

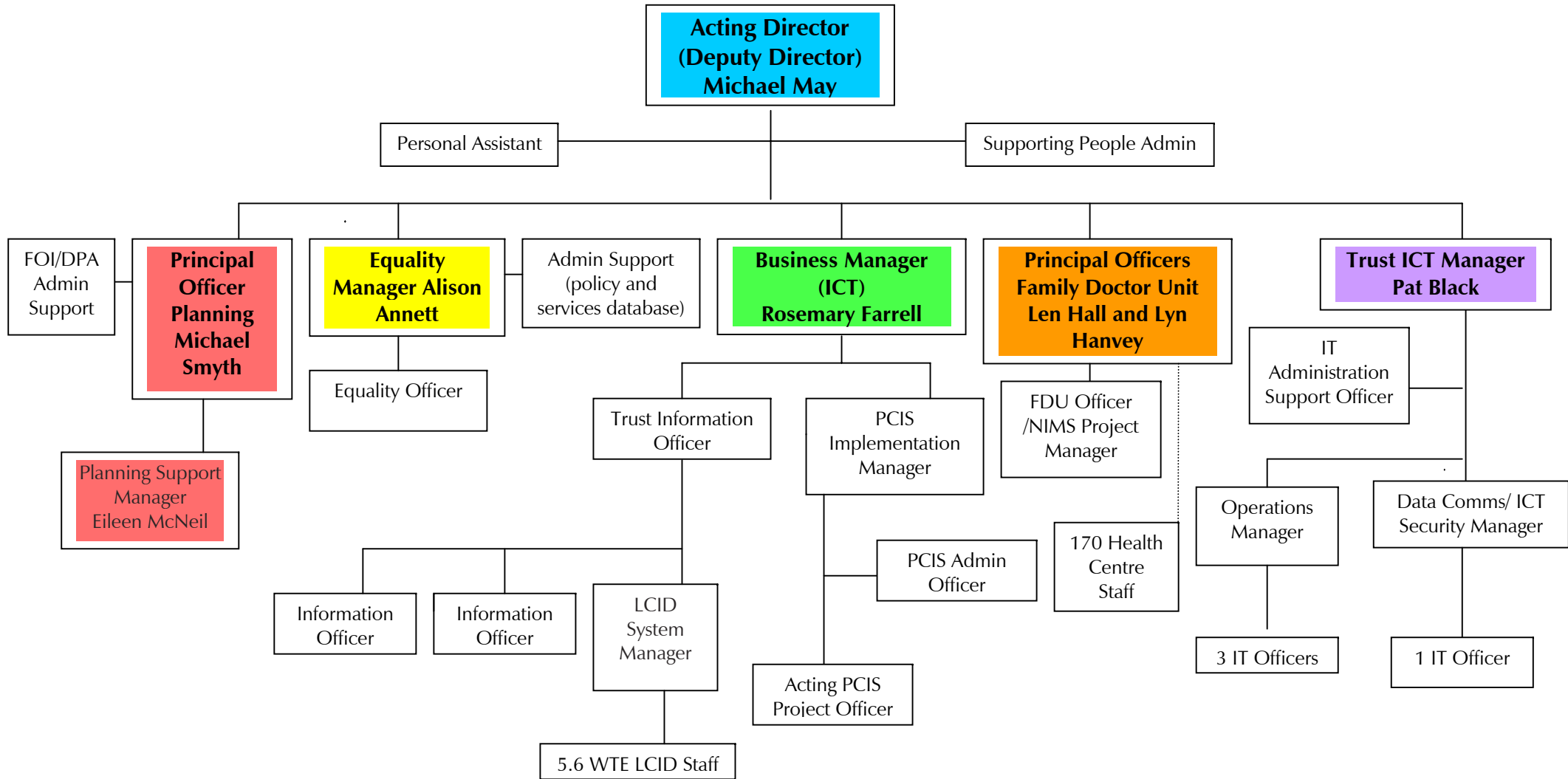


Planning and Information Directorate

Information Pack

December 2005

Planning and Information Directorate



Function and scope

The Planning and Information Directorate employs 194 staff in its various departments. Of this total, 170 staff are employed as health centre managers and receptionists.

