



**Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh**

Regulating Health +
Social Care Professionals

An Chomhairle um Ghairmithe Sláinte agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh
The Health and Social Care Professionals Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTS ● DIETITIANS ● MEDICAL SCIENTISTS
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS ● PODIATRISTS ● PSYCHOLOGISTS
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ● ORTHOPISTS ● RADIOGRAPHERS
SOCIAL CARE WORKERS ● SOCIAL WORKERS ● SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPISTS

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Glossary



In this Annual Report, the following expressions shall, unless context otherwise requires, have the following meaning:

“Act”	means the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 establishing the Health and Social Care Professionals Council.
“Council”	means the Health and Social Care Professionals Council.
“Registration Boards”	means the individual Registration Boards for each of the professions to be registered under the Act.
“Chief Executive Officer” or “CEO”	means a person appointed to the post of Chief Executive Officer/ Registrar of Council.
“Minister”	means the Minister for Health and Children.
“DOHC/ Department”	means the Department of Health and Children.

1. Chairperson's Forward

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, to present our second Annual Report covering our activities during the twelve month period up to the end of December 2009.

The year saw the end of the term of the first Council and the appointment of the second Council by the Minister for Health and Children in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005. While each member of Council is appointed for a four year term, the Act requires that half the members of Council as initially appointed, change after two years. Therefore, it was agreed at the very first meeting of Council held in March 2007, that members to retire after the first two years be randomly selected by lot. In March 2009, the following members duly retired from Council: Ms Elizabeth Anne McKay, Ms Una O'Shiel, Ms Nanno Fitzsimons, Ms Joan Freeman, Ms Elva Gannon, Mr Vincent McCabe, Mr Denis A Cusack, Mr Michael O'Halloran, Ms Mary O'Donnell, and Ms Joan Johnson.

I would like to thank them again most sincerely for their outstanding service to Council and on my own behalf, and on that of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, to take this opportunity to record our deep appreciation of the contribution made by each and every one of them.

As a result of the efforts of Council, Committees and Working Groups in which Council members generously agreed to participate, working closely with our Chief Executive Officer, Ms Ginny Hanrahan and her team, sufficient progress had been made to recommend to the Minister for Health and Children that she could now commence a number of further parts of the Act and proceed with appointing the first of the Registration Boards.

Pending completion of this work by the Minister and her Department, the newly appointed second Council has meanwhile proceeded with preparations for the roll-out of registers as determined by Registration Boards as soon as they are appointed. These preparations included the seeking of approval for, and recruitment of Heads of Legal Affairs, and of Registration and Education both of whom took up appointment in August 2009. The second Council also oversaw, in the course of 2009:

- Completion of an Information and Communication Technology Review of the ICT requirements for the Council;
- Completion of a comprehensive Business Process Mapping exercise;
- Establishment of a Communications Strategy to be completed in 2010;
- Review of proposed fee structure commenced;
- Implementation of a Legal Support Framework.

All external consultants who assisted in the above tasks, were selected and recruited in accordance with public procurement rules, including EU tender procedures.

The output from all the forgoing activity has now been considered by the relevant Council Committees and Working Groups, and by Council itself. This has been done with a view to putting in place modern, efficient, and effective systems of registration. Council has submitted to the Department for approval, a detailed Five Year Plan, for the period 2010 – 2014, incorporating a recommended sequence for the roll-out of registers; projected income and expenditure levels; and a proposed staffing structure. Council has also submitted detailed proposals for approval relating to the delivery of our IT system, based on the business process selected by Council, which will meet the requirements of Council and the Registration Boards for the foreseeable future.

In the interim, Council Executive has embarked on a joint planning process with the National Social Work Qualifications Board (NSWQB), the Opticians Board and the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council, who are due to join Council in due course.

The Executive continues to be accommodated at the Baggot Street offices of the NSWQB, to whom I would like to take this opportunity to express Council's appreciation for the assistance, co-operation and courtesy the Board and their staff continue to show to Council, our Chief Executive Officer and her team.

Similarly, I would like to record, on behalf of Council, our gratitude and appreciation of the encouragement and support afforded right throughout 2009 by the Minister for Health and Children and her Department, especially Mr Bernard Carey, Assistant Secretary General, Ms Deirdre Walsh, and Mr Paul Flanagan, who continue to be of invaluable assistance and ongoing support to Council.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margaret Hayes", written over a horizontal line.

Margaret Hayes
Chairperson

2. Introduction

2.1 The Health and Social Care Professionals Act was enacted to protect the public, by enabling health and social care professionals to practise in a regulated, controlled and safe environment; and in a manner that ensures provision of high-quality interventions, while meeting the challenges of increasingly complex and evolving care and therapeutic regimens for service users. The Act provides for a system whereby health and social care professionals will be facilitated in ensuring responsible and accountable practices whilst they seek to provide the highest level of patient care and service.

2.2 The Act provides for a Council to act as the statutory regulator of designated health and social care professions including the following, which are specified in Section 4 of the Act:

Clinical Biochemists	Physiotherapists
Dietitians	Psychologists
Medical Scientists	Radiographers
Occupational Therapists	Social Care Workers
Orthoptists	Social Workers
Podiatrists	Speech and Language Therapists

and any further professions scheduled by the Minister for Health and Children under the Act. Following budget statements in October 2008 and April 2009, the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) who regulates the Emergency Medical Technicians, Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics, and the Opticians Board, who regulate Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians, are now scheduled to merge with Council in due course. The National Social Work Qualifications Board is already scheduled under the 2005 Act to merge with Council as soon as the required legal framework is put in place and work on this is already underway within the Department. It is intended to plan for transfer in May 2010.

