

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

20 February 2020: 16.30 – 18.00

Video conference Dublin/Cork

Present:

Pat O'Mahony	Chairperson	POM
Paula Kilbane	Board Member (dial in)	PK
Caroline Spillane	Board Member	CS
Stephen O'Flaherty	Board Member (dial in)	SOF
Lynsey Perdisatt	Board Member	LP
Michael Rigby	Board Member	MJR
Tony McNamara	Board Member	TMcN
Molly Buckley	Board Member (dial in)	MB

In Attendance:

Phelim Quinn	CEO	PQ
Kathleen Lombard	Board Secretary and Chief Risk Officer	KL
Sean Angland	Acting Chief Operations Officer	SA
Eleanor Noonan	Finance Manager	EN

Apologies:

Enda Connolly	Board Member	EC
Jim Kiely	Board Member	JK
Martin Sisk*	Board Member	MS

*Due to family bereavement

1. Welcome and Quorum

It was noted that a quorum was present and the Board meeting was duly convened.

2. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

3. Matters arising from the Regulation Committee Meeting

PK, as Chair of the Regulation Committee reported on two matters of concern arising from the recent meeting of the Regulation Committee that necessitate briefing the Board;

- The ongoing instability of the Prism IT system and the risk that it has on effective regulatory operations. Funding is required urgently to stabilise the system.
- The Chief Inspector's position in relation to designated centres for older persons. In this context, PK advised that the Chief Inspector has been working closely with the HSE on an approach to improve the dignity and privacy needs of older persons by reducing the number of beds in the centres where this is an area of poor compliance.

PQ updated the Board on recent developments in relation to these two items;

- Following a meeting with the DoH attended by PQ and the Chief Information Officer, it is anticipated that the interim solution for a project aimed at stabilising the ICT system will be funded
- PQ indicated that there has been contact with HSE whereby they had indicated efforts to resolve immediate and longer terms issues pertaining to relevant designated centres.

The Chairperson also advised that he met with the Chairperson of the HSE where the issue of long term residential care for older people was discussed.

4. Annual Accounts

CS, Chair of the Audit Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) advised that the committee had met on the previous Monday evening and had reviewed the financial statements in detail. SA had explained the process and led the committee through each of the governance statements and the key elements of the financial statements. CS reported that detail in relation to aspects of the accounts was made readily available and there had been no concerns or issues remaining following the Committee's review. CS also reported that additional detail was included in the presentation included in the Board papers which supported the financial statements for the Board meeting. The additional detail relates to an explanation of a change in accounting treatment of expenditure prior to 2019, but which will be reflected as a prior year's adjustment. In addition, more detail has been provided to the Board on ICT related expenditure. Following their review, the Committee were satisfied to recommend to the Board, the approval of the financial statements for 2019.

In response to a query relating to ICT expenditure on enhancements to the existing Prism system, the executive responded by clarifying that the changes had been made to facilitate HIQA's extension of powers to regulate patient exposure to ionising radiation. It had been deemed that these changes in Prism were needed to carry out the function. It was explained that some of this expenditure may transfer to the longer term ICT strategy but that this would depend on the new system and the extent to which migration of certain processes can be achieved.

Following review by the Board of the financial statements, CS proposed approval of the statements and LP seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the financial statements for 2019 be approved by the Board.**

The Chairperson thanked EN and SA and the finance team for their work in producing the annual statements so promptly after year end.

5. Assessment of Needs Standards

RF, Director of Health Information and Standards, joined the meeting for this item and presented on the associated paper included with the Board papers. RF explained that the existing Assessment of Need (for children and young people with special educational needs) standards were developed by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Education and were approved at the first meeting of the HIQA Board in May 2007.

RF explained that the Ombudsman for Children has been in communication regarding the standards and a meeting has taken place with the DoH in recent months in relation to the status of the standards. The DoH is of the view that the standards should remain in place in the interim to facilitate the HSE's operational assessment of need. However, HIQA considers that these standards are not fit for purpose and need a full revision to ensure that they are evidence based and developed in line with HIQA's quality assurance framework for standards development. Three options were set out in the paper for the Board's consideration.