The Directorate is responsible for providing and supporting a range of corporate functions, including the following.

Planning

The strategic planning function of the Directorate involves developing and monitoring the implementation of the Trust Delivery Plan (TDP). It is proposed that in 2006/07 a corporate plan is produced as in previous years to facilitate the more effective sharing of information on corporate as well as directorate objectives.

The Directorate also supports the strategic planning processes within the Trust and is currently leading in the development of a plan for services for older people. This has included the coordination of an extensive consultation process.

In addition, the Directorate facilitates and supports the development of new services across a full range of Trust activity.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

We provide direct support in delivering and maintaining ICT infrastructure, activity and services that are essential to enable the Trust to carry out its business.

We assess requirements, draw up specifications and, as appropriate, procure, install, maintain and manage all ICT hardware and software services throughout more than 100 Trust facilities. Twenty seven of these are now connected to the Homefirst Broadband data communications network.

We develop software and systems to facilitate efficient and effective information gathering and processing at emergency incidents. The software approach developed by Homefirst ICT staff has now been recognised by the Police Service of Northern Ireland as the most suitable method available for emergency response. The police are actively pursuing implementation of this approach.

Historically, ICT activity was in support of care staff and functions including human resources and finance but, for some time, the ICT department has been involved in the provision of ICT for service users, for example, Rehabilitation and Telehealthcare (Dentistry).

The ICT department activity includes the following.

- 1,200 email users and 600 internet access sites.

- 2,650 PCs and 350 laptops.
- Approximately 10,000 calls serviced each year.
- Approximately 1,000 SOS CARE, Finance and HR systems that were all been successfully migrated to new consolidated servers in September 2005.

We are in the process of installing new high performance server technology at The Cottage, which will provide:

- collaboration tools including integrated email and calendaring/diary management;
- the potential for expanding new systems and performance enhancement for existing system; and
- a higher level of resilience and recovery in the event of contingency or disaster situations.

Information

The Information Department coordinates and collates queries and reports on Trust activity to DHSSPS, NHSSB and Trust Board.

The LCID information system for nursing and other services is also managed within the Department.

The Person Centred-community Information System (PCIS) is a multi million pound regional initiative, which will create an information infrastructure for the Trust and support person-centred integrated care.

The expected benefits of PCIS are as follows.

- Reduced duplication between systems.
- Reduced professional time spent on administration.
- Improved quality of patient care.
- Flexible easy to use systems.
- Easier sharing of information across professional disciplines.
- More efficient use of staff resources.

The key issues in PCIS are:

- the development and implementation of person-centered electronic health records; and
- delivering new technology and changing the way people work.

It is anticipated that PCIS will be implemented in 2007.

Service and budget agreement processes

We are responsible for managing service and budget agreements with other Trusts and Boards, and voluntary and private providers of services to the Trust. The value of service and budget agreements ranges from a few thousand pounds to those in excess of one million pounds per annum.

Staff in the Service and Budget Agreement Department are responsible for the entire agreement process. We work with other staff in the Trust and the Regional Supplies Service in developing specifications for the purposes of tendering services and engage in activity to identify the most appropriate supplier, throughout the full tendering and selection process. We then organise the preparation and signing of appropriate service and budget agreements. Thereafter, we organise six monthly and annual reviews at which the quality of services are measured and problem areas are identified and resolved.

We are also responsible for the receipt of invoices and for making payments, generally on a monthly basis, to each organisation. We also make sure that organisations comply with our requirements regarding insurance, health and safety regulations, complaints procedure, etc.

We are also responsible for agreements with residential and nursing homes in terms of core standards and funding.

These are multi-million pound aspects of the Trust business and are areas in which problems frequently arise. For example, there are increasing difficulties over the maintenance of tariff rate payments to residential and nursing homes and these areas, if not resolved at a regional area, are likely to create massive cost pressures for the Trust or lead to a reduction in services delivered, in breach of our indicative volumes with the Northern Health and Social Services Board.

Equality, Human Rights and Disability Discrimination compliance

The above legislation places a statutory duty on the Trust to require and encourage fairness towards service users and our staff and to ensure respect for their rights. The Equality Unit is responsible for completing the Trust's annual Section 75 progress report for the Equality Commission. This includes outlining evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets. The Equality Unit coordinates the implementation of the legislation by the following methods.

