

Summary Minutes of the Medical Council Meeting held on 16th & 17th May 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT – 16th May, 2017

Professor Freddie Wood (President)
Dr John Barragry
Dr Anthony Breslin
Ms Katharine Bulbulia
Mr Fergus Clancy
Dr Rita Doyle
Ms Mary Duff
Professor Fidelma Dunne
Dr Bairbre Golden
Mr Seán Hurley

Professor Mary Leader
Mr Tom O'Higgins
Dr Michael Ryan
Ms Cornelia Stuart
Dr Consilia Walsh

Apologies

Dr Audrey Dillon (Vice-President)
Ms Anne Carrigy
Dr Sean Curran
Dr Ruairi Hanley
Professor Alan Johnson
Ms Margaret Murphy
Mr John Nisbet
Professor Colm O'Herlihy
Ms Vicky Blomfield

MEMBERS PRESENT – 17th May, 2017

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Professor Alan Johnson
Ms Margaret Murphy
Mr John Nisbet
Professor Colm O’Herlihy
Ms Vicki Blomfield

In attendance – full meeting

Mr Bill Prasifka (CEO)
Ms Lisa Molloy (Secretary to Council and Head of Corporate Governance)
Ms Jane Horan (Corporate Governance & Council Manager)
Mr William Kennedy (Director of Regulation)
Ms Ruth Rock (Head of Investigations & Complaints; Solicitor)

In attendance – for the relevant parts of the meeting

Mr Philip Brady (Acting Director of Professional Development and Practice)
Ms Wendy Kennedy (Director of Corporate Services)
Ms Úna O’Rourke (Head of Education, Training and Professionalism)
Ms Jantze Cotter (Head of Professional Competence)
Mr John Sidebottom (Head of Inquiries, Health and Monitoring)
Ms Deirdre Foley (Acting Head of Finance)
Ms Barbara O’Neill (Acting Head of Communications)

Private Session:

A private session without members of the Executive present was held. A note of this session was taken by a nominated Council member and provided to the Secretary to Council.

CEO’s Report

The CEO highlighted the productive engagement session at the Trainee and Student Consultative Panel, held in the Medical Council offices on the evening of April 25th. The group have also hosted an information stand at University Hospital Galway on May 4th and an information evening, at the same location, with presentations by Ms Niamh Muldoon and Ms Jantze Cotter. In addition, the CEO travelled to Sligo University Hospital on May 5th to address Grand Rounds. The CEO advised Council that he had received very positive feedback and appreciation from doctors for holding engagements outside of Dublin. The CEO stated that the Medical Council needs to increase the number of regional engagements and that this would be taken into consideration for future events.

The CEO updated Council on a number of staff initiatives including the annual Employee Engagement Survey and the recent staff team building day.

Council noted the tracker tool to monitor and report on the delivery of the Corporate Procurement Plan objectives is in place and that a number of objectives are being prioritised in 2017.

Council further noted that in line with the record management policy that changes to the e-retention practices are in progress with a view to completion by Q3.

Council were pleased to note that a number of portraits of past Presidents are now on display in the Schoolhouse.

Assurance was given to Council that the Medical Council's ICT systems had not been affected by the recent Ransomware attacks. The ICT systems although robust and secure are still being monitored for any potential breaches.

The Internal Audit of Internal Financial Controls and Governance reported a substantial level of assurance in the controls within the organisation. It was noted that BDO's contract as Internal Auditors expired at the end of April and that Deloitte have been appointed as the new Auditors.

Council was advised that Registration completion rates are down due to staffing matters including the loss of some key staff.

In light of the recent Ransomware attack and subsequent lockdown of HSE email addresses it has been decided to delay the issuing of annual Retention Notices by a period of one week.

In the area of Education, Training and Professionalism the main focus has been on the first Regional visit which took place on the 4th and 5th May. In addition, preparations are underway for the first meeting of the National Intern Governance Board. The goal of this group is to put in place a single framework for the management of the Intern year and to ensure minimum standards throughout the six networks.

