



Medical Council Business Plan 2021

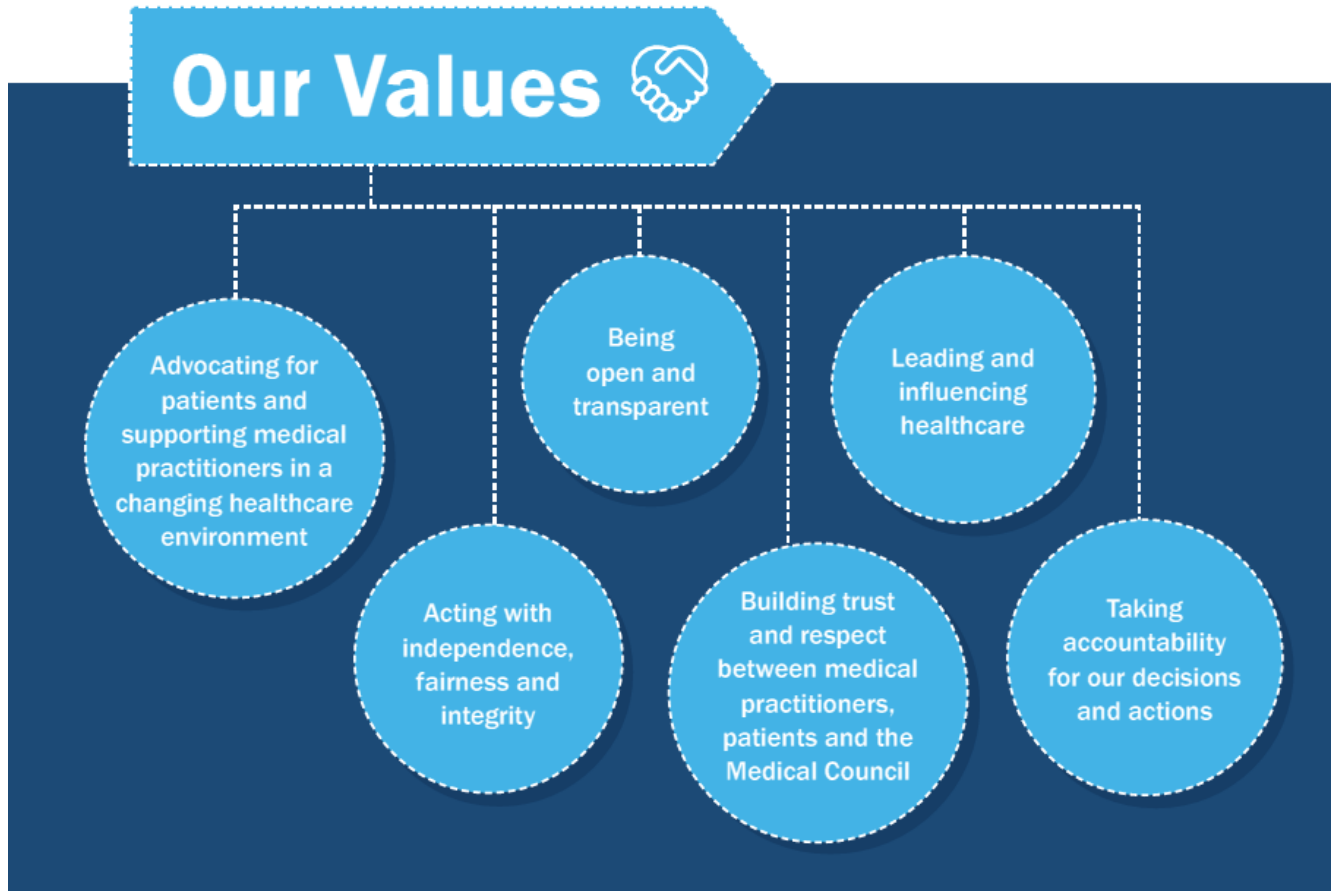


Comhairle na nDoctúirí Leighis
Medical Council

Contents

Vision, Mission & Values of the Medical Council	Page 3
Strategic Objectives 2019 – 2023	Page 4
Introduction	Page 5
Business Objectives 2021 Aligned to the Strategic Objectives	Page 6

1. Vision, Mission & Values of the Medical Council



2 Strategic Objectives 2019 – 2023

To deliver the strategy the Council has defined six key strategic objectives and several key actions.