- Providing advice and support with regard to the implementation of the above legislation, including the screening and consultation of Trust policies.
- Working collaboratively with local communities to improve access to our services.
- Developing and maintaining a database of all Trust policies and procedures.

- Regularly assessing training needs and delivering training in diversity awareness, human rights, user involvement and disability awareness.
- Managing requests for interpreting and translation to ensure the use of professionally trained interpreters and the coordination of costs.
- Supporting the Trust's Equality and Social Inclusion Group, DDA sub-group and Disability Consultation Panel.

Freedom of Information and Data Protection compliance

The above legislation conveys legal rights on individuals and organisations to allow them to access information, which the Trust holds about them specifically, and all other information held by the Trust (as long as it does not relate to another named individual). This means that we have to have sound and responsive processes in place to enable us to process applications efficiently, comprehensively and speedily, in line with legislative requirements.

The Trust receives approximately 25 Freedom of Information requests per year along with approximately 150 formal Data Protection Act requests. Many of the applications are complex and require the retrieval, redaction and release of voluminous material.

Many more informal requests are received and addressed through normal business. In a number of other cases applicants are referred to our publication scheme as a means of accessing the information they are seeking.

A number of applications are sensitive, particularly those which have involved child abuse or mental health detentions. Staff in the Department undertake the responsibility for supporting, advising and assisting applicants through the access process in line with legislative requirements and best practice guidelines.

The volume and complexity of requests are increasing, as are the numbers that have the potential to result in litigation.

Family Doctor Unit

The Family Doctor Unit provides support to general practitioners occupying Trust-owned premises to make sure that they have a high standard of administrative and technical support, which includes the following.

- Carrying out licence agreement reviews, negotiating with general practitioners the financial, staffing, equipment and accommodation arrangements and amending the agreements when required.
- Participating in the proposal, execution and commissioning stages of capital and maintenance projects.

- Providing advice on telephone facilities in conjunction with the Estates Telecommunications Officer in order to improve services where possible.
- Co-ordinating the allocation of accommodation within health centres to maximise usage following regular consultation with appropriate Directors and general practitioners.
- Managing relevant administrative and clerical staff and liaising with Directors on common staffing issues related to the smooth running of health and community care centres.

The Family Doctor Unit negotiates lease arrangements with general practitioners for Trust staff working in privately owned premises.

In addition the Family Doctor Unit manages the provision of the out-of-hours key-holding security of trust premises.

Supporting People

The Directorate manages and coordinates the Trust's involvement in developing appropriate accommodation and related support services through the Northern Area Supporting People Partnership. This includes coordinating, as appropriate, new developments and selecting housing support and care providers for supported living schemes.

Service modernisation and quality

This year we have sought improvement in the following areas.

Information Services

- Improving the quality and timeliness of LCID data by making LCID Millennium available to services including nursing and allied health professionals so that staff can input directly on to the system.
- Investigating the options for improving information available in relation to operational services.

PCIS

- The implementation of PCIS will provide a single record for service users to support multidisciplinary team working and enable care delivery to be more accessible.
- Consider options for the roll out of our call management model.

ICT

- Establishment of a new helpdesk system that will provide more effective and efficient reporting and management of ICT problems and faults.
- Enhance and make available computerised file storage and recovery services.
- Installation of a new mail server, which has the capability to offer better groupware facilities for email.
- Improvement of “spam” management for email.
- Improved internet scanning and monitoring for virus, Trojan, spy-ware and other non-business related file types including screensavers, music files.
- Leading the research, development and implementation of technologies for care delivery and business support. This will improve the quality of service in a number of areas including basic ICT for professionals, tele-dentistry and enhancing the technology infrastructure.

Equality

- Development of service database to improve the information we provide for our service users. The database has been designed so that it can be accessed via our internet and intranet site.

- Implementation of the Trust's User Involvement Strategy to make staff and service users aware of our commitment to involving service users in the development and monitoring of the quality of our service.
- Compilation of a library and database of all Trust policies and documents to make sure that all Trust staff can have easy access to all the policies they must adhere to. The information recorded on the database reflects the documents detailed in our Publication Scheme and is therefore integral to the accuracy of our Scheme. The development and maintenance of this database makes sure the Trust can discharge its responsibilities under governance, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The review and implementation of an amended equality training programme to reflect the increasing diversity of our staff and the communities we serve.
- The development of a Cultural Awareness Guide for staff to raise awareness of racial equality issues.
- To make interpreting and translation more accessible to staff.

