzgerald*	Chief Executive Officer	AF
Sean Angland*	Acting Chief Operations Officer	SA
Sean Egan*	Director of Healthcare Regulation	SE
Susan Montgomery*	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	SM
Bala Krishnan*	Chief Information Officer	BK
Finbarr Colfer*	Chief Inspector Designate	FC
Aoife McCann*	Head of Legal Services	AMC
Rachel Flynn*	Director of Health Information and Standards	RF
Marty Whelan*	Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement	MW
John Crimmins*	Prospectus Consulting	JC
Karen Egan	Board Secretary	KE
Mary O'Connor*	Governance Officer	MOC

*Joined for part of the meeting

1.0 Quorum

A quorum was present and the meeting was duly convened.

MOH informed the Board that he had recently appeared before the Oireachtas Health Committee in accordance with the "Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards". The Minister for Health will confirm her decision in writing regarding the appointment of MOH as Chairperson of the Board of HIQA in due course.

2.0 Confirmation of Chairperson

The Board noted that section 18 of the Health Act 2007 provides that if and so long as the Chairperson of the Board is not present, or if that office is vacant, the members of the Board who are present shall choose one of their number to be Chairperson of the meeting.

LC proposed that MOH be chosen to be Chairperson of the meeting and JK seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that MOH was chosen to be Chairperson of the HIQA Board meeting on 28 January 2026.**

3.0 Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

AF and MOC left the meeting at this point.

4.0 Board Only Session

Susan Montgomery (SM), Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development joined the meeting.

[REDACTED]

AF re-joined the meeting and provided the Board with an update on a HR matter.

5.0 Minutes of the last meeting – 26 November 2025

The minutes of the meeting of 26 November 2025 were reviewed by the Board and it was agreed that the minutes were an accurate representation of the meeting. MM proposed approval of the minutes and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the minutes of 26 November 2025 be approved by the Board.**

6.0 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

7.0 Review of Actions

MOC re-joined the meeting.

KE referred the Board to the paper on actions arising from the previous meeting and advised that five actions were complete and a number of actions were in progress as indicated. KE drew attention to action no.7 and advised that the scope of the international review of publicly funded services for donor-assisted human reproduction had now been clarified.

AF provided an update on action no.5 in relation to legal duties of directors in provider companies and advised that this action could now be closed as it was comprehended within the Review of Regulatory Inspection currently underway. The owner for this action should be changed to the Board Secretary.

In relation to action no.6, relating to independent assurance on service user experience, AF advised that the timeline for this work had been revised to Q1 2026.

8.0 Emerging Issues and Risks

AF noted the evolving health information landscape including the Health Information Bill, NIS-2 and the European Health Data Systems, and HIQA's legislative functions under the Health Act 2007 and the need for continued engagement with the Department to ensure cohesion and avoidance of overlapping functions and accountabilities within the proposed legislative frameworks for health information.

9.0 Health and Safety Matters

AF advised there were no Health and Safety matters to bring to the Board for discussion.

10.0 HIS 2026 Work Plan

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

JK, Chair of the Standards, Information, Research and Technology Committee (SIRT), advised that the HIS Work Plan had been discussed at the SIRT meeting on 13 January 2026 and recommended for approval by the Board.

The Board held a detailed discussion in relation to the National Standards for Home Support with regards to the Health (Amendment) (Home Support Providers) Bill 2025, approved in December 2025. The Board noted that the scope of the draft legislation proposes that HIQA's remit will include public, private for-profit and not-for-profit providers of home support services for both adults and children.

It was reiterated with the Department of Health that as the Bill is intended to regulate providers rather than care provision, this may pose challenges in terms of public expectation and understanding. AF highlighted the importance of ensuring clear and consistent communication to all stakeholders concerning HIQA's regulatory remit under the legislation. HIQA will also need to consider the appropriate model of regulation to provide necessary assurances on providers. It was also noted that the findings from the review of regulatory effectiveness currently underway by Forvis Mazars may have relevance for the establishment of this new regulatory function.

MM proposed the approval of the HIS 2026 Work Plan and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the HIS 2026 Work Plan be approved by the Board.**

11.0 Board Policies for Approval

11.1 Setting Strategy and Development of Corporate Plan

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

The Board asked that the Policy be further updated to include a review of the Corporate Plan at the annual Board Strategy session. It was agreed that the updated Policy would be brought back to the next Board meeting for approval.

11.2 Complaints Policy

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

LP advised that the Complaints Policy was reviewed at the recent meeting of the Resource Oversight Committee (ROC) on 22 January 2026 and recommended for approval by the Board. In terms of ownership of the Policy, no change is envisaged at this time so Communications and Stakeholder Engagement will continue to report on the Policy to the Board.