The six key strategic objectives for this term are:



Business Plan Introduction



The 2021 Business Plan, for the Medical Council, reflects the way the Council aims to deliver on the core business and outcomes aligned to the 2019-2023 Statement of Strategy.

The Business Plan for 2021 reflects the learning taken from the challenges faced in 2020, with the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Plan reflects the requirements of public health guidelines on social distancing, working remotely, etc., while optimising developments in work practices emanating from a new working world.

The plan remains challenging and setting out actions to achieve fundamental activities and a number of major initiatives and projects. This continues to, demonstrate the Council's ambition in delivering on its core remit of patient safety, through strong governance, leadership and support of the profession.

The Council acknowledges the Plan will need to be closely monitored as 2021 unfolds, adjusting its ambition as shifts in the way work is now done, impact the Council's operations.

Philip Brady

Chief Executive Officer

Objective 1:

1. Ensure medical regulation protects the public and supports registered medical practitioners

1.1 Maintain the application of standards that ensure the efficient and effective registration of medical practitioners

Action	Target date
Ensure year end on hand first-time applications is < 650	December
Complete assessments and make determinations on all Section 47(1)(f) specialist applications	December
Ensure that Post Graduate Training Board's complete >95 per cent of assessments within the specified 10-week elapsed time period	
Ensure Register is up-to-date and captures all relevant changes in practitioners' registration	August
Ensure >98 per cent of annual retention fees are paid/received	
Complete assessments and make determinations on all intern applications	July
Ensure that >99 per cent of qualifying interns are registered	
Ensure that Registration application information is updated to reflect relevant changes upon ratification/implementation of Brexit	March

1.2 Maintain the application of proportionate and targeted regulatory interventions

Action	Target date
Monitor and respond to COVID-19 implication on doctors' capacity to meet the MPC requirements and prepare recommendations for Council endorsement	February
Undertake Performance Assessment activity as endorsed by Registration and Continuing Practice Committee and Council (subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	November
Give effect to amendments to the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020 to enhance Regulatory systems, processes and procedures to reflect changes in legislation/ investigative powers	February
Complete review of: (i) Evolve case management system and (ii) IT functionality requirements associated with enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020	February
Develop recommendations identifying costs and benefits associated with Evolve system upgrade versus migration to an alternative case management system	

Enhance transparency and awareness through the publication and sharing of statistics detailing e.g. • Number and nature of complaints received • Section 60 orders • Breakdown of public vs private inquiries • Other (to be agreed) Ensure proactive communication of related information to stakeholders through agreed channels	December
Ensure the continued, efficient and regular support for registered medical practitioners with identified relevant health and practice issues through activities of the Health Committee	December

1.3 Identify, harness and use Medical Council expertise to develop clear positions on key healthcare issues and contribute to health policy development which impacts on patient safety and the medical profession

Action	Target date
Implement updated Section 11 Registration rules following enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020	February
Examine patient safety concerns around the prescribing practices of benzodiazepines, pregabalin and Z drugs to enable Council to make healthcare policy recommendations and to support doctors in the area of safe prescribing. This will be achieved by hosting a multidisciplinary group consisting of representatives from the Dept of Health, HSE, PSI, ICGP, HPRA, NMIB, College of Psychiatry and a GP/Pharmacist. These meetings occur approximately once every 6 weeks and require the collaboration and engagement of all of the stakeholders mentioned in order to continue to progress on issues of safe prescribing	December
Examine the opportunities and challenges of telemedicine to inform Council guidance and make recommendations on healthcare policy initiatives	December
Update and conduct public consultation exercise on updated Section 11 rules following enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020- SI 741 of 2011	April
Undertake a complete review of all section 11 rules	April

