Business Policy Title	Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures RCPI National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC)
Policy Number *To be assigned by the Business Systems & Planning Dept*	
Approving Manager(s)	RCPI Council
Approving Committee(s)	RCPI Council
Effective Date	12th February 2021
Owner(s) *Person(s) responsible for the updating and maintenance of the policy*	NIAC Programme Manager

Purpose

The purpose of the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC, hereinafter the Committee) is:

- To provide advice to the Department of Health (DOH) on vaccines, immunisation and related health matters in the Irish context
- To develop and disseminate the National Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland
- To advocate for best immunisation practices

Governance

- Standing committee of the College
- Reports to College Council
- Provide annual report to the Annual Stated Meeting of the College
- President of the RCPI is the Chair of the Committee; on an annual basis the President delegates the chair responsibility to a College Fellow
- Registrar of the RCPI is the Secretary of the Committee; on an annual basis the President liaises with the Chair to nominate a delegate
- Any change to Committee responsibilities or membership may be brought to Council for approval
- The Committee is not a policy maker and has no regulatory function

Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Committee

- Read, understand, and follow the operating procedures of the Committee, described herein
- Attend at least 3 meetings per year
- Submit a Conflict of Interest form when appointed to the committee and on an annual basis. Activities that may be perceived as, or pose, a conflict of interest regarding a matter on the agenda, should be stated at the start of the meeting.
- Review vaccines for suitability for inclusion in the Irish vaccine schedule

- Draft advice and make recommendations to the Chief Medical Officer in the DOH about immunisation
- Update the "Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland" which provide current recommendations about immunisation and best practice for administering authorised vaccines
- Establish and delegate specific work to subcommittees and or short-term working groups as required
- Produce public statements or publications emanating from the Committee
- Disseminate key Committee outputs to their representative bodies

Responsibility of the Chair

- Appoint/demit members of the Committee
- Report to RCPI Council and Executive at the Annual Stated Meeting or on request
- Prepare an annual report of Committee activities for Council for the College Annual Stated Meeting in October of each year for the preceding calendar year
- Agree the agenda for each meeting
- Review working documentation for meetings before circulation to Committee members
- Sign minutes approved by the Committee
- Ensure that there is a quorum for decision making purposes
- Ensure each member is aware at the start of each meeting about their duties in relation to a declaration of interest
- Make the purpose of each meeting clear to members and explain the agenda at the beginning of each meeting
- Ensure the meeting runs to schedule and keep the meeting moving by putting time limits on each agenda item
- Encourage broad participation from members in discussion especially the public representatives
- End each meeting with a summary of decisions and assignments
- Review and approve key documents (e.g. meeting minutes, recommendations, statements) for publication on RCPI website

Support to the Committee
i) Responsibility of the Medical Secretaries

- Provide support to the Chair of the Committee
- Record and produce a working/briefing document following each meeting
- Draft correspondence, if required, for the Chair following meetings
- Assist in drafting reports and coordinating their drafting (in part or in whole) by others designated to do so in line with an agreed time scale

ii) Responsibility of Programme Manager

- Work with the Chair of the Committee, the Special Advisors and committee members on the programme of work under the auspices of the Committee
- Manage and support the workflow of the Committee and associated subgroups

- Coordinate meetings, prepare documentation, design templates, document outputs, version control of documentation
- Assist in drafting reports and coordinating their drafting (in part or in whole) by others designated to do so in line with an agreed time scale
- Ensure programme documentation, Guideline updates and information is disseminated to relevant colleagues and stakeholders
- Email an agenda and all documents for review to all Committee members, at least 1 week prior to a scheduled meeting
- Liaise with Recording Secretary to draft working/briefing documentation, minutes and action points
- Ensure each Committee member signs the conflict of interest form annually

Membership

Representation
Membership should include broad representation with expertise in immunisation from a range of healthcare professional bodies. Membership will also include two Special Advisors, two lay members and the RCPI Programme Manager.