MH proposed the approval of the Complaints Policy and LC seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the Complaints Policy be approved by the Board.**

12.0 ARGC Terms of Reference

BC advised that the updated ARGC Terms of Reference was reviewed by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee on 20 January 2026 and recommended for approval by the Board.

FOD proposed the approval of the ARGC Terms of Reference and BC seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the ARGC Terms of Reference be approved by the Board.**

13.0 Transactions for Approval

Sean Angland (SA), Acting Chief Operations Officer, joined the meeting.

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

LP advised that the three contracts for goods and services were reviewed at the ROC on 22 January 2026 and recommended for Board approval.

In response to questions from the Board regarding one of the contracts, SA provided clarification on the requirement for external specialist services in relation to pensions due to the complexity of the area.

MH proposed the approval of the award of three contracts for goods and services as listed in the paper and LP seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the award of the three contracts be approved by the Board.**

14.0 Annual Board Work Plan and Policy Review 2026

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

BC proposed the approval of the Board Work Plan and Policy Review 2026 and MM seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the Board Work Plan and Policy Review 2026 be approved by the Board.**

15.0 Committee Membership

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

KE provided the following update of the proposed Committee appointment and cessations:

Regulation Committee

- The appointment of LC as Chair of the Regulation Committee from 28 January 2026.
- The appointment of MOH to the Regulation Committee to cease on 28 January 2026 in anticipation of the confirmation of his appointment as Board Chairperson.

Standards, Information, Research and Technologies (SIRT) Committee

- The appointment of MOH as a member of the SIRT Committee to cease on 28 January 2026.

JK proposed the approval of the Committee membership and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the updated Committee membership be approved by the Board.**

16.0 DER Status Report

[REDACTED]

17.0 Board Committee Report

Standards, Information, Research and Technology Committee (SIRT) – 13 January 2026

JK, Chair of the SIRT Committee, advised the Committee had reviewed the following items in detail at the meeting on 13 January 2026:

- The annual update on National Standards for Health and Social Care and on Quality and Assurance Functions for HIS Directorate were presented.
- HIS 2026 Work Plan was presented and recommended for approval by the Board.
- Executive Assurances for HTA and HIS Directorates were reviewed by the Committee.
- The HTA 2026 Work Plan was presented to the Committee.
- The 2026 SIRT Committee Work Plan was approved by the Committee.
- An update on Corporate Performance in HTA and HIS Directorates was provided.
- An update on Risks in HTA and HIS Directorates was provided to the Committee:
 - o The Director of HIS provided an update on Red-Rated Directorate #494 relating to ongoing instability of IT systems.
- The Committee had a discussion on the Health Information Bill and noted the following:
 - o The importance of cohesion and avoidance of overlapping functions or ambiguity.
 - o The risks of non-compliance or obfuscation if there is a lack of clarity and cohesion between provisions on health information in Health Act, NIS2, EHDS and AI Act.

Regulation Committee – 15 January 2026

MOH, Chair of the Regulation Committee, advised that the Committee had reviewed the following items in detail at the meeting on 15 January 2026:

- A report from the Chief Inspector was presented.
- A report from the Director of Healthcare Regulation, including an update on NIS-2 Directive and IPAS monitoring.
- An update on Corporate Performance in Regulation Healthcare and Social Services was provided.
- An update on Risks in Regulation Healthcare and Social Services.
- Executive Assurances from the Chief Inspector Designate and the Director of Health Care were reviewed by the Committee.
- Succession Planning for the Committee was discussed.
- The 2026 Regulation Committee Work Plan was approved by the Committee.

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) – 20 January 2026

BC, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, reported that the following items were reviewed in detail at the ARGC meeting on 20 January 2026:

- An update on the Internal Audit Plan was presented including:
 - o A Report on Follow Up Audits Review 2025.
 - o The Draft Three-year Internal Audit Plan was reviewed.
 - o An update on the closure of completed internal audit recommendations was provided by the Head of Quality, Risk and Compliance.
 - o The Terms of Reference for the SIC review and the Risk Management review were approved by the Committee
 - o An updated was provided on the costs for the Review of Regulatory Inspections Process.
- The Six-Monthly Corporate Risk Report to the Board was presented by the Chief Risk Officer.
- HTA and HIS Directorates presented on Risks and Internal Audit Recommendations for their areas.
- Update on Finances to end-November 2025 and DER Finances were reviewed by the Committee in detail.
- An update on Business Continuity and Incident Management was provided to the Committee.
- An update on Statutory Compliance was provided.
- The Committee reviewed the Annual checklist for the effectiveness of the Audit Risk and Governance Committee.
- The updated Terms of Reference for the ARGC was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Board.
- The Committee approved the annual ARGC Work Plan 2026.

