

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

25 March 2026, 9am – 2pm  
HIQA Dublin and MS Teams

**Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Martin O'Halloran	Chairperson	MOH
Bernadette Costello	Board Member	BC
Leonie Clarke	Board Member	LC
Marion Meany	Board Member	MM
Martin Higgins	Board Member	MH
Daniel McConnell	Board Member	DMC
Lynsey Perdisatt	Board Member	LP
Clíodhna Foley-Nolan	Board Member	CFN
Frank O'Donnell	Board Member	FOD

**In Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Initials</b>
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
Marty Whelan*	Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement	MW
Pauline Poots*	EY	PP
Rory Flanagan*	EY	RF
Astitv Gulati*	EY	AG
Emma Deenihan*	Chief Risk Officer	ED
Mairead Murphy*	Audit and Risk Manager	MM
Karen Egan	Board Secretary	KE
Mary O'Connor*	Governance Officer	MOC

\*Joined for part of the meeting

**Apologies:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Initials</b>
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Jim Kiely	Board Member	JK
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### **1.0 Quorum**

A quorum was present and the meeting was duly convened.

### **2.0 Conflict of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### **3.0 Board Only Session**

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

[REDACTED]

SM left the meeting at this point.

LP provided an update on CEO PMDS for 2025. She advised that she, BC and AF had met to review and close out all 2025 objectives. LP highlighted the following:

- 2025 had been an exceptionally challenging and busy year, in particular in relation to the Midwest Review, the integration of NIAC, the CHI review and the DER project. Overall, AF had had a very successful year in terms of her performance as CEO.
- AF had requested that it be noted how supported she felt by the Board.
- The new Board Chairperson, MOH, would be involved in defining the final objectives for 2026. Key priorities will include the organisation structure and the new deputy CEO role.

The Board noted that the CEO objectives for 2026 need to be cognisant of what is realistic and achievable given the scale and breadth of activities and the number of new functions planned for the Authority.

AF joined the meeting.

MOH provided an update on the PAS process for selection of new Board members and advised that a shortlist of candidates had been sent to the Minister for Health for consideration. He also advised that a meeting was scheduled with the Minister for Health on 15 April 2026. Following the preliminary meeting between the Chair, CEO and DoH officials, the priority areas for discussion were agreed. They include the impact and relevance of HIQA work, the significant planned expansion of functions and associated requirements for HIQA in terms of the organisation structure, key posts and requirements for the new CEO post. It was also agreed at the Board meeting that matters such as IPAS and the Health Information Bill would also be discussed.

AF provided an update on a HR matter.

[REDACTED]

MOC joined the meeting.

#### **4.0 Minutes of the last meeting – (i) 28 January 2026 and (ii) 12 February 2026**

The minutes of the meeting of 28 January 2026 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 LC seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the minutes of 28 January 2026 be approved by the Board.**

The minutes of the meeting of 12 February 2026 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 LC seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the minutes of 12 February 2026 be approved by the Board.**

The Board noted the late circulation of a small number of Board papers on the evening before the meeting. AF agreed that papers relating to DER were delayed as there was a desire to reflect the Board's specific questions that had been raised at the ROC meeting, a few days before the Board meeting.

AF advised the importance of consistency and clarity in the papers being provided to the Board on DER and related matters, so that the Board was in receipt of the necessary level of assurance about the agreed actions and their expected impact. It was suggested that the timing of the ROC meeting might be reviewed so that any updates required for Board might be addressed and circulated in sufficient time ahead of the Board meeting.

The Board also noted the rapidly evolving nature of HIQA's responsibilities and the anticipated increase in complexity across forthcoming legislative requirements. In this context, the importance of resourcing arrangements for senior level roles, including a new Deputy CEO role, were noted and will be included in the items for discussion with the Minister at the forthcoming meeting.

#### **5.0 Review of Actions**

KE referred the Board to the paper on actions arising from the previous meetings and advised that four actions have been completed and a number of actions were in progress as indicated.

## **6.0 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **7.0 Emerging Issues and Risks**

No emerging issues or risks were brought to the Board for discussion.

