



**Minutes of the Board meeting of the Health Research Board
held on Thursday, 6 November 2025 at the Herbert Park Hotel, Dublin 4.**

Present: Dr Tracy Cunningham (Chairperson)
Dr Leonora Bishop
Dr Julie Ling
Dr Terry McWade
Dr Cliona Saidlear
Prof Peter Doran
Dr Martina Ni Chualain
Prof Mark Lawler

Apologies: Dr Sarah Barry
Prof Tom Fahey

In attendance: Prof Grainne Gorman, Chief Executive Officer.
Ms Lorna Purcell, Board Secretary and Head of Governance.
Dr Teresa Maguire, Director of Research Strategy and Funding, attended for items 6 & 7.
Dr Anne Cody & Dr Aoife Cahill, Research Strategy and Funding Directorate, attended for Item 7.1
Ms Oonagh Ward, Research Strategy and Funding Directorate, attended for item 7.2.
D'Arcy Donnelly, HR & OD Manager, attended for item 8.1.

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The Chair Dr Tracy Cunningham welcomed the new CEO of the HRB, Professor Grainne Gorman. Prof Gorman thanked the Chair and the Board for their warm welcome.

1. Apologies

Dr Sarah Barry and Prof Tom Fahey sent apologies.

2. Conflicts of Interest

A Conflict of interest was declared for Item 7.2 by Prof Peter Doran who recused himself for this item.

3. Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on September 26 2025 were approved.

4. Matters Arising and action points from previous meetings

Action points from the previous meeting were either addressed or appeared as an agenda item.

5. CEO's Report

The CEO reported to the Board on the following matters:

- Introduction and welcome
- HRB: Ireland's third National Action Plan on AMR (iNAP3) – Strategic Objective 5: Research
- Awards made under Delegated Authority
- Update on Research Security
- Mapping Disability Services
- Data linkage to PPSN
- HRB Representation on NIMC specialist Group
- Drugs and Alcohol Research Team and NHIS team publication of two peer review papers
- Evidence Team publication of three evidence reviews
- National Office - EC Survey on the CTR
- Irish Academic training (ICAT) Programme
- National Conference
- Meeting with the Minister for Health

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- HRB at 40
- ICT matters including a PQQ tender and Cyber Attack Simulation Training
- Media Coverage

6. Progress Update: Project to procure and implement a new grant management solution

The Director of RSF provided an update on the ongoing project to procure and implement a new Grant Management System, including outlining the positive response received from the Department of Health ICT Capital Unit on the Business Case submitted, allowing the case to proceed to tender stage. The Board was assured that there would be further information provided at the December meeting on indicative costs.

7. Approval of Panel Recommendations on Awards

1. PPI Ignite Network 2026

The Board approved the panel recommendation to fund the PPI Ignite Network 2026, at a cost to the HRB of €7.3M (for 11 sites) over five years. An additional €2.7M co-funding will be provided by the network Lead Sites, leading to a total budget of €10M over five years. The Board requested that it is provided with output from the work undertaken by the Network in strengthening and taking a leadership role in defining, measuring, and communicating its collective impact.

2. Approval of grants in Cycle 1 of the Investigator-Led Clinical Trials Programme (ILCT) 2025

Prof Peter Doran declared a conflict and left the meeting for this item.

The International Panel recommended funding for four Investigator-led clinical trials grants (2 DI's and 2 Feasibility Studies) under Cycle 1. One further DI was recommended as a 'reserve', subject to availability of funds. The Board approved the International Panel recommendations to fund four investigator-led clinical trials grants under Cycle 1 of the ILCT 2025 at an anticipated cost of approximately €2.4M over five years.

The Board requested that the 'reserve' proposal (at a cost of approximately €1.3M), be offered the opportunity to amend their proposal based on peer review feedback and to have their application reviewed again at the next appropriate panel meeting (which has a deadline for submission of December 12, 2025). The outcome of this Panel will be presented at the June 2026 Board meeting.

8. Corporate Reporting

1. Corporate Operations – HR

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The HR Manager provided the Board with a presentation on the HR function in the HRB, including information on recruitment processes, learning and development programmes, engagement, culture, succession planning, health & wellbeing, EDI initiatives, and an overview on staffing.

9. Programme of Work for the Board

The Board reviewed the Programme of Work for the Board. Work is ongoing to overhaul the PoW for 2026.

10. Other Governance Matters

1. Development Committee (verbal update)

The Chair provided a verbal report on the Development Committee meeting, including an update on the amended Terms of Reference of the Committee, the Programme of Work for the Committee in 2026, Pulse Survey participation rate data, the establishment of Focus Groups arising from the Pulse Survey results, the Training Framework and Succession Planning in the organisation.

2. Audit and Risk Committee (verbal update)

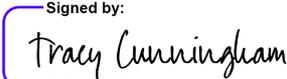
The Chair provided a verbal report on the ARC meeting that took place on October 3, including an update on the Risk Register, CERAS, and Internal Audit.

3. Risk Register

The Board noted the Risk Register, highlighting the risks considered to be of most significance to the HRB as of September 2025.

Executive Session of the Board

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)

Signed by:

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