

Appointments to the Mental Health Commission

Closing Date: 15:00 on Wednesday 31st May 2017

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
Chapter House, 26 – 30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1**

Telephone Number: 353 1 858 7441

Email: info@stateboards.ie

stateboards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that the PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, www.stateboards.ie, is the channel through which the PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

Membership of State Boards

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities. Members of State Boards, and the relevant management team, are accountable for the proper management of the organisation.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, subject to the objectives set by Government. In that regard and in accordance with 13.2 of the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, "it is advisable that no member of a State Board should serve more than two full terms of appointment or should hold appointments to more than two State Boards."

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016](#) (the Code) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

Appointments to the Mental Health Commission

Location:	Dublin
Number of Vacancies:	2
Remuneration:	€7,695 per annum. Travel and subsistence allowances may be claimed in accordance with approved public sector rates. (It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees, save for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors).

Time Requirements: There are approximately 8 half day meetings per annum. Preparation for Commission and sub-committee meetings may include reading a large volume of paperwork which is circulated in advance of meetings. Commission members are also expected to sit on one of the sub-committees or the Audit Committee of the Commission which meet at least 4 times per annum.

1. Background

The principal functions of the Mental Health Commission, established under the Mental Health Act, 2001, are to promote, encourage and foster the establishment of high standards and good practices in the delivery of mental health services and to take all reasonable steps to protect the interest of persons detained under the Mental Health Act 2001.

Under the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015, the Decision Support Service will be located within the Mental Health Commission.

The Board comprises 13 members. Under Mental Health Act, 2001, 11 of these members are to be appointed through nominations from representative bodies. These are as follows:

- Three registered medical practitioners who shall be representative of registered medical practitioners (of which two shall be consultant psychiatrists) with a special interest in or expertise in relation to the provision of mental health services;
- Two registered psychiatric nurses who shall be representatives of registered nurses whose names are entered in the division applicable to psychiatric nurses in the register of nurses maintained by the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland under section 46 of the Nurses & Midwives Act 2011;
- One social worker who shall be representative of social workers with a special interest in or expertise in relation to the provision of mental health services;
- One psychologist who shall be representative of psychologists with a special interest in or expertise in relation to the provision of mental health services;
- Three representatives of voluntary bodies who shall be representative of voluntary bodies promoting the interest of persons suffering from mental illness (at least two of whom shall be a person who is suffering from or has suffered from mental illness); and
- One representative of the HSE.

2. The Mental Health Commission

The Members of the Commission should have the skills and knowledge appropriate to the activities of the Commission to enable them to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities effectively. Commission Members should bring an independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, regulation and governance.

Role of the Commission (under Mental Health Act, 2001):

The Commission:

- shall appoint the Chief Executive and may, for stated reasons, remove him or her from office with the consent of the Minister.
- may appoint such and such number of persons to be members of the staff of the Commission as it may determine with the consent of the Minister and the Minister for Finance.
- shall from time to time appoint a consultant psychiatrist to be the Inspector of Mental Health Services
- may appoint such and such number of its staff as it considers necessary to assist the Inspector in the performance of his or her functions.
- shall from time to time appoint one or more Mental Health Tribunals to determine such matter or matters as may be referred to it by the Commission.
- shall prepare and submit to the Minister a scheme or schemes for the granting of superannuation benefits to or in respect of such members of the staff of the Commission as it may think fit.
- may, for the purpose of providing for current or capital expenditure, from time to time, borrow money...but shall not do so without the consent of the Minister and the Minister for Finance.
- shall, whenever so requested by the Minister, furnish to the Minister information in relation to such matters as he or she may specify concerning or relating to the scope of its activities, or in respect of any account prepared by the Commission
- shall, as soon as may be after its establishment, provide itself with a seal.
- shall submit estimates of income and expenditure to the Minister in such form, in respect of such periods, and at such times as may be required by him or her and shall furnish to the Minister any information which he or she may require in relation to such estimates.
- shall cause to be kept on a continuous basis proper books of account of all income and expenditure of the Commission, and of the sources of such income and the subject matter of such expenditure, and of the property, assets and liabilities of the Commission and shall keep all such special accounts as the Minister may from time to time direct.
- shall, whenever so requested by the Minister, permit any person appointed by him or her to examine the books and accounts of the Commission in respect of any financial year or other period and shall facilitate any such examination.

Much of the above work comprises overseeing the work performed by the CEO of the Mental Health Commission.

3. Person Specification

The Minister for Health invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for 2 positions on the Mental Health Commission under one of these areas:

(a) A person who has not less than ten years experience as a practising barrister or solicitor in the State ending immediately before his or her appointment to the Commission

(b) A person who must be representative of the interest of the general public

In addition to the specific professional/organisational requirements as set out in the Mental Health Act 2001, candidates must also demonstrate significant experience at an appropriately senior level of two or more of the following:

- Corporate Governance
- Financial management
- Risk Management
- Change management
- Strategy development
- Regulation
- Mental Health services knowledge/experience

Desirable

- Previous experience of Board Membership
- Evidence of an ability to work with others and build consensus with a broad range of stakeholders

4. Term of Appointment

Under the Act, appointments to the Board will be made for a period of 5 years subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Commission may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.
- A member of the Commission may resign his or her membership of the Board by notice in writing sent or given to the Minister, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives the notice.
- If the Commission fails to perform any of its functions the Minister for Health may direct it in writing to perform the function within a specified timeframe
- The roles and responsibilities of Board Members are described in the Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 which is available on the website of the Department of Finance [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#).
- A Commission member shall cease to be a member of the Board if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament.

5. Submitting your Application

Before submitting your application, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found [here](#). This questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an expression of interest - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, you should consider carefully how your background and experience fits with the specific appointment criteria set out in the Person Specification section in this booklet. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may arise if appointed to this board.

Your submission should be made via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter** (see Appendix 1 of this booklet for help with the online process).

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your application. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you do the following:

1. *Ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position(s) specified in this booklet, and*
2. *That you fully answer any supplementary questions which are presented to you as part of our online application process.*

This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to this State Board.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email info@stateboards.ie.

6. Assessment Process

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the applications received by PAS. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet;
- assess potential candidates further once they meet the specified appointment criteria by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Meeting¹/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks; and/or
 - Any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate (this may include PAS requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to the bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications).
- arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

Please note that the Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates as part of our selection process.

7. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

8. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

Should your name be forwarded to a Minister for consideration, please note that your cover letter and curriculum vitae will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant department and may be retained for up to one year.

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)

¹ The Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

APPENDIX 1

Submitting your application:

In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

1. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
2. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
3. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position you would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
4. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
5. This will bring you to a page on www.publicjobs.ie and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to create one.
6. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
7. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc.). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
8. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
9. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.