## **8.0 Health and Safety Matters**

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

## **9.0 Board Committee Report**

### **Standards, Information, Research and Technology Committee (SIRT) – 10 March 2026**

CFN advised the SIRT Committee had reviewed the following items in detail at the meeting on 10 March 2026:

- An update on the National Immunisation Technical Advisory Group (NIAC) Secretariat function was presented to the Committee. It was noted that NIAC's immunisation guidelines and associated documents were downloaded from the HIQA website over 33,000 times between 31 March 2025 and 31 January 2026.
- The Health Information Standards Quality Assurance Function (QAF) was presented and recommended for approval by the Board.
- The HTA of Teledermatology for management of primary care referrals was recommended by the Committee for approval by the Board.
- An update on the National Mental Health Experience Survey was provided, noting the Committee expressed support for the proposed approach for HSE approved hospitals.
- An update on the Health Information (HI) Bill was provided. The Committee noted that an amendment to the Bill provided for the HSE to consult with HIQA on the preparation of guidelines with respect to health information. A letter will issue to the Minister for Health seeking clarity in terms of HIQA's role and responsibilities alongside the new roles for HSE envisaged within the Health Information Bill.
- An updated Executive Assurance for HIS Directorate was presented to 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. The Director of HIS provided an update on a previously Red-Rated Directorate risk #494 which was downgraded from high to medium.

CFN referenced the presentation provided by members of the NIAC team in relation to the successful transition from the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) to the HTA Directorate since March 2025. It was noted that NIAC acknowledged HIQA's support and collaboration during the transition over the past year. AF commended MR and her team for their work in enabling a successful transition and integration to HIQA.

### **Regulation Committee – 12 March 2026**

LC, Chair of the Regulation Committee, advised that the Committee had reviewed the following items in detail at the meeting on 12 March 2026:

- A report from the Chief Inspector was presented.
- A report from the Director of Healthcare Regulation included the following:
  - o Network and Information Systems 2 (NIS-2).
  - o The National Screening Services Review.
  - o The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission to peer review the regulatory processes of Ireland to promote radiation safety.
  - o An update was provided on HIQA's future role in the Monitoring of International Protection Services (IPAS) as proposed under the International Protection Bill 2026.
- An update on Corporate Performance in Regulation Healthcare and Social Services was provided.
- An update on Risks in Regulation Healthcare and Social Services was provided.
- Presentations on HIQA's Healthcare Surveillance and Risk Assessment function and the Critical Entities Resilience (CER) were presented to the Committee.

LC advised that going forward the Chief Inspector and Director of Healthcare reports will focus on highlighting strategic issues.

### **Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) – 18 March 2026**

BC, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, reported that the following items were reviewed in detail at the ARGC meeting on 18 March 2026:

- The Internal Audit Plan update was provided to the Committee including:
  - o The report on the of the System of Internal Controls review 2025 was reviewed and recommended to the Board for approval. The Committee noted that the audit opinion is Satisfactory.
  - o The Annual Internal Audit Function Report 2025.
  - o The Internal Audit Plan 2026 – 2028 was approved by the Committee.
- The ARGC Annual Assurance Report to the Board was recommended for circulation to the Board.
- The Corporate Procurement Plan was recommended by the Committee for approval by the Board.

- The Quality Service Charter and Action Plan 2026-2028 was reviewed by the Committee.
- An update on DER finances was reviewed by the Committee in detail.
- The Corporate Risk Report was presented by the Chief Risk Officer.
- An update on risks in the ID and HR Directorates was provided to the Committee.
- The results of the Committee's review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Function were noted.

BC provided an update on the appointment of the external ARGC Committee member.

### **Resource Oversight Committee (ROC) – 19 March 2026**

LP, Chair of the Resource Oversight Committee, advised that the Committee had reviewed the following items its recent meeting on the 19 March 2026:

- An update on the DER project and the proposal to extend the scope of the DER Programme to include planned new functions was provided.
- An update on Prism was provided to the Committee. The Prism project is now complete and operating successfully.
- The Committee reviewed the HIQA Code of Governance and recommended to the Board for approval.
- An update on HIQA Human Capital and People & Culture Overview Report was provided.
- The Annual confirmation of SIPO declarations by Board members and Staff members was noted by the Committee.
- The updated Executive Assurance Statement from Chief Information Officer was noted by the Committee.

LP advised that the Committee had formally acknowledged the significant efforts and dedication of BK, FC and their teams, particularly over the Christmas period, with regards to the successful implementation of the Prism upgrade.

The Board welcomed the successful close out of the PRISM upgrade project.

