



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for Health

## Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 23 September 2021

**Meeting Location:** Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Colm Gildernew MLA (Chairperson)

Gerry Carroll MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Alan Chambers MLA

Cara Hunter MLA

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

**Apologies:**

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Órlaithí Flynn MLA

**In Attendance:**

Keith McBride (Clerk)

Jonathan Lamont (Clerical Supervisor)



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Roisin Donnelly (Assistant Clerk)

Deirdre Farry (Assistant Clerk)

Brendan Miskelly (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 9.32 am in closed session.

**1. Apologies**

As above.

The Chairperson informed the Committee that, under Standing Order 115 (6), Órlaithí Flynn had delegated authority to Carál Ní Chuilín, to vote on her behalf at the meeting.

**2. Health and Social Care Bill: Formal clause by clause consideration**

Assembly Bill Clerks, Aoibheann Baker and Claire McCanny, joined the meeting at 9.32 am.

The Bill Clerks briefed the Committee on the amendments the Committee had instructed the Bill team to prepare and another option for amendments.

The Chairperson thanked the Bill Clerks for their attendance.

The Committee considered the proposed Committee amendments to the Bill and agreed to the amendments as outlined in the formal clause-by-clause.

The meeting moved to public session at 10.10 am.

*The Chairperson declared an interest as formerly being employed as a social worker and currently taking a career break.*



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The Committee commenced its formal clause by clause consideration of the Health and Social Care Bill.

**Clause 1: Dissolution of the Regional Health and Social Care Board**

The Committee considered Clause 1 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 1 as drafted.

**New Clause 1A: New Model**

The Committee considered its proposed amendment to insert a new Clause 1A: New Model, to place a statutory duty on the Department of Health to produce secondary legislation to make provision for a model for health and social care using the draft affirmative procedure:

*After Clause 1 insert –*

*‘New Model for Health and Social Care*

*(1A) (1) The Department must, before the first anniversary of this Act coming into operation, lay before the Assembly regulations to —*

*(a) establish a new model for the planning, management and delivery of health and social care in Northern Ireland, and*

*(b) set out the governance and reporting arrangements for the new model.*

*(2) If it is not reasonably practicable for the Department to comply with section 1A(1), the Minister must make a statement to the Assembly on why it is not reasonably practicable to do so.*

*(3) Regulations under this section are not to be made unless a draft of the regulations has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, the Assembly.’*



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the new Clause 1A as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to recommend to the Assembly that the proposed new Clause 1A be added to the Bill.

**Clause 2: Transfer of the Regional Board's Functions**

The Committee considered Clause 2 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 2 as drafted.

**Clause 3: Schemes for transfer of assets and liabilities**

The Committee considered Clause 3 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 3 as drafted.

**Clause 4: Transitional provision**

The Committee considered its proposed amendment to Clause 4 on the repeal of Local Commissioning Groups:

Clause 4, page 2, line 14

*At end insert*

*'(4) The Department may by regulations repeal section 9 (Local Commissioning Groups) of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.*

*(5) The regulations provided for under section 4(4) must not specify a date which is earlier than date on which the regulations provided for under section (1A) of this Act are approved by a resolution of the Assembly.*

*(6) The regulations provided for under section 4(4) are not to be made unless a*



## Northern Ireland Assembly

*draft of the regulations has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, the Assembly.*

*(7) Regulations under section 4(4) may make such amendments to the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009 and this Act as are necessary or appropriate in consequence of the repeal made by the regulations.'*

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the amendment as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 4 as amended.

### **Clause 5: Interpretation**

The Committee considered Clause 5 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 5 as drafted.

### **Clause 6: Commencement**

The Committee considered Clause 6 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 6 as drafted.

### **Clause 7: Short title**

The Committee considered Clause 7 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 7 as drafted.

### **Schedule 1: Transfer of the Regional Board's functions**

The Committee considered its proposed amendments to Schedule 1 to allow for the continuation of Local Commissioning Groups:



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Schedule 1, Page 5, Line 3

*In paragraph 11 leave out “and (b)”*

Schedule 1, Page 42, Line 35 In paragraph 232,

*leave out “7 to 11” and insert “7,8,10 and11”*

Schedule 1, Page 42, Line 35, at end insert

*232(A) In section 9(1) —*

*(a) for “Regional Board” substitute “Department”*

*(b) omit “in accordance with paragraph 7 of Schedule 1”*

*232(B) In section 9(3)(b), for “Regional Board may, with the agreement of the Department,” substitute “Department may”*

*232(C) Omit section 9(6)(b)*

*232(D) Omit section 9(7)*

Schedule 1, Page 42, Line 37

*Leave out “and Local Commissioning Groups”*

Schedule 1, Page 42, Line 38

*Leave out paragraph 233(b)*

Schedule 1, Page 42, Line 39

*Leave out paragraph 233(c)*

Schedule 1, Page 43, Line 38

*Leave out “and Local Commissioning Groups”*



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the amendments as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Schedule 1 as amended.

