

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
NATIONAL CANCER REGISTRY BOARD (NCRI)**

**HELD ON**

**15 JULY 2025 AT 1.00 PM**

**REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS, AND IN PERSON AT  
BUILDING 6800, CORK AIRPORT BUSINESS PARK, KINSALE ROAD, CORK**

**1. Register of Attendance:**

**1.1 Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Dr Robert O'Connor (online)	Chairperson	ROC
Ms Mary Bourke (online)	Board Member	MB
Ms Ellen Farrell (online)	Board Member	EF

**In Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Prof Deirdre Murray	NCRI Director	DM
Ms Rose O' Connor	NCRI Corporate Operations Manager	COM
Ms Catherine McGovern	NCRI Business & Planning Manager	CMcG
Dr. Theresa Redaniel	Head of Research and Analysis	TR (for part thereof)
Ms. Jean Kelly	Data Quality Manager	JK (for part thereof)
Mr. Jerry Lane	Governance & Compliance Officer	GC

**1.2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Ms. Cathy Enright (CE) and Mr. Niall Murphy (NM).

**1.3 Quorum.**

**IT WAS NOTED THAT** as the meeting was not quorate that items for requiring ratification would be circulated by email to members for their express approval.

ROC informed the meeting that considerable efforts had been made to ensure the timely appointment and reappointment of Board members. The reappointment was confirmed the week of the meeting, with the new appointment confirmed the very morning of the meeting. ROC will share these details with the Director and the team. ROC noted that the new appointment was too close to the meeting to invite the new member to attend and thus mitigate the quorum issue.

**2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest.**

The Board members confirmed that they had no conflict of interest in the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

### **3. Director's Report.**

3.1. DM reported to the Board on the NCRI's strategic and operational goals, during which the following points were noted and discussed:

#### **3.2. Strategic and Operational Goals.**

3.2.1. DM noted that we are now in the second year of our three-year Strategic Plan (2024–2026). Item 5 on the agenda provides a progress update, including a dashboard that tracks our performance against the 2025 Strategic Implementation Plan.

#### **3.3. Business Continuity.**

3.3.1. DM addressed the Firewall statistics schematic. This charts the volume of attempted threats against our network Jan-May 2025. These figures reflect the effectiveness of our firewall in preventing unauthorized access. In addition, NCRI maintains continuous internal monitoring to detect and respond swiftly to any suspicious activity within the network..

#### **3.4. Research & Analysis.**

3.4.1. DM noted the momentum in R&A, with several presentations delivered and in preparation. Highlights include abstracts to key conferences in Ireland, Spain, and Turkey. The team's success in securing submissions to the IACR meeting in Turkey for later this year was commended. A detailed presentation on the activities of R&A is provided in section 6 of the meeting.

#### **3.5. Electronic Data Capture.**

3.5.1. MedLIS. NCRI recently met with the MedLIS team to discuss the NCRI interface project and agree next steps. Further meetings are planned.

#### **3.6. Stakeholder Engagement.**

3.6.1. A discussion took place on NCRI's strategic and executive engagements with stakeholders since the last board meeting. DM highlighted that during Q2, NCRI staff participated in the ENCR-GRELL Scientific Meeting, engaging with representatives from cancer registries across the EU and the UK as well as with colleagues from the NHS, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the Joint Research Centre (JRC).

3.6.2. Governance & Compliance. During Q2, the NCRI Executive maintained ongoing engagement with the Cancer Policy Unit (CPU) at the DoH. These discussions ensured the timely submission of all mid-year compliance documentation to ensure ongoing governance alignment. Discussions also continued around Board appointments and processes and timelines relating to the nomination of new members, reappointment of members and the process relating to retiring members.

3.6.3. NCRI personnel met with the internal auditors, Mazars, to plan the next audit, which will focus on cybersecurity and is scheduled for Q4 2025. ROC asked that the outcome from this audit be tabled at the Q4 Board meeting. ACTION: Schedule a report from the audit (cybersecurity) for the Q4 meeting.

### **3.7 HR, Finance and Risk Reports.**

3.7.1 Finance and Risk reports were addressed and discussed.

3.7.2 COM advised the Board regarding recent (early) engagement with the DoH regarding budget 2026, where initial high-level budget figures were required by the Department.

3.8 The Board commended the Director's report with EF noting its positive recognition in the draft report of the Board Evaluation.

### **4 Board Recruitment Update.**

4.1 ROC confirmed that Dr Paul Kavanagh has been invited onto the Board by the Minister following the conclusion of the recent 'State Boards' competition.

4.2 It was noted that the term of two Board Members had expired on the 14/07/2025. ROC thanked MB for her continuing commitment to the Board and will write to Prof Mark Lawler (ML) to thank him for his tenure and contribution.

4.3 ROC noted that a further vacancy remains to be filled. CMcG proposed a review of the Board's collective skills matrix considering the recent appointment. ROC asked that be formally noted.

