



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Health

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday, 11 November 2021

Meeting Location: virtual meeting

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Colm Gildernew MLA (Chairperson)

Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Alan Chambers MLA

Deborah Erskine MLA

Órlaithí Flynn MLA

Colin McGrath MLA

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

Apologies:

Gerry Carroll MLA

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Keith McBride (Clerk)

Roisin Donnelly (Assistant Clerk)

Deirdre Farry (Assistant Clerk)



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Brendan Miskelly (Clerical Supervisor)

Ellen Wilson (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 9.03 am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

The Chairperson advised Members that Gerry Carroll MLA was on paternity leave and recorded the best wishes of the Committee to Mr Carroll and his family.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 5.

2. Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill – Evidence from Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Public Health Agency

The following officials from the Belfast HSC Trust and the Public Health Agency joined the meeting by video-conference at 9.04 am:

Janet Johnson, Interim Director for Anaesthetics, Critical Care, Theatres and Sterile Services, Belfast HSC Trust;

Dr Dominic Trainor, Clinical Lead for Organ Donation, Belfast HSC Trust;

Stephen Wilson, Director of Operations, Public Health Agency;

Dr Catherine Millman, Health Intelligence Manager, Public Health Agency; and

Catherine McKeown, Organ Donation Promotion Manager, Public Health Agency.



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The officials briefed the Committee on the Organ and Tissue (Deemed Consent) Bill.
A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

**3. Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill – Evidence from
Donate4Dáithí Campaign, British Heart Foundation and Kidney Care UK**

The following representatives from Donate4Dáithí, the British Heart Foundation and Kidney Care UK joined the meeting by video-conference at 10.07 am:

Máirtín McGabhann, Donate4Dáithí Campaign;

Fearghal McKinney, Head of British Heart Foundation, Northern Ireland; and

Fiona Loud, Policy Director, Kidney Care UK.

The representatives briefed the Committee on the Organ and Tissue (Deemed Consent) Bill.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

The meeting was suspended at 10:50 am and resumed at 11:26 am.



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4. Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill – Evidence from NHS Blood and Transplant

The following representatives from NHS Blood and Transplant joined the meeting by video-conference at 11.26 am:

Anthony Clarkson, Director for Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation;
Dr Dale Gardiner, Associate Medical Director for Deceased Organ Donation; and
Phil Walton, Legislation Lead.

The representatives briefed the Committee on the Organ and Tissue (Deemed Consent) Bill.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

The Committee returned to agenda item 2.

5. Chairperson's Business

- i. The Chairperson referred to the compulsory vaccination of healthcare workers in England.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask what consideration the Minister of Health has given to this issue.

- ii. The Chairperson referred to the increase in COVID-19 cases and the pressures this was causing to the health care system and advised that this



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matter would be raised at the next briefing session with the Health Minister and Chief Medical Officer.

- iii. The Chairperson advised that the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill passed second stage in the Assembly on 9 November and that the Committee would engage with the Education Committee on this Bill.

6. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 4 and 9 November 2021.

7. Matters Arising

Alan Chambers MLA raised the Neurology briefing session the Committee held with the General Medical Council (GMC) at the meeting on 4 November 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the GMC whether it has requested that changes are made to the Medical Act 1983 relating to the misuse of the voluntary erasure process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the GMC to provide it with Michael Watt's most recent revalidation report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek clarification from the Department of Health regarding responsibility for appraisals.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk would explore the Committee's options in relation to making legislative change in this area.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Professional Standards Authority to seek their views on the Medical Practitioners Tribunal's



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determination relating to the application for voluntary erasure from the Medical Register in the case of Michael Watt.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a copy of the Verita Report in relation to Michael Watt.

8. LCM: Westminster Health and Social Care Bill – consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered a draft report on its consideration of three Legislative Consent Memorandums relating to the Westminster Health and Social Care Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report on its consideration of three Legislative Consent Memorandums on the Westminster Health and Social Care Bill should be published.

9. Recognition payment for Health and Social Care workers – briefing from the Department of Health

The following officials from the Department of Health joined the meeting by video-conference at 12.10 pm:

Phil Rodgers, Director of Workforce Policy; and

Mark McGuicken, Director of Disability and Older People.

The officials briefed the Committee on the recognition payment for HSC workers.

The officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information on a number of issues raised.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.



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The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the recognition payments for Health and Social Care workers.

10. SR 2021/286 The Provision of Health Services to Persons Not Ordinarily Resident (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021

Patricia Quinn-Duffy, Head of Healthcare Policy EU Future Relations, Department of Health joined the meeting by video-conference at 12.53 am.

Ms Quinn-Duffy briefed the Committee on SR 2021/286 The Provision of Health Services to Persons Not Ordinarily Resident (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 which makes amendments to the availability, to visitors in Northern Ireland, of certain health services.

