



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte  
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh

Regulating Health +  
Social Care Professionals

**Committee of Inquiry Chairperson**

**Information Booklet**

**October 2019**

An Chomhairle um Ghairmithe Sláinte agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh  
Health and Social Care Professionals Council



# Committee of Inquiry Chairperson – Information Booklet

## About CORU

CORU regulates Health & 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. It comprises the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and individual registration boards, one for each profession named in the Act.

The professions are; Clinical Biochemists, Dietitians, Dispensing Opticians and Optometrists, Medical Scientists, Occupational Therapists, Orthoptists, Podiatrists, Physiotherapists, Physical Therapists, Psychologists, Radiographers and Radiation Therapists, Social Care Workers, Social Workers, Speech and Language Therapists and Counsellors and Psychotherapists. In the future, the Minister for Health may add other professions to be regulated by CORU.

## Data Protection

CORU will process any personal data provided by you in connection with an application for this role in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Acts 2018. The data will be kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which that data are processed, and it shall be kept in a manner that ensure appropriate security of the data including the unauthorised or unlawful processing of data.

If your application is successful for this role, then your personal data will continue to be processed in accordance for the specified reason of the vacancy that you have applied to, and your data will not be held longer than is necessary. If your application is successful and you accept an offer of employment with CORU, then your personal data will continue to be processed in accordance with CORU personnel file management policy.

CORU may disclose the data that you provided on the application form to external sources for the following reasons – where there is an external assessor assisting in



the shortlisting or during interviews to the post which you have applied, and to internal and external auditors.

## **Committee of Inquiry**

The Committee of Inquiry is a statutory committee and is in place to make decisions on Fitness to Practise complaints.

## **Introduction**

As part of its statutory objective to protect the public, CORU requires a Chairperson for both Committees of Inquiry namely, Health and Conduct. The Chairperson appointments will commence at the end of February 2020. These committees make decisions on Fitness to Practise complaints, and are established under Part 6 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005 (as amended). Appointments to this committee will be up for renewal.

There will be two distinct panels of Committees:

- a. Professional Conduct Committee
- b. Health Committees

CORU now invites expressions of interest in the role of Chairperson of Committees of Inquiry. There are two positions available: one for the Professional Conduct Committee and one of the Health Committee. Both committees are Committees of Inquiry.

## **Committees of Inquiry**

When a complaint has been received by CORU, it goes to the Preliminary Proceedings Committee who looks at each complaint to decide whether:

- it should be referred onwards for resolution by mediation OR
- it should be referred for hearing to a Committee of Inquiry OR
- no further action should be taken.



If it is decided that the complaint requires further action and is not suitable for mediation or there is no consent to mediation, the complaint will go before a Committee of Inquiry. This may be a Professional Conduct Committee or a Health Committee.

The Committee of Inquiry (the Professional Conduct Committee or the Health Committee – depending on the nature of the complaint) will be made up of three people:

- one registrant from the same profession as the registrant against whom the complaint is made
- one registrant from another profession and
- one non-registrant (Chairperson)

Hearings will be similar to hearings before a Court or tribunal. In brief, at a hearing the Professional Conduct Committee or the Health Committee hears evidence from the parties to a complaint and ultimately decides, having considered the evidence, if there is an impairment to practise on the part of the registrant who has been complained about.

Professional Conduct Committee hearings are normally held in public. Health Committee hearings are normally held in private.

### **Requirements for the role of Chairperson**

The Chairperson of Committee of Inquiry will be a lay member of the committee. If you are expressing an interest in being considered for the role of Chairperson you must have:

- At least 2 years' experience sitting on a Disciplinary Committee or similar decision making body in a quasi-judicial function
- Experience of Chairing such Committees
- Have attended at least 10 meetings of a Committee of Inquiry or sat on at least 10 Committees of Inquiry or an equivalent committee
- The ability to conduct hearings in accordance with fair procedures
- The ability to explain and justify decisions in language appropriate for a broad range of interested parties



- Excellent writing skills with the ability to compose decision(s), setting out clear and concise reasons for such decision(s)

In addition, you must not be registered or ever have been registered with CORU or predecessor bodies, or hold a qualification that would allow you to apply to be on any register of the Registration Boards established by the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended).