Council was updated in relation to the core Professional Competence developments. Council noted that the Professional Competence declaration questions in the annual retention form have been amended. Council was advised that recruitment for Case Officers is underway to assist in clearing the backlog of PCS cases. Council noted that the arrangement between the Medical Council and the Postgraduate Training Bodies to operate a Professional Competence Scheme has now been agreed and signed.

Council noted the litigation update in particular the matter relating to Dr Lohan Mannion which is due before Mr Justice Kelly shortly.

The CEO completed his report with an update on a number of stakeholder meetings of note.

President's Business

Fitness to Practice Committee Inquiry Calendar

The President informed Council that there are a number of inquiries scheduled that need to be populated and asked members to provide their availability.

Newspaper Article – “Stop the barbaric practice of using CPR on the very old”- Dr Muiris Houston

The President advised Council that Dr Houston has been invited to present on this topic at future Council meeting.

Position of Vice-President

Following the resignation of Dr Audrey Dillon from the position of Vice-President a request for expressions of interest was issued to all medical Council members. One expression of interest from Dr Anthony Breslin and four supporting nominations was received. As there was only one candidate Council noted that there was no requirement for an election. Council therefore agreed to appoint Dr Breslin to the position of Vice-President. Dr Breslin thanked those members who nominated him and Council for their support.

President's Meetings to note

Council noted the meetings the President had attended.

Letter to President re HIQA nominee – Ms Vicky Blomfield

Council noted the correspondence.

Brexit Working Group

The CEO advised Council that the Executive has been monitoring the situation and that to date no impact in terms of Registration has been identified. In light of the fact that the CEO and his team are keeping the matter under review and will report on this periodically to Council it was agreed not to establish a working group.

Real Bodies Exhibition

Council noted the memorandum prepared by the Executive. It was further noted that the issue was raised at a recent meeting with the Department of Health.

Audit, Strategy & Risk Committee (ASRC)

The report of the Audit, Strategy & Risk Committee meeting held on 3rd May, 2017 was presented to Council.

Mr Hurley outlined the Committee's recommendation to approve the revised Procurement Policy which is in line with EU Public Procurement legislation, National Guidelines and the Medical Council's Corporate Procurement Policy 2016-2018. Council noted that the revised Policy has included a reference under Section 15 to the purchase of high value assets and that the Policy covers the procurement of all works, supplies and services by the Medical Council.

Council was advised of a number of items for noting in relation to the following:-

- Review of Internal Financial Controls
- Business Plan Q1 Update it
- The Draft Metrics for 2017
- Management Accounts and Variance Analysis
- New Investment Consultants for the Medical Council
- Risk Register

The Report of the Audit Strategy and Risk Committee was approved by Council.

Registration and Continuing Practice Committee (RCPC)

The Report of the Registration and Continuing Practice Committee meeting held on 27th April, 2017 was presented to Council.

Council was updated in relation to the Safe Start project and was advised that the report had been well received at the Forum of Postgraduate Training Bodies at a recent meeting. Council noted that the Safe Start Working Group had identified the initial steps as gathering the existing developed e-learning modules and deciding on the most suitable material to use, and also to commence the Safe Start in a number of pilot sites.

Council was advised that the Committee discussed a paper on telemedicine. It was acknowledged that whilst telemedicine technology offers new opportunities for medical practice via virtual consultations the Committee were of the view that there are potential patient risks and regulatory issues.

Council noted that the reminders to pay the annual retention fee would be issued on 22nd May 2017. The reminders will be issued to the e-mail address provided by doctors for correspondence rather than in hard copy format.

Council noted the Spring PRES Level 3 results which had taken place in Galway on 11th March 2017.

Council noted the updates on both Registration Case Management and PCS Case Management.

The Report of the Registration and Continuing Practice Committee was approved by Council.

Education, Training & Professional Development Committee (ETPDC)

The Report of Education, Training and Professional Development Committee meeting held on 2nd May, 2017 was presented to Council.