**Schedule 2: Transfer of assets etc**

The Committee considered Schedule 2 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Schedule 2 as drafted.

**Schedule 3: Transitional provision**

The Committee considered Schedule 3 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Schedule 3 as drafted.

**Long Title**

The Committee considered the Long Title as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Long Title as drafted.

The Chairperson advised that the formal clause by clause scrutiny of the Health and Social Care Bill had concluded.

The clause by clause consideration of the Bill was reported by Hansard.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to hold a meeting on Tuesday, 28 September to consider its draft report on the Bill.



## Northern Ireland Assembly

### 3. Chairperson's Business

- i. The Chairperson advised Members that the Autism Bill had passed Second Stage on 21 September.
- ii. The Chairperson raised the subject of pressures within the Health and Social Care system and reiterated the Committee's agreement to call the Minister of Health to urgently convene a meeting with staff representative bodies, including the unions, to acknowledge and address the concerns about pressures within the health and social care system.

### 4. Draft Minutes

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021.

### 5. Matters Arising

The Committee discussed a proposal made by Gerry Carroll at the meetings on 9 and 16 September, that the Committee take a position in relation to the pay offer for health staff and discussed a number of potential amendments to the wording of Mr Carroll's proposal.

Under Standing Order 115 (6), Órlaithí Flynn had delegated authority to Carál Ní Chuilín, to vote on her behalf.

The question was put on Carál Ní Chuilín's Amendment:

Replace the final paragraph with:





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

"That this Committee calls on Minister Swann to engage with the Health Unions in relation to a fair pay uplift for all Health and Social Care Staff and further calls on the Executive to seek the increased funding necessary from the British Treasury."

The Committee divided: Ayes; 4; Noes 4.

**AYES**

Órlaithí Flynn  
Colm Gildernew  
Cara Hunter  
Carál Ní Chuilín

**NOES**

Jonathan Buckley  
Pam Cameron  
Gerry Carroll  
Alan Chambers

The Amendment fell.

The question was put on Pam Cameron's Amendment:

Replace the final paragraph with:

"That this Committee calls on Minister Swann to engage with the unions and professional bodies in relation to a fair pay award and implore the Executive to explore ways to fund a more substantial pay uplift for health and social care staff, which they are fully deserving of."

The Committee divided: Ayes; 3; Noes 5.

**AYES**

Jonathan Buckley  
Pam Cameron  
Alan Chambers

**NOES**

Gerry Carroll  
Órlaithí Flynn  
Colm Gildernew  
Cara Hunter  
Carál Ní Chuilín

The Amendment fell.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The question was put on Gerry Carroll's Proposal:

"That this Committee notes with concern the 3% pay offer set to be made to health workers. This offer falls way short of satisfying the various health union's demands for a substantial pay uplift and doesn't keep up with inflation or rising utility costs.

The Committee further notes that this offer comes at a time when health workers are under considerable strain, as they manage one of the highest Covid-19 rates across the world with our health service severely under-resourced to tackle this and many other challenges.

In order to retain a vibrant and world class health service, we must reward staff for the vital work which they carry out. The pandemic has shown how vital our health service is. Yet many Health workers still suffer poverty wages and continue to be paid less than what they are worth.

This Committee resolves to write to Minister Robin Swann and the First and Deputy First Minister, urging them to not implement the planned offer of 3% for health workers and implores the Executive to explore ways to fund a more substantial and fair pay uplift for health workers here which they are fully deserving of."

The question was put.

The Committee divided: Ayes 1; Noes 7.

**AYES**

Gerry Carroll

**NOES**

Jonathan Buckley  
Pam Cameron  
Alan Chambers  
Órlaithí Flynn  
Colm Gildernew  
Cara Hunter  
Carál Ní Chuilín

The Proposal fell.

The meeting was suspended at 10.41 am and resumed at 10.46 am.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## **6. Adoption and Children Bill: RalSe Briefing**

NI Assembly Research Officer, Dr Lesley-Ann Black joined the meeting by video-conference at 10.46 am and briefed the Committee on the RalSe Briefing Paper on Adoption in Northern Ireland.