2.3 Council has been given the following statutory object

"To protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among registrants of the designated professions." - Section 7 of the Act (See Appendix 1 for further details)

2.4 Council completed the first two years of office in March 2009. The Minister for Health and Children appointed the second Council as follows:

Membership of the the Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Chairperson

Ms Margaret Hayes

One member from each of the 12 professions to be regulated:

Ms Margaret Doyle (Dietitians)
Ms Jacqui Barry-O’Crowley (Medical Scientists)
Ms Patricia Godwin (Podiatrists)
Mr Mitchel Fleming (Psychologists)
Mr Mark McEntee (Radiographers)
Ms Monica Egan (Social Workers)

Three persons who have qualifications, interest and experience as in the opinion of the Minister, would be of value to Council in performing its functions:

Mr Tom Jordan
Ms Fionnuala Cook
Ms Patricia O’Connor

One representative of the management of the public health sector, the public social care sector or both sectors:

Ms Jackie Reed

One representative of the management of a voluntary or private sector organisation concerned with health or social care:

Mr Tony Darmody

One representative of third level education establishments involved in the education and training of persons with respect to the practice of the designated professions and is nominated by the Minister for Education and Science:

Ms Ann Taylor

Six representatives of the interest of the general public and are appointed with the consent of the Minister for Education and Science:

Mr Pat Quinlan
Ms Bernie Eustace
Ms Sharon Foley
Mr Michael Ronayne
Ms Stephen McMahon
Ms Julie Ling

The formal appointment to Council of a further six nominees is currently pending an amendment to the Act. At present, the nominees have observer status:

Ms Jill Long (Physiotherapists)
Ms Mary Barrett (Occupational Therapists)
Ms Libby Delap (Orthoptists)

Mr David Power (Social Care Workers)
Ms Maeve Murphy (Speech and Language Therapists)
Mr John O'Mullane (Clinical Biochemists)

** Italic– new appointees*

Completed Terms of Office as members of Council during 2009

Professional Representatives

Ms Elizabeth Anne McKay (Occupational Therapists)
Ms Una O'Shiel (Speech & Language Therapists)
Ms Nanno Fitzsimons (Orthoptists)

Ministerial Nominees

Ms Joan Freeman
Vacant

Public and Private/Voluntary Health Management Representative

Ms Elva Gannon

Educational Representative

Vacant

General Public Representatives

Mr Vincent McCabe
Mr Denis A Cusack
Mr Michael O'Halloran
Ms Mary O'Donnell
Mrs Joan Johnson

2.5 Meetings

Council met on five occasions in 2009, with most members also serving on Council Committees and Working Groups. John O'Mullane continued to act as Council's nominee to the Irish Medical Council. (See Appendix 2 for further details)

2.6 Appointment of the second Council

Under the Act, the Minister for Health and Children appointed the first Council for a four year period. The legislation however requires that half of the first Council change after two years through lots, to allow a rolling system of Council members. Those due to retire after the first two years were accordingly selected at the first meeting of Council in March 2007.

The second Council was appointed in accordance with the Act. Each Council member is appointed for a four year term. However, an issue has arisen within the legislative framework, which is currently being

addressed in order to permit the Minister to formally appoint the final six nominees to Council. These nominees currently have full observer status and attend all meetings of Council pending the amendment to the Act.

2.7 Induction for Council

Formal induction and training for Council members took place on the 1st December 2009 on topics including corporate governance, implementing the Act – legal issues; approval of the educational courses, registration and fitness to practise.

2.8 Registration Boards

The Act provides that Registration Boards be appointed for each of the professions designated under the legislation. Each Registration Board will be a body corporate with perpetual succession, a seal, and may sue or be sued in its corporate name. The Act requires that each Board is to consist of 13 members - six from the profession to be registered – one educator, two managers and three practitioners; and seven lay members - representatives from management of the public health/social care sector; management of voluntary/private sector health or social care; a third level representative and four to represent the general public, who are nominated by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Board will then duly elect the Chairperson. (See Appendix 3 for further details)

Council advised the Minister in October 2008 that arrangements were now in place to facilitate the appointment of the first of the twelve Registration Boards which will be for Social Workers. The Department of Health and Children completed a consultation process with the relevant bodies regarding nominees for the Minister to consider for appointment. It is understood that the need for the aforementioned amendment of the Act has led to some unavoidable delays in completing this process.

3. Programme of Activities in 2009

2.5 Summary of main activities:

- Comprehensive business process mapping exercise, resulting in the adoption of an innovative organisational design structure;
- Development of five-year business plan for 2010-2014;
- Start of strategic planning process;
- Preparation for registration, including work to establish standards for registration, defining the requirements needed to be regarded as “fit and proper”, etc.;
- Updating draft standards for education, training and proficiency, in preparation for a wide consultation process;
- Consultation process related to the Professional Code of Conduct and Ethics;
- Reorganisation and enhancement of Council working group and committee structure, concentrating on setting up processes and procedures needed to establish the Council’s regulatory system;
- Increase of staff through appointments to the posts of Head of Registration and Education, Head of Legal Affairs and Office Manager;
- Progress towards the absorption in 2011 of the National Social Work Qualifications Board, the Opticians Board and the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council;
- Information and communication technology (IT) review, establishing the Council’s future IT requirements;
- Development of new organisational identity as “CORU”;
- Establishment of a communications strategy process;
- Fee analysis process;
- Implementation of a legal support framework;
- Website developed and prepared for 2010 launch;
- Involvement in the steering group set up to implement the recommendations of the Commission for Patient Safety and Quality report “Building a Culture of Patient Safety”;
- Development of links with other health and social care regulators throughout the island of Ireland;
- Exploration of possibility of sharing services with other organisations in similar fields of work.

4. Council Committees / Working Groups

4.1 Council adjusted the Working Groups and Committees arrangements to reflect the phase of development of the organisation and currently has the following two Council Committees and four Council Working Groups in place:

- 1) Finance and Remuneration Committee;
- 2) Audit, Risk and Governance Committee;
- 3) Registration Working Group;
- 4) Education and Training Working Group;
- 5) Fitness to Practise Working Group;
- 6) Strategy Development Working Group.

(See Appendix 4 for further details)

This year, work has focussed on the establishment of processes and procedures in relation to the establishment of the system of registration.