In response to queries from the Board, AF provided an update on the status of the Independent Review of the Regulatory Process. AF advised that there are regular update meetings being held between the Chair of ARGC and Forvis Mazars on the Review and noted that work is progressing well with the expectation to have the draft report prepared by end February.

A further meeting would be arranged between the auditors and MOH.

Resource Oversight Committee (ROC) – 22 January 2026

LP, Chair of the Resource Oversight Committee, advised that the Committee had reviewed a range of topics at its recent meeting on the 22 January 2026, including the following items:

- Transactions for approval relating to Contract Awards were reviewed and recommended to the Board for approval.
- An update on DER was presented.
- Executive Assurance Statements from HR, ID and Communications were reviewed by the Committee.
- An update on Prism was presented.
- The Complaints Procedure was reviewed and recommended to the Board for approval.
- The Annual ROC Work Plan for 2026 was approved.
- An update on Corporate Performance in the HR, ID, and Communications Directorates was provided.
- An update on Risks in the HR, ID, and Communications Directorates was provided.
- An update was provided on the development of the Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Plan which will be further informed by the Strategy Session taking place on 28 January 2026. The Committee has asked the Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement to consider the feedback provided by the Committee in updating the Plan. In considering the development of the plan, the Committee noted the importance of an outcomes-based framework and alignment with the organisation's strategic positioning.

LP noted the informative presentation provided by SA in relation to sustainability and highlighted that the Committee noted that resource requirements will be an important consideration in the development of the proposals.

18.0 CEO Report

Finbarr Colfer (FC), Chief Inspector Designate joined the meeting. SE re-joined the meeting.

AF highlighted the following from her report which was previously circulated.

Corporate Governance and Internal Audit

- Board members' Annual Statement of Interests for 2025 were returned to SIPO.
- The Follow-up Audits 2025 report and the Internal Audit Plan 2026-2028 were presented to ARGC on 20 January 2026.

Quality, Risk and Compliance

- HIQA was successful in its recent ISO surveillance audit. AF acknowledged the work of KE and the Quality, Risk and Compliance team throughout the process.
- A public consultation on HIQA's new Quality Service Charter and Action Plan was launched in November 2025 until 6 January 2026. The submissions are being reviewed and will inform the final Charter.

Strategic HR Issues

- The HIQA Strategic Workforce Plan 2024/25 is now successfully concluded. AF noted and expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by SA and SM in progressing the workforce planning activity and the resource considerations.

People & Culture Strategy

- Work has progressed on the "Turning the Values In" organisational development programme. A positive outcome arising from this work is the level of commitment that staff have both to the organisation and its values. Since the previous Board meeting, a number of workshops were facilitated to further develop the culture framework.

Healthcare Regulation

- In 2025 HIQA received 144 notifications since the enactment of the Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act 2023. 61 (43%) of the notifications related to neonatal therapeutic hypothermia and 24 notifications were from private hospitals.
- All of the private hospitals under HIQA's remit were inspected in 2025 with good levels of engagement reported.
- There is ongoing engagement with the Department of Health with regard to Healthcare licensing.

The Networks and Integration Security Directive (NIS-2)

- HIQA continues to engage with the Department of Health, Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration and the National Cybersecurity Centre to discuss remaining key considerations to the satisfaction of HIQA's Board. An updated draft of the legislation is expected in coming months.
- HIQA is not yet in a position to bring a resolution to the Board that HIQA assumes responsibilities as a Competent Authority under this legislation.

Critical Entities Resilience (CER) Directive

- There is ongoing engagement with the Department of Defence (DoD) and other Competent Authorities to advance preparations for CER implementation.
- The CER National Operations Manager is working in conjunction with the Healthcare Regulation Directorate's Senior Management Team (Project Board) to

identify critical entities. The proposed list will be reviewed with an External Advisory Committee (currently being established).

National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC)

- AF advised that NIAC, a new HIQA function that reporting to the Board, has embedded very well in HIQA. She acknowledged the leadership of Mairin Ryan in leading the transition and also the collaboration of the NIAC team in enabling an effective and smooth transfer.