A question and answer session followed.

*Jonathan Buckley left the meeting at 11.12 am.*

The Chairperson thanked the Research Officer for attending.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda items 8 to 12.

## **7. SR 2021/198 The Establishment and Agencies (Fitness of Workers) (Revocation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

The Committee considered SR 2021/198 The Establishment and Agencies (Fitness of Workers) (Revocation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 which revokes the temporary Covid-19 pre-employment vetting policy that permitted employers to recruit staff quickly to health and social care posts on the basis of more limited pre-employment checks, in anticipation of Covid-19 staffing pressures.

**Agreed:** The Committee considered SR 2021/198 The Establishment and Agencies (Fitness of Workers) (Revocation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and had no objection to the Rule.

## **8. SR 2021/221 The Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

The Committee considered SR 2021/221 The Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 which adds three benzodiazepines, the



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

compounds known as flualprazolam, flunitrazolam and norfludiazepam, to Schedule 1 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002.

**Agreed:** The Committee considered SR 2021/221 The Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and had no objection to the Rule.

**9. SR 2021/222 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

The Committee noted that SR 2021/222 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 contained errors and was revoked and replaced by the Department before it came into force by SR 2021/231 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 which also makes equivalent provision.

**10. SR 2021/231 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021**

The Committee considered SR 2021/231 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 which: adds the compounds known as flualprazolam, flunitrazolam and norfludiazepam to Schedule 1 of the Misuse of Drugs (Designation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2001; and revokes SR 2021/222 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

**Agreed:** The Committee considered SR 2021/231 The Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 and had no objection to the Rule.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## 11. Correspondence

*Jonathan Buckley re-joined the meeting at 11.15 am.*

- i. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health providing an update on the use of powers in the Coronavirus Act 2020.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding COVID-19 indemnity arrangements.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to seek further detail from the Department of Health on COVID-19 indemnity arrangements.

- iii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health on tackling gambling related harm.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Health to request an update on the progress of its work relating to the development of a public health approach to tackling gambling related harm.

- iv. The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding plans for the introduction of a vaccine passport programme, recording of vaccines in medical records and the provision of Covid status certification.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask for information on the anticipated demand for vaccine passports as a result of the easing of travel restrictions from 4 October and the Department's assessment of virus transmission as a consequence of the easing of travel restrictions.

- v. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding COVID-19 vaccinations for anaphylactic sufferers.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- vi. The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the validation process for Coronavirus test devices.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Health to request a further update on this matter when progress is made.
- vii. The Committee considered correspondence from Cara Hunter MLA requesting Committee support for the NUS-USI campaign to support student health heroes.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content to support this campaign.
- viii. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding the difference in remuneration between retired doctors and nurses who are undertaking vaccinator roles.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department of Health for comment.
- ix. The Committee considered a copy of correspondence from an individual to the Patient and Client Council regarding the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Engagement Platform.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department of Health and the Patient and Client Council for comment and to ask for a copy of the PCC report exploring the experiences and perspectives of clinically extremely vulnerable people during COVID-19 shielding.
- x. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual following a reply from the Minister of Health regarding the restricted hospital visiting policy during the pandemic.
- xi. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding Continuing Healthcare funding.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department of Health for comment.

xii. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Department of Justice to the Committee for Justice regarding protests at premises providing abortion services and other healthcare services.

xiii. The Committee considered correspondence from Birth Mothers for Justice regarding its campaign for a statutory inquiry into Mother and Baby homes and Magdalen Laundries in Northern Ireland.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the Clerk would explore options for the Committee to engage with the groups associated with the Mother and Baby Homes and Magdalen Laundries in Northern Ireland.

**Agreed:** The Committee further agreed to ask the Department of Health for an update on its ongoing work in relation to this matter.

xiv. The Committee noted the correspondence from an individual regarding COVID-19 deaths in care homes.

xv. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding COVID-19 testing of children who attend childcare premises.

xvi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Chair of the House of Lords Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland Sub-Committee to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Innovation (Lords) regarding Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021 686 of 23 April 2021 authorising a health claim made on foods, other than those referring to the reduction of disease risk and to children's development and health, and amending regulation (EU) No. 432/202.

xvii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance requesting its views on a proposed LCM in respect of the Westminster Public Sector Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- xviii. The Committee noted correspondence from the NI Assembly EU Affairs Manager providing an update on the status of the Common Frameworks and the indicative times for these to come to Committees.
- xix. The Committee noted the Examiner of Statutory Rules' Second Report of Session 2021-2022.
- xx. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance on its call for evidence on the Defamation Bill.
- xxi. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding the Western Health Trust and the Mental Health Champion.
- xxii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health advising of the publication of the outcome of the consultation on the Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill on 17 September.

