

Summary minutes of the meeting of the Medical Council held in person on the 6th September 2022 in the Chartered Accountants House, Dublin 2.

MEMBERS PRESENT –6th September 2022

Dr Suzanne Crowe (President)
Dr Thomas Crotty (Vice President)
Ms Vicky Blomfield
Ms Teresa Bulfin
Ms Marie Culliton
Prof Paul Finucane
Mr John Gleeson
Prof John Hyland

Dr Orla Kelly
Ms Jill Long
Mr Bill Maher
Prof Joe McMenamin
Dr Aoife Mullally
Mr Jim O’Sullivan
Prof Mary O’Sullivan
Prof Edna Roche

APOLOGIES

Dr Anthony Breslin
Dr Mary Davoren
Mr Ian Drennan
Mr Paul Harkin

Prof Marina Lynch
Dr Michael McGloin
Mr John Murray
Dr Margaret O’Riordan
Mr Ronan Quirke

In attendance - In Person

Mr Leo Kearns (CEO)
Ms Lorna Purcell (Head of Corporate Governance & Secretary to Council)
Mr William Kennedy (Director of Regulation, Solicitor)
Ms Jantze Cotter (Director of Professional Competence & Research)
Ms Úna O’Rourke (Director of Education & Training)
Ms Joanna Holly (Director of Corporate Services and Planning)
Mr Alan Gallagher (Head of Communications)
Ms Ann Curran (Head of Registration)
Ms Katie Mulroy (Head of Investigations & Complaints; Solicitor)
Ms Julie Dineen (Solicitor & Legal Advisor)
Ms Johanna Morris (General Counsel)
Ms Roseanne Fox (Head of Finance)
Ms Aoife Fitzsimons (Head of Quality Improvement, E&T)
Ms Fiona Redmond (Chief Risk Officer and Governance & Compliance Manager)
Ms Jan Fitzpatrick (Corporate & Council Manager)
Ms Mellisa Tierney (Corporate & Council Executive)

In attendance – Virtually

Mr Bill Maher (Council Member)
Mr Kevin Walsh (Solicitor & Legal Advisor)
Mr Colm Reddan (Solicitor & Legal Advisor)
Ms Marion Mitchell (Head of Human Resources)

Note – all references to ‘the Act’ shall be construed as references to the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 unless otherwise stated

President's Business

President's Report

The President gave a high-level overview of her public activities with a variety of stakeholders, including Dr Gozie Offiah, National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP), HSE. The President and the CEO also met with Dr Colm Henry, CCO, HSE and Dr Brian Kinirons, NDTP, Ms Winifred Ryan and Professor Peter Gillen, to discuss the HSE National Healthcare Communication Programme. The President advised that she attended numerous other events and meetings.

Council noted this report.

Bank Mandate

Following the retirement of the Director of Strategic Projects & Registration the current Council bank mandate will be updated to reflect same and sent to Bank of Ireland to be actioned in September 2022. Additional signatories have been added to the exiting mandate to ensure appropriate cover for payments during periods of annual leave.

CEO's Business

CEO's Report including Mid-Year Review of the Business Plan

The CEO provided a high-level overview to Council of the CEO's report. Council was reminded of the achievements and challenges faced by the Executive and by Council. The key findings and risks arising from the Mid-Year Review were discussed. The CEO confirmed that the new Director for Corporate Services & Planning, Ms Joanna Holly will be commencing work for the 2023 Business Plan focusing on a more robust workforce and resource planning which is required to ensure the Council has the capacity to deliver on the Business Plan, and to ensure our people are focused on priority objectives.

A summary of the budget position to the end of May was also provided. The CEO outlined the areas he will be focusing on to ensure the following is progressed, continue to deliver against the mid-year 2022 Business Plan, incorporate lessons learned from the mid-year reviews process into the 2023 Business Planning process in terms of active planning, resource planning, training and personal development and Progress key projects: e.g. Finalise tender for the Organisation Design partner, recruitment plan, culture programme etc. A high-level summary report was provided to Council with a status of the 170+ deliverables agreed in the 2022 Business Plan. Council noted the contents of the report.

Update on Ukrainian Doctors

This matter was presented to Council by Mr Gallagher. A presentation was given on the Medical Councils response to the Ukraine crises and helping doctors to enter the Irish Healthcare system. Council was advised of the information collected from a survey which went live on the 13th April 2022. Council was informed that they are part of a working group set up by the Irish Medical Schools Council (IMSC). Council was informed that this working group was set up to examine ways of supporting medical students arriving in Ireland who have had to leave Ukraine. Council was further informed of the supports that are currently available for doctors and the supports which are coming in the near future.

Council thanked Mr Gallagher for his presentation to Council.

Annual Report 2021

Mr Gallagher provided an update to Council on the Annual Report 2021. Council was advised of the achievements under the Statement of Strategy, including a note on the impact of Covid-19 on the work of the Medical Council in 2021. It was noted that once there was a revised design and the agreed edits the report will be forwarded to the Professional Regulation Unit of the Dept of Health for review, prior to being submitted to the Minister.

Council approved the Annual Report 2021 pending the agreed edits.

Committee Reports

Audit & Risk Committee Report to Council

The report of the Audit & Risk Committee meetings held on the 18th and 24th of August 2022 was presented. Council was given a high-level overview of this report. Four items were for noting by Council, relating to risk management, the Q2 2022 management accounts, an update on investment performance and internal audit.

Council approved the report of the Audit & Risk Committee.

Risk Report - Update for Council

This matter was presented by Ms Redmond, Chief Risk Officer, who informed Council of new risks, upgraded risks and the thirty-six red risks. Council was informed that there had been an update to the statistics provided in the Risk Report dated 16 August 2022. Council discussed these risks at length and clarification was given on the method of calculation of levels of risks.