Review of Membership
During their term, the Chair, on behalf of the Committee in consultation with RCPI President and CEO, will review the membership of the Committee.

Members' Term
To ensure organisation knowledge is maintained on the Committee, membership is a four-year staggered term so that every two years at least 30% of members will be newly nominated and appointed. Membership is normally once renewable in agreement with the Committee and relevant member organisation.
The following exemptions apply:
- Time served as Chair is excluded
- Four-year staggered term does not apply to the Special Advisors or Programme Manager

Chair's Term
The term of the Chair is four years, normally once renewable in agreement with President of RCPI. When a new Chair is appointed, her or his organisation should be invited to nominate another member to sit on the Committee for the term of the Chair.

Membership Nominating Organisations

Professional Body/Organisation
Faculty of Occupational Medicine, RCPI
Faculty of Paediatrics, RCPI
Faculty of Pathology, RCPI
Faculty of Public Health Medicine, RCPI
Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Infectious Disease Society of Ireland
Institute of Medicine
Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
Irish College of General Practitioners
Lay public representatives
National Immunisation Office
Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
Special Clinical Advisors
Travel Medicine Society of Ireland
Virus Reference Laboratory, UCD

Additional Membership

As the independence of the Committee in decision making must at all times be respected, the following will be in attendance, with access to Committee papers and may, as directed by the Chair, contribute to Committee discussions, but will not have voting rights.

Additional membership
DOH
HSE
Health Products Regulatory Authority
Department of Health and Social Services, Northern Ireland
Medical Secretaries (Specialist Registrars in Public Health Medicine, Infectious Diseases or Paediatrics)

Resignation

Resignation before completion of tenure will be tendered and accepted only in writing to the Chair and will allow for no less than a two-month notice period. The Chair can invite additional members to fill casual vacancies from the relevant cohort or as the need arises to ensure adequate specialist expertise is represented. Such co-opted members will advise the Committee but will not be eligible to vote.

Observers, normally those training with Committee members, may attend at the discretion of the Chair and the approval of the Committee.

Frequency of meetings

The RCPI NIAC will meet every two months. The Chair of the Committee, or President of the RCPI, may call an extraordinary meeting if required. Attendance may be in person, by video link or by teleconference.

Required Attendance - A record of attendance is maintained at every meeting and this will be published in the Committee annual report. In the event a member is not able to attend, apologies should be sent to the Committee Programme Manager in advance.

If a member of the Committee cannot attend, it is appropriate to send an alternate, with prior notice sent to the Programme Manager. Inability to attend and contribute to two consecutive meetings

may require review of membership and possible re-nomination from the relevant member organisation.

Quorum

The Committee requires the presence of 50% of the voting members plus one voting member to establish a quorum for any meeting convened for decision making purposes. Quorum should be maintained throughout the meeting.

Management of Declaration of Interest

To ensure the Committee operates in a transparent and unbiased way, all Committee members will be asked to declare any interest to the Chair in line with the RCPI Conflict of Interest Policy, September 2018. All members will complete a COI form at least annually.

Confidentiality

The deliberations of the Committee are confidential. Members of the Committee are nominated by various bodies and part of their role is to keep these professional bodies informed about developments in national immunisation recommendations. Members must not, without authority, disclose any information which has been communicated in confidence.

Indemnity

Confirmation of indemnity has been received from DOH under the appendix to General Council (GC) Report 1357.

Decision Making

Committee decisions will be made by consensus following discussion by members. In the absence of consensus, voting members will be requested to vote on the decision with the Chair having the casting vote.

Review

These Terms of Reference shall be subject to review every three years, from the date of approval of this document, by the Committee and any proposed changes submitted to RCPI Council.

Approved By:	Date
Provisional Adoption by NIAC	
Approved by [COMMITTEE TO WHICH THEY REPORT]	
Review	
Next review date	