### **10.0 HTA of tele dermatology for management of primary care referrals**

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

MM proposed the approval of the HTA of tele dermatology for management of primary care referrals and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the HTA of tele dermatology for management of primary care referrals be approved by the Board.**

## **11.0 Health Information Standards Functions QAF**

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

FOD proposed the approval of the Health Information Standards Functions QAF and LC seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the Health Information Standards Functions QAF be approved by the Board.**

## **12.0 HIQA Code of Governance**

The Board noted the papers previously circulated and that, following Board approval, the Code will be submitted to the Minister for Health for approval as required under section 34 of the Health Act 2007.

MM proposed the approval of the HIQA Code of Governance and CFN seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the HIQA Code of Governance be approved by the Board.**

## **13.0 System of Internal Control (SIC) Review 2025 and ARGC Annual Assurance Report to the Board**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

BC, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) advised that the System of Internal Control (SIC) Review 2025 and ARGC Annual Assurance Report to the Board had been reviewed at the recent ARGC meeting. She highlighted the following:

- The System of Internal Control Review received an overall audit rating of Satisfactory.
- The review identified no high priority findings.
- There were a small number of medium/low priority findings and an overview of these were provided.
- The ARGC recommended the SIC Review 2025 and the ARGC Annual Assurance Report for Board approval.

LC proposed the approval of the System of Internal Control (SIC) Review 2025 and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the HIQA System of Internal Control (SIC) Review 2025 be approved by the Board.**

BC advised that the ARGC Annual Assurance Report to the Board is a requirement of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and underpins the review of internal controls. The report includes an overview of the Three Lines of Defence and concludes that the ARGC has delivered on its Terms of Reference in respect of 2025.

MH proposed the approval of the ARGC Annual Assurance Report to the Board and LP seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the ARGC Annual Assurance Report to the Board 2025 be approved by the Board.**

#### **14.0 Corporate Procurement Plan**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

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

SA provided a brief update on the Corporate Procurement Plan, noting it is a requirement under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies to outline the procurement aims and objectives and provide an overview of the procurement activities undertaken annually. He noted that the process supports a transparent and efficient approach to forward plan for each of the business areas.

FOD proposed the approval of the Corporate Procurement Plan and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the Corporate Procurement Plan be approved by the Board.**

#### **15.0 Business Plan 2026**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

SA introduced the Business Plan 2026 and advised the following:

- The Business Plan was developed in line with the Corporate Plan 2025–2027 and sets out how HIQA will deliver on its strategic objectives.
- The four longer term outcomes and six near time outcomes as set out in the Corporate Plan act as the benchmark for measuring its success. Appropriate processes are in place to effectively monitor progress against the defined objectives.
- Subject to approval of the Business Plan 2026 by the Board, it will be submitted to the Minister for Health.

The Board noted the following:

- The Board welcomed the structuring of the Business Plan around outcomes and outputs and noted that this approach would help to drive delivery of the outcomes rather than simply focus on outputs.
- The Letter of Determination had now been received and funding uplift is in accordance with HIQA requirements and is welcomed. The Business Plan will need to be updated to include the Budget for 2026 in advance of it being submitted to the Minister.
- The need for HIQA and the Board to keep under review the adequacy of the current financial allocation in supporting delivery of agreed objectives, particularly in the context of evolving requirements.

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

SA left the meeting.

## **16.0 Committee Membership**

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

MOH provided an update on the membership of the Resource Oversight Committee (ROC) and following the forthcoming departure of LP from the Board. He proposed that MH be appointed as Chairperson of the ROC effective 25 March 2026.

LP proposed the approval of the appointment of Martin Higgins as Chairperson of the ROC and LC seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the appointment of Martin Higgins as Chairperson of the ROC be approved by the Board.**

## **17.0 Setting Strategy SOP**

The Board noted the papers previously circulated.

KE provided an update on the Setting Strategy and Corporate Plan Development Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) noting that it had been updated to reflect feedback provided by the Board at the January meeting.

LC proposed the approval of the Setting Strategy and Corporate Plan Development SOP and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the Setting Strategy and Corporate Plan Development SOP be approved by the Board.**

## **18.0 Risk Appetite Workshop**

Pauline Poots (PP), Rory Flanagan (RF) and Astitv Gulati (AG) from EY joined the meeting to provide a Risk Appetite Workshop to the Board.

