

Summary minutes of the meeting of the Medical Council was held in person on the 12th December 2023 in Kingram House, Dublin 2.

MEMBERS PRESENT – 12th December 2023

Dr Suzanne Crowe (President)
Dr Mary Davoren (Vice President)
Ms Teresa Bulfin
Ms Marie Culliton
Dr Morgan Crowe
Mr John Gleeson
Mr Paul Harkin
Ms Jill Long
Dr Margaret O’Riordan

Mr Jim O’Sullivan
Prof Mary O’Sullivan
Prof Joe McMenamin
Mr John Murray
Prof Deirdre Murphy
Mr Nauman Nabi
Prof Ronan O’Connell
Prof Ronan Quirke
Dr Liqa Ur Rehman

APOLOGIES

Mr Ian Drennan
Ms Sinead Corcoran
Prof Edna Roche

In attendance - In Person

Mr Leo Kearns (CEO)
Ms Mellisa Tierney (Corporate Governance & Council Manager and Interim Secretary to Council)

In attendance for relevant sections of the meeting

Mr Alan Gallager (Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement)
Ms Roseanne Fox (Executive Director of Finance)
Ms Fiona Redmond (Chief Risk Officer and Governance & Compliance Manager)
Ms Jantze Cotter (Executive Director of Regulatory Policy & Standards)
Ms Fiona McVeigh (Head of Regulatory Policy)
Ms Caren Shanley (Senior Solicitor Complaints and Investigations)
Ms Johanna Morris (General Counsel Office of the CEO)
Ms Mairead Britton-Doyle (Director of Fitness to Practise)
Ms Katie Mulroy (Director of Complaints and Investigations)
Mr Paul Byrne (Executive Director, Regulation, Operations & Support Services)
Ms Debbie Chappat (Head of Professional Competence)

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

Protected Disclosures Training

Ms Michelle Ní Longáin & Ms Lorraine Heffernan, Byrne Wallace provided Council with training in relation to Protected Disclosures. The training included, the overall legislative landscape, DPER Guidance, what a protected disclosure is, key concepts, internal reporting channels, external reporting channels, protection of identity, penalisation, protections, offences, public body reporting obligations. Council was informed that finalised policies and procedures would be circulated early in 2024.

Council members thanked Ms Ní Longáin & Ms Heffernan, Byrne Wallace for the training and they left the meeting.

President's Business

President's Report

The President welcomed Dr Morgan Crowe to Medical Council. The President then went through her list of engagements and highlighted a very productive Conference she attended the IAMRA Conference. The President and CEO also confirmed that the Medical Council would be the next hosts of the conference in 2025.

Committees

Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)

The ARC report was presented to Council. Mr O'Sullivan requested Council to decide whether, having regarded to the information available to it, including, the audited unabridged 2022 Financial Statements of the PHMP, it wished to authorise the previously proposed donation of €25,000 in respect of 2022. Council approved the proposal.

Risk Report

Ms Fiona Redmond, Chief Risk Officer, joined the meeting and presented the Risk Report. Ms Redmond provided Council with an update on new, open, and closed risks. An update was also provided on five Risk Registers which had been selected for an in-depth review – rating updates, control changes and risks reassigned as appropriate. A comparison was also provided to Council on 2023 Risk Statistics versus 2022.

Following the Risk Training provided to staff, Council was advised that an update to the Risk Policy has been drafted. Following Council approval and once implemented, it is expected there will be some changes to risk ratings as an updated risk appetite per risk category will be available for consideration.

Ms Redmond updated the Council on upcoming changes to the Risk Module. Risks will be reassigned, and new owners assigned. A new audit tracker has been created which will be populated and linked back to the Risk Register. The 2024 Business Plan activities along with the updated Strategic Risk Register will also be uploaded and linked to the risk registers. Ms Redmond left the meeting.

CEO's Business

CEO Report & Appendices

Mr Leo Kearns went through the CEO Report. The CEO welcomed Mr Paul Byrne, Executive Director, Regulation, Operations & Support Services to the organisation and confirmed to the Council that the new Executive Director, Strategy & Business Services would start in mid-January. There was also a discussion regarding the current risks to the board and the organisation.