Council noted the Committee recommendation to approve the report of the visit to University College Dublin's satellite Anatomy Department at the Mater Hospital.

Council noted that the first regional visit to Saolta Hospital Group took place on 4th and 5th May, 2017. It was noted that if, in the event any issues which the Assessor team would consider to be very serious and urgent were raised, the matter would be raised with the Senior Management at the site and/or Hospital Group and also with the CEO of the Medical Council.

Council was updated in relation to its annual monitoring review of all recognised medical education programmes in Ireland and overseas and noted that there are no major concerns at this time. Council noted that the information received from NUI Galway and UCC will help inform the visits planned for later this year and early 2018.

Council were provided with an update in relation to the postgraduate training programmes in Sports and Exercise Medicine and Vascular Surgery. Council noted that a process for interim monitoring of new training programmes will be developed to ensure that the Medical Council is kept informed of developments during the early years of the programme.

The Report of the Education, Training and Professionalism Committee was approved by Council.

Ethics & Professionalism Committee (EPC)

The Report of the Ethics & Professionalism Committee meeting held on 11th May, 2017 was presented to Council.

Council noted the ongoing work in providing additional support to help the profession in its understanding of the Ethical Guide. Council was advised that various supporting documents referenced in the new Guide will also be listed on the website as a reference point.

Council was informed that consultation with a number of relevant organisations on the Council's 2012 publication exploring doctors' relationships with industry had taken place and will be reviewed for consideration at the Committee's next meeting.

Council was provided with an update in relation to the draft joint guidance on 'Controlled Drug Prescribing and Dispensing'. Council noted that the programme of work in 2017 is on track and plans on developing a second guide on Medicines Management in Residential Care Settings is underway.

Council noted that the Committee had considered correspondence seeking clarification as to whether a legal obligation to disclose patient information, referred to in paragraph 31.2 of the Ethical Guide, includes a doctor's obligations under Freedom of Information Legislation. Council was advised that clarification had been issued to confirm that FOI legislation falls under this paragraph.

The Committee noted that Dr James O'Rourke from the Intensive Care Society of Ireland had been invited to present their guidelines for non-heart beating organ donation in adults to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Report of the Ethics Committee was approved by Council.

Health Committee (HC)

The report of the Health Committee meeting held on 3rd May, 2017 was presented to Council.

Council noted that there are currently 43 medical practitioners supported by the Health Committee.

The Committee wishes the Council to approve the recommended release of one practitioner from the support of the Committee.

Council noted the number of review sessions conducted by the various teams.

Council noted the outcomes of the Committee's ongoing review session and the support being provided to each practitioner.

Council was informed that positive health reports had been received and reviewed in respect to three practitioners and that review sessions have been scheduled.

Council was advised that there were no new cases seeking the support of the Committee.

The Report of the Health Committee was approved by Council.

Monitoring Committee (MC)

The report of the Monitoring Committee meeting held on 4th May, 2017 was presented to Council.

Dr Hanley expressed his thanks to the previous chair of the Committee, Ms Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan, for her work on the Committee.

Council noted the breakdown of medical practitioners who have conditions attached to the retention of their name in the Register.

Council noted that correspondence and documentary evidence of compliance had been received, where appropriate, from each of those other practitioners currently practicing within the jurisdiction

with conditions attached to the retention of their name in the Register and that such further evidence would be taken up as and when required in order to confirm compliance.

The Committee wishes the Council to note that the Committee are updating the bank of conditions previously drafted to assist the Fitness to Practise Committee and Medical Council when imposing conditions, to ensure that the conditions being used are workable and can be monitored.

Council approved the report of the Monitoring Committee.

Media Coverage Log covering period: March 2017 – May 2017

This Item was noted by Council.

Date and Time of next meeting

Council noted the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 12th July, 2017 at 12:30 hrs and Thursday 13th July, 2017 at 08:30 hrs.