Finance and Remuneration Committee

4.2 Reporting to Council, the role of the Finance and Remuneration Committee is to oversee the financial management of the HSCPC, including the collection, investment, borrowing and outlay of all monies received.

Key responsibilities of the Finance and Remuneration Committee as determined by Council are:

- To monitor approved budget income / expenditure of the HSCPC and report to Council on such matters, highlighting and commenting on variances and corrective action required as appropriate;
- To approve delegated areas of expenditure at limits approved by Council and in line with overall Council approved budget;
- To review capital expenditure proposals from the Chief Executive and to make recommendations to Council;
- To review budget proposals from the Chief Executive in a timely manner, to consider and make recommendations for approval to Council prior to submission of same to Department of Health and Children;
- To review proposals from the Chief Executive, the draft business plans in line with allocated budget and to make recommendations to Council;
- To review and to make recommendations to update operating financial procedures / processes of the HSCPC where appropriate and necessary, in accordance with changes in funding and legislative requirements and best practice;
- To carry out other assigned functions as prescribed by Council from time to time.

Membership

The current members are: Mr Pat Quinlan (Chair), Mr Tony Darmody, Ms Jacqui Barry-O’Crowley, and Mr Mitchel Fleming.

Outgoing members who completed their term of office in March 2009 were: Mr Vincent McCabe (Chair until March 2009), Ms Elizabeth-Anne McKay, and Ms Nanno Fitzsimons.

The Committee met on three occasions in 2009 advising Council and the Executive on matters such as budget management, accommodation, procurement and the Business Process Mapping project. The Committee also made recommendations to Council on the 2009 business plan and for the budget and service plan for 2009.

The Finance and Remuneration Committee also took the lead on ensuring the completeness of the review of the fee analysis report by EPS Consulting and subsequently made their recommendations to Council.

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee

4.3 Key responsibilities of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee as determined by Council are:

- The review of the reliability and integrity of financial systems, systems of internal control and operational information and reporting to include:
 - Reviewing and approving purchasing procedures and protocols for the transfer and disposal of assets;
 - Overseeing the process for safeguarding assets and, as appropriate, verifying the existence of such assets;
 - Ensuring that adequate attention is paid to value for money auditing;
 - Through the internal audit section, appraising the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are employed.
- The review of governance processes to include:
 - Reviewing the Corporate Governance system in place and ensuring that the Code of Corporate Governance reflects the changing requirements.
- The review of systems of risk identification and management.
- The review and consideration of any report received from the Comptroller and Auditor General and to liaise with that office as necessary; to consider findings of internal audits and investigations, and management’s response:
 - To consider and advise Council on the appointment of terms of engagement of the internal audit service, the provision of any non-audit services by the internal auditors and any questions of resignation;
 - To ensure that the resources made available for internal audit are sufficient to meet Council’s needs or to make recommendations to Council as appropriate.

- To review annual financial statements and submit a recommendation to Council focusing, particularly on:
 - Any changes in accounting policies and practices;
 - Major judgemental areas;
 - Significant adjustments resulting from the audit;
 - The going concern assumption;
 - Compliance with accounting standards;
 - Ensuring compliance with legal requirements.
- To consider any topics as requested by Council.

Membership

The current members are: Ms Sharon Foley (Chair), Mr Tim Dalton (ex-Secretary General Department of Justice), Mr Vincent McCabe (Financial Controller, Irish Heart Foundation) and Mr Stephen McMahon (Council Member).

The Committee commenced their work in February 2010 which included drafting the terms of reference, subsequently approved by Council and progressing and finalising the corporate governance framework, subsequently approved by Council.

Governance (Subsumed into the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee at the end of 2009)

4.4 Key responsibilities of the Governance Committee as determined by Council are:

- Identify governance issues as required under the Act;
- Identify relevant issues to be addressed by Council;
- Establish a draft governance framework.

The members were: Mr Tom Jordan (Chair), Ms Elva Gannon, Mr Michael O'Halloran, Ms Patricia Godwin, and Mr John O'Mullane.

Due to Mr John O'Mullane's role on the Medical Council and the onerous requirements, Mr O'Mullane was excused from Committee work. It was agreed by Council that the issue of Governance would be better served by integrating it with the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, which occurred at the end of 2009, resulting in the disbandment of this Committee.

Registration Working Group

4.5 Key responsibilities of the Registration Working Group as determined by Council are:

- Identify the relevant issues for Council regarding registration;
- Advise Council on the steps required for registration;
- Establish a draft action plan to prepare for registration.

Membership

The current members are: Mr Mark McEntee (Chair), Ms Margaret Doyle, Mr Mitchel Fleming, Ms Jill Long, Mr David Power and Ms Jacqui Barry O’Crowley.

Outgoing members who have completed their terms of office in March 2009 were: Ms Nanno Fitzsimons, Mr Vincent McCabe, Mr Michael O’Halloran, Mr John O’Mullane, and Ms Patricia Godwin.

The Working Group met on four occasions in 2009. It worked closely with the Executive in relation to completion of reports for ICT analysis, business process mapping and outsourcing.

Education and Training Working Group

4.6 Key responsibilities of the Education and Training Working Group as determined by Council are:

Outline specific requirements under the Act in relation to education and training;

- Identify the issues in relation to education for the purposes of registration including validation of courses;
- Advise Council on the manner in which the issue of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) should be handled.

Membership

The current members are: Ms Ann Taylor (Chair), Ms Monica Egan, Ms Margaret Doyle, Mr Mark McEntee and Ms Jackie Reed.

Outgoing members who completed their terms of office in March 2009 were: Ms Elizabeth-Anne McKay, Ms Joan Johnson, and Ms Una O’ Sheil.

The group oversaw the process of updating the draft standards for education, training and proficiency. Following legal review and Council approval a wider consultation process will be held with the educators, professionals, employers and service users to ensure that Council guidelines issued to the Registration Boards meet all requirements.

The Committee has now begun work on establishing systems of approval for education courses, and reviewing non-national qualifications.

