

**Minutes of the Board meeting of the Health Research Board
held on Friday, 30 June 2023 at Grattan House 67-72 Lower Mount Street, Dublin.**

Present: Prof B Hannigan (Chairperson)
Dr L Bishop (Zoom)
Dr T Cunningham
Dr J Ling
Dr T McWade
Prof C Normand
Dr C Saidlear

Apologies: Dr S Barry
Prof S Donnelly
Prof T Fahey

In attendance: Dr M O'Driscoll, Chief Executive Officer
Ms C Cronin, Board Secretary and Head of Governance
Dr J Long, Evidence Centre attended for item 5
Dr H Sinclair, Director of Evidence and Information attended for items 5 and 6
Dr T Maguire, Director of Research Strategy and Funding, attended for items 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11
Mr M Morgan, Director of Corporate Operations attended for items 6 and 12
Mr D Murphy, Finance Manager, attended for items 6 and 12
Dr Anne Cody, Investigator Led Grants, Careers and Enablers, attended for items 8(a) and 8(b)
Dr C Creely and Dr C Gill, International Cooperation, Evaluation and Targeted Programmes, attended for items 8(c), 9 and 10

1. Conflict of Interest

Prof Normand declared conflicts of interest and agreed to leave the meeting while the Board discussed the matters of:

- Investigator-led Grants (ILP) 2024
- Secondary Data Analysis Projects (SDAP) 2023 – cycle one
- Applied Partnership Awards 2022 – cycle two
- Palliative Care Research Network (PCRN) 12-month pro-rata costed extension

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2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 12 May 2023 were approved.

3. Action points from previous meetings and matters arising

There were no action points or matters arising from the previous meeting.

4. CEO's Report

The CEO reported on

- Progress on the sale of Baggot Street
- Bequest Update
- Latest data on drug treatment and drug-related deaths
- Final General Assembly for TEHDAS project
- HRB's Evidence Centre – 2023 Work programme
- E-cigarettes and global consultation
- HRB and the PEACEPLUS programme
- National Office for Research Ethics Committees – annual report
- Launch of Clinical Trials Institute
- Event on research ethics
- Data retention and deletion project
- HRB Media Coverage
- Awards made under delegated authority

5. Evidence Ecosystem

Dr Long gave a presentation on the HRB Evidence Ecosystem comprising research, data/information and evidence. The presentation defined evidence ecosystems, outlined the primary actors in the evidence ecosystem and internationally, and set out the forms in which evidence is encountered in decision making.

The Board discussed the strategic role of the HRB within the Irish evidence ecosystem with special reference being made to the roles of the Department of Health as the HRB's funder, and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science, and the Health Services Executive.

It was agreed that a paper would be brought to the Board on mapping the research ecosystem in Ireland.

6. Submission to Estimates 2024

The Board approved the submission to the Department of Health as part of the 2024 estimates process subject to the adjustment of the amount included for PhD stipends to €25,000 per annum and minor clarifications in relation to the numbers of additional posts sought.

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7. 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.

8. Approval to issue calls

(a) Investigator-led Projects (ILP) 2024

The Board approved a call for the Investigator-led Project (ILP) funding scheme 2024.

(b) Health Research Charities Ireland - HRB Joint Funding Scheme (HRCI-HRB) 2024

The Board approved a new HRCI/HRB Joint Funding Scheme call (2024) and noted that the 30% overhead is paid only on the HRB contribution.

(c) Support for Clinical Practice Guideline Development 2024

The Board approved the launch of an open call for applications for an award to support clinical practice guideline development, as a follow-up to HRB-CICER (Collaboration in Ireland for Clinical Effectiveness Reviews).

9. Approval of Panel Recommendations on Awards

(a) Secondary Data Analysis Projects (SDAP) 2023 – cycle one

The Board approved the International Panel's recommendations to fund five SDAP 2023 (cycle one) awards.

(b) Applied Partnership Awards 2022 – cycle two

The Board approved the International Panel's recommendations to fund six Applied Partnership Awards at a cost of approximately €1.12 million to the HRB over two years, with a further 20% co-funding contribution being leveraged from Knowledge User organisations.

The Board also approved a reserve list of four projects, and delegated authority to the Executive Team to action reserves as they deem appropriate subject to available funding.

10. Other research funding matters

(a) Increase of the financial limit for EU investments approved by the HRB Executive Team under delegated authority

The Board approved a request to increase to €4 million the annual financial limit for EU investments approved by the HRB Executive Team under delegated authority. It was agreed that a paper setting out a process for regularly reporting to the Board on the use of this funding would be presented to the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 13 October 2023.

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(b) Palliative Care Research Network (PCRN) 12-month pro-rata costed extension

The Board approved a twelve month extension to the existing PCRN Award at a cost of approximately €90,000, to be shared between HRB and Health and Social Care R&D Division (Northern Ireland).

11. Other HRB Publications

(a) Proof-of-Concept: Technical Prototype for Data Access, Storage, Sharing and Linkage (DASSL) to support research and innovation in Ireland

The Board noted the final outcome of the DASSL Proof of Concept Award and **approved the publication of the report** entitled *Proof of concept: Technical Prototype for Data Access, Storage, Sharing and Linkage (DASSL) to support research and innovation in Ireland*.

12. Corporate reporting

(a) HRB Annual Report 2022 (Part 1)

The Board reviewed the draft HRB Annual Report 2022 (Part 1) and approved its publication as a record of the activities of the HRB for the year.

(b) HRB Annual Report 2022 (Part 2)

The Board accepted the recommendation from the Audit & Risk Committee **to approve the Governance Statement and Board Members' Report 2022, the Statement on Internal Control 2022 and the draft Financial Statements 2022**, subject to any adjustments that arise from the audit by the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General. The Board agreed that, on completion of the audit by the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General, these documents would be published as the HRB Annual Report 2022 – Part 2

The Board also agreed that, on completion of the audit, the documents would be signed on behalf of the HRB by the persons then holding the positions of Chairperson of the Board and Chairperson of the Audit & Risk Committee.

(c) Management Accounts to 31 May 2023

The Board noted the HRB managements accounts for the period to 31 May 2023 and the revised forecasted outturn for the year.

(d) Procurement Activity Reports

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

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

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- Authorised exceptions to the competitive procurement guidelines

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

13. Other governance matters

(a) Report from the HRB Audit & Risk Committee

Prof Normand, Chairperson of the HRB Audit & Risk Committee, reported on a meeting of the Committee held earlier that day. Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 24 February 2023 were included with the Board's papers.

(b) System of Internal Control (SIC) 2022 – Management Assurance Statement

The Board noted the System of Internal Controls (SIC) 2022 – Management Assurance Statement completed by the HRB's Executive Team, which documents the outcome of the annual review of internal controls for 2022.

(c) HRB Risk Register

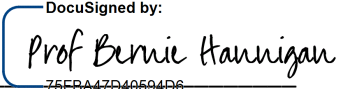
The Board reviewed an extract from the HRB Risk Register setting out the risks considered to be of most significance to the HRB as of 20th June 2023.

14. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Friday 22 September 2023.

15. Executive session of the Board

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

Signed:  75FBA47D40694D6...

Prof Bernie Hannigan (Chairperson)