1.4 Collaborate with Irish and international medical regulators to contribute to and enhance best practice regulatory models and standards

Action	Target date
Implement agreed changes to Medical Council processes coming from discussions with the General Medical Council in 2020	February
Implement joint Medical Council/General Medical Council processes, protocols and timelines for post-Brexit information sharing as it relates to doctors practising in the respective jurisdictions	February

Sharing regulatory information with other representative bodies via the FTP Forum and bilaterally on an ad hoc basis and with our international counterparts via our membership of the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities	December
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Objective 2:

Ensure consistency in application of quality assured standards across the continuum of education, training and lifelong learning

2.1 Continued development of a proportionate, evidence-led, regulatory model to quality assure medical education, training and lifelong learning

Action	Target date
Develop a comprehensive set of draft Medical Council standards for undergraduate, intern and postgraduate medical education and training and clinical training sites	June
Engage a third-party provider to develop an infrastructure, processes, documentation and supports required for the practical application of new education and training standards.	December
Complete accreditation process for 1 undergraduate and 13 postgraduate medical education and training programmes (subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	December
Undertake evaluations of all medical schools and Post Graduate Training Board's to determine adherence to Medical Council standards since date of last accreditation	July
Ensure that areas of non-compliance are identified, and remedial actions/requirements are relayed to the respective medical education and training bodies	December
Ensure that all applications for recognition of new specialities are processed in accordance with indicative process time parameters	December
Determine which Anatomy Departments should receive priority in the inspection cycle and ensure that they are inspected (subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	December
Complete evaluations of all Anatomy Department data, assess adherence to Medical Council policy and report associated findings/ recommendations	March
Provide training in relation to EU Directives regarding professional qualifications and proportionality to relevant staff, assessors, Council/committee members	October
Complete inspection process for 11 clinical training sites (subject to constraints due to COVID-19)	December

Undertake evaluations of selected clinical training sites to determine adherence to Medical Council standards since date of last inspection	July
Ensure that areas of non-compliance are identified, and remedial actions/requirements are relayed to the respective clinical training sites and hospital groups	December
Conduct review of governance of intern year and make recommendations for improvement	September
Implement high-priority objectives identified to improve the Council's processes and procedures under Part 10 of Medical Practitioner Act 2007	December
Complete review of international evidence and best practice with a view to enhancing the maintenance of professional competence framework and obtain Registration and Continuing Practice Committee and Council endorsement	March
Implement changes to existing PRES Level 2 (MCQ) arrangements and impacts on registration applications	March

2.2 Ensure all education, training and lifelong learning interventions are evidence-based

Action	Target date
Establish accreditation standards and monitoring process for Continuing Professional Development of registered medical practitioners	September

2.3 Ensure professional identity formation process, from lay person to skilled professional, is embedded in education, training and lifelong learning

Action	Target date
Ensure Professional Competence schemes are compliant with contractual arrangements through the analysis and reporting of KPI and qualitative data to Registration and Continuing Practice Committee and communicate advice to Post Graduate Training Board's on agreed actions	August
Collate Registration and Continuing Practice Committee and Council inputs, develop agreed position and implement recommendations	

2.4 Guide the development of outcome-based education, training and lifelong learning programmes appropriate to the student or registered medical practitioner's career stage

Action	Target date
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Develop updated guidance document detailing Council's CPD priorities and requirements of Professional Competence Scheme operators	November
Ensure understanding of CPD priorities/requirements and commitment to adoption is secured on behalf of all operators	

2.5 Undertake or commission targeted medical education research that addresses strategically important themes that advance medical education, training and lifelong learning quality in Ireland