A question and answer session followed.

Alan Chambers left the meeting at 1.10 pm.

Colin McGrath left the meeting at 1.10 pm.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Quinn-Duffy for attending.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

Agreed: The Committee considered SR 2021/286 Provision of Health Services to Persons Not Ordinarily Resident (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and had no objection to the Rule.

11. SR 2021/291 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings) (Amendment) (No.7) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021

The following departmental officials joined the meeting by video-conference at 1.12 pm:



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Elaine Colgan, Head of Health Protection Branch 2, Department of Health;
Marian McKeever, Health Protection Branch 2, Department of Health; and
Peter Luney, Deputy Director, Covid Recovery & Strategy, Executive Office.

The officials briefed the Committee on two coronavirus restriction regulations.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for attending.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

The Committee considered SR 291 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings) (Amendment) (No.7) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 which removes the requirement for the wearing of a face covering when eating or drinking in an indoor setting and when dancing.

Agreed: The Committee considered SR 2021/291 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings) (Amendment) (No.7) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and recommended that it be approved by the Assembly.

12. SR 2021/292 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 (Amendment No. 18) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021

The Committee considered SR 2021/292 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 (Amendment No. 18) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 which: removes the requirement to be seated in a hospitality venue to consume food or drink; removes the requirement to maintain social distancing in a hospitality venue; permits dancing in all venues;



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permit the reopening of nightclubs; and removes the requirement for a ticket to be purchased in advance for an outdoor event.

Agreed: The Committee considered SR 2021/292 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 (Amendment No. 18) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and recommended that it be approved by the Assembly.

13. Health and Social Care Bill – consideration of Addendum Report

The Committee considered a draft report on its consideration of the Department of Health's proposed amendments to the Health and Social Care Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report on its consideration of the Department's proposed amendments to the Health and Social Care Bill should be published as an addendum to its Bill Report.

14. The Severe Fetal Impairment Abortion (Amendment) Bill – Final report deliberations

The Committee considered its draft report on the Severe Fetal Impairment Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

Pam Cameron MLA reiterated her party's (DUP) opposition the inclusion of a call for the full implementation of commissioned abortion services within the text of the report.

Title Page, Committee Powers and Membership and Table of Contents

The Committee considered the Title Page, Committee Powers and Membership, and Table of Contents as drafted.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Title Page, Committee Powers and Membership, and Table of Contents.

Executive Summary

The Committee considered the Executive Summary of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Executive Summary.

Introduction

The Committee considered the Introduction and Committee Approach section of the report (paragraphs 1 to 22) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Introduction section of the report.

Consideration of the Bill

The Committee considered the Consideration of the Evidence received on the Bill section of the report (paragraphs 23 to 126) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Consideration of the Bill section of the report.

Clause by Clause Consideration of the Bill

The Committee considered the Clause by Clause Consideration of the Bill section of the report (paragraphs 127 to 133) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Clause by Clause Consideration of the Bill Section of the report.



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Appendices

The Committee considered the Appendices section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Appendices be included in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Chairperson to approve the Minutes of Proceedings of this meeting for inclusion in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content for Committee staff to make any necessary formatting changes in advance of publication.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Report on the Severe Fetal Impairment Abortion (Amendment) Bill to be published and issued to all MLAs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that a link to the Bill report should be sent to all organisations who provided evidence to the Committee on the Bill.

The Committee's consideration and approval of the Committee report was reported by Hansard.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing session with the Department of Health on the commissioning of abortion services.

15. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland to the Minister of State for Health regarding the application of an EU Regulation (Unnumbered EM: COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) 2021/1317



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of 9 August 2021 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 regarding maximum levels of lead in certain foodstuffs) to Northern Ireland under the scope of the Protocol.

- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health providing an update on the Northern HSC Trust Radiology Lookback Review.
- iii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health advising that CMO and CSA advice relating to coronavirus restrictions was provided to the Executive as a whole and that the Minister was therefore unable to release that advice to the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the Executive Office for this information.

- iv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the recruitment of vaccinators and the delivery of the booster programme.
- v. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding progress on the implementation of the public health approach to address the harm caused by problem gambling.

Paula Bradshaw left the meeting at 1.40 pm.

Carál Ní Chuilín left the meeting at 1.40 pm.

The Chairperson advised that as the Committee was now inquorate, decisions on the remaining listed items of correspondence could not be taken and would instead be deferred for considered at the next meeting.

16. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted its Forward Work Programme.



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17. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

18. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Health was scheduled to take place at 12.45 pm on Tuesday, 16 November 2021.

The Chairperson reminded Members that the informal session on the current adoption process, to assist Members' scrutiny of the Adoption and Children Bill, will take place at 9:30 am on 12 November 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.45 pm.

**Colm Gildernew MLA, Chairperson,
Committee for Health**