### **5 Strategic Plan: Service Plan Dashboard.**

5.1 CMcG presented the service plan dashboard to the meeting and highlighted to the meeting the NCRI's progress against its strategic objectives as of this date.

5.2 CMcG addressed the following items:

5.2.1 The NCRI migration to Tableau continues with the team having learned some valuable lessons from the recent website upgrade.

5.2.2 The Customer Charter which will be reviewed.

5.2.3 There was a discussion in relation to the MedLIS project. The NCRI team will continue to work closely with the MedLIS team and monitor its progress.

5.2.4 ROC complimented the team for the achievements to date in relation to adherence to the timeline of the Strategic Plan.

5.2.5 The terms of two ARC members would be concluding shortly and CMcG proposed to send reappointment letters to ROC for signature.

5.2.6 EF complimented the website implementation and noted that NCRI is one of two finalists in the Open data category of the eGov awards.

### **6 Deep Dive: Research & Analysis.**

6.1 TR joined the meeting to provide the Board with a detailed presentation in relation to NCRI Research & Analysis function. The presentation introduced the team, highlighted current and upcoming publications, and outlined the core Research Principles guiding NCRI's approach to research.

6.2 The Board thanked TR for the excellent presentation.

- 6.3 Following the presentation, the Board welcomed the significant progress made in Research & Analysis. MB commended the depth and quality of outputs in recent years and inquired about interest in internships. DM provided an update on engagement with various academic institutions.
- 6.4 There was a discussion in relation to the NCRI publication plan and the mechanisms for decision making on NCRI reports, publications and collaborations. The 2026 – 2028 draft publication plan will be shared with Board at the next meeting and then communicated onwards to the DoH.
- 6.5 ROC enquired about the next meeting of the Advisory Council. DM updated the board in relation to terms of current members coming to an end, and the recruitment status for replacements. It is expected that the Advisory Council will meet in Q3.
- 6.6 There followed a discussion about the wider strategic relevance of the R &A Research Principles, against the context of anticipated national strategic plan developments and board members present enquired if the NCRI would need to have its own strategy, indicating priorities and things falling outside scope.

## **7 Deep Dive: Data Quality.**

- 7.1 JK joined the meeting to provide the Board with a presentation in relation to Data Quality.

The Board thanked JK for her excellent presentation. The Board held a discussion on the European Health Data Space (EHDS), in relation to the framework for assigning quality labels to data sources. Board members inquired about data quality at NCRI and the key challenges facing the Data Quality team. JK highlighted the scale of work required in preparation for the European Health Data Space (EHDS) and noted that delivering on these requirements will require significant resources.

## **8 Board External Evaluation.**

- 8.1 CMcG advised that the Workshop is scheduled for Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025, at the Wellington Room, at the Merrion Hotel. ROC expressed his thanks to the team for their organisation and to O'Brien Governance for their draft report. Board members enquired about the possibility of an online option for this workshop, which NCRI will facilitate.

## **9 ARC Report to the Board – Draft Minutes and associated matters.**

- 9.1 EF presented the ARC Report to the Board arising from their meeting of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2025 April.
- 9.2 The following items, as circulated with the Board Pack, are recommended to the Board for approval:
- Related Party Transactions Policy.
  - Corporate Procurement Policy.
  - Term of Reference for the ARC.
- 9.2.1 The three Board members present indicated their approval of the policies, subject to a minor update to the Corporate Procurement Policy. Explicit approval will be sought as per 1.3 above.
- 9.2.2 EF informed the Board that the Protected Disclosures policy is currently being reviewed, and it is expected that the updated policy will be brought to the October Board meeting for consideration.
- 9.2.3 EF indicated there had been work undertaken on the risk statement and, based on reanalysis, it now consisted of eight distinct medium level risks.

## **10. Minutes of Previous Meetings.**

10.1 The draft minutes of previous Board meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> of April 2025 (the “**Previous Minutes**”) were produced to the meeting and reviewed by the Board.

10.2 Following a discussion in relation to the foregoing, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

10.2.1 The three Board members present indicated their approval of the Previous Minutes in the form produced to the meeting. Explicit approval will be sought as per 1.3 above.

10.2.2 When all Members had approved the minutes; then the Chairperson be authorised to sign the Previous Minutes in his capacity as Chairperson of the current meeting.

## **11. Matters Arising / Actions from Prior Meetings.**

11.1 Item 5 re Artificial Intelligence (AI) was discussed by the Board in response to ROC’s query - DM noted that NCRI is engaging with peer institutions in the health sector to explore current approaches and identify best practices. There will be guidance formulated as a result and it is anticipated this will be available to the team later in the year.

11.2 CMcG advised on the recently launched ‘shared’ area for the Board members and that it will continue to be populated.

## **12. AOB.**

12.1 Nil.

## **13. Executive Session.**

The Board met, without Management present, to discuss any matters deemed relevant.

### **Close.**

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed.

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**Dr Robert O’Connor**  
Chairperson

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> of October 2025.**