Freedom of Information

- Since the full introduction of the Freedom of Information Act on 1 January 2005, the Trust has a legal duty to respond to all requests for information in a timely and appropriate manner. We have committed resources to this work from existing funding to enable the Trust to meet its statutory duties. We have established an efficient system to deal with all requests and through this work we are able to demonstrate openness and transparency. In time, we will be able to share more detailed evidence of our decision making processes and the fairness and consistency with which we operate.

Family Doctor Unit

- Introduction of a 'bank' receptionist service for health centres to provide a skilled back-up relief service to practices for the provision of receptionist cover within the Trust's area.

Risk

The Planning and Information Directorate has identified a number of risks categorised as follows.

Amber – these are major risks and are included in the Directorate and Trust risk register


- Computer suite failure
- Data communications failure
- Destructive code attack – virus, Trojan, etc
- Inadequate ICT resourcing
- Failure of operational ICT systems
- Security concern – rear entrance doors at The Cottage

Yellow - these are moderate risks and are included in the Directorate risk register

- Email system failure.
- HPSS (DIS managed) Internet Access Failure (affecting Web browsing and email to/from non HPSS organisations).
- Litigation, financial risk and negative publicity associated with non-compliance Section 75 of NI Act, Human Rights Act and Disability Discrimination Act.

Green – these are low level or minor risks which are regularly monitored

- Lack of availability of funding for remedial works within health centres.
- Inability to recruit and retain posts within medical practices.
- Inability to produce a business case to support an upgrade of Whiteabbey Health Centre.
- Failure to prepare Trust adequately for implementation of the Health and Care Number resulting in Trust's inability to comply with government ICT modernisation agenda, and therefore not being able to properly share information.

- Business continuity threatened by staff absence, illness or resignation or information systems failure.
 - Failure to produce the Trust ICT Strategy, leading to lack of planning and direction in the identification of resource requirements, management controls and implementation of ICT in the Trust.
 - Financial risk of underpayments, overpayments or non-payment, to independent sector provider organisations.
 - Failure to conclude all service and budget agreements resulting in an absence of formal agreements with service providers, which identify standards, funding and activity, levels.
 - Failure to take appropriate actions in respect of the 'Supporting People' initiative resulting in loss of income, lack of monitoring of standards and lack of planned development of supported living services.
 - Delay in the PCIS procurement process.
 - Costs associated with implementing network connections across such a large Trust, with such a substantial rural element.
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Planning and Information Directorate budget

Department	Salaries and wages	Goods and services	Total
Equality Unit	69,095	9,388	78,483
Family Doctor Unit	89,625	8,832	98,457
Information Services	110,591	6,084	116,675
PCIS	92,903	-	92,903
I.C.T. Dept	177,718	104,241	281,959
LCID	97,136	9,636	106,772
Management	195,694	-	195,694
Health Centres	464,511	393,123	857,634
Planning	99,770	11,241	111,011
Total	1,397,043	542,545	1,939,588

We trust that this information pack provides you with a summary of the functions, key responsibilities, quality initiatives and risk within the Planning and Information Directorate. If you would like further details on any aspect of the work of the Directorate, please do not hesitate to contact the responsible manager – contact details are listed overleaf.

Department Heads and contact details

Function	Contact details
Planning Supporting People Service development	Mr Michael May Phone: 2563 3757 Email: michael.may@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	Mr Pat Black Phone: 2563 3724 Email: ict.manager@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk
Information	Mrs Rosemary Farrell Phone: 2564 7945 Email: rosemary.farrell@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk
Service and budget agreements Freedom of Information Data Protection	Mr Michael Smyth Phone: 2563 3739 Email: michael.smyth@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk
Equality, Human Rights and Disability Discrimination	Ms Alison Annett Phone: 2563 3795 Email: alison.annett@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk
Family Doctor Unit	Mr Len Hall Phone: 2563 3737 Email: len.hall@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk