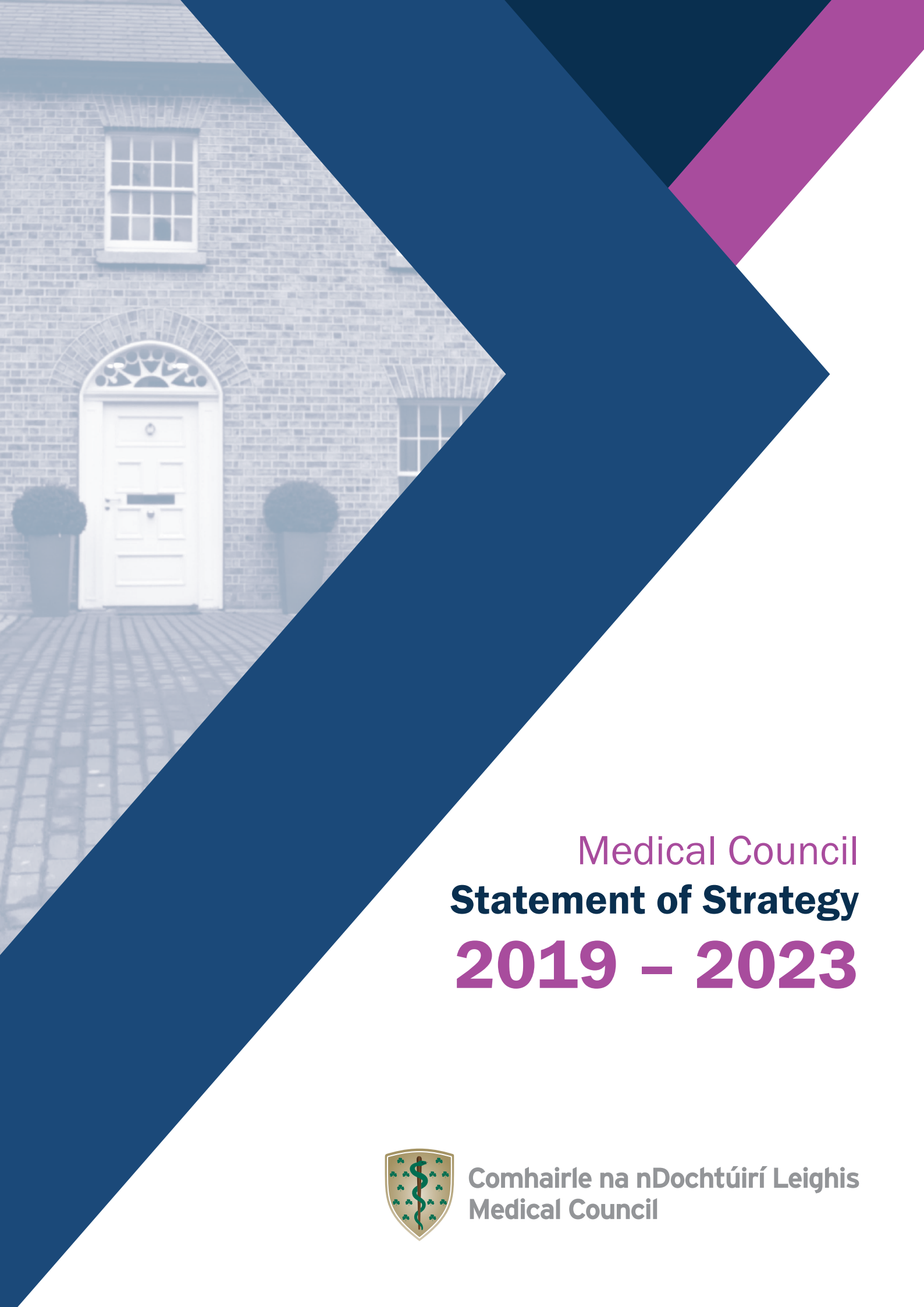




Medical Council
Statement of Strategy
2019 – 2023



Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

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Foreword



The Medical Council has a central role in promoting and ensuring patient safety through the setting of high standards of professional conduct and ethics for the medical profession.