The Board considered the three options and the following observations were made;

- The standards team has limited capacity to take on developing another set of standards
- The dilemma of having standards that are not fit for purpose as against having no standards
- Current priorities for the standards team include developing standards for homecare services and
- Current developments in the context of children's wellbeing that are happening at EU and WHO including
 - o The EU "Child Guarantee" proposal that all vulnerable and marginalised children are guaranteed housing, nutrition, education and healthcare. A feasibility study has been concluded on the guarantee and was report in Brussels on Monday. MJR declared that he was the health expert on the study but it was noted that this fact does not constitute a conflict of interest as the discussion is in the context of social services
 - o The Director General of the WHO has advised that children should be the priority for the next WHO global campaign.

RF explained that during initial engagement with key stakeholders on the development of the National Standards for Children's Social Services, there was a desire to ensure that any new standards framework would encompass all children's health and social care services. It was envisaged that the proposed standards for Assessment of Need would be an important subsection of the wider standards framework. Once developed a recommendation would be made to the Minister to retire any relevant, pre-existing standards.

Following discussion, the Board agreed that the option to develop standards for assessment of need under the wider standards framework for children's services should be pursued. MJR proposed approval of this option and PK seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was resolved that the option to develop standards for assessment of need under the wider standards framework be approved by the Board.**

It was noted that it would be worth exploring securing a temporary resource to work on the growing number of standards that are considered a priority. The Chairperson advised that he and the CEO will raise the matter with the Secretary General of the DoH at their upcoming meeting.

6. Health Information – Strategic Objectives

RF outlined the rationale for examining the approach of the HIS directorate to its functions as they relate to health information. RF explained the current operating environment in Ireland. She explained that while HIQA has a remit for setting health information technical and quality standards, it had become clear that progress in terms of policy, legislation, strategy and investment was slow and therefore implementation of standards was also poor. In that context, it was necessary to re-examine the work of the directorate and develop strategic objectives to refocus effort and resources on where it would have the most impact.

RF set out the areas where the HIS Directorate will focus over the coming years and advised that they are in line with HIQA's remit and the Sláintecare plan;

- Influencing policy direction e.g. evidence for a consent model re information use
- Developing guidance for information governance
- Undertaking a programme of reviews of national e-Health services programmes.

The Board considered the rationale for the change in focus and the associated objectives and the following points arose during the discussion;

- HIQA is in a unique position in having both HI and HTA functions which provides an opportunity for combining standards setting and health technology assessment so that standards in the area of information technology, such as e-prescribing systems, include rules governing the quality of data. In addition, HTAs could be conducted on national health information systems such as ePrescribing. Proprietary systems are becoming an issue as they are being used more frequently, are not based on standards and can lead to, data quality and data sharing issues.
- Establish if the HRB is carrying out research in this area
- Relationships with other researchers should be explored to ensure duplication of effort is avoided and
- HIS should consider undertaking a review of waiting lists for various services to add value to the system.

In response to these points it was clarified that;

- HIQA is invited to join a group where research will be shared across the UK, Ireland, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- The CEO and the Chairperson will meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in this area and
- A review of waiting lists is on the work programme for this year
- HIS and HTA to explore working together in areas where information and other technologies meet.

The Board agreed with the approach and the objectives set out for the HIS Directorate.

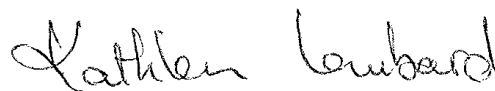
7. Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting concluded.

Signed



Pat O'Mahony
Chairperson



Kathleen Lombard
Board Secretary

Actions arising from the Board meeting on 20 February 2020

No	Action	Person Responsible	Timeframe
1	explore securing a temporary resource to work on the AON standards. (Chairperson and CEO to raise the matter with the Secretary General of the DoH at their upcoming meeting)	PQ/RF	
2	CEO and Chairperson to meet with the HRB to explore what is being done in the area of technology research	POM/PQ	
3	HIS and HTA to explore working together on standards development in areas where information and other technologies meet	RF/MR	