Fitness to Practise Working Group

4.7 Key responsibilities of the Fitness to Practise Working Group as determined by Council are:

- Outline the elements of the fitness to practise framework, as provided for in the Act;
- Influence the standards that are being set, to ensure that they reflect the requirements of a fair fitness to practise system;
- Identify the relevant FTP issues for Council.

Membership

The current members are: Ms Monica Egan (Chair) Ms Jill Long, Mr David Power, Ms Monica Egan, and Ms Patricia Godwin.

Members who completed their terms of office in March 2009 were: Ms Joan Freeman, Mr Denis Cusack, and Mr Tony Darmody.

The draft fitness to practise framework document and generic rules of professional conduct (Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics) were agreed in 2008. These documents will form the basis for all Registration Boards and their bye-laws on their professions' Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics. It was agreed that Council would commence consultation with the professions, representatives of patients/service user groups, the Competition Authority and Data Protection. Two workshops took place, one in November 2009 and the second took place in early 2010. The Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics to be issued as a guideline to the Registration Boards was subsequently approved by Council in February 2010. (See 5.3 for further details).

Strategy Development Working Group

4.8 Work on the Strategic Plan for 2010 - 2014 commenced with members of Council in December 2009. Ms Sharon Foley, Ms Fionnuala Cook and the Executive started preliminary work in developing the strategic plan. In 2010, the plan will be finalised and will be signed off by Council.

5. Establishment of the Executive

5.1 Staffing

The year was challenging for the national economy and this has impacted on the pace of the development of this new body. Thanks to the support of the Department of Health and Children and the work of the Public Appointments Service, Council were able to appoint 2 senior members of staff in August in 2009.

The completed Business Process Mapping exercise provided Council with an outline of the staffing requirements for the five year business plan, taking into account the amalgamation of staff and posts from the other agencies. The plan has been subsequently forwarded to the DOHC.

5.2 Preparing for Registration

The Executive as a priority has been progressing preparations for the systems to support the establishment of the Registration Boards and registration. This includes establishing standards for registration to include methods of applications and processes to enable respective registration boards to satisfy themselves that applicants meet all of the requirements of the Act and that all people on the register will be “Fit and Proper”. Guidelines issued by Council to the Registration Boards will ensure that there is consistency between boards regarding procedures, processes and regulations.

Other issues that have been commenced but require further work include:

Legal	Content of statutory rules, bye laws and notifications to the DOHC on the commencement of sections of the Act and subsequent necessary enactments;
Education and Training	Establishing standards for education and training and proficiency;
Fitness to Practise	The nature of standards against which fitness to practise will be measured;
Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics	Work progressed on developing a guideline document from Council which incorporated the principles required. This document will be used by the Registration Boards as a guideline to allow them to develop their specific codes.

5.3 Framework for a common Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

Consultations were held on a draft framework for a Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

Two consultation workshops were held on 25 November 2009 and 21 January 2010 with Council members and nominated professionals from the 12 designated professions and nominees from the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council and the Opticians Board.

The first workshop was well attended (26 professionals) and well received. There was a broad level of support for the common code.

Professional groups were asked to consult with their professional bodies on the revised code in advance of the next workshop and to feedback any comments in advance of the meeting. The revised text was also sent to the Competition Authority and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner. Comments received were logged and circulated to participants at the second workshop. 22 responses were received.

The second workshop was attended by 28 participants. Over three sessions, the groups considered the conduct, ethics and performance sections of the draft code. The final session identified priority areas for the groups. Feedback was collected from each session.

Feedback was considered by the Fitness to Practise Working Group of Council and a final text was agreed for recommendation to Council.

At its meeting on 11 February 2010, Council resolved to adopt the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics as a guideline in accordance with section 31(7) of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005. The agreed text will act as a guideline for Registration Boards, when appointed, to prepare their individual Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

5.4 Advisory Services

Council engaged advisory services following public procurement processes for the following activities:

- **Legal advisory services**

A framework was established consisting of 6 legal companies to provide advice on regulatory and corporate matters for the organisation.

- **ICT analysis**

An ICT analysis was completed in March 2009 which was a major piece of research to determine the ICT requirements for the complex needs of the organisation as it evolves.

- **Business Process Mapping**

The organisation completed a business process mapping exercise in the latter half of 2009 to document and map the business processes for each of the Council's core business areas.

- **Fees Analysis**

A fee analysis was completed by the end of 2009 and is due to be reviewed by Council in February 2010. This will set out the proposed fee structure for the organisation. The ICT analysis, business process mapping and fee analysis helped to form the basis of the five year Business Plan 2010 – 2014 which identified the resources required to provide this service. The Business Plan 2010 – 2014 was submitted to the Department of Health and Children.

- **Communication Strategy**

Work commenced on devising a communication strategy and workplan to set out how we will communicate with all our stakeholders.

- **Website**

The website was designed and prepared for launch. The website will be formally launched in the first quarter of 2010.

- **“CORU”**

Council has decided to trade under the name “CORU”. CORU will be the term for the umbrella body which will be responsible for regulating health and social care professionals. It includes the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the 12 Registration Boards established under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act. The name is derived from the Irish word cóir which means fair, just and proper and will be launched next year. These values resonate deeply within our organisation and perfectly reflect our commitment to protecting the public by regulating health and social care professionals. The Health and Social Care Professionals Council will remain our legal name.

- **Shared Services**

In line with government policy Council has been exploring shared services with existing agencies, particularly in the area of corporate functions. There has been some interesting work with a number of regulators and Council has since submitted proposals to the Department of Health and Children based on this work and it is hoped to produce tangible systems to forward Council’s work in 2010.

5.5 Pension Scheme

Proposals for a HSCPC Pension Scheme were submitted to the Department of Finance in 2008 but await approval. The HSCPC scheme has since been listed on the public service transfer list and on the local government transfer scheme and for registration with the Pensions Board.

5.6 Accommodation

Council Executive continues to share the premises of the National Social Work Qualifications Board. Council wish to formally record their grateful appreciation to the Board and especially to Ms Eilís Walsh, Director, and her staff for the friendly and hospitable manner in which they have accommodated Council staff.

