

**Commission on Patient Safety and  
Quality Assurance**

**Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> meeting  
26 January 2007**

**MINUTES**

**Summary of Action Points**

	<b>Action</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1	Redraft and circulate Terms of Reference	Dr Madden - Chair	Prior to next meeting
2	Comment on redrafted terms of reference	Individual group members	Prior to next meeting
3	Provide observations on proposed list of meeting dates (as circulated at meeting) to the Secretariat	Individual group members	Prior to next meeting
4	Provide observations on the function and membership of proposed subgroups to Dr Philip Crowley	Individual group members	Prior to next meeting

**In attendance:**

Ms Mary Harney, T.D., Minister for Health and Children  
Chair: Dr. Deirdre Madden, Senior Lecturer in Law, University College Cork  
Dr. Richard Brennan, General Practitioner, Kilkenny  
Dr. Tracey Cooper, CEO, Interim Health Information and Quality Authority  
Dr. Philip Crowley, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health and Children  
Ms Mary Duff, SRN, Director of Nursing St Vincent's Hospital  
Ms Edwina Dunne, National Head of Quality of Risk, Office of the CEO, Health Services Executive  
Mr Paul Fox, Process Engineering Manager, Bausch and Lomb, Waterford  
Dr. Mary Hynes, Director of Quality and Risk, National Hospitals Office, Health Services Executive  
Ms Margaret Murphy, Patient/Carer representative, Cork City  
Dr Alf Nicholson, Consultant Paediatrician, Our Lady of Lourdes Drogheda  
Mr Tiberius Pereira, Patient/Carer representative, Dublin  
Dr. Ailis Quinlan, Clinical Indemnity Scheme  
Dr Gabriel Scally, Regional Director of Public Health for the South West Region of England, Bristol, England  
Mr Dermot Smyth, Assistant Secretary, Department of Health and Children

**Secretariat:**

Ms Susan Reilly, Department of Health and Children  
Mr Aidan Clancy, Department of Health and Children

**Apologies :**

Professor Fergal Malone, Professor of Obstetrics, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

**Agenda Item 1 – Introductions**

The Chair opened the meeting by inviting members to introduce themselves.

The Minister for Health and Children welcomed members to the Commission and expressed her gratitude to them. She stressed the importance of the task which they faced and the need to improve the safety and quality of the healthcare system.

**Agenda Item 2**

Dr Philip Crowley gave a presentation on safety and quality issues facing the healthcare system. He cited a number of recent national and international inquiries into adverse healthcare incidents and spoke about the need to ensure that lessons were learned from these incidents. He suggested that the role of the Commission might be to arrive at recommendations at a systems wide level, rather than to define specific standards.

There was a general discussion following Dr Crowley's presentation during which the following matters were highlighted:

- the need to ensure that action followed from any recommendations the Commission might make and that recommendations are integrated into the healthcare system
- the need to ensure that safety systems are not obstructed by undue bureaucracy and the need for an integrative/collaborative system of work
- the need to create a learning and high performance environment which will be informed by adverse and sentinel incidents and the need to support this learning environment in both primary and post graduate education of healthcare staff
- the need to learn from events which occur outside our own organisations or jurisdictions and to avoid 'reinventing the wheel'
- the particular risks associated with the point where patients are handed over from one clinician or caregiver to another
- the need to ensure that the concept of safety extends to citizens and is not just confined to patients
- the need to look wider than adverse incidents; to strive for excellence as well as avoiding adversity
- the requirement that any policy on safety should be inclusive of the full range of occupations within healthcare – clinicians, technical support, administrative support and management

- issues surrounding recruitment and the use of agency staff and the need for a regulatory environment that ensures quality in this arena including the desirability of evaluating an individual's performance across multiple employments
- the role of the Clinical Indemnity Scheme in sharing learning experiences through newsletters and seminars
- concern that striving for better value for money could negatively impact quality
- the necessity of increasing patient participation in decision-making at individual, institutional, and national level
- the value of a policy of open disclosure in the event of an adverse incident
- the likely impact of an increasing incidence of independent healthcare practitioners

### **Agenda Item 3 – Terms of reference**

A draft set of terms of reference were circulated – see Appendix 1- and a detailed discussion followed.

The Chair undertook to rework the TOR in the light of the discussion and to circulate them by e-mail for comment.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Working methodology**

In addition to monthly sub-group and Commission meetings, it was suggested that it will be necessary to engage with a number of stakeholders which are not represented on the Commission.

- A specialist registrar in Public Health in DoHC is available to lead a review of international models
- Specific experts may be invited to present to the Commission
- May be value in publishing an interim report to stimulate debate on key issues
- The Commission should engage positively with the media with a view to keeping the public informed of developments
- Minutes of meetings to be posted on the Commission website

A draft list of subgroups was circulated. Members were requested to revert to Dr Crowley prior to the next meeting with their view on membership of the groups.

### **Agenda Item 5 – Future Meetings**

A proposed list of meeting dates was circulated. Members were requested to revert to the Secretariat regarding the suitability of the proposed dates.

**Agenda Item 6 – AOB**

None

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dr Deirdre Madden  
Chairperson  
Commission on Patient Safety and  
Quality Assurance

DoHC – January 2007

## Appendix 1

### Draft Terms of Reference as circulated at meeting

#### **Terms of reference:**

Having regard to the findings of the Lourdes Inquiry and to responses to health system failures in other jurisdictions:

the Commission will develop proposals for a health service wide (encompassing both the public and the private sectors) system of governance based on corporate accountability for the quality and safety of health services. These proposals should constitute a framework which includes mechanisms and arrangements that will enable the verifiable implementation of nationally agreed managerial and clinical standards. The framework should include any necessary legal, managerial, administrative, technical, human resource measures.

As a component of any proposed framework, the Commission will *inter alia* examine and make recommendations in relation to:

- a system of management and clinical leadership which would underpin robust corporate accountability for institutional and clinical performance
- a statutory system of licensing for public and private health care providers and services;
- the accreditation of the quality of clinical services (with regard to clinical outcomes) for public and private health care providers and services;
- procedures for healthcare professionals to identify and remedy poor performance through effective critical incident reporting and complaints procedures;
- the participation of patients and carers in engaging with health care providers on the quality of care received;
- the participation by all health care staff in audit programmes which will aim to ensure that trends in adverse clinical events, complaints, adverse drug reactions and adverse events with medical devices are effectively analysed and disseminated;
- the means to ensure that evidence-based practice is supported and applied routinely in everyday practice;
- the governance of regulatory bodies in the health system and examine ways in which effective integration can be enabled between the various bodies.

**Timescale:** 18 Months

**Method:** Monthly plenary meeting and sub group meetings. In conducting its work, the Commission should engage with relevant stakeholders, and undertake any research and/or consultation that it deems appropriate. The Department of Health and Children will provide administrative and other necessary support to the Commission.

**Output:** A report will be presented to the Minister outlining a series of actions needed to ensure patient safety and improve quality assurance in our health services.