



Edited minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Board of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) held online and in NMBI on Wednesday, 27 March 2024 starting at 9.00hrs.

Members attending in person

Ms Áine Lynch, Vice President of NMBI
Ms Mittu Alungal
Ms Muireann Ní Shúilleabháin
Ms Anne Marie Duffy

Members attending online

Dr Margaret Murphy
Mr Thomas Glynn
Mr John Horan
Mr Joseph Shalbin
Mr Richard Bruton
Dr Lydia Buckley
Mr Terry McGonigal
Ms Mary Rose Loughnane
Mr Mark Johnston
Dr Don Faller

In attendance

Ms Sheila McClelland, CEO
Ms Kathyann Barrett, Head of Operations
Dr Ray Healy, Director of Registration
Ms Carolyn Donohoe, Director of Education, Policy and Standards
Ms Orla Crowe, Director of Fitness to Practise
Ms Majella Doherty, Communications Manager
Dr Karn Cliffe, Director of Midwifery
Ms Orla Coady, Governance and Secretariat Manager
Ms Mary Devane, Professional Officer
Ms Lorraine Clarke-Bishop, Professional Officer
Ms Terri Raftery, Digitisation Lead

Item 1 – Apologies and conflicts of interest

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Dr Louise Kavanagh McBride, Dr Conan McKenna, Ms Louise Collins, Dr Nadine Farah, Ms Niamh Murphy, Mr Ray Dolan, Ms Kate O’Halloran, Ms Mary Leahy and Ms Marian Vaughan.



In the absence of the President, the Vice President chaired the meeting.

- 1.2 The Vice President reminded Board members of the provisions of the conflict of interest policy. The Vice President then asked Board members to review the agenda to identify any conflicts of interest.

The Vice President advised members that matters discussed during this meeting were to remain confidential to Board members and attendees.

Item 2 – President’s update

- 2.1 The Board noted the invitation received by the President from the Royal College of Surgeons (RCSI) to its 43rd Annual International Nursing & Midwifery Research and Education Conference held on 21 February 2024. The President represented the Board at this event.

Item 3 – CEO’s update

- 3.1 CEO report

The Board noted the CEO report, incorporating the directorate reports, which had previously been circulated to members and which outlined the activities which had taken place across NMBI.

Item 4 – MyNMBI status

- 4.1 Ms Raftery joined the meeting.

The Board considered the briefing document and slides which had previously been circulated to members and which set out details of the recommendation from the MyNMBI Steering Group and Business, Strategy and Finance Committee in relation to the identified preferred supplier for MyNMBI NextGen.

Decision Following consideration of the matter, the Board accepted the recommendation of the MyNMBI Steering Group and the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee as set out in the briefing document.

The Board then noted the presentation which had previously been circulated to members and which provided an update to the Board in relation to the following areas of the MyNMBI Next Gen project:

- Project governance.
- MyNMBI Next Gen evaluation process.
- MyNMBI transition.
- Financial update.



- Risk.

Ms Raftery left the meeting.

Item 5 – Registration

5.1 Annual Renewal Fees (ARF) Report 2024

Following the Annual Renewal cycle for 2024, 1874 registrants were removed for non-payment of the renewal fee. Additionally, 1354 registrants had voluntarily removed themselves from the register before the removal cycle had been closed. At its meeting on 15 February 2024, the Board requested a breakdown of these two categories by demographic details. A report containing this information had been previously circulated to members and the findings were presented by Dr Healy.

The Board noted the report.

5.2 State of the Register briefing

The Board noted the briefing paper which had previously been circulated to members and which gave details of a presentation to members of the Oireachtas on the State of the Register. It was hoped that this presentation would take place in early May 2024 as International Nurses Day is 12 May and the International Day of the Midwife is 5 May.

Dr Healy left the meeting.

Items 6-9 were considered after item 10.

Item 10 – Fitness to Practise

10.1 Reports

10.1.1 *Section 58 orders/undertakings*

The Board noted the update report on registrants subject to section 58 orders which had previously been circulated to members.

