



**Minutes of the Board meeting of the Health Research Board
held on Friday, 27th May 2022 at Grattan House, 67-72 Lower Mount Street,
Dublin 2.**

Present: Prof B Hannigan (Chairperson)
Dr T Cunningham
Prof T Fahey
Prof M Harding (on Zoom)
Dr T McWade
Prof C Normand
Dr C Saidlear

Apologies: Prof S Donnelly
Dr J Ling

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, attended for items 5 and 11
Dr H. Sinclair, Director of Information & Evidence and Dr T Maguire, Director of Research Strategy and Funding. attended for item 5
Ms Anne Doyle, Research Officer, Evidence Centre and Mr Brian Galvin, Programme Manager for Drug and Alcohol Research, Evidence Centre attended for item 8
Dr Suzi Lyons, Senior Researcher, National Health Information Systems and Dr Sarah Craig, Head of National Health Information Systems attended for items 9 and 10
Mr D Murphy, Finance Manager, attended for item 11

1. Conflict of Interest

Members of the Board had no conflicts of interest to declare in relation to matters to be discussed at the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 1 April 2022 were approved.

3. Matters arising and action points from previous meetings

The Chairperson reported that four of the five action points from the previous meeting had been completed and that an update on conflict of interest would be presented at the next meeting of the Board.

4. CEO's Report

CMO secondment issue

The CEO informed the Board that, in response to comments made in the media and at the Oireachtas Committee on Health on the matter of the proposed secondment of the CMO to Trinity College, the HRB had written to all of its Principal Investigators clarifying that had not been involved in any discussion around this post, and reiterating that the HRB has rigorous and transparent policies and processes in place in relation to both the application for, and assessment of, research awards.

The CEO said that she had met with Ms Maura Quinn, who was appointed by the Minister for Health to carry out an external review of the matter, and that Ms Quinn was expected to issue her report to the Minister in June.

National Office for National Research Ethics Committees

The CEO updated the Board on progress to fill the vacancy resulting from the resignation of the Head of the National Office for National Research Ethics Committees. The Board discussed the implications of the expansion of its statutory functions as set out in SI 41/2022 European Union (Clinical Trials on Medicinal Products for Human Use) (National Research Ethics Committees) Regulations 2022 and noted the legal advice on the matter received from the HRB's solicitors. It was agreed that it would be desirable to put a Statement of Understanding (SOU) in place with the Department of Health to clarify the governance arrangements.

Other matters

The CEO also reported on:

- Estimates process ('June letter')
- Health Data update
- Sale of 73 Lower Baggot Street
- Northern Ireland host institution applications
- National Ability Supports System
- HRB Internship Programme
- HRB Media Coverage
- HRB Conference in November

5. Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy

The CEO presented the vision and five pillars of Ireland's research and innovation strategy covering the nine years to 2030 entitled Impact 2030. She also drew the Board's attention to the actions for health in the work programme 2022-2024 set out in the appendix to the document.

The Board welcomed the publication of Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy and noted that the document positively reinforced the role of the HRB as a leader and innovator in health research for Ireland. The Board agreed to the HRB taking a full role in implementing the aspects of the strategy that relate to health research and looked forward to visibility on relationships, particularly among funding bodies, and decision making structures.

6. HRB Service Plan 2022

The Board reviewed the draft HRB Service Plan 2022 and **approved it for submission to the Department of Health as the programme of work to be conducted by the HRB during year two of the HRB strategy Health research – making an impact (2021-2025)**

7. Programme of Work for the Board

The Board noted the programme of work for the remainder of 2022.

8. Other HRB publications

Overview of alcohol and drug use among young people

Ms Anne Doyle presented the key findings, and **the Board approved the publication of the report: Alcohol and other drug use among children and young people in Ireland: prevalence, risk and protective factors, consequences, responses, and policies**

9. Statistical Reports and Bulletins

Dr Suzi Lyons presented a brief summary of the key findings, and the Board noted the publication of the HRB Bulletins entitled:

- National Drug Treatment Reporting system 2015-2021 Drug Treatment Data
- National Drug Treatment Reporting system 2015-2021 Alcohol Treatment Data

10. Annual overview of National Health Information Systems (NHIS) activity

The Board agreed to amend its work programme to set aside time at a meeting once each year to consider the output from the NHIS including development issues, output delivery, policy impact and other areas of significant impact.

11. Corporate reporting

Management Accounts

Mr Dara Murphy presented the HRB management accounts for the four months ended 30 April 2022 and the updated forecast of outturn for the full year.

Procurement Reports

The Board noted reports on HRB procurement activity during the period 1 January 2022 to 31 March 2022.

Contracts valued at in excess of €75,000

The Board approved the award of a 36-month contract to F1000 Research Ltd for the provision of Open Research Publishing for the HRB. The Board also approved a 48-month contract to Dataway Ltd for the provision of firewall services, network support, and penetration testing for the HRB.

12. Other governance matters

Blended/Hybrid working at the HRB

In response to a query from the Board, the CEO provided an outline of progress to date to implement blended working for HRB staff. The CEO agreed to provide an update at the next meeting of the Board on the steps being taken to manage risks associated with accessing data remotely.

Annual Report from the ARC to the Board 2021

The Board noted the Annual Report from the Audit & Risk Committee in respect of 2021.

Terms of reference of the Management Development Committee

The Board reviewed the terms of reference of the Management Development Committee and agreed that no changes were required.

13. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Friday 1 July 2022.

14. 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)

Actions Arising from the Board Meeting of 27 May 2022

No.	Action
1.	An update on conflict of interest to be presented at the next meeting of the Board
2.	HRB Service Plan 2022 to be submitted to the Department of Health as the programme of work to be conducted by the HRB during year two of the HRB strategy Health research – making an impact (2021-2025)
3.	Board work programme to be amended to include a discussion on the output from the NHIS including development issues, output delivery, policy impact and other areas of significant impact.
4.	Update to be provided at the next meeting of the Board on the steps being taken to manage risks associated accessing data remotely.