

Independent Review into RQIA Board Resignations – Updated Terms of Reference (September 2020).

Introduction

On 17th and 18th June 2020, the acting Non-Executive Chair and six Non-Executive Members of the Board of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) resigned with immediate effect. These resignations were in addition to further resignations from two Non-Executive Members on the 9th and 10th June 2020 to take up alternative posts. This effectively left the RQIA Board with 11 vacancies, the complete non-executive Board membership.

Scope of the Review

The review will examine the circumstances that gave rise to the nine RQIA Board Member resignations and will include:

- A desktop review of all relevant correspondence, between the Department, the RQIA non-executive Board members and the RQIA executive team, including any and all material requested by the review panel as required in relation to the review and the HSC response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This shall include all relevant correspondence between Departmental officials and also between RQIA officials pertaining to this matter.
- Interviews with the relevant individuals in the Department, the RQIA non-executive Board members and the RQIA executive team, including the former Chief Executive.

Particular consideration should be given to:

- Current codes of practice and guidance for Boards and the Department, including the Board's Code of Conduct, the Nolan Principles, the Code of Conduct and Code of Accountability for Board Members of Health and Social Care Bodies (July 2012) and the Civil Service Code of Ethics.
- The roles and responsibilities of the Department, the RQIA non-executive Board members and the RQIA executive team
- Agreed working arrangements between the Department and the RQIA (Framework / Partnership Agreement)
- Reporting lines between the Chief Executive, Chair, the Board and the Minister/Department
- Communication between the Department, the RQIA non-executive Board and the RQIA executive team and
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the above

The review should establish the facts and lessons to be learned from the circumstances that gave rise to the resignations and make recommendations for the consideration of the Minister.

Timing

The review should be completed and a report with conclusions and recommendations brought to the Minister within three months.