10.1.2 *Conditions report*

The Board noted the update report on registrants subject to conditions which were imposed following fitness to practise proceedings and were confirmed by the High Court which had previously been circulated to members.



10.1.3 ***Undertakings report***

The Board noted the update report on undertakings given under section 65 and section 57A of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended, which had previously been circulated to members.

Ms Crowe left the meeting.

Item 6 – Business, Strategy and Finance

6.1 Finance and Business Plan 2024

6.1.1 *Management accounts – December 2023 and January 2024*

The Board considered the management accounts for December 2023 and January 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee and approved the management accounts for December 2023 and January 2024.

6.1.2 *Business Plan 2024*

The Board considered the updated business plan for 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

The business plan for 2024 had been approved by the Board at its meeting on 14 December 2023. However, since that time, a number of changes to the environment in which NMBI operates, and within NMBI itself, had arisen. To respond to these changes, the business plan had been reviewed and amended, particularly in relation to timelines.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee and approved the updated business plan for 2024. The approved business plan would now be submitted to the Minister for Health pursuant to section 20(6) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended.

6.2 Objectives and key indicators report

The Board noted the report which had previously been circulated to members.

6.3 Annual Report 2023



The Board considered the draft Annual Report for 2023 which had previously been circulated to members.

In addition to the document which was before the Board today, Ms Doherty advised the Board that, in accordance with paragraph 1.9 of the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*, the Annual Report would include as an appendix the Chairperson’s Comprehensive Report to the Minister. The Comprehensive Report had been approved and signed by the President.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee and approved the Annual Report 2023. The approved Annual Report must be submitted to the Minister for Health by 31 March 2024, pursuant to section 21 of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended.

Ms Doherty left the meeting.

6.4. Protected Disclosures Policy

The Protected Disclosures Policy had been revised to take into consideration the changes introduced in the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022 which commenced on 1 January 2023. The Act requires every public body to establish and maintain procedures for the making of protected disclosures and procedures for dealing with such disclosures. It also requires that public bodies provide written information relating to the procedures established.

The Board considered the documents which had been previously circulated to members. The document marked ‘external’ would be made available publicly on NMBI’s website. The document marked ‘internal’ would be published within NMBI only.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee and approved the revised Protected Disclosures Policy.

Item 7 – Audit and Risk

7.1 Revised Audit and Risk Committee terms of reference

The Board considered the briefing document which set out the proposed revisions, and draft revised terms of reference which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee and approved the revised terms of reference.



7.2 System of internal controls review 2023

Section 1.8 of the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* states that:

‘The Board has responsibility for ensuring that effective systems of internal control are instituted and implemented. The Board is required to confirm annually to the relevant Minister that the State body has an appropriate system of internal and financial control in place.’

In its statement on the SIC the Board is also required to confirm that there has been a review of the effectiveness of the SIC. The report on the review of the SIC, which had previously been circulated to members, was considered by the Board. The report summarised the results of the review of internal financial controls and internal control questionnaires completed by management for consideration by the Board as part of its review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control for the period January 2023 to December 2023. The report consisted of two parts:

1. Internal financial controls.
2. Internal control questionnaire (ICQ)

Internal financial controls

NMBI’s internal auditors were of the opinion that reasonable assurance could be placed on the adequacy and operating effectiveness of internal controls to mitigate and/or manage those inherent risks to which the activity under review is exposed. The audit did not identify any high priority findings that would require immediate management attention. The audit identified two medium priority findings and four low priority findings.

The internal auditors do not provide assurance in respect of the ICQ as the internal auditors are part of the internal control framework. The ICQ was completed in the form of a self-assessment by management. The internal audit represented a high-level review of evidence to support the statements made and not an in-depth audit of the controls noted.

Based on this high-level review of the completed questionnaire, no high priority items were identified. One medium priority finding was identified and two low priority findings were identified.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee and approved the report on the review of the SIC.

7.3 Draft financial statements 2023



The Board considered the draft annual financial statements for 2023 which had previously been circulated to members and which included the following:

1. General information about Board members' appointments and terms of office.
2. Governance statement and Board members' report.
3. Statement on internal control.
4. Financial statements.