Following the meeting on 16 September, the Committee considered and agreed actions in relation to the following correspondence by email:

- xxiii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health to the Public Accounts Committee regarding Indemnity Arrangements in support of Royal College of Physicians participating in the Neurology Review.
- xxiv. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding PERT treatment for those with pancreatic cancer.
- xxv. The Committee considered the response from the Minister of Health to the Committee's request for his comments on correspondence received from the Committee on Administration of Justice in relation to the impact of coronavirus restrictions regulations on the right to protest.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the Minister's response to the Committee on Administration of Justice.





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- xxvi. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding social distancing at Child Contact Centres.
- xxvii. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health to the Committee's request for his comments on issues raised in media reports relating to the Department's COVID-19 Care Home Review.
- xxviii. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health relating to line management responsibilities for Professor Ian Young during his secondment to the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.
- xxix. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding the collection and recording of data on drug related deaths.
- xxx. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding the advice on self-isolation for those travelling within the Common Travel Area.
- xxxi. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health to issues raised by the Committee during the briefing on 08 July 2021.
- xxxii. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health relating to access to the EU digital COVID certificate, fixed penalties issued during the Black Lives Matter protests and the draft report on the Irish Cup Final test event.
- xxxiii. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health providing an update on COVID-19.
- xxxiv. The Committee considered the response from the Minister of Health regarding correspondence from the Royal College of Nursing relating to community mental health services.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Royal College of Nursing.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

xxxv. The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding Mental Health Crisis Services.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Department for a timeline on the provision of services and a copy of the Action Plan.

xxxvi. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding protests at abortion premises.

xxxvii. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health providing a written briefing on eating disorders.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on this matter in its forward work programme.

xxxviii. The Committee considered the response from the Minister of Health regarding correspondence from the Association of Infant Mental Health (NI) relating to the Mental Health Strategy.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Association of Infant Mental Health (NI).

xxxix. The Committee noted the correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the publication of the Northern Ireland Cancer Strategy for public consultation.

xl. The Committee noted the correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the introduction of a new Estimates format as part of the review of Financial Processes.

xli. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding accessibility of mental health services in rural communities.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to Rural Community Network.

xlii. The Committee noted the written statement from the Minister of Health regarding the Urology public inquiry.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

xliii. The Committee considered correspondence received from the Minister of Health regarding the Adult Protection Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Department for a timeline for the introduction of the Bill.

xliv. The committee considered the response from the Minister of Health regarding PKU treatment.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this response to the individual who raised the issue.

xlv. The Committee considered the response from the Minister of Health regarding Coeliac UK correspondence.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the response to the individual who raised the issue.

xlvi. The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Health regarding Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis treatment.

xlvii. The Committee noted the correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the launch of the Substances Use Strategy, 'Preventing Harm, Empowering Recovery'.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on this issue into its forward work programme.

xlviii. The Committee noted the Department of Health Annual Progress Report 2021-2022.

xlix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the appointment of the Mental Health Champion.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- I. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding Department of Health and Social Care Trust Activity Projections.
- li. The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for Justice to the Department of Health in relation to the Damages (Return on Investment) Bill.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Department to copy the Committee into any response to the Department of Justice.
- lii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Justice regarding proposals for the development of a joint secure care and justice campus.
- liii. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding a ban on suspended admissions at Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department for comment.
- liv. The Committee considered correspondence from Focus: The Identity Trust regarding gender transition services.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department for comment.
- lv. The Committee noted the correspondence from the Department of Health regarding the consultation on expanding access to Naloxone.
- lvi. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding regulation of Community Mental Health Services  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department and to Northern Trust for comment.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- Ivii. The Committee noted an invitation from Brain Injury Matters (NI) to the Chairperson to attend a panel discussion on acquired brain injury.
- Iviii. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding foster care allowances, fees and retention.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department for comment.
- lix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding the consultation for Early Access to Medicines Scheme.
- Ix. The Committee noted correspondence from University of Ulster on opioid overdose.
- Ixi. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding access to medical tests and diagnosis for PANDAS.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department for comment.
- Ixii. The Committee noted a tweet and link from Department of Health regarding COVID-19.
- Ixiii. The Committee noted correspondence from Free the Night.
- Ixiv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding UK Consultation on Point of Care (POC) manufacturing.
- Ixv. The Committee noted correspondence from Pharmacy Forum NI regarding a series of webinars focusing on gender and equality of opportunity in NI Pharmacy.
- Ixvi. The Committee noted correspondence from Association of Child Psychotherapists regarding workforce issues in child psychotherapy services.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to add a briefing from the Association of Child Psychotherapists to its Forward Work Programme.