The professions regulated and to be regulated by CORU are as follows; Social Workers, Radiographers, Radiation Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Optometrists, Dispensing Opticians, Speech and Language Therapists, Clinical Biochemists, Dietitians, Medical Scientists, Orthoptists, Physiotherapists, Podiatrists, Psychologists and Social Care Workers and Counsellors and Psychotherapists.

#### **Main responsibilities of the Chairperson:**

- Working with other Committee members to consider information and evidence presented to them as the Committee of Inquiry
- Considering allegations relating to a registrants' fitness to practise
- Demonstrating fairness and consistency in approach to complaints and applying the principles of natural justice and fair procedures
- Reaching well-reasoned and fair decisions within the parameters of Part 6 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended)
- Working effectively with others in the organisation such as members of the Executive.
- Maintain competence in Chairperson skills by attending CORU provided training, and keeping up to date with changes in processes or procedures as notified by CORU



### **The Committee of Inquiry complete the following:**

- Considering allegations of impairment of fitness to practise for individual health and social care professionals (registrants)
- Contributing to a collaborative decision making process in respect of a fitness to practise complaint about a registrant
- Considering information and evidence from a range of sources and providing clear and consistent decisions
- Attending meeting/hearings when required to proactively work with other Panel Members and CORU to ensure complaints are completed in the scheduled time
- Maintaining competence in Panel Member skills by attending training provided by CORU, and keeping up to date with changes in processes or procedures notified by CORU

### **Requirements**

#### **Skills, knowledge and abilities**

##### **Essential**

You must be able to:

- Demonstrate the importance of upholding public interest or any experience where you have contributed to Public accountability, in particular any experience of a regulatory environment
- Display the ability to make objective decisions that display sound judgement.
- Have leadership skills and experience
- Have excellent written and oral communication skills and interpersonal skills. Please show us how you meet these requirements including your ability to engage a range of stakeholders
- Manage to analyse and grasp the detail of large amounts of information
- Demonstrate strategic thinking in either your professional career or any other capacity



- Demonstrable ability of participation in quasi-judicial proceedings, tribunals or in similar situations.

### **Desirable**

- Demonstrable ability of conducting meetings and/or drafting formal reports
- Proven knowledge of the legal and/or policy context affecting delivery and development of professional practice in a health or social care setting

### **Time commitment**

The time commitment is estimated as being in the region of 10 to 15 working days each year in order to maintain competencies. This may include training days. CORU is under no obligation to provide a panel member with any guaranteed minimum number of days per annum.

Due to the specific requirements of a variable caseload, there is no guarantee of the amount of work offered to individual panel members.

A panel may be formed for Committee of Inquiry Chairperson vacancies should the need arise in the future.

### **Training**

CORU is committed to the training of Disciplinary Committee Panel Members.

If your expression of interest to become a Panel Member is successful you will receive training for this role.

Panel members must complete an induction training programme before commencing panel work, and to attend refresher training events as required by CORU. Panel Members will not receive payment from CORU for attending training.

### **Fee and expenses**

The role of panel members attracts a fee of €500 per day. If it is appropriate, half day payments may also be paid.



**Payments to Panel Members are subject to the "one person one salary" principle, as recommended by the Review Body on Higher Remuneration in the Public Sector in 1972.**

Other expenses may be claimed by Panel Members provided they are properly vouched and submitted on the appropriate Panel Members invoice.

It is acknowledged by the Panel Member that he or she is not an employee of CORU. Each Panel Member provides his or her services to CORU as an independent contractor.

To apply to become a member, please fill in the official application form available from the vacancies section of our website. Send the completed application form to [recruitment@coru.ie](mailto:recruitment@coru.ie) no later than **3pm on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019**.

For further information on CORU, please visit [www.coru.ie](http://www.coru.ie).

#### **Version Control**

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Author</b>
14/10/19	1.0	New Document	Darragh Connolly