Sean Egan (SE), Director of Healthcare Regulation, Sean Angland (SA), Chief Operations Officer, Finbarr Colfer (FC), Chief Inspector Designate, Bala Krishnan (BK), Chief Information Officer, Emma Deenihan (ED), Chief Risk Officer, and Mairead Murphy (MM), Audit and Risk Manager also joined the meeting.

The Board examined the risk category and risk appetite definitions to ensure they remain appropriate for HIQA. PP led a revaluation of assigned risk appetites to risk categories via Menti-Poll.

EY agreed to provide a report on the outputs of the workshop including some proposed changes to the risk appetite and certain risk categories as discussed.

ED, MM, PP, RF AG left the meeting.

## **19.0 DER Project update**

[REDACTED]

## **20.0 CEO Report**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

AF provided the following updates to the Board:

- An update on the Forvis Mazars Review of the Regulatory Inspection Process. The draft report is expected to be presented to the ARGC for approval in coming weeks.
- A recent meeting was held with the Minister of State at the Department of Health to provide an update on the status of both the Report on the Inspection of Regulatory Process Review and HIQA's review of nursing homes operated by the Emeis Group.
- An update on the legal proceedings to access footage filmed for the RTE Investigates documentary aired in June 2025.

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

### Corporate Governance:

- The HIQA Code of Governance was reviewed and updated and is presented on the agenda for approval. Further to Board approval, the Code will be submitted to the Minister for Health for approval, in accordance with section 34 of the Health Act 2007.

### Quality, Risk and Compliance (QRC)

- Recertification of HIQA's Quality Management System by SGS auditors will take place in September and October 2026.
- The Guidance and SOP for the Employee Suggestion Box is under consideration by EMT, with updated guidance expected to be finalised in the coming weeks.

### People and Culture Strategy

- The "Turning Our Values In" project is a key programme of work aimed at strengthening understanding and application of organisational values at both individual and collective levels, supporting day-to-day interactions and a shared sense of responsibility and purpose.
- A Communications and Launch Plan will include Staff Town Hall events in Cork, Dublin and Galway in the coming weeks.

- The Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, a group run by employees, was recently nominated for the National Diversity Awards 2026.

#### Meeting with Covid-19 Evaluation Panel

- A meeting took place with the Covid-19 Evaluation Panel on 23 March 2026 attended by AF and members of EMT.
- A presentation was provided by HIQA, followed by discussion on insights and perspectives on the role of HIQA during the pandemic, with key learnings, challenges encountered, and considerations for future events, to inform future planning.
- Engagement with the Evaluation Panel is continuing.

#### Healthcare Regulation

- Since the commencement of the Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act 2023, 192 patient safety notifications were received with over half of the total notifications received relating to maternity related incidents. Approximately 20% of the incidents that are non-maternity related, originate from private hospitals.
- A compliance plan is in place with one hospital and there is ongoing engagement with the service, Regional Health Area, HSE and Department of Health in this regard.

#### The Networks and Integration Security Directive (NIS-2)

- At the end of 2025, HIQA's feedback on the draft legislation regarding a potential role for HIQA under the NIS-2 Directive was provided by the Department of Health to the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.
- There is the potential that this matter may progress quickly once an updated draft of the bill is available for review. When there is greater clarity on this matter, the Executive will engage further with the Board.
- A full briefing was provided at the recent Regulation Committee meeting.

#### Critical Entities Resilience (CER) Directive

- An external Advisory Group (EAG) has been established to review and discuss the identification methodology and to advise on the implementation of CER.
- HIQA is required to identify and formally inform critical entities that they meet the criteria for inclusion by July 2026.

#### Section 8 Review – Assurance review of the governance of HSE National Screening Services against National Standards

- A review of the governance arrangements for the provision of the population-based health screening services by the Health Service Executive at national level is underway.
- This Review will be conducted under Section 8 of the Health Act (2007) as amended, monitoring compliance against the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare.

## IPAS

- An update was provided on HIQA's future role in the Monitoring of International Protection Services (IPAS) as proposed under the International Protection Bill 2026.
- There has been direct engagement with the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration (DJHAM) regarding the proposed amendments to the International Protection Act which envisage a continued role for HIQA in monitoring IPAS services. HIQA understands that it is DJHAM's intention to limit the scope of HIQA's role within the new legislation to align with its current role on an interim basis until the function is assigned to an alternative body.
- A Bill is expected to be presented to Séanad Éireann on 25 March 2026.
- A written submission will be provided to the DJHAM outlining specific points raised for further consideration.

