



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust

**Strategic Response to
the Comprehensive
Spending Review
2008-2011
An Equality Impact
Assessment**

**RESPONSE TO STAGE 1 CONSULTATION FROM
24.10.08 TO 19.12.08**

January, 2009

Contents

Introduction	3
Consultation	4
Summary of Responses	4
Further Consultation	9
Appendices	11

1. Introduction

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust recently published its vision for the future of health and care services across the Trust area. *Modernising Health and Social Care Services*, outlines the measures needed to develop services in a way that will meet the needs of people living in the Trust area.

The document included proposals for developing or enhancing existing services or restructuring to make more effective use of current resources. This will mean finding new ways of working to realise savings that can be redirected towards service delivery.

At the same time, the Trust completed an overarching Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the proposals in fulfilment of the commitments under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and as outlined in our Equality Scheme.

The Trust embarked on a comprehensive process of engagement on this EQIA as an early step in the Trust's overall plans for internal and external engagement.

In keeping with the Trust's commitments in its Equality Scheme the Trust subjected the proposals outlined in the overarching EQIA to equality screening (in line with the Equality Commission for NI Guidelines). The outcomes of this screening exercise were set out in Section 5 of the EQIA report.

From 24 October until 19 December 2008, the Trust sought views on to outcome of this screening exercise.

2. CONSULTATION

All those listed in the Trust's Consultation Database were sent a copy of a document entitled *“Modernising Health and Social Care Services – The future of health and Social Care Services in the Northern Trust. Consultees also received a letter informing them that the Trust's “Response to the Comprehensive Spending Review – An Equality Impact Assessment” was available on the Trust's website and intranet site (a computer network available within the Trust).*

During the consultation period the Trust also:

- Sent a letter to all staff;
- Held meetings with staff;

- Held meetings with representative groups, local councils and political parties;
- Held specific meetings with affected service users; and
- Responded to several Assembly Questions and media enquiries.

(See appendix 1 for full list of all meetings held)

All feedback will be considered by the Trust before any final decisions are made.

3. Summary of Responses

A total of 50 written responses were received. (See appendix 2 for list of all those who responded)

The majority of responses received provided detailed feedback or views on one or more of the specific proposals. These will be considered during the second stage of consultation when these specific comments will be relevant as we look at the individual proposals and potential impacts.

Feedback received on the Overarching EQIA and Stage 1 Consultation Process

The following sets out a summary of responses received during the first stage of consultation where the respondent commented on the overarching EQIA or overall approach to the proposals and consultation plans.

Accessing Documents

During the first week that the consultation document was available on the Trust's website, a number of telephone calls were received from members of the public who were encountering difficulties in accessing the document. Comments were also made regarding inaccessibility of the questionnaire.

Trust response: As a direct result of these comments the Trust posted a copy of the consultation document along with a separate copy of the response questionnaire onto the home page of the Northern Trust website. All consultation documents for second stage consultation will be available on the Trusts Website.

Disability Action

Disability Action welcomed the Trust's proposals to carry out further detailed equality screening and individual EQIA Consultations on relevant proposals to determine any equality implications for those directly affected. Disability Action would also support the view of the Trust that the EQIA consultations

would be included as an integral part of the consultation and engagement process on the Trusts Comprehensive Spending Review proposals. Disability Action looks forward to responding to relevant EQIA consultations when the process commences in January 2009.

Disability Action welcomed the decision by the Trust to undertake full EQIAs in relation to these proposals 4, 7-16, and 18-20 as it believes that these proposals may impact on people with disabilities and looks forward to responding to EQIA Consultations relating to these particular proposals.

Disability Action made no further comment on Proposal 5 – Picture Archiving and Communications Systems; Proposal 6 – Pharmaceutical Efficiencies as they are unlikely to significantly impact on the day to day services delivered to communities of interest including people with disabilities. However they recommended the Trust follow the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's guidelines in relation to procurement ensuring that any impact on communities of interest including people with disabilities are Equality Screened and consulted on.

Disability Action recommended a full EQIA on the following proposals due to the impact they may have on staff with disabilities.

- Proposal 1 – Promotion of Staff Health and Managing Sickness Absence
- Proposal 2 – Overtime and Agency Costs
- Proposal 3 – Improve Skills Mix
- Proposal 17 - Women's and Children's Directorate: Reconfiguration of Services

Royal College of Nursing

Royal College of Nursing (RCN) are satisfied that the overarching EQIA has identified the overall key drivers for change and NHSCT is committed to mitigate any potential adverse effects as a consequence of implementing the CSR proposals. RCN notes that consultations on detailed EQIAs are likely to provide more detailed and specific information. At this stage of the consultation process, a more objective assessment will be made on the equality impact of these proposals.

RCN are generally supportive of the broad direction of travel for developing future modern health and care services across the Northern Health and Social

Care Trust as set out in the Engagement and Consultation document:
Modernising Health and Social Care Services.

