

Appointment to the Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board Department of Justice & Equality

The Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board, established by the Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006, reviews the detention of patients detailed in the Central Mental Hospital who:

- a) are awaiting trial on criminal charges, but are currently unfit to stand trial because of their mental illness, or
- b) have been tried by a Court and, by reason of insanity, have been found not guilty of having committed a criminal offence, or
- c) were in prison on remand or having been convicted of committing an offence, and were transferred from prison, including military prison, for treatment.

In 2010, the Act was amended to give the Board power to order the discharge of patients, subject to enforceable conditions.

The offences, or alleged offences, committed by these patients come within the most serious category of crimes. When reviewing the detention of these patients, the Board has to balance the risk of future violence on the part of the patient both to themselves and others, with their right to liberty, taking account of their illness, insight into their illness and their compliance with treatment.

Patients reviewed by the Board suffer from a wide variety of mental disorders. Mental disorder under the Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006 covers a wide spectrum of conditions that is included in the Mental Health Act 2001. Patients are legally represented before the Board.

Having regard to the mental and criminal history of patients, the Board has to decide whether or not it is in their best interest and in the public interest, that a patient should be unconditionally discharged, discharged subject to enforceable conditions, returned to prison or whether they should continue to be detained in the Central Mental Hospital for further treatment.

A link to the Current Annual Report can be accessed on the Department's website www.justice.ie

Current Board Membership

Mr. Justice Iarfhlaith O'Neill - Chairperson

Dr. Michael Mulcahy – Member

Ms. Nora McGarry – Member

Dr. Elizabeth Walsh – Member

Vacancy Details

The Board, which comprises 3 members and a Chairperson, is required to have at least one approved medical officer. (paragraph 1, Schedule 1 Criminal Law (Insanity) Act, 2006);

Approved medical officer is defined as a consultant psychiatrist by Section 1 of the Act.

The current approved medical officer will be resigning from his position on the Board in the coming months and a replacement Consultant Psychiatrist will be required. Members serve in a part-time capacity. The term of appointment is for five years. Members may be re-appointed by the Minister

for another term in accordance with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards; <http://www.per.gov.ie/en/appointments-to-state-boards>.

Skills Desired/Essential Criteria

Expressions of interest in serving as a member are sought from suitable persons with professional qualifications, competence, experience and a genuine interest in this area.

Candidates must be of good character and will be subject to Garda vetting prior to appointment.

The ideal candidates will have knowledge, understanding, expertise, and experience of the criminal justice system, understanding and empathy for victims and the impact of crime on them, and have an interest and preferably some experience of forensic psychiatry. Candidates must possess knowledge of the societal issues impacting on the criminal justice environment.

Candidates will be required to contribute effectively to the work of the Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board. This will involve the ability to collaborate and work effectively and cohesively as a member of the Board.

Candidates should possess:

- Excellent judgement, analytical skills and influencing skills;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- Proven capacity for independent assessment of complex issues and decision-making;
- The ability to make a balanced and reasonable assessment of the risk involved and the factors taken into account;
- Good levels of self confidence.

Confidentiality at all times is a key requirement. Suitable candidates must be discreet in managing highly sensitive, personal, and confidential information.

Candidates must also be adaptable and flexible. Members of the Board are required to devote two to four days per month and may be required for more depending on the number of interviews to be carried out.

Candidates are asked to submit a comprehensive Curriculum Vitae along with a covering letter (no more than two pages) outlining your achievements and experience, and the relevance of your expertise to the work of the Board.

Selection will be based on an examination of the applications received, shortlisting if necessary, followed by an interview. The most suitable applicants in order of merit will then be placed before the Minister for Justice and Equality for her approval consideration.

Orientation will be provided to new Board member.

Applicants must be an 'approved medical officer' This is defined as a consultant psychiatrist by Section 1 of the Criminal Law (Insanity) Act, 2006.

Application & Assessment Process

Expressions of Interest to include a cover note and Curriculum Vitae outlining relevant experience should be emailed for the attention of Human Resources, Department of Justice & Equality to recruit@justice.ie by **5pm on Thursday 24th November 2016**. Please ensure that “Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board” is referenced in the subject line.

Completed EOIs will be examined by an assessment panel which may include:

1. The outgoing approved Medical Officer
2. A representative of the Department of Justice & Equality
3. An Independent person

Selection will be based on an examination of the applications received, shortlisting if necessary, followed by interview anticipated to take place 15th December 2016. The most suitable applicants in order of merit will then be placed before the Minister for Justice & Equality for approval.

You will be contacted once the Minister has made her final decision.

Candidates who are found to be suitable but who are not offered an initial place may be contacted at a later stage should further vacancies arise.

In considering applications due regard will be given to Government policy on gender balance on State Boards.