During 2009, many venues were considered as possibilities for future offices for Council. At the end of 2009, Council was working closely with the DOHC and the OPW towards acquiring a premise. It is anticipated that the new accommodation will be available in the first half of 2010.

5.7 ICT Systems

The provision of an appropriate ICT system will be a critical factor in the economical manner in which this organisation progresses. The ICT system must meet the requirements of the corporate, registration, education, and fitness to practise functions of the organisation. Council and the Department of Health and Children are working together on a number of proposals including shared services, to ensure that the capital funding to be spent on ICT will be done so economically.

5.8 Links with other Health and Social Care Regulators/ Statutory Agencies

The Executive continued to strengthen working links with the other Health and Social Care Regulators in Ireland, in particular – An Bord Altranais, Irish Medical Council, the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland and HIQA. Regulators in other areas of work have also provided great support in particular the Teachers' Council, and the Personal Injuries Assessment Board. Strong links have also been forged with the Health Professionals Council, UK who regulate 10 of the 12 professions designated in the Act of 2005, and with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, who are currently responsible for the registration of Social Workers and Social Care Workers in Northern Ireland.

Council would also like to acknowledge in our Annual Report the assistance and support that these and all the statutory regulators, with whom we have made contact with, have afforded to us. They have been most generous in sharing with Council, and our Executive their knowledge, information and expertise.

Our CEO continued to work as part of the Health and Social Care Regulators' Forum for Chief Executives, established in 2008, currently chaired by Mr Eugene O'Donoghue (CEO, An Bord Altranais). There are 14 members including An Bord Altranais, Irish Medical Council, Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC), National Social Work Qualifications Board, Opticians Board, the Dental Council, HIQA, Health and Safety Authority, Veterinary Council Ireland, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Mental Health Commission, Radiation Protection Institute of Ireland, Irish Medicine's Board and the Health and Social Care Professionals Council. The Forum currently has a number of working parties looking at how the regulators can work closer together for the betterment of public protection and to achieve better value for money.

The CEO continues as a member of ACESA – Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies - which has been a very useful networking group and has resulted in much assistance in many of the areas we are working towards establishing.

5.9 Involvement in development of professions preparing for registration

The CEO has continued to attend meetings and conferences with the professions to be regulated, to keep them informed of the ongoing developments of Council.

5.10 Ethics in Public Office

Council was listed in April 2008 under the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and 2001. Council met all their requirements under the Act in 2009.

6. Commission for Patient Safety and Quality

6.1 Work continues in the DOHC on implementing the recommendations of the Commission for Patient Safety and Quality report entitled “Building a Culture of Patient Safety”. The DOHC has established the Implementation Steering Group to identify methods of implementation. This is chaired by Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, and it is to report back to the Minister and the DOHC by December 2010.

Council’s CEO is involved with the Health and Social Care Regulators Forum who work together towards delivering better regulation of professionals and services in the Health and Social Care services. Ms Hanrahan is leading the group’s co-ordinated response to the report. The Forum are working with the different sub-groups, but in particular the Regulation Sub-group, chaired by William Kennedy, Medical Council and Credentialing and Licensing Sub-group chaired by Hugh Kane, Mental Health Commission. (See Appendix 5 for more details on the report).

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Health and Social Care Professionals Council



Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 December 2009

Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

I have audited the financial statements of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council for the year ended 31 December 2009 under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005.

The financial statements, which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein, comprise the Statement of Accounting Policies, the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the related notes.

Respective Responsibilities of the Council and the Comptroller and Auditor General

The Council is responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 and for ensuring the regularity of transactions. The Council prepares the financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland. The accounting responsibilities of the Members of the Council are set out in the Statement of Council's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland. I also report whether in my opinion proper books of account have been kept. In addition, I state whether the financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

I report any material instance where moneys have not been applied for the purposes intended or where the transactions do not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report if I have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of my audit.

I review whether the Statement on Internal Financial Control reflects the Council's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and report any material instance where it does not do so, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information of which I am aware from my audit of the financial statements. I am not required to consider whether the Statement on Internal Financial Control covers all financial risks and controls, or to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the risk and control procedures.

Basis of Audit Opinion

In the exercise of my function as Comptroller and Auditor General, I conducted my audit of the financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board and by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures and regularity of the financial transactions included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Council's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations that I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of the Council's affairs at 31 December 2009 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

In my opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the Council. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.



Andrew Harkness

For and on behalf of the
Comptroller and Auditor General
31 March 2011

Statement on Internal Financial Control

1. On behalf of the members of the Council of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, I acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial controls is maintained and operated. The system of internal financial controls can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely period.

2. Key Control Procedures

The Council has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment by:

- Clearly defining management responsibilities,
- Adopting the principles of corporate governance contained in the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* including:
 - Affirmation of compliance with procurement guidelines as set out in the Code
 - Affirmation of compliance with disposal of assets and access to assets by third parties as set out in the Code
 - Affirmation of implementation of Government policy on the remuneration of CEO
- Establishing formal procedures to monitor the activities and safeguard the assets of the organisation.

The system of internal financial controls is based on a framework of regular management information, a system of delegation and accountability, a set of financial procedures, administrative procedures including segregation of duties and rigorous ongoing checks by the finance function. In particular it includes:

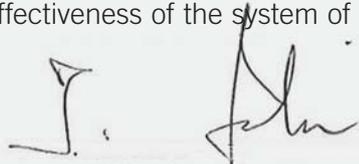
- A comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget, which is reviewed and approved by the members of the Council.
- Setting authorisation limits for the disbursement of the Council's funds.
- Regular review by the members of the Council of periodic and annual financial information and reports (including management accounts), which indicate financial performance against budgets.

An Audit Committee was established in 2010. During 2009 the Finance Committee took on the role of the Audit Committee.

The Council's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of an external firm of accountants, the executive of the Council which has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial controls framework, and comments made by the Comptroller and Auditor General in his report, as applicable.