The draft financial statements for 2023 had been submitted to the Department of Health on 29 February 2024 in accordance with the requirements of the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*. The Department of Health had acknowledged receipt of the draft financial statements.

The Board noted that the draft financial statements for 2023 had been circulated to the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee for noting.

The Board noted that the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of NMBI on 31 December 2023 except for non-compliance with the requirements of FRS102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements. In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Board accounts for the costs of the superannuation entitlements only as they become payable. This basis of accounting does not comply with FRS102 which requires costs to be recognised in the year in which entitlement is earned.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee and approved the draft annual financial statements for 2023. The draft annual financial statements for 2023 would now be submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit no later than 31 March 2024 pursuant to section 34(3) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended.

7.4 Corporate Risk Register

The Board considered the report on the Corporate Risk Register which had previously been circulated to members.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Mr Horan, advised the Board that the Corporate Risk Register had been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting on 20 March 2024. Full details were set out in the report.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee and approved the Corporate Risk Register.



7.5 Internal audit report: Corporate governance

The Board noted the report which had previously been circulated to members and which detailed the results of the review by NMBI's internal auditors into the organisation's compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*.

Mr Horan advised a representative of the Officer of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) had been scheduled to attend the last meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee and to discuss the management letter for 2022. Unfortunately, the representative had deferred their attendance until later in the year.

Mr Horan extended his thanks to all members of the Committee for their hard work. Mr Horan in particular noted that two non-Board members, Mr Philip Brady and Mr Chris McCann, had agreed to be appointed for a second term and this was appreciated by all members of the Committee.

Ms Devane and Ms Clarke-Bishop joined the meeting.

Item 8 – Education, Policy and Standards

8.1 Site inspection reports

8.1.1 *University of Limerick*

The Board considered the report which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Education, Training and Standards Committee and agreed that, in accordance with section 85(2) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended, University College Limerick and associated healthcare provider sites be approved to provide programmes leading to registration and specialist educational programmes not leading to registration for a period of five years or until the next site visit whichever is soonest.

8.1.2 *Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Mayo*

Mr Johnston declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting.

The Board considered the report which had previously been circulated to members.



Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Education, Training and Standards Committee and agreed that, in accordance with section 85(2) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended, ATU Mayo and associated healthcare provider sites be approved to provide programmes leading to registration and specialist educational programmes not leading to registration for a period of five years or until the next site visit whichever is soonest.

Mr Johnston returned to the meeting.

8.2 Approval for eligibility for direct registration with NMBI

The Board considered the briefing paper and report which had previously been circulated to members.

In June 2023, Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly approved the funding for 200 student nursing and midwifery places in Northern Ireland for students from the Republic. In October and November 2023, the Education Policy and Standards (EPS) Department facilitated a series of meetings with Ulster University and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) to explore if graduates of the Ulster University nursing programmes could be eligible for direct registration with NMBI.

Ulster University submitted a curriculum which was developed and validated by the NMC in 2020 and which was aligned with the NMBI Standards and Requirements for Registration Programmes (NMBI 2023, 5th edition).

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Education, Training and Standards Committee and approved direct eligibility for registration with NMBI for Ulster University graduates who studied the 2020 curriculum. The Board agreed that the approval would be valid for five years, with the condition that Ulster University must inform NMBI if there were any changes to the approved curriculum.

8.3 Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Framework

The Board considered the briefing paper, consultation report and framework which had previously been circulated to members.

The approval of the Graduate Entry Nursing General Registration Education Programme Standards and Requirements (2023) provided an education pathway for people who already held a National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) level 8 undergraduate bachelor's degree and wished to complete an education programme leading to registration as a general nurse. As recognition of prior learning is permitted, NMBI had developed a framework to optimise consistency in the implementation of RPL across education bodies providing



nursing programmes in Ireland. The proposed framework set out guidance for education bodies for the use of RPL to widen access to nursing programmes and specifically provided guidance for the Graduate Entry to Nursing General Education Programme.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Education, Training and Standards Committee and approved the RPL framework. The Board also approved the consultation report which set out the consultation process undertaken by NMBI to develop this framework.