Following a comprehensive internal and external stakeholder engagement process and an analysis of international best practice we are pleased to present the Medical Council's Statement of Strategy to cover the period 2019 – 2023.

This is the third plan since the introduction of the Medical Practitioners Act of 2007 and is a natural progression on the previous strategic documents 2010 - 2013 and 2014 - 2018.

Central to the development of this plan was a comprehensive review of the 2014 - 18 Statement of Strategy, which was used to inform the mission, vision, values and objectives for the forthcoming 5-year term of the Council. The delivery of our remit will be underpinned by these principles.

We also reviewed international best practice and have sought to factor-in relevant regulatory and legislative developments on the horizon for the next five years.

We would like to acknowledge the co-operation of all our stakeholders and their willingness to positively engage in the development of this plan. They clearly agreed that in the ever-evolving and fast-moving health sector, the importance of ensuring that the Medical Council, while responding to its core legislative and regulatory responsibilities, is a leader in the promotion and implementation of best medical practice.

Following the considerable body of work that has been undertaken, we have arrived at a five-year strategy that is realistic, innovative and ambitious. We believe it positions the Medical Council to fulfil its full remit as the body responsible for the regulation of registered medical practitioners in Ireland. Central to this is protecting patient safety and supporting the medical profession in a transparent, respectful and fair manner.

Central to the development of this strategy the Medical Council has articulated that it will, through the application of right touch regulation, influence changes within the health system required to support the provision of safe quality health care. The Medical Council will contribute to Sláintecare, the 10-year vision for the Irish national health care system, and other leading national policy through the dissemination of our data and sharing of our expertise and proactive engagement with our stakeholders.

Nationally identified health policy considerations will be incorporated into the relevant Council annual business plans as they arise. We look forward to working with all registered medical practitioners and our stakeholders in the delivery of the Medical Council's strategy for the next five years.

Dr Rita Doyle
President

William Prasifka
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

The Medical Council is the body responsible for the regulation of registered medical practitioners in Ireland under the Medical Practitioner’s Act 2007 (‘the Act’).

Under the Act, its functions include:

- ▶ Protecting the public as defined by the Act
- ▶ Maintaining the register of medical practitioners
- ▶ Setting, monitoring and maintaining standards of education for registered medical practitioners.
- ▶ Setting, monitoring and maintaining standards of ethical and professional practice for registered medical practitioners.
- ▶ Ensuring registered medical practitioners are maintaining their professional competence and are fit to practise
- ▶ Managing complaints made about doctors to ensure that high standards of medical care is provided to protect patients

The Act changed the role and remit of the Medical Council in many areas and this was reflected in the first statement of strategy in 2010. The process to develop the following strategy 2014 – 2018 resulted in broad engagement with stakeholders and allowed the Medical Council to reflect on its current position in the health environment and set its key objectives to move the organisation forward. The key themes arising from that process - leadership, patient trust, balanced approach, registered medical practitioner retention, good practice, medical practitioners’ health, collaboration, governing legislation and sustainability, continue to hold true today.

This is the Medical Council’s third Strategic Plan, which will cover the period 2019 – 2023. The Medical Council carried out a widespread internal and external stakeholder engagement process and conducted an international desktop analysis on best practice to inform the development of this strategy.

Scope

In developing this strategic plan, the Medical Council focused on:

- ▶ The functions of the Medical Council as set out in the Act
- ▶ The changing societal and economic environment
- ▶ The changing demands of regulation
- ▶ The planned amendments to the Act and potential changes in the Medical Council’s role arising from such changes
- ▶ Sláintecare, other national healthcare policy and legislation
- ▶ The evolving delivery of health services and move towards community-based services
- ▶ Transformational changes within the health services with the establishment of hospital groups and community healthcare organisations.