Health Information and Standards and National Care Experience Programme (NCEP)

- There is ongoing engagement with the Department of Health to progress the National Mental Health Experience Survey including addressing the specific legal considerations identified by HIQA:
 - o Ethical Approval will be sought from the Royal College of Physicians Ireland.
 - o A Data Sharing Agreement with the HSE is in place and is currently being put in place with private providers.

National Standards for Health and Social Care

- There is ongoing engagement with the Department of Health and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth regarding the Health (Amendment) (Home Support Providers) Bill 2025 whereby the scope of the Bill has been amended to include children. The revised Standards will be subject to further Board approval.

Emerging legislation

- A Position Paper on the evolving health information landscape including the European Health Data Space (EHDS), the Health Information Bill, and NIS-2 and how they interact with HIQA legislative functions under the Health Act was submitted to the Department of Health in December 2025 and follow up round table discussions are scheduled.

Information Division Update

- The DER project successfully completed User Acceptance Testing in November 2025 and Release 1 went live.
- The Financial Management System transformation project was successfully completed by end of 2025 and is now live.
- The upgraded PRISM system successfully went live in January 2026.
- A number of other projects are being progressed to support cyber security, operational effectiveness and system integration.

AF congratulated BK, FC and their teams on the successful upgrade of the PRISM system and SE, SA and BK on the successful go live of release 1 of IRIS.

SE provided an update on the regulation of services that conduct medical exposures to ionising radiation. He advised that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was in Ireland from 18 to 28 January 2026 to assess

how HIQA, and Ireland, are meeting IAEA standards in relation to regulatory arrangements for radiation safety. IAEA will publish a report of their inspections and evaluations in the coming months. AF acknowledged the work of SE and team in this regard.

LP and SE left the meeting.

19.0 Chief Inspector's Report

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

Finbarr Colfer (FC), Chief Inspector Designate, provided the following updates to the Board:

- On 28 January 2026, on behalf of HIQA, FC appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee along with Ciara McShane, Interim Deputy Chief Inspector, to discuss the Overview Report on the Regulation of Disability Services in 2024. He noted the positive and engaging discussions regarding HIQA's remit and work in promoting and protecting the rights of people with disabilities.
- FC acknowledged the work of the Social Care and ID Teams who worked over the Christmas period to ensure the successful implementation of the PRISM upgrade which went live in January 2026.

FC highlighted the following from his report which was previously circulated:

Older Persons Services:

- As of 31 December 2025, there were 545 registered designated centres for older people providing 32,408 residential places. These figures reflect a reduction of three in the number of nursing homes since the end of 2024, and an overall increase of 38 registered beds, indicating a movement towards larger centres.
- Between 01 January and 31 December 2025, the Older Persons' team completed 759 inspections of designated centres for older people (1,325 inspection days) and published 674 inspection reports.
- The application to cancel the registration of a centre pursuant to section 59 of the Health Act 2007, as amended, is in progress. Concerns regarding the delay in the court system have been communicated to the Department of Health. The centre is being closely monitored with ongoing inspection activity and regulatory engagement with the provider.

Disability Activity

- As of the 31 December 2025, there were 1745 registered designated centres with the capacity to support 9,481 individuals with a disability. This represents a net increase of 90 designated centres and 235 residential placements since the beginning of the year and reflects a continued growth within the sector.
- There are four providers in escalated regulatory programmes, three of which have demonstrated improved levels of compliance.

- There is ongoing engagement with the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) with a view to progressing legislation which will allow providers to operate an unregistered centre in specific emergency situations.

Children's Team

- Between 01 January and 31 December, 46 inspections of children's services were conducted across all five service types including; child protection and welfare services, statutory foster care services, non-statutory foster care services, Oberstown Detention Campus and designated centres for special care.
- Inspections of child protection and welfare services noted the demand for children's services, provided by Tusla, continues to increase, with an increase in referrals since the previous year.
- Two services have been escalated to Tusla's Chief Executive Officer. HIQA continues to monitor these services closely.
- HIQA continues to engage with Tusla in relation to changes in their governance and operational re-organisation which was implemented under their Integrated Reform Programme.
- HIQA's inspections will be paused for a short period early in the New Year to enable the introduction of new governance structures. The inspection schedule will resume as planned in February.

The Board thanked FC for his comprehensive report.

20.0 Six-Monthly Risk report to the Board

The Board noted the paper previously circulated. This item was deferred to the February Board meeting.

21.0 Human Capital Report

The Board noted the paper previously circulated. This item was deferred to the February Board meeting.

22.0 Finance Report

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

AF provided a brief update on the Finance report to end-November 2025. The Board agreed to take this item as read and noted that the draft financial statements for 2025 would be presented to the upcoming February Board meeting.