UNISON

The 'overarching EQIA' is focused on the impact of the CSR 3% efficiency programme. The Trust should note that UNISON in evidence to the Health Services Committee of the Assembly has demanded the exemption of Health from the CSR process because of the visible impact on frontline services.

UNISON has specific concerns regarding the consultation process as follows:

The experience was of confused and pressured decision-making in an environment where practice lacked explanation, and there had been no systematic pre-training for participants. In addition, workshop recommendations were amended by the Trust SMT in a process behind closed doors.

The CSR proposals themselves are still not robust:

- *The Minister has indicated general consultation up to March 2009, and his intention to veto some items published by Trusts including HSCT*
- *There is no capital programme announcement at the time of writing*
- *Proposals for the use of the independent sector are for the use of a sector in crisis*

The Trust quotes the published and generally accepted screening criteria of the Equality Commission. It then adds criteria of absence of unlawful discrimination and proportionality. There is no evidence for source and authority for these additional criteria. In the view of UNISON, they weaken the authoritative Equality Commission screening criteria. For example, the Trust agrees that there is a range of adverse impacts (page 64), but then mitigates by avoidance of unlawful discriminations, which is not in itself an adequate mitigation factor in working with S75.

The analysis is over reliant on a widely criticised EQIA of the Programme for Government, which marginalised health priorities and needs. It also fails to grasp the impact of under funding in the acute sector (17%) and primary/community sector (35%) – both figures confirmed by DHSSPS in dialogue with Trade Unions.

The approach to Human Rights is limited to ECHR rights only, and fails to take account of international socio-economic rights which are included in current policy development for NI and GB Bill of Rights initiatives. Crucially, there is no assessment against the right to Health.

Qualitative consultation where it appears is essentially quantitative. This misses the point: qualitative consultation is essentially about dialogue, either to strengthen the evidence base, or develop understanding in its absence. Sustained qualitative consultation with affected groups has clearly not taken place to date.

There are frequent references to mitigation, but none effectively to alternative policy, which is the clear alternative to mitigation identified in Equality Commission Guidance.

Service Development and its intentions are not clearly distinguished from economics under CSR.

In taking forward indicated EQIAs for CSR and Service Development proposals, the Trust must confirm that it will take on board the issues raised at points 2-9.1 as part of equality practice.

Where 'Complete Detailed Screening report' is indicated, the content of paragraph 10 also must apply. UNISON will expect specific written consultation, and the opportunity for dialogue, on all such proposals in the text. The Trust needs to establish a specific communications protocol with UNISON for the processes in this and the above paragraph.

There is a general lack of validity in items being screened out for the reasons demonstrated at paragraphs 2-11 above.

UNISON would contest the screening out of the following CSR items:

- *Promotion of Staff Health and Managing Sickness Absence*
- *Overtime and Agency Costs*

Prejudice and discrimination make people ill, and the evidence base for this is clear and consistent. The work of Richard Wilkinson and Michael Marmot demonstrates the regressive impact of social and economic inequality on health starters and outcomes. So practice in the Trust interacts with known inequality and inequality outcomes which contribute to ill health. Screening in Absence Management will benefit the Trust and its workforce.

Overtime, Agency Costs, Temporary Contracts, Freeze on recruitment:

- *There is no analysis of overtime reductions*
- *There is no consideration of the forthcoming Agency Workers Directive, or the legal status of temporary workers employed for over one year*
- *There is no quantitative analysis against the 9 grounds*

'The Complete Detailed Screening Report' recommendations for Improved Skills Mix and Women's and Children's Service Reconfiguration are a useful opportunity for the Trust to develop real and qualitative consultation in screening, including UNISON. Its approach to qualitative consultation on request in this EQIA is clearly inappropriate.

UNISON has demonstrated in detail both the general methodological flaws in the Trust's approach, and the specific weaknesses in the screening out of CSR items. The Trust must therefore reconsider its approach and recommendations on these issues.

For the avoidance of doubt, the consultee here is UNISON in its own right, not as part of Staff Side. Direct consultation with UNISON must therefore be the model for the future.

Trust Response on Views Expressed to Date

Trust Board will considered this feedback in February 2009. A decision report will be published on the Trust's website.

4. Consultation on detailed Equality Impact Assessments

The Trust wishes to consult widely from 8 January 2009 until 6 March 2009 on the findings of its detailed Equality Impact Assessments. These have now been completed and have been published in seven separate documents entitled:

- Reconfiguration of Acute Hospital Services
- Reform and Modernisation of Children's Services
- Traffic Management at Northern Health and Social Care Trust
- Reprovision of the Trust's Residential Homes
- Reconfiguration of Domiciliary Care Services
- Reform and Modernisation of Mental Health Services
- Reform and Modernisation of Learning Disability Services

Four locality public meetings will be held as follows:- (The Trust's Senior Management Team will be available to provide more information and answer any queries.)