Vision, Mission & Values

A review of the Vision, Mission and Values statement resulted in an update of each to reflect the focus of the Medical Council in the next five years.

Vision

Safe, high quality patient care, public confidence in the medical profession and leadership in healthcare

Mission

To set, monitor and promote professional standards that support the delivery of high quality, safe patient care and best patient outcomes

Values

Advocating for patients and **supporting** medical practitioners in a changing healthcare environment

Acting with **independance**, **fairness** and **integrity**

Being **open** and **transparent**

Building **trust** and **respect** between medical practitioners, patients and the Medical Council

Leading and **influencing** healthcare

Taking **accountability** for our decisions and actions

Strategy Development

The six objectives of the strategy are the product of an extensive stakeholder engagement and internal consultation process.

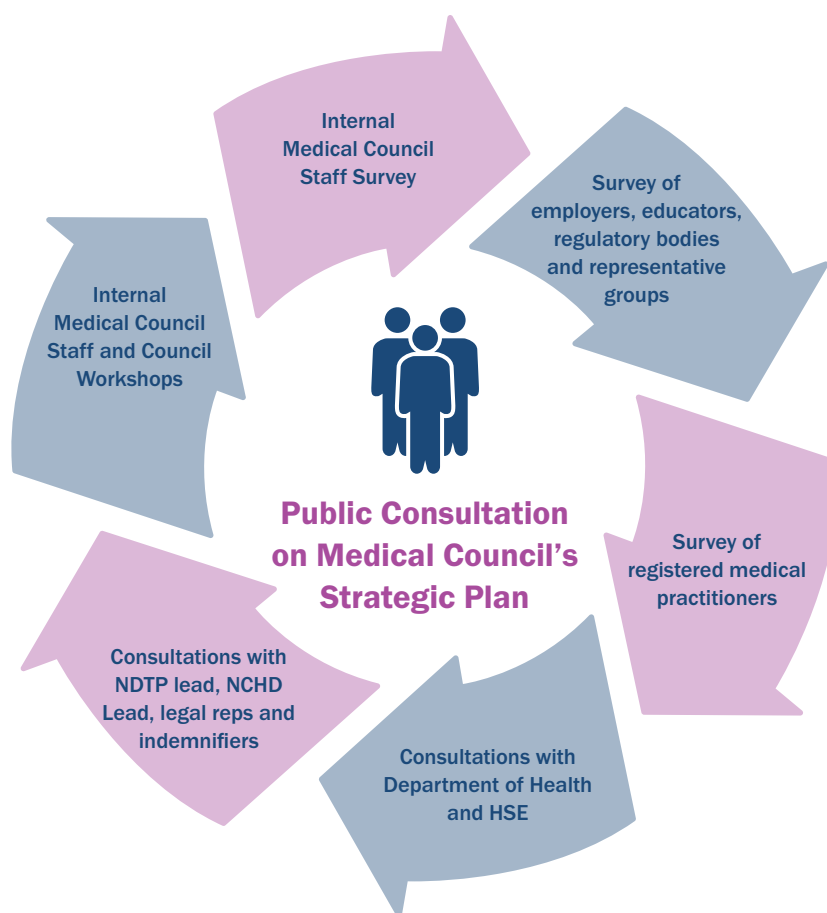
The Medical Council is confident that it has developed a robust strategy to achieve its mission and advance towards achieving its vision.

The Medical Council's annual business plan will be developed and aligned to these strategic objectives with measurable indicative timescales, deliverables and outputs.

The Medical Council will monitor the changing health and social care environment to ensure that the strategy remains relevant and fit for purpose to effectively achieve its mission and vision.

In developing its 2019 – 2023 strategy the Medical Council:

- ▶ Reviewed the 2014 – 2018 Medical Council Strategy;
- ▶ Undertook extensive stakeholder engagement through surveys and focused meetings;
- ▶ Reviewed the current national and international environment;
- ▶ Conducted visioning workshops with the Medical Council executive, the Medical Council's senior leadership team and Medical Council representatives.