Action	Target date
Conduct the annual trainees survey drawing on previous research findings and current health service/practice issues	December

2.6 Provide leadership to students and registered medical practitioners on their professional conduct and ethical responsibilities

Action	Target date
Undertake a review of the Professional Conduct and Ethical Guide based on legal advice and research and consultation	September

2.7 Support and advocate for the physical and mental well-being of students and registered medical practitioners

Action	Target date
Launch campaign in early 2021 and then maintain and enhance the campaign to optimise awareness	January
Promote the doctor wellbeing campaign to highlight the importance for patient safety of doctors caring for themselves	December

Objective 3:

Learn from experience to enhance the delivery of an efficient and proportionate model of regulation

3.1 Proactively identify and deliver improvements in regulatory activities

Action	Target date
Plan and commence a phased implementation of the recommendations for the evolution of the Irish Maintenance of Professional Competence Model following stakeholder consultation, endorsement by the Registration and Continuing Practice Committee and Council	December
Undertake a review of legal services (inhouse-external) to recommend changes to the management, organisational structure and resourcing of Council legal services to ensure cost effectiveness and efficiency	July

3.2 Analyse and use relevant information (internally and externally) in a targeted way, to better inform decisions

Action	Target date
Analyse internal and external regulatory activity and related data to inform changes in how the existing functions of the Council are carried out	December
Produce and publish the Workforce Intelligence report with a view to informing health sector workforce planning and policy decisions	December

3.3 Collaborate with stakeholders to encourage sharing of information, experiences and joint learning

Action	Target date
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Medical Council analyses and disseminates the data collected in undertaking its regulatory functions to ensure patient safety in the public's dealings with the Medical Profession	December
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3.4 Be a learning organisation committed to continually improving what we do

Action	Target date
Implement annual self-assessments, reporting and review of outcomes for Council and its committees	December
Ensure that all Council personnel complete refresher Freedom of Information and Data Protection training	November
Develop, agree and implement Freedom of Information and Data Protection orientation plan for all new personnel joining from 1 st January.	
Ensure that all objectives, requirements and obligations as outlined in the 'Equality in the Public Sector' Working Group document are implemented by year end	December
Implement recommendations for new: (i) complaint procedures, (ii) Preliminary Proceedings Committee/ Fitness to Practice Committee procedures and associated correspondence with (i) and (ii) Manage the Fitness to Practice Committee list subject to COVID-19 restrictions	December
Deliver 'critical' and 'necessary' training to relevant staff and committee members in relation to the enactment of the Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendments) Act 2020	December
Research and recommend suitable ICT or similar solution which would allow inquiries to be conducted remotely and/or at relevant physical distance	June
Monitor and implement best practice/lessons learned in managing litigation, appeals, judicial reviews and other legal actions	December

Objective 4:

Improve the understanding of the role of the Medical Council

4.1 Promote an open and transparent organisational ethos

Action	Target date
Publish quarterly Freedom of Information Disclosure Logs	December
Ensure that 100% of data breaches are reported to the Data Protection Commission within the timeframe as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	December
Ensure that at least 90% of requests for information under Freedom of Information & Data Protection legislation are issued within the timeframes outlined in relevant legislation	December
Ensure that media queries are acknowledged in a timely manner and comprehensive responses are issued promptly	December
Produce and publish statistical reports relating to registration processing for the various divisions of the register on a quarterly basis	December

4.2 Establish meaningful two-way communication channels and engage opportunities with stakeholders

Action	Target date
Ensure that working groups (Council, President, Committee) who require Corporate Governance support are identified/agreed/documented upon establishment and met on an on-going basis	December
Ensure effective and on-going engagement with elected officials and Oireachtas Health Committee members in accordance with agreed principles	December
Conduct engagement campaign with patient advocacy groups on twice yearly basis in respect of the Council's principal remit of patient safety	December
Devise, develop and agree consultations to address areas of importance relevant to Medical Council's remit - consulting with broad range of stakeholders and communicating findings	December