Council approved the Risk Register Report. Council thanked Ms Redmond for her detailed presentation and work to date.

Governance Update

Ms Purcell, Secretary to Council, provided the Council with an update on the Council Election & Nominations which will take place in 2023. Council was informed of the background, timeline of events and the impact it may have on the membership of the committees. It was confirmed that in 2023, fifteen Council members' terms will end. However, some of these members are eligible for re – appointment or re – election.

Ms Fitzpatrick then reminded Council of the Governance Calendar 2022, which maps out Council's governance requirements for the year, in compliance with the Code of Practise for the Governance of State Bodies. Council was advised on the status of each action, some of which have been deferred pending completion of the Change Programme relating to Governance.

Council thanked Ms Purcell and Ms Fitzpatrick.

Temporary nomination to the Health Committee

This matter was presented to Council by Ms Fitzpatrick. Council was informed that due to personal circumstances, Prof Marina Lynch has stepped away temporarily from the Health Committee. In order to limit the impact on this Committee, Council Members were requested to consider if they could step

into the role until the end of the year. Council members were asked to submit their Expressions of Interest to the Corporate Governance Team and provide a brief outline of their suitability for the role. Council was informed that one application from Ms Jill Long was received.

Council approved the appointment of Ms Long to the Health Committee for the duration that Prof Marina Lynch is unavailable. Council wished Ms Long well on her appointment.

Draft medical education and training standards for public consultation – including presentation by Cardiff University

This matter was presented to the Council by Ms O'Rourke. Council was requested to approve the draft Medical Education and Training Standards ("the standards") for wider public consultation. Council was provided with background information regarding the standards for quality assuring medical education and training in Ireland. Council was reminded that the review of the standards is part of a major initiative which began in 2018. The objective of the project is: *"To develop a single suite of standards and adopt an outcomes-based approach to the continuum of medical education, training and life-long learning in Ireland"*. The purpose of developing a single suite is to enable Council to take a consistent approach across the continuum of medical education and Training.

Council was informed that Health Care Informed and the project team developed a suite of standards under five themes between 2019 and 2020. This standards framework was approved by Council in February 2019 and the development of standards and criteria commenced. Once all themes were collated and looked at holistically, it became apparent the standards required considerable editing by someone with the relevant expertise to do so. In 2021, the Medical Council commissioned Cardiff University to review and edit the new draft standards.

Council was informed that upon reviewing the new draft standards, Cardiff University (CU) identified considerable overlap between the standards and criteria under each theme and made edits to the draft standards. In their approach to editing the standards, they significantly reduced the size of the draft standards and Council consequently approved the following recommended changes to the titles of the themes in March 2022, which are now:

- Theme 1 – Clinical Learning Environment,
- Theme 2 – Mission and Governance,
- Theme 3 – Educators,
- Theme 4 – Learners,
- Theme 5 – Curricula and Assessment.

Ms Julie Browne - Project Lead, Senior Lecturer in Academic practice, Cardiff University School of Medicine then gave a presentation to Council highlighting these areas of research.

Council was advised of the initial feedback from the focus groups and survey results, the areas of concern for stakeholders, the recommendation of the Education and Training committee and the next steps to be taken and the implications on resources and communications.

Council thanked Ms Browne for her very detailed and thorough presentation, which Council acknowledged was a large project. Council discussed the proposed standards and the effects they would have if a doctor wished to practice elsewhere in Europe.

Council approved the draft medical education and training standards ("the standards") to go out for wider public consultation.

Prof O’Sullivan then informed Council that the ETC had approved the TCD Entry Programme for a period of 5 years.

Council was then informed that Prof Alan Johnson has resigned from the ETC for personal reasons. The President, on behalf of Council, noted Prof Johnson’s long-term work with the Medical Council and sent thanks through the Chair. Council noted their best wishes should also be sent to Prof Johnson.

Health Committee

The report of the Health Committee meeting held on 17th August 2022 was presented to Council.

Council approved the report of Health Committee

Attendance of PPC and FTPC members at s57 matters considered at Council meeting – update

This matter was presented to Council by Ms Morris. Council was advised regarding the following areas:

- i. Decisions under section 57 of the Act.
- ii. Preliminary Proceedings Committee (“PPC”) decisions; and
- iii. Fitness to Practice Committee (“FTPC”) decisions.

Council was advised on actions which have been taken since the Council Meeting on the 13th July 2022 and the next steps in progressing this issue. It was noted that further legal advice would be forthcoming, and that Council will continue to be updated.

Council discussed this issue at length with many areas being highlighted as possible issues going forward. Council noted the content of the update.

Presentation on Legislative changes Project

Mr Kennedy gave a presentation to Council outlining significant amendments which effect the Legislative change project. Council was given an overview of the historical governance and structure of the legislation effecting the Medical Council. Mr Kennedy then provided an overview of the current workload of Council along with an outline of the changes that the 2020 Act would bring. Council was then informed of the next steps to continue to progress these proposed legislative changes including planned engagements with relevant stakeholders including the Department of Health.

Council thanked Mr Kennedy for his presentation and his continued work.

Reports from Committees

The below reports were included in the brief for noting by Council. Council was advised that the full reports were available on Decision Time

- Report of the Education and Training Committee (ETC) meeting held on 27th July 2022
- Report of the Monitoring Committee meeting held on 19th August 2022
- Report of the Registration and Continuing Practice Committee meeting held on the 28th June 2022.

Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

The in-person meeting concluded at 15.15pm for the day, it resumed on the 7th September 2022 at 9.00am, for Day 2 – Regulatory, held virtually.