Testing Emerging Strategic Themes

Strategic themes emerged from the research, surveys, workshops and discussions, and these were further tested in workshops with the Medical Council, management and staff. Through this process, the Medical Council identified the key strategic objectives and relevant actions that will drive the Medical Council in its work over the next 5 years.

Strategy Map

Our Vision



Safe, high quality patient care, public confidence in the medical profession and leadership in healthcare

Our Mission



To set, monitor and promote professional standards that support the delivery of high quality, safe patient care and best patient outcomes

Our Strategic Objectives



1

Ensure medical regulation protects the public and supports registered medical practitioners

2

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

3

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

Our Values



Advocating for patients and supporting medical practitioners in a changing healthcare environment

Being open and transparent

Leading and influencing healthcare

Acting with independence, fairness and integrity

Building trust and respect between medical practitioners, patients and the Medical Council

Taking accountability for our decisions and actions

4

Improve the understanding of the role of the Medical Council

5

Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession'

6

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

Strategic Objectives

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

The six key strategic objectives for this term are:

1

Ensure medical regulation protects the public and supports registered medical practitioners

2

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

3

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

4

Improve the understanding of the role of the Medical Council

5

Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession

6

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

Strategic Objective

1

Ensure medical regulation protects the public and supports registered medical practitioners

We aim to achieve this objective through the following actions:

- 1.1** Maintain the application of standards that ensure the efficient and effective registration of medical practitioners
- 1.2** Maintain the application of proportionate and targeted regulatory interventions
- 1.3** Identify, harness and utilise 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
- 1.4** Collaborate with Irish and international medical regulators to contribute to and enhance best practice regulatory models and standards

This objective is about ensuring robust and proportionate regulation to protect the public and support the medical profession.

This objective aims to ensure that the Medical Council is a leading voice and influencer in healthcare policy development and a global leader in medical regulation, informed by international best practice.

The Medical Council will know it's successful when:

- ▶ We see improved outcomes arising from proportionate regulatory interventions;
- ▶ The Medical Council consults, contributes and informs relevant healthcare policy;
- ▶ We have identified and utilised organisational and international expertise to inform our regulatory approaches.

Strategic Objective 2

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

We aim to achieve this objective through the following actions:

- 2.1** Continued development of a proportionate, evidence-led, regulatory model to quality assure medical education, training and lifelong learning
- 2.2** Ensure all education, training and lifelong learning interventions are evidence-based
- 2.3** Ensure professional identity formation process, from lay person to skilled professional, is embedded in education, training and lifelong learning
- 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
- 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
- 2.6** Provide leadership to students and registered medical practitioners on their professional conduct and ethical responsibilities
- 2.7** Support and advocate for the physical and mental well-being of students and registered medical practitioners

This objective is about the Medical Council assuring patients, students, registered medical practitioners, and the multi-disciplinary teams, that medical education, training and lifelong learning in Ireland is fit for purpose. It recognises the student's and registered medical practitioner's need for specific supports at key transition points throughout their studies and career. Its aim is to ensure that Medical Council policy and interventions on education, training and lifelong learning remain current and appropriate.

The Medical Council will know it's successful when:

- ▶ Medical Council regulatory interventions arising from reviews of education, training and lifelong learning standards are evidence based;
- ▶ Medical Council standards for the continuum of medical education, training and lifelong learning are consistent, outcomes-based and can be applied to each stage in a student's/registered medical practitioner's development;
- ▶ Medical training bodies and institutions meet (and sometimes exceed) education and training standards, or take swift and responsive action where compliance issues identified by the Medical Council arise;
- ▶ Wellbeing supports are available and accessible for students and registered medical practitioners transitioning from lay person to medical professional and throughout their career.