MH, FOD and SE left meeting at this point.

## **21.0 Chief Inspector's Report**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

Finbarr Colfer (FC), Chief Inspector Designate, noted the Report had been reviewed in detail at the Regulation Committee meeting on 12 March 2026. He highlighted the following:

- There is a growing concern regarding the use of Special Emergency Arrangements (SEAs) within Children's Residential Care due to the lack of regulation and oversight of these centres. Informal feedback from Tusla indicated that the number of SEAs under HIQA's remit may potentially be increased in the near future.
- A confidential staff survey was conducted within the Regulation-Social Care Directorate to gather feedback and inform ongoing development within the context of the implementation of the People and Culture Strategy. Feedback is now being considered and facilitated sessions are being planned with each pillar to drive the implementation of the critical values within the Directorate.
- The Chief Inspector will host a delegation from the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia on 30 March 2026 with the aim of facilitating a constructive exchange of knowledge and good practice.

The Board noted the following:

- That the Regulation Committee reviews the Chief Inspector report in detail and has in-depth discussions on the work of the Regulation-Social Care Directorate.
- The intention to further refine the Chief Inspector report.
- The increasing use of emergency services for children due to the lack of places.

FC left the meeting at this point.

## **22.0 Update on Covid-19 Review (including update on Covid Review ToR) and RTE Investigates documentary**

This item was deferred to the May Board meeting.

## **23.0 Health and Safety Annual Report 2025**

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

## **24.0 Finance Report**

This item was deferred to the May Board meeting.

## **25.0 Update on HI Bill**

This item was deferred to the May Board meeting. Further discussion on this item at the May meeting following the meeting with the Minister.

## **26.0 Annual update on the NIAC secretariat function**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

## **27.0 Human Capital report**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

## **28.0 Update on Annual Confirmation of SIPO 2025 declarations by Board members and staff reviewed by Chair and CEO respectively**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

## **29.0 Board Decision by written procedure – SOY 2026**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated and that, as provided in the Standing Orders for the Board, the Board decision taken on 27 February 2026 is to be recorded in the minutes of the 25 March 2026 Board meeting:

**The Board resolved by written procedure on 27 February 2026 to approve the revised Start of Year (SOY) submission for 2026.**

### **30.0 National Mental Health Experience Survey**

The Board noted the paper previously circulated.

### **31.0 Board Correspondence**

The Board noted the letter previously circulated.

### **32.0 Any other business**

The Board noted the departure of LP from the Board and acknowledged her enormous contribution over almost seven years, highlighting her wisdom and her consistently measured and considered approach.

AF thanked LP for her leadership and her focus on acting in the best interests of HIQA. She acknowledged LP's commitment to the development of the People and Culture Strategy and her support in enabling others to perform at their best.

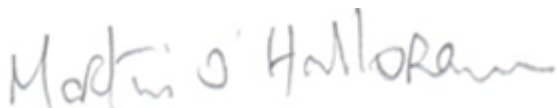
In response, LP reflected positively on her time with HIQA and her fondness for the organisation as it continues to grow from strength to strength. She wished the organisation and her colleagues well.

The Board acknowledged the increasing demands in workload, in the context of the organisation's developing and widening remit and agreed to review the matter in the coming months.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution during the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 14.20pm.

#### **Signed**



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**Martin O'Halloran**  
Chairperson



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**Karen Egan**  
Board Secretary

## Actions arising from Board meeting – 25 March 2026

No	Action	Owner	Timeframe
1	Business Plan to be updated to refer to the Budget for 2026 in advance of the Plan being submitted to the Minister.	SA	Immediately after meeting
2	Review day and time of future ROC meetings	MH	Immediately after meeting
3	The following items to be included on the agenda for the May Board meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety Annual Report 2025</li> <li>• Update on HI Bill</li> </ul>	KE	May Board meeting
<b>Actions carried forward from previous meeting</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
4	[REDACTED]	SM	Following meeting
5	Risk #127 to be rephrased so that it reflects the progress that has been made on resourcing.	ED/SM	Following meeting
6	Accommodation plan, including costings, to be presented to the Board in 2026.	SA	When available
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	Q2 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