3. Annual review of controls

I confirm that, for the period ended 31 December 2009, the Council, conducted a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control.



Chairperson of the HSCPC

29-3-2011

Date

Statement of Council's Responsibilities

The Health and Social Care Professionals Council was established on the 20 March 2007 under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005.

It is a statutory body charged with ensuring that health and social care professionals practise in a regulated, controlled and safe environment in a manner which will ensure the provision of high-quality health and social care services to the public.

The Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005, Part 1, Section 21 requires the Council to keep all proper and usual accounts of all moneys received or expended by it including an income and expenditure account and balance sheet. In preparing those financial statements, the Council is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Council will continue in operation;
- disclose and explain any material departures from applicable Accounting Standards.

The Council is responsible for keeping proper books of account, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Council and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Part 1, Section 21 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005. The Council is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

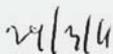
Chairperson _____



CEO _____



Date _____



Statement of Accounting Policies

General

The Health and Social Care Professionals Council was established on 20 March 2007 under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 to regulate designated health and social care professions. The Act also provides for the transfer of the staff, assets and liabilities of the National Social Workers Qualification Board which will be implemented on a future date determined by the Minister for Health and Children.

1. Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are prepared under the accruals method of accounting, except as indicated below, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles under the historical cost convention. Financial Reporting Standards recommended by the accountancy bodies are adopted as they become operative. The unit of currency is the Euro.

2. Oireachtas Grant

Grant income is recognised on a cash receipt basis with the exception of grants allocated for capital expenditure incurred in the year, which is accounted for on an accruals basis.

3. Fixed Assets and Depreciation

- (i) Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation.
- (ii) Fixed Assets are depreciated at annual rates on a straight-line basis estimated to write off the assets over their useful lives. Depreciation is charged a full year in the year of purchase and disposal. Depreciation is at the following rates:-

Furniture & Fittings	20%
IT/Office equipment	33.3%

4. Capital Account

The Capital Account represents the unamortised value of income used to finance fixed assets.

5. Superannuation

Section 13 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 provides for the establishment of superannuation scheme(s) by the Council. The scheme is a defined benefit scheme for the purposes of the Pension Act 1990. The scheme is being operated on an administrative basis pending the approval by the Minister for Health and Children with the consent of the Minister for Finance.

The Council is in discussions with the Department of Health and Children (DoHC) with a view to agreeing an arrangement whereby the Council would pay to the DoHC an employer contribution at rates set by the Department of Finance and pay over pension contributions deducted from employees.

In return, the Council would be reimbursed all monies required to settle the pension obligations when they fall due.

Pension costs comprise the employer's contribution in respect of the period and are accrued in the financial statements.

Employee pension contributions are paid over to the DoHC.

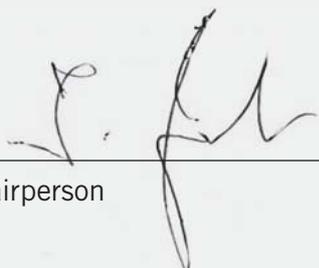
Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 December 2009

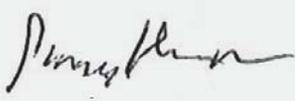
	NOTES	YEAR ENDED 2009 €	YEAR ENDED 2008 €
INCOME			
Oireachtas Grant	1	605,142	324,862
Miscellaneous Income		736	
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		605,878	324,862
Transfer (to)/from Capital Account	7	(24)	(13,777)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		605,854	311,085
EXPENDITURE			
Salaries	4	275,244	124,676
Travel		7,567	1,804
Accommodation Expenses	2	48,445	30,235
Office Administration	3	160,688	41,661
Office Supplies		828	1,010
Publications		5,689	669
Legal & Professional Fees		55,373	38,955
Audit Fee		3,290	3,500
Accountancy Fees		11,215	1,823
Agency Establishment		17,439	11,227
Pension services		1,613	8,773
Payroll services		1,500	425
Depreciation		8,320	6,248
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		597,211	271,006
Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year		8,643	40,079
Surplus at beginning of year		29,460	(10,619)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Surplus at end of year		38,103	29,460
		<hr/>	<hr/>

All losses and gains are recognised in the Income and Expenditure account.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 9 form part of these Financial Statements.



 Chairperson



 CEO

29/3/11

 Date

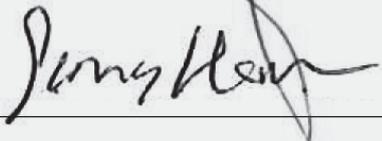
Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2009

	NOTES	2009 €	2008 €
Fixed Assets	5	13,801	13,777
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank		128,737	67,928
Debtors and Prepayments		8,634	4,971
		<u>137,371</u>	<u>72,899</u>
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and Accruals	6	99,268	43,439
Net Current Assets/Liabilities		<u>38,103</u>	<u>29,460</u>
Total Assets		<u>51,904</u>	<u>43,237</u>
Represented by:			
Capital Account		13,801	13,777
Income and Expenditure Account		38,103	29,460
		<u>51,904</u>	<u>43,237</u>

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 9 form part of these Financial Statements.

Chairperson 

CEO 

Date 29/3/11

Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2009

NOTES	2009	2008
1. OIREACHTAS GRANT	€	€
Department of Health & Children	605,142	324,862
	<u>605,142</u>	<u>324,862</u>

Grant income in 2009 was drawn down directly by the Council from the Department of Health & Children. Capital Grants of €9,917 (2008: €10,681) is included in the above figures.

NOTES	2009	2008
2. ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES	€	€
Rent & Rates & Insurance & Service charge	48,445	30,235
	<u>48,445</u>	<u>30,235</u>

Accommodation expenses include rents, rates, insurance and service charges incurred in relation of office space which the Council shares with the National Social Work Qualification Board.