Strategic Objective 3

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

We aim to achieve this objective through the following actions:

- 3.1** Proactively identify and deliver improvements in regulatory activities
- 3.2** Analyse and use relevant information (internally and externally) in a targeted way, to better inform decisions
- 3.3** Collaborate with stakeholders to encourage sharing of information, experiences and joint learning
- 3.4** Be a learning organisation committed to continually improving what we do

The Medical Council will gather information from all its activities, carry out thorough analysis, looking at root causes for both successful and more problematic incidents. This objective focuses on using this information to develop initiatives, with a view to preventing regulatory issues emerging at a later stage.

The aim is to adopt a 'prevention rather than cure' approach in regulating registered medical practitioners with continuous improvements across all the Medical Council's activities and functions.

The Medical Council will know it's successful when:

- ▶ We have identified and implemented programmes to support enhanced regulatory practice;
- ▶ Targeted education and training programmes are developed for registered medical practitioners that reflect gaps in knowledge, skills and experience;
- ▶ Annual business plans are achieved.

Strategic Objective 4

Improve the understanding of the role of the Medical Council

We aim to achieve this objective through the following actions:

- 4.1 Promote an open and transparent organisational ethos
- 4.2 Establish meaningful two-way communication channels and engagement opportunities with stakeholders
- 4.3 Outline and share the Medical Council's methodologies, operations and processes to key stakeholders
- 4.4 Publish and promote relevant Medical Council activities

This objective focuses on raising awareness amongst registered medical practitioners, the public and other stakeholders of the functions, role and activities of the Medical Council and how it supports safe, effective patient care. It is about being open and transparent in all activities, ensuring that stakeholders understand and value the role the Medical Council plays in protecting the public and supporting the medical profession.

The Council will work in partnership with stakeholders to promote the benefits of effective regulation in protecting the public and supporting the profession.

The Medical Council will know it's successful when:

- ▶ The Medical Council is seen as open, transparent and fair in its dealings with the profession;
- ▶ The Medical Council pro-actively engages and communicates with registered medical practitioners and stakeholders.

Strategic Objective 5

Review and recommend changes to legislation regulating the medical profession

We aim to achieve this objective through the following actions:

- 5.1** Review the current legislation regulating medical practitioners to inform and recommend changes
- 5.2** Examine international health professions regulatory practice and legislation to inform and recommend changes in the regulation of medical practitioners
- 5.3** Make recommendations on how to improve regulation of registered medical practitioners

The aim of this objective is to effect appropriate changes in legislation that enable the Medical Council to be a more effective and responsive regulator. The Medical Council will review the Medical Practitioners Act 2007 and other relevant legislation to make suggestions on an appropriate legislative framework for the future regulation of the medical profession in line with international best practice.

To achieve this the Medical Council will work with the Department of Health (DoH) and relevant stakeholders.

The Medical Council will know it's successful when:

- ▶ The Medical Practitioners Act 2007 and other relevant legislation is reviewed and suggested changes to improve the regulation of registered medical practitioners in Ireland in line with best practise are presented to the DoH.

Strategic Objective 6

To develop the Medical Council as an engaged, effective and empowered organisation

We aim to achieve this objective through the following actions:

- 6.1** Develop, align and support a skilled and knowledgeable team required to deliver on the Council's strategic objectives
- 6.2** Create a culture that encourages collaboration and shared learning within the Medical Council
- 6.3** Provide a working environment and infrastructure that will support the strategic direction of the Council
- 6.4** Continuously review and align the governance structures to the strategic priorities of the organisation

This objective focuses on developing the organisation and its workforce, equipped with competencies to deliver the Council's remit and strategy. It promotes collaborative, cross-functional working, leading to more effective delivery of the Council's core functions. It undertakes regular review of governance structures throughout the lifetime of the strategy to improve its operations.

It examines the resource requirements of the organisation and the medium -to- long term facility requirements of the Medical Council.

The Medical Council will know it's successful when:

- ▶ The organisation retains and attracts skilled and competent employees;
- ▶ We see more efficient delivery of key operations, informed by reviews;
- ▶ We have infrastructure that is fit for purpose to support the Medical Council's operations, including progressive ICT systems.

Notes

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