Business Plan 2024

Mr Leo Kearns went through a high-level summary of the Business Plan 2024 and confirmed that it would come back before Council in January 2024 for approval. Council discussed various aspects of the plan and were asked to forward any comments they have regarding their priorities and the feasibility of the plan to Mr. Kearns in advance of the January meeting.

Legal Services Tender, Post Evaluation Update

Ms Britton – Doyle presented a Memo for approval to Council on the Legal Services tender. Council was asked to approve the award of Legal service contracts to the legal services providers listed in table one of the memo. Council discussed the information provided within the memo and following a proposal Council approved the legal service providers listed in table one of the memo.

Maintenance of Professional Competence Rules & Maintenance of Professional Competence Guidelines

Ms Debbie Chappat, Head of Professional Competence and Ms Jantze Cotter, Executive Director of Regulatory Policy & Standards, joined the meeting.

Ms Chappat presented to Council the draft Maintenance of Professional Competence Rules and Guidelines. Council was informed that following a rigorous process involving both internal and external stakeholders, the Registration and Continuing Practice Committee approved the Maintenance of Professional Competence Rules and accompanying Guidelines at its meeting on 23 November 2023. Council was asked to approve the draft Rules and Guidelines outlined in the memos presented to Council. A discussion took place regarding the differences between the current and the new draft Rules. A query arose in relation to the 1st of May Professional Competence Scheme enrolment date which was addressed. Council approved the Rules and Guidelines set out in appendices of both memos presented to Council. Ms Chappat left the meeting.

Regulatory Policy Priorities

Ms Fiona McVeigh, Head of regulatory Policy joined the meeting. Ms McVeigh presented Council with the drafted publications policy that outlines specific circumstances under which information related to a doctor's fitness to practise can be disclosed. A discussion then took place regarding the different sections of the policy. Council was then asked to consider the documents and the content of the presentation given by Ms McVeigh and make any recommendations for change in advance of the Governance meeting scheduled for January 2024 where it would be brought before Council for approval. Ms McVeigh left the meeting.

Update on the Head of Governance and Board Secretary Role

Ms Johanna Morris, General Counsel, presented this memo to Council. Council was informed following the previous board secretary finishing employment a recruitment campaign was currently underway for the permanent role of head of corporate affairs. Council was informed that the role would be a new role in the Medical Council and the role holder will have accountability for three teams Council Governance, Risk & Compliance and Information Governance. Council was requested to approve the President and or Ms Teresa Bulfin to take part in the interview process for the permanent role of Head of Corporate Affairs. Following a discussion by Council, Council approved that both the President and Ms Bulfin should take part in the interview process. Ms Morris also confirmed to Council that Ms Tierney had been appointed Interim Secretary to Council until the Head of Corporate Affairs role was filled.

Key Updates

Mr Leo Kearns presented the below items to Council with the understanding that the papers that had been shared in advance of the meeting and were taken as read. It was confirmed that the papers

would be brought back to Council for decision at its next Governance meeting including any suggested changes. Mr. William Kennedy, Ms Morris, Ms Mairead Britton-Doyle and other members of the Executive Leadership Team were present to answer any questions that Council may have had.

- Complaints Model
- Commencement of 2020/2022 Acts
- Potential Amendments to Parts 7 & 9 - Draft Memo to Government
- Committees & Delegations Project
- Statutory Requirements on Committee Membership

A discussion then took place in regard to each of the above-listed items and the significance of the draft memo to the Department of Health was highlighted as a key strategic development for the future. Mr. Kearns then asked Council to e-mail him if they had any recommendations or suggested changes that they would like brought before Council at the January meeting.

ETC Report to Council November 2023

Council noted the contents of this report.

RCPC Report to Council

Council noted the contents of this report.

Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

The in-person meeting concluded at approx. 4pm for the day, and resumed on December 13th 2023 at 9.00am, for Day 2 – Regulatory, held virtually.