- Ixvii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding on its Call for Evidence on the Climate Change (No.2) Bill.
- Ixviii. The Committee noted correspondence from Home Start UK in NI regarding the findings from the Home Start UK Family Report.
- Ixix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Commissioner for Standards on the outcome of the Committee's complaint against Pat Sheehan MLA and Órlaithí Flynn MLA.
- Ixx. The Committee noted correspondence from Allied Health Professionals Federation regarding the Future Planning Model and Health and Social Care Bill.
- Ixxi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health and Social Care to the Chair of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland Sub-Committee, regarding the Explanatory Memorandum on EU regulations relating to health claims made on foods and related issues.
- Ixxii. The Committee noted correspondence from Royal College of Nursing regarding its report 'Sensemaker: the lived experience of nursing in Northern Ireland during a pandemic 2020/21'.
- Ixxiii. The Committee considered an invitation from the Ulster University to visit the School of Medicine.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule this visit in its Forward Work Programme.

- Ixxiv. The Committee noted a briefing paper from Family Mediation NI on the impact of poorly managed family breakdown on children and young people.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- Ixxv. The Committee noted a request from the Royal College of Nursing to brief the Committee on a number of matters.
- Ixxvi. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding the Independent Neurology Inquiry.
- Ixxvii. The Committee noted the ISNI Investing Activity Report for August 2021.
- Ixxviii. The Committee noted correspondence from British Dental Association NI regarding dental earnings.
- Ixxix. The Committee noted the response from PSNI regarding protests at Trust premises.
- Ixxx. The Committee noted correspondence from Birth Mothers for Justice regarding a statutory inquiry into Mother and Baby Homes and Magdalen Laundries.
- Ixxxi. The Committee noted a request from Versus Arthritis to brief the Committee.
- Ixxxii. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding COVID-19 vaccinations and the OCTAVE trial of people who are immunocompromised.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment.
- Ixxxiii. The Committee considered correspondence from Advice NI regarding Health Services Charges provision.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Department for a copy of its response to Advice NI on the issues raised.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

lxxxiv. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from an individual to the Minister for Education regarding COVID regulations in schools.

lxxxv. The Committee considered further correspondence from Focus: The Identity Trust regarding the Gender Dysphoria National Referral Support Service.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department for comment.

lxxxvi. The Committee noted the PIVOTAL report on policy priorities for Northern Ireland for September 2021.

lxxxvii. The Committee considered correspondence from Action for Children regarding the Adoption and Children Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to invite Action for Children to provide a written submission on the Bill.

lxxxviii. The Committee noted the correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee, informing of its intention to hold an inquiry into the NI Audit Office Report on Addiction Services.

lxxxix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee regarding the COP26 event.

xc. The Committee noted the correspondence from the Finance Committee regarding the Executive scrutiny process relating to EU Regulations.

xc. The Committee considered correspondence from Children's Law Centre regarding a successful High Court Judgment against the SEHSCT in relation to respite care.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department of Health to establish the impact of the judgement.





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- xcii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health advising that he had received the CMO advice in relation to the universal vaccination of children and young people aged 12-15 years.
- xciii. The Committee noted the RaISe Briefing Paper on adoption in Northern Ireland.
- xciv. The Committee noted the Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) Bill and Explanatory Memorandum that was introduced in the Assembly on 13 September.

**12. Adoption and Children Bill: Department of Health briefing on principles of the Bill**

The following officials from the Department of Health joined the meeting by video-conference at 11.26 am:

Eilis McDaniel, Director of Childcare & Family Policy;

Julie Stephenson, Head of Adoption and Children Bill Team; and

Frances Nicholson, Social Services Officer.

The officials briefed the Committee on the principles of the Adoption and Children Bill.

*Jonathan Buckley left the meeting at 11.35 am.*

A question and answer session followed.

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

The Chairperson thanked the officials for attending.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**13. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

**14. Any Other Business**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Jonathan Lamont, a member of the Committee's support team was transferring to another post within the Assembly. The Chairperson and Members thanked Mr Lamont for his contribution to the work of the Committee and wished him well in his new post.

**15. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for Health was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 28 September 2021, time to be confirmed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.43 pm.

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