Attend, present and liaise with stakeholders and organisations in relation to registration matters in the registration of medical practitioners	December
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4.3 Outline and share the Medical Council's methodologies, operations and processes to key stakeholders

Action	Target date
Deliver and implement engagement plan and schedule for meetings with: (i) the HSE, (ii) private and independent hospitals / other employers e.g., locum, telemedicine agencies (iii) registrant indemnifiers, (iv) GP representatives (v) patient advocacy groups and (vi) Doctor representative groups Delivery and presentation and external messaging on the Council's core regulatory functions including complaints processes, professional competence, registration, education and training. Further process of stakeholder engagement for local level reporting/ resolution of complaint matters initially	TBA
Develop and agree information requirements and seminar themes for registered medical practitioners	December

4.4 Publish and promote relevant Medical Council activities

Action	Target date
Design, develop and agree stakeholder presentation and messaging as it relates to the Council's professional competence schemes Develop and implement engagement plan and schedule for meetings with key stakeholder groups	October
Ensure in all instances that launch plans and related information/ media/ campaign strategies are developed and implemented to optimise awareness of Council research and reports	December
Review, evaluate and enhance our digital platforms to further promote relevant activities	December

Research, prepare, and publish WFIR	December
Research, prepare, and publish reports relevant to trainer and trainee experiences	December
Publish, promote and disseminate Medical Council reports, abstracts and presentations	December
Make available detailed financial statements on an annual basis following audit by the Office of The Comptroller & Auditor General	September

Objective 5:

Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession

5.1 Review the current legislation regulating medical practitioners to inform and recommend changes

Action	Target date
Review the Medical Practitioner's Act 2007 (& related Statutory Instruments) in its totality to identify opportunities for change, including gaps and barriers, to improve and enhance regulatory functions	TBA
Conduct a series of focused engagements with stakeholders relevant to each part of the Regulated Professions (Health & Social Care) (Amendment) 2020 to inform and recommend legislative changes	TBA
Commence a review of the Council's existing model of registration, informed through international research, with a view to establishing a registration process to future proof proportionate medical regulatory action	TBA
Research and report on international application of licence to practice models to explore and inform future direction of registration activity	July

5.2 Examine international health professions regulatory practice and legislation to inform and recommend changes in the regulation of medical practitioners

Action	Target date
Undertake research into other regulatory bodies in how they function across the governance and regulatory functions, to develop an understanding of different regulatory models	TBA

Coming from the research, consult with other international regulatory bodies to further understand the breadth of their functions and how they conduct their business, with a view to considering if appropriate to the Council	TBA
Bring together a central repository of all legislation which impacts the Medical Council, to ensure the totality of the legislative framework within which the Council operates, is considered when drafting policy proposals	TBA
Engage stakeholders, through a “think tank”, to review Part 10 of the Medical Practitioner Act 2007 and prepare a right touch vision for regulation of Medical Education and Training	TBA

5.3 Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession

Action	Target date
Develop proposals emerging from research, consultation and analysis of legislation and international regulation, emanating from activities set out at 5.1 (above)	TBA
Research and develop proposals for new opportunities for revenue generation	TBA

Objective 6:

Develop the Medical Council as an engaged, effective and empowered organisation

6.1 Develop, align and support a skilled and knowledgeable team required to deliver on the Council's strategic objectives

Action	Target date
Create 2021 Learning & Development Plan objectives and determine programmes/training which will be delivered remotely	September
Develop updated agenda, plan and activity programme for Council's autumn away-day	
Ensure successful implementation of governance software board meeting support module	December
Ensure successful implementation of governance software performance and risk modules	
Review requirements necessary to ensure full compliance with procurement legislation/controls and address any resource or related gaps arising	July
Ensure that review of existing structure is undertaken and proposed organisational design is developed/agreed	July
Ensure that revised Workforce Plan is developed and submitted to the Department of Health	
Develop and agree integrated/strategic training plan for the organisation and ensure implementation in accordance with associated timelines	September
Ensure that a customised Medical Council competency framework is developed, agreed and implemented across the organisation	October

Review, develop and update all Medical Council HR policies and procedures	November
Ensure that interview skills and PMDS training is provided for all Medical Council personnel in support of the new competency framework	November
Senior executive team to engage employees in the implementation of the Business Plan to enhance skill development and corporate knowledge	December

6.2 Create a culture that encourages collaboration and shared learning within the Medical Council

Action	Target date
Identify and propose ICT and related solutions to: (i) increase efficiency and (ii) support remote access/e-working	September
Ensure full compliance with health and safety legislation in implementation of remote working	December
Ensure that Employee Engagement meetings are held on a regular quarterly basis and that emerging issues are addressed Ensure that monthly wellbeing meetings take place and agreed actions delivered on Design and administer regular staff surveys, report findings to CEO/Director of Corporate Services and develop action plan to address issues necessitating intervention Develop schedule for regular lunch and learn sessions, ensuring that key learning topics are agreed and promoted Ensure that agendas are developed and that staff meetings are held on a regular monthly basis across the organisation	December
Foster a culture of collaboration through cross organisation initiatives to improve regulatory efficiencies	December

6.3 Provide a working environment and infrastructure that will support the strategic direction of the Council

Action	Target date
Manage and ensure successful appointment of Internal Auditors that meets the needs and requirements of the Council for a 4 year period	April
Ensure successful delivery of Single Public Service Pension Scheme Databank transfer project	July
Ensure successful Implementation of the new Registration System	December
Complete the rollout of new HR/Time & Attendance System	March

Complete the rollout of the new Decision Time System for Council and Committees	March
Complete the ICT element of Building Works for Kingram House (Comms Room Re-Work, Re-Cabling, Video AV, Presentation, Visitor Management and Physical Access Controls)	December
Define/agree internal terms of reference, review the Council's income model and report recommendations to Audit, Finance and Risk Committee	December
Implement and monitor application of customised COVID-19 infection control policies and protocols to minimise infection risks for Council, staff, visitors and all stakeholders	December
Ensure successful completion of refurbishment and mechanical and electrical infrastructural programme which meets spatial, environmental, disability, health and safety and related requirements	December
Deliver meeting space solution(s) which address key meeting objectives/requirements	December
Administer on-line self-assessment survey of Council's governance and performance and report results against 2020 findings	August
Identify and engage facilitator to explore results and identify emerging issues/requirements/proposals with Council members during a dedicated Learning and Development session	
Continue to develop and implement protocols for convening, chairing and managing Council meetings on a remote basis	September
Complete satisfaction surveys and develop enhancement recommendations after 6 months of operation	December
Manage the Record Management process to include and support the appointment of a new Document Management Support Service	September
Monitor Council member meeting attendance rates and report results to members, Strategy & Governance Committee and President at year end	September
Nominate and agree c. 12 'Record Champions' to support the implementation of the new Document Management Support Service and provide training/assistance to colleagues	October
Working with the Strategy and Governance Committee, ensure that all committee chairs review their committee's terms of reference and develop proposals for adoption for SGC review/approval	November
Engage employees to inform resource requirements to deliver effective operation of the Council's regulatory and business functions	TBA

6.4 Continuously review and align the governance structures to the strategic priorities of the organisation

Action	Target date
Develop proposals and agree arrangements (with Council and Department of Health) for implementation of rolling Council terms with effect from June 1 st , 2021	March
Successfully implement a customised Environmental Action Programme for all aspects of the Medical Council's operations, to deliver required targets for Public Sector Organisations	December
Ensure that the organisation's combined energy consumption is reduced by a minimum of 3 per cent against 2020 baseline levels	December