



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh

Regulating Health +
Social Care Professionals

Guide for Council and Registration Board Members

1.About CORU	2
2.Who will be regulated?	2
3.What is the Council?	3
4. What are the functions of Council?	3
5.What are the Registration Boards at CORU?	4
6.What is the term of office of members?	4
7.What skills do you need to be a member of Council or a Board?	5
8.What is the time commitment?	6
9.Is the role voluntary?	6
10.Is training provided?	7
11.Further information	7

1. About CORU

We are a regulator for health and social care professionals. Our role is to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct, education, training and competence through statutory registration of health and social care professionals.

CORU was set up under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended). It comprises the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and 13 registration boards – one for each profession named in the Act.

CORU is the umbrella term used to describe the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the registration boards established for each of the professions.

2. Who will be regulated?

The professions to be regulated by CORU are:

- Clinical Biochemists
- Dietitians
- Medical Scientists
- Occupational Therapists
- Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians
- Orthoptists
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Psychologists
- Radiographers and Radiation Therapists
- Social Care Workers
- Social Workers
- Speech and Language Therapists

In the future, the Minister for Health may also add other professions to be regulated by CORU.

3. What is the Council?

The Health and Social Care Professionals Council has 29 members that are unpaid, and a Chair, appointed by the Minister for Health. Each of the professions is represented on the Council. The Council also has other lay people concerned with health and social care. They include representatives from:

- the education sector;
- patient advocacy groups;
- the voluntary sector; and
- public and private sector organisations.

The Council has a 'lay majority' (more lay members than health and social care professionals). This is viewed internationally as one of the best ways of making sure the public interest is at the centre of all that we do.

4. What are the functions of the Council?

Council is responsible for overseeing the governance and strategy of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, including finance and risk; staffing; legal decisions and strategic planning. In addition to corporate governance, the main functions of the Council are to:

- Oversee and co-ordinate the activities of the Registration Boards
- Enforce standards of practice for registered professionals, including codes of professional conduct and ethics and to manage Fitness to Practise procedures
- Make decisions and give directions relating to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions on registrants.

5. What are the Registration Boards at CORU?

Each profession has its own Registration Board, which is responsible for registering members of the profession. Each Board has 13 members and, like the Council, each has a lay majority.

The Registration Board is responsible for:

- setting up and maintaining the Register of members for that profession;
- assessing and recognising qualifications gained outside the State;
- approving and monitoring education and training programmes;
- approving qualifications for entry on to the register
- devising the code of professional conduct and ethics; and
- setting the requirements for continuing professional development.

6. What is the Term of Office?

a) Council members

Normally, members hold office for a term of not more than 4 years from the date of appointment and cannot remain a member for more than 2 consecutive terms.

b) Registration Board members

A member of a registration board holds office for a term of not more than 4 years specified by the Minister at the time of appointment and cannot remain a member for more than 2 consecutive terms.

One half of the members of a registration board first constituted hold office for a term of 3 years from the date of their appointment. The members who are to hold office for a term of three years are drawn by lot at the first meeting. Each Registration Board elects one of its members to be its chairperson.

7. What skills do you need to be a member of Council or a Board?

The variety of issues to be dealt with will require Council and Board members that can add value through knowledge, experience or expertise gained in their current or previous roles. Members would be expected to bring their professional experience and skills to bear in order to make sound decisions and to provide leadership.

This will involve the ability to balance a strategic view of key decisions with a specialist or expert perspective, while being committed to the principle of collective decision making. A patient/service user focus is essential as our mandate is to protect the public.

Membership also requires understanding and experience of what it takes to develop a well-run, responsive and high performing public sector organisation.

All Board and Council members should be committed to public service. They will be expected to act with integrity and the highest professional standard and to promote fairness, transparency and accountability.

Board and Council members should ideally:

- Have a track record of effective judgement, decision making, initiative and analytical thought
- Demonstrate experience in identifying solutions to complex issues and understanding their impact and implications
- Possess excellent interpersonal and teambuilding skills with proven ability to build relationships with many different stakeholders
- Display excellent oral and written communication skills, with the ability to negotiate and challenge when necessary
- Possess a strong sense of ethics, integrity and probity
- Have the ability to bring objectivity and scrutiny to the governance of the organisation.

In addition, members should

- Be familiar with the business and regulatory environment in which CORU operates and the Health and Social Care Sector in Ireland or demonstrate capacity to acquire this knowledge.
- Have experience of Board membership and/or public administration experience

8. What is the time commitment?

Membership of CORU's Council and registration boards requires high levels of engagement. Successful applicants will be expected to attend up to 10 Council meetings or 10 Board meetings each year and members may also be nominated to serve on committees or sub groups.

Members will be required to devote as much time to their duties as necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties. This will include time in preparation for Council/Board meetings and attending and preparing for committee meetings, stakeholder events and other ad hoc meetings as required. By applying for the position it is assumed that you can meet this time commitment.

Members are obliged to comply with the relevant provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. This Code includes a description of the role and responsibilities of board members.

9. Is the role voluntary?

Council and Board members serve on a part-time basis and there is no remuneration for the positions. Members can claim travel and subsistence allowances which will be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings or to transact its business. This is in accordance with approved public sector rates.

Meetings are usually held in Dublin city centre. Most communication between the Council and registration boards is electronic and members must be willing to accept communications through electronic means.

10. Is training provided?

Appropriate training is provided to all members.

11. Further Information

Stateboards.ie has prepared a self-assessment questionnaire of competencies for anyone interested in becoming a member of a state board. To access, please visit:

<http://stateboards.ie/stateboards/questionnaire/24.htm>

For more information on CORU and our work, please visit our website www.coru.ie. You can also call (01) 2933160 or email info@coru.ie with your questions.



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