NOTES	2009	2008
3. OFFICE ADMINISTRATION	€	€
Telephone	5,656	1,619
IT Development	101,541	198
IT Hardware/Software	5,728	41
Repairs	-	318
Stationery & Office Expenses	5,556	2,104
Recruitment & Agency Staff	8,666	9,302
Staff Training & Conferences	1,678	5,410
Sub-committee expenses	1,053	1,134
Council Meetings - Room Hire & Refreshments	7,807	6,283
Council Meetings - Travel & Subsistence	2,965	-
Chairpersons Fees	15,925	15,000
Registration Boards	544	-
Office Furniture / photocopier	1,120	-
IT Support	2,076	-
Petty Cash	111	33
Bank Charges	262	219
	<u>160,688</u>	<u>41,661</u>

Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2009

4. SALARIES

The total number of staff employed by the Council in the year was 4.

	2009	2008
	€	€
Salaries	248,467	119,485
Pension Costs	26,777	5,191
	<u>275,244</u>	<u>124,676</u>

Beaumont Hospital recharge the Council for the CEO's salary costs. The total amount reimbursed to Beaumont Hospital in respect of the CEO's salary in 2009 was €109,092, pension €22,699 and an administration charge of €750.

The CEO was not in receipt of any performance related pay or BIK allowance.

The CEO's pension entitlement do not extend beyond the standard entitlements in the model public sector defined benefit superannuation scheme.

€6,521 of pension levy has been deducted from salaries and paid over to the Department of Health and Children.

Fees of €15,925 payable to the Chairperson Ms Margaret Hayes in respect of 2008 and 2009 have been included in the accounts.

Employer contributions of €26,777 have been charged as pension costs in relation to 2009.

5. FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and Fittings	IT/Office Equipment	Total
	€	€	€
Cost at 1 January	3,160	16,865	20,025
Additions in year	5,363	2,981	8,344
Disposals in year	-	-	-
	<u>8,523</u>	<u>19,846</u>	<u>28,369</u>
Depreciation:			
Accumulated Depreciation at 1 January	532	5,716	6,248
Depreciation in Year	1,705	6,615	8,320
Depreciation on Disposals	-	-	-
Accumulated Depreciation at 31 December	<u>2,237</u>	<u>12,331</u>	<u>14,568</u>
Net book value at 31 December 2009	<u>6,286</u>	<u>7,515</u>	<u>13,801</u>
Net book value at 1 January 2009	<u>2,628</u>	<u>11,149</u>	<u>13,777</u>

Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2009

6. CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS	2009	2008
	€	€
PAYE/PRSI	15,240	9,373
Payroll Accrual	29,678	-
Superannuation Accrual	31,968	5,191
Other Accruals	22,382	28,875
	<u>99,268</u>	<u>43,439</u>
7. CAPITAL ACCOUNT	2009	2008
	€	€
Balance at 1st January	13,777	-
Transfer to Income & Expenditure account:		
Funding to acquire fixed assets	8,344	20,025
Less: Amortisation in line with depreciation	(8,320)	(6,248)
	<u>24</u>	<u>13,777</u>
Balance at 31 December	<u>13,801</u>	<u>13,777</u>

6. Council Members - Disclosure of Interests

The Council has complied with guidelines issued by the Department of Finance in relation to the disclosure of interests by Council Members and these procedures have been adhered to in the year. There were no transactions during the period in relation to the Council's activities in which Council Members had any beneficial interests.

7. Approval of Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Council on 29th March 2011.

Appendix 1

Duties of Council

Object and duties of the Council

According to the Act, “the object of Council is to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among registrants of the designated professions”.

Duties of the Council:

The Council's functions, as set out in the Act, are to:

- oversee and co-ordinate the activities of registration boards;
- provide administrative support and secretarial assistance to registration boards and their committees;
- receive applications and make decisions about registration concerning the refusal of registration boards to grant or restore registration;
- enforce standards of practice for registrants of the designated professions, including the codes of professional conduct and ethics adopted by their registration boards;
- establish committees of inquiry into complaints, inquiries and discipline, as outlined in Part 6 of the Act, against registrants of the designated professions;
- make decisions and give directions under Part 6 relating to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions on registrants of the designated professions;
- advise the Minister, either on its own initiative or at the Minister's request, on all matters relating to the Council's functions under the Act;
- encourage registration boards to collaborate with each other, where practicable, including in the professional education and training of registrants;
- issue assessment guidelines for the purposes of section 91 (pertaining to initial registration of existing professions within the designated professions for the opening of the registers and during the transitional period);
- perform any function that may be assigned by the Minister to the Council and that relates to;
- the registrants of any designated profession, their education and training and the practice of the profession;
- the implementation of any directive or regulation of the Council of the European Union concerning the practice of, and person engaged in, health care or social care.

The Council “has power to do anything that appears to it to be requisite, advantageous or incidental to, or to facilitate, the performance of its functions under the Act”.

Appendix 2

Attendance Council Meetings 2009

1st Council 2007 - 2009

NAME	DATES	
	5th Feb	19th Mar
Margaret Hayes (Chair)	●	●
Vincent McCabe	●	●
MOHC nominee vacant		
Joan Freeman	●	●
Joan Johnson	●	●
Denis Cusack	●	
Michael O'Halloran		■
Mary O'Donnell		
Education Rep vacant		
Elva Gannon		●
Tony Darmody	●	●
Pat Quinlan		●
Tom Jordan	●	●
Una O'Shiel	●	
John O'Mullane	●	●
Margaret Doyle	●	
Jacqui Barry-O'Crowley	●	
Elizabeth Anne McKay		
Nanno Fitzsimons	●	●
Jill Long	●	●
Patricia Godwin	●	●
Mitchel Fleming	●	●
Monica Egan	●	●
Mark McEntee	●	
David Power	●	●

● Attended

■ Not on Council

2nd Council appointed 2009 - 2011

NAME	DATES		
	22nd July	22nd Oct	2nd Dec
Margaret Hayes (Chair)	●	●	●
Tony Darmody	●	●	
Pat Quinlan	●	●	●
Tom Jordan	●	●	
Margaret Doyle	●	●	●
Jacqui Barry-O'Crowley	●	●	●
Patricia Godwin	●	●	●
Mitchel Fleming	●	●	●
Monica Egan	●		●
Mark McEntee	●		
Sharon Foley	■	●	●
Ann Taylor	■		●
Fionnuala Cook	■		●
Jackie Reed	■	●	●
Stephen McMahon	■	●	●
Michael Ronayne	■	●	●
Bernie Eustace	■	●	
Julie Ling	■	●	
Patricia O'Connor	■	●	
Speech & Language Therapy rep*			
Clinical Biochemist rep*			
Occupational Therapy rep*			
Orthoptics rep*			
Physiotherapy rep*			
Social Care Worker rep*			

* See section 2.6, page 9 for details

Appendix 3

Duties of the Registration Boards

Object and duties of registration boards

The object of the registration board of a designated profession is “to protect the public by fostering high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among registrants of that profession”.

