



**Minutes of the Board meeting of the Health Research Board  
held on Friday, 12 May 2023 at Grattan House 67-72 Lower Mount Street, Dublin.**

**Present:** Prof B Hannigan (Chairperson)  
Dr S Barry (on zoom)  
Dr L Bishop  
Dr T Cunningham  
Prof T Fahey  
Dr J Ling  
Dr T McWade  
Prof C Normand  
Dr C Saidlear

**Apologies:** Prof S Donnelly

**In attendance:** Dr M O'Driscoll, Chief Executive Officer  
Ms C Cronin, Board Secretary and Head of Governance  
Mr M Morgan, Director of Corporate Operations and Mr D Murphy, Finance Manager, attended for items 5 and 10.  
Dr T Maguire, Director of Research Strategy and Funding, attended for items 6, 7 and 8.  
Ms O Ward, Research and Innovation Infrastructures, attended for item 6(a)  
Dr Anne Cody, and Dr Annalisa Montesanti, Investigator Led Grants, Careers and Enablers, attended for item 6(b)  
Dr C Creely, International Cooperation, Evaluation and Targeted Programmes, attended for items 7 and 8.  
Dr C Gill, International Cooperation, Evaluation and Targeted Programmes, attended for item 7(a)  
Ms V Muppavarapu, International Cooperation, Evaluation and Targeted Programmes, attended for item 8(a).  
Dr C Coyle, International Cooperation, Evaluation and Targeted Programmes, attended for item 8(b).  
Dr J Long and Dr N McGrath attended for item 9.

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## **1. Conflict of Interest**

Prof Normand and Prof Fahey declared conflicts of interest and agreed to leave the meeting while the Board discussed the matters of the approval to issues calls for the Emerging Investigator Awards and Clinician Scientist Awards 2024 and the Commissioned Evaluation of Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts of The Irish Longitudinal Study on Aging (TILDA).

## **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 31 March 2023 were approved.

## **3. Action points from previous meetings**

The Board noted that the action points arising from the previous meeting had been addressed.

## **4. CEO's Report**

### **Sale of 73 Lower Baggot Street**

The CEO reported on progress on the sale of Baggot Street and the likely date for completion of the transaction.

### **Request for delegated authority for the approval of a new Doctoral Training Programme in Precision Medicine in Cancer**

The Board agreed to delegate authority to the HRB Executive Team to take a decision on the approval of an award to be made for a new Doctoral Training Programme in Precision Medicine in Cancer.

### **Other matters**

The CEO also reported on:

- Bequest Update
- Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use
- Geographical analysis of drugs & alcohol data to support resource allocation
- Health Information Bill
- Research Bill
- Update on National Office for Research Ethics Committees
- HRB Media Coverage
- Awards made under delegated authority

## **5. Estimates 2024**

The Board reviewed the draft budget and resource estimates for 2024 and noted that, for the first time it also incorporates funding requests for the National Office for National Research Ethics

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Committees and the Secretariat for the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee. The inclusion of a request for additional staff posts was discussed as was the potential prioritization of those posts. It was noted that the final request would be brought to the Board for approval at its meeting in June before submission to the Department of Health.

## **6. Approval to issue calls**

### **(a) Cancer Clinical Trials Groups Enhancement Awards 2023**

The Board approved issuing an invitation for applications from two Hospital Groups (SAOLTA University Healthcare Group and University Hospital Limerick Group) for Cancer Clinical Trials Group Enhancement Awards (CTEA) 2023. It was noted that, to be successful, each application would be required to demonstrate a clear vision, that academic and hospital partners are committed to achieving that shared vision and that clear and tangible evidence exists that the plan set out in the application is achievable. It was further noted the CTEA awards would bring the two Hospital Groups into alignment with the end date of the other six Cancer trials Groups.

### **(b) Emerging Investigator Awards and Clinician Scientist Awards 2024**

The Board approved issuing calls for Emerging Investigator Awards (academic track) and Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards (clinician-researcher track). The Board noted the changes from previous calls and discussed the use of PhD equivalence as a criterion for the Clinician Scientist Awards.

## **7. Reviews Evaluations and Outputs**

### **(a) Commissioned Evaluation of Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts of The Irish Longitudinal Study on Aging (TILDA)**

The Board noted the key findings in a pre-publication version of a report, commissioned by the HRB to evaluate the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA), and discussed in detail the recommendation that TILDA should make further improvements to systems and practices to facilitate researchers and other key stakeholders' access to TILDA data. Recommendations for improvements to mechanisms for engagement between TILDA and policy makers were also discussed. The Board approved progression to contract finalisation for 3 further Waves of funding for TILDA aligned with the recommendations of the International Panel.

## **8. Other research funding matters**

### **(a) Research Strategy and Funding Directorate Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Plan 2023-2025**

The Board reviewed and approved the Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Plan 2023-2025 for the Research Strategy and Funding Directorate. The matter of how the HRB would support its

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decision making processes by using information generated by the monitoring evaluation processes was discussed. It was noted that the monitoring and evaluation plan of the Research Strategy and Funding Directorate will be part of a wider evaluation and monitoring activity across the organisation.

### **(b) National Mental Health Research Strategy**

Reference was made to Action 93 of the *Sharing the Vision Implementation Plan 2022-2024* which tasked the HRB to be the lead agency in the development of a National Population Mental Health Services Research and Evaluation Strategy. The Board noted the planned approach for HRB's development and publication of the strategy and that an update on progress would be provided to the Board at its meeting in November 2023.

## **9. HRB Publications – Evidence Reviews**

### **(a) Cost, safety, and environmental impacts of reprocessing single-use medical devices: An evidence review and meta-analysis**

The Board considered the peer review process for the evidence review entitled *Cost, safety, and environmental impacts of reprocessing single-use medical devices: An evidence review and meta-analysis* and agreed that it was in order to go forward for publication.

## **10. Corporate reporting**

### **(a) Report on HRB Service Plan 2023 – Quarter 1**

The Board noted the report on status of HRB's Service Plan for 2023 as at 31 March 2023 and approved its submission to the Department of Health's Research Services and Policy Unit as the progress report on the annual Performance Delivery Agreement 2023.

### **(b) Contract valued at in excess of €75,000**

The Board approved the award of

- (a) a 12-month extension to the contract issued to Mazars for the provision of Data Protection Officer services and that the maximum value of the total contract would not exceed €100,000 excluding VAT
- (b) a three-year contract to Allpro Services for the provision of a services officer and on-site cleaning services at a maximum value of €213,000 excluding VAT

### **(c) Procurement Activity Reports**

The Board noted a report on the following procurement activity during the period 01 January 2023 to 31 March 2023

- Purchase Orders raised with a value more than €20,000
- Contracts awarded between €25,000 and €75,000 (ex VAT)

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- Contracts approved by the Board more than €75,000 (ex VAT)
- Authorised exceptions to the competitive procurement guidelines

The Board also noted a table listing supplier expenditure exceeding €25,000 during the three months 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023

## **11. Other governance matters**

### **(a) Programme of Work for the Board 2023 and listed conflicts of Interest**

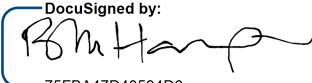
The Board noted the programme of work for the remainder of 2023 and agreed to advise the Secretary of any changes required to the listed conflicts of interest.

## **12. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was set for Friday 30 June 2023.

## **13. Executive session of the Board**

No decisions were taken during the executive session of the Board.

Signed:   
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Prof Bernie Hannigan (Chairperson)