Date and Time	Areas Covered	Venue
Monday 2 February 2009 at 7.00 pm	Coleraine, Ballymoney and Moyle	Lecture Theatre, Causeway Hospital
Tuesday 3 February	Carrickfergus, Larne and	Carrick Room,

2009 at 7.00 pm	Newtownabbey	Clarion Hotel, 75 Belfast Road, Carrickfergus
Monday 9 February 2009 at 7.00 pm	Antrim and Ballymena	Antrim Day Centre, Station Road, Antrim
Tuesday 10 February 2009 at 7.00 pm	Cookstown and Magherafelt	Cookstown Adult Centre Westland Road, Cookstown

The Chief Executive will inform staff of the consultation process at her annual staff briefings to be held as follows:-

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday 8 January	2.00 pm	McNeill Theatre, Larne Leisure Centre, Larne
Friday 9 January	10.00am	Dodds Room, Town Hall, Carrickfergus
Friday 9 January	Noon	Boardroom, McCaughey House, Whiteabbey Hospital, Newtownabbey
Tuesday 13 January	2.00 pm	Ward 4, Mid Ulster Hospital, Magherafelt
Tuesday 13 January	3.30 pm	Dining Room, Cookstown Adult Centre, Westland Road, Cookstown
Friday 23 January	10.00am	Antrim Day Centre, Station Road, Antrim
Friday 23 January	Noon	Conference Room 1, Training Centre, Braid Valley Hospital, Ballymena
Monday 26 January	Noon	Training Room, Dalriada Hospital, Coleraine Road, Ballycastle
Monday 26 January	3.30 pm	Lecture Theatre, Causeway Hospital, Coleraine
Thursday 5 February	3.00 pm	Bill Tweed Room, Robinson Hospital, Ballymoney

All enquiries regarding this consultation process should be directed to

Alison Annett
Head of Equality
Route Complex
8e Coleraine Road
Ballymoney
Co Antrim
BT53 6BP

Tel: 028 2766 1377
Fax: 028 2766 1209
Textphone: 028 2766 1377
E-mail:
alison.annett@northerntrust.hscni.net

Appendix 1

September, 2008

- Staff briefing – Antrim Area Hospital
- Meetings with Belfast Trust
- Meeting with Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
- Meeting with Staffside

October, 2008

- Chief Executive wrote to all staff
- Monthly meeting with Staffside
- Consultation letter sent to all Trust Consultees
- Consultation documents posts on Trust website
- Meeting with Whiteabbey Council
- Communication by Extern to staff in Linden
- Meetings with Managers – Residential Homes
- Four meetings with Domiciliary Care Staff
- Letters to GPs in Whiteabbey and Mid-Ulster
- Meeting with GP Forum
- Staff briefing – Causeway Hospital
- Staff briefing – Mid-Ulster Hospital

November, 2008

- Meeting with Ballymena Council
- Meeting with SDLP

- Meeting with Coleraine Borough Council
- Meeting with D Ford, MLA
- Meeting with Stakeholders (Ballycastle)
- Meeting with Staff – Learning Disability
- Meeting with User Committee – Learning Disability

December, 2008

- Northern News – 2 pages re: CSR proposals
- Meeting with Northern Health and Social Services Council
- Meeting with Sinn Fein
- Meeting with Larne Council
- Meeting with Disability Consultation Panel
- Meeting with Cookstown Council
- Meeting with Antrim Council
- Meeting with Alliance Party
- Meeting with Carrickfergus Council
- Monthly Meeting with Staffside
- One to One meetings with clients at Broadways
- Broadways parents and carers consultation
- Memo to Managers in Residential Homes
- Meeting with Managers at Holywell
- Meeting with Clinicians
- Meeting with GPs and Primary Care

Appendix 2

Responses to consultation

Members of the Public

L McGarvey, Maghera
E Conlon, Maghera
M McAlary, Maghera
M McGarvey
T McQuiston, Greenisland
C Glendinning, Cookstown
M Gordon, Carrickfergus
M Davis, Ballymena
A Junkin
P Casey, Antrim
S Harrington, Antrim
D Privett, Antrim
C Knox, Magherafelt
S Chan, Cookstown
Dr S Houston, Senior Lecturer, QUB

Public Representatives

Rev Dr William McCrea MP MLA
Alastair Ross, MLA
Roy Beggs, MLA
Francis Molloy, MLA
Magherafelt District Council
Larne Borough Council
Coleraine Borough Council
Ballymena Borough Council

Professional Bodies

Royal College of Nursing

Other Bodies/Voluntary Groups

F Burke, Principal, Rostulla School
L McCuddy, Chief Executive, Extern
Portballintrae Residents Association
Disability Action
Unison
RNIB NI Coleraine
Autism NI, Mid-Ulster Branch

Staff

Children's Disability Team, Carrickfergus
Social Work Staff, Larne
Staff at Princess Gardens
Staff at Cherry Lodge
Children with Disabilities Team, Magherafelt & Cookstown
Children's Disability Service
Home Care and Allocations Officers
Staff at Greenisland House
Children's Disability Team, Coleraine
Consultant Physicians at Mid-Ulster Hospital
Social Work Team, Newtownabbey
Staff from Clonmore House

Other

One anonymous response