Duties of a registration board:

A registration board’s functions, as set out in the Act, are to:

- establish and maintain a register of members of the designated profession;
- issue certificates of registration;
- give guidance to registrants concerning ethical conduct and give guidance and support to them concerning the practice of the designated profession and continuing professional development;
- monitor, in accordance with the Act, the continuing suitability of programmes approved by the board for the education and training of applicants for registration;
- make recommendations concerning sanctions to be imposed on registrants of the designated profession.

With the approval of the Council a registration board may:

- engage in research into education and training relating to the practice of the designated profession, including the formulation of experimental curricula and the evaluation of existing programmes and examination and assessment procedures;
- maintain statistical records and make those records available for research and planning.

Appendix 4

Membership of Committees and Working Groups for Council (All retired during 2009)

First Council – until March 2009

Fitness to Practise

Jill Long (Chair)
Joan Freeman
David Power
Denis Cusack
Monica Egan

Education

Elizabeth Anne McKay (Chair)
Joan Johnson
Bernie McNally
Monica Egan
Mark McEntee
Margaret Doyle
Una O'Sheil

Finance Committee

Vincent McCabe (Chair)
Elizabeth Anne McKay
Bernie McNally
Tony Darmody
Pat Quinlan
Mitchel Fleming
Jacqui Barry O'Crowley
Nanno Fitzsimons

Registration

Mark McEntee (Chair)
Jacqui Barry O'Crowley
Margaret Doyle
Mitchel Fleming
Patricia Godwin
Nanno Fitzsimons
John O'Mullane
Jill Long
David Power
Vincent McCabe
Michael O'Halloran

Governance

Tom Jordan (Chair)
Elva Gannon
Michael O'Halloran
Patricia Godwin
John O'Mullane

Second Council 2009 - 2011 (all appointed)

Fitness to Practise Working Group

Monica Egan (Chair)
Jill Long
David Power
Patricia Godwin
Jacqui Barry O’Crowley

Education Working Group

Ann Taylor (Chair)
Monica Egan
Mark McEntee
Margaret Doyle
Jackie Reed

Governance Working Group –

it was agreed to amalgamate with the Audit Committee to form the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee.

Finance & Remuneration Committee

Pat Quinlan (Chair)
Tony Darmody
Mitchel Fleming
Jacqui Barry O’Crowley

Registration Working Group

Mark McEntee (Chair)
Jill Long
Mitchel Fleming
Margaret Doyle
David Power

Strategy Working Group

Fionnuala Cook
Sharon Foley

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee

Sharon Foley (Chair)
Tim Dalton
Vincent McCabe
Stephen McMahan

Appendix 5

Commission for Patient Safety and Quality

The Commission's Report entitled "Building a Culture of Patient Safety" came out in July 2008. Dr Deirdre Madden, UCC Law Lecturer, and current Chair of the Standards in Practice Sub-committee, Medical Council, chaired the committee. The terms of reference included:

- "a system of leadership for clinicians and managers which would underpin robust corporate accountability for institutional and clinical performance;
- a statutory system of licensing for public and private healthcare providers and services;
- the process of quality assurance of clinical services (with an emphasis on clinical outcomes) for public and private healthcare providers and services;
- procedures for healthcare professionals and managers to anticipate risks and promote good performance through effective risk identification, near-miss and adverse event reporting;
- the participation of patients and carers and support staff in engaging with healthcare providers on health services planning and the quality of care received;
- the participation by all healthcare staff in audit programmes which will aim to ensure quality improvement and that trends in adverse clinical events, complaints, adverse drug reactions and adverse events with medical devices are effectively analysed and disseminated;
- the means to ensure that evidence-based practice is supported and applied routinely in everyday practice;
- the governance of regulatory bodies in the health system and ways in which effective integration can be enabled between the various bodies."

Of particular interest to Council are the following recommendations:

- "collaboration by health professional regulators on areas of common interest;
- developing a shared understanding of professional standards common to each body;
- supporting education & training appropriate to professionals operating in multi-disciplinary teams".

The report charges the regulators of the health and social care professionals to:

- Develop first point of contact for patient (service users) concerns regarding (clinical) care;
- Handle the initial investigation of complaints – use a common framework to deal with & audit cases to assure performance;
- Fitness to Practise processes – to be reviewed – but must have greater separation between investigation and adjudication function;
- Independently appointed and trained panels for fitness to practise;

- Healthcare providers not currently covered should also be identified and considered for regulation under Health and Social Care Professionals Council;
- Non-medically trained practitioners in alternative medicine whose treatments may be unsafe or potentially hazardous to patients should be considered by DOHC for some type of regulation;
- Single database with health professional's qualifications, registration status, and track record;
- Alert notices to be issued between employers where employee poses potential risk to patients.

Currently there is an Implementation Steering Group (ISG) reporting to Minister on 134 recommendations in the Madden Report including:

- Five sub-groups with stakeholder participation: Advocacy, Professional Regulatory Bodies, Adverse Event Reporting, Audit and Credentialing;
- Consideration by Government October 2008.

The timeframe for ISG & sub-groups to report is 12 to 18 months and to complete their report by December 2011.



To protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among registrants of the designated profession.



**Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh**

**Regulating Health +
Social Care Professionals**

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