Mr Glynn left the meeting.

8.4 Programmes for first time approval

8.4.1 *University of Galway*

The Board noted that the following programme had been considered by the Education, Training and Standards Committee at its meeting on 7 March 2024 and was recommended for approval by the Committee:

- MSc in Evidence-Based Future Healthcare (Level 9, 90 ECTS)

Decision In accordance with section 85(2) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended, the Board accepted the recommendation of the Education, Training and Standards Committee and agreed that University of Galway be approved to provide the above programme for a period of five years or until the next site visit as an allied healthcare provider site of University of Galway, whichever was soonest.

8.5 Programmes for re-approval

8.5.1 *Trinity College Dublin*

The Board noted that the following programme had been considered by the Education, Training and Standards Committee at its meeting on 7 March 2024 and were recommended for re-approval by the Committee:

- MSc/Postgrad Dip/Postgrad Cert in Nursing - Advancing Child Health and Wellbeing (formerly Nursing Child Health and Wellbeing) (Level 9, 90 ECTS)

Decision In accordance with section 85(2) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended, the Board accepted the recommendation of the Education, Training and Standards Committee and agreed that Trinity College Dublin be approved to provide the above programme for a period of five years or until the next site



visit as an allied healthcare provider site of Trinity College Dublin, whichever was soonest.

Item 9 – Professional Standards – Midwifery

9.1 Appointment of non-Board members to the Midwives Committee

The Board considered the briefing document which had previously been circulated to members.

The Board noted that two vacancies had arisen on the Committee under sections 24(3)(b)(i) and 24(3)(b)(iv) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011, as amended.

Decision The Board accepted the recommendation of the Director of Midwifery and the Chair of the Midwives Committee and agreed to appoint the following two non-Board members to the Midwives Committee for a period of three years from 25 March 2024 to 25 January 2027:

- **Gillian Canty:** Section 24(3)(b)(i) – a midwife.
- **Niamh Hayes:** Section 24(3)(b)(iv) – a representative of the public interest and each of whom is not and never has been a registered nurse or registered midwife in the State or a nurse or midwife in another jurisdiction.

Item 11 – Minutes and actions of previous meetings

11.1 Minutes of previous meetings

11.1.1 *Minutes of the meeting of 23 January 2024*

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting of 23 January 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of the 23 January 2024.

11.1.2 *Minutes of the meeting of 24 January 2024*

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting of 24 January 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of the 24 January 2024.

11.1.3 *Minutes of the meeting of 15 February 2024*



The Board considered the minutes of the meeting of 15 February 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of the 15 February 2024.

11.1.4 *Minutes of the meeting of 15 February 2024 – item 6.1*

The Board noted that these minutes had been approved at the previous day's meeting.

11.1.5 *Minutes of the FTP meeting of 26 February 2024*

The Board considered the minutes of the FTP meeting of 26 February 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board approved the minutes of the FTP meeting of the 26 February 2024.

11.1.6 *Minutes of the meeting of 26 February 2024*

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting of 26 February 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of the 26 February 2024.

11.1.7 *Minutes of the meeting of 12 March 2024*

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting of 12 March 2024 which had previously been circulated to members.

Decision The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of the 12 March 2024.

11.2 Actions and matters arising from previous meetings

The Board approved the updated action list.

There were no matters arising which were not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda or in the minutes or action list.

Mr Glynn re-joined the meeting in person in NMBI.

Item 12 – Any other business

12.1 Presentation to the CEO



The CEO would shortly leave NMBI to take up the role of CEO with CORU. The President joined the meeting remotely to bid the CEO farewell and to express gratitude to her for her hard work, leadership and dedication. Members of the Board and the senior management team joined the President in conveying their thanks to the CEO for her commitment and contribution to NMBI's development and growth.

On behalf of the Board, the Vice President presented the CEO with some gifts as a token of thanks and wished her well in her future role.

Item 13 – Board private session

13.1 The Board did not wish to meet in private at this time.

There being no further matters for consideration the meeting ended at 12.45hrs.