23.0 Impact of AI and National and European Legislation

Rachel Flynn (RF), Director of Health Information and Standards, joined the meeting.

AF provided an update on the position paper in relation to the evolving regulatory landscape in the health sector under the European Health Data Space Regulation (EHDS) and the Health Information Bill. In this context other legislation including the NIS-2 Directive and the EU Artificial Intelligence Act, are also considered in the paper. There is a need for coherence between all of these pieces of legislation and HIQA's current legal remit.

The paper sets out areas for further consideration around the implementation of the various pieces of legislation; how they will be adopted in Ireland, and the role of HIQA, if it is designated to be a national competent authority under the National Cyber Security Act, which will implement NIS-2 Directive in Ireland.

AF outlined the next steps. She advised that there are ongoing discussions with the Department of Health and other key stakeholders to enable clarity and cohesion on the respective roles and responsibilities of service providers and regulators operating within the health and social care sectors, as governed by the proposed legislative provisions.

The Board agreed that the matter required further clarification from the Department in order for the Board to have clarity on its oversight and accountability requirements and to avoid unintended consequences for regulators and policy makers in the development of distinct regulatory frameworks.

CFN left the meeting.

24.0 Noting of Board Decision by Written Procedure – Chief Inspector Designation

The Board noted the paper previously circulated and that, as provided in the Standing Orders for the Board, the Board decision taken on 15 December 2025 is to be recorded in the minutes of the 28 January 2026 Board meeting:

The Board unanimously resolved by written procedure on 15 December 2025 to approve the continued designation of Finbarr Colfer, Inspector of Social Services, to perform the functions of the Chief Inspector of Social Services under section 41 and section 43(2) of the Health Act 2007 as amended and to perform the non-statutory/administrative functions of the Chief Inspector generally and as required from today's date subject to further review and until the Board revokes this designation.

25.0 Follow -up on Board Strategy Session

Marty Whelan, Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement, joined the meeting. BK and SE re-joined the meeting.

John Crimmins (JC), Prospectus Consulting, facilitated a follow-up strategy session as part of the Board's ongoing strategic development process. The session identified key themes, requirements and areas for further development as follows:

- Communications and Stakeholder Strategy
 - Assessment of brand and reputation survey
 - A marketing strategy that promotes brand informed by feedback
 - Focus on all stakeholders
 - Assessing impact – focus on outcomes in everything HIQA does
 - Internal communications plan to have regard to the outcomes focus and to also take account of the programme of work on People and Culture.

- Organisation Design
 - Requirement for further review of Internal capability to align with new functions
 - Further review of organisation design to build on the work already undertaken but to consider span of control, breadth and diversity of new functions
 - CEO and Management Team – benchmarking exercise to be undertaken with comparable agencies.

- Outcomes Focus
 - Need to develop agreed measures of outcome to enable effective review and evaluation of Corporate Plan deliverables and of impact of HIQA's work.

A summary of the principal points discussed and proposed next steps will be brought back to the Board for consideration in due course.

26.0 Any other business

MOH thanked everyone for their contribution during the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 14.30pm.

Signed

Martin O'Halloran

Martin O'Halloran
Chairperson

Karen Egan

Karen Egan
Board Secretary

Actions arising from Board meeting – 28 January 2026

No	Action	Owner	Timeframe
1	[REDACTED]		
2	Board Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action no. 5 to be closed at it is comprehended within the Review of Regulatory Inspection Process; owner for this action should be changed to the Board Secretary. - Action no.6 - timeline for this work to be revised to Q1 2026. 	KE	Following meeting
3	[REDACTED]		
4	[REDACTED]		
Actions carried forward from previous meeting		Owner	Timeframe
5	Accommodation plan, including costings, to be presented to the Board in 2026.	SA	Q1 2026
6	Legal services unit to examine HIQA's role in relation to legal duties of directors in provider companies and parent companies.	KE	At appropriate time
7	Proposal regarding independent assurance on service user experience to be presented to the Board at appropriate time, incorporating the processes for receiving unfiltered feedback.	MW	Q1 2026
8	A paper providing clarification on the NIS-2 proposal, including setting out the impact on HIQA as an organisation of taking on the new functions under NIS-2 to be brought to the Board.	SE	At appropriate time
9	NIS-2-Clarification to be sought on the legal position when enforcement powers move from one agency to another.	SE	At appropriate time
10	Consideration to be given to governance arrangements for occasions when staff members are appointed to external bodies.	SM/KE	Ongoing
11	Palliative care regulation to be brought back to the Board for further discussion at the appropriate time.	SE	At the appropriate time