

TO: [Committee.health\\_HSCbill@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:Committee.health_HSCbill@niassembly.gov.uk)

Call for Evidence: The Health and Social Care Bill

Response on behalf of the Royal College of General Practitioners Northern Ireland

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General comments:

RCGP NI welcomes the Bill as part of the ongoing transformation process and anticipate an accelerated movement on the transformation agenda with a more simplified approach to oversight of the processes of health care management for Northern Ireland.

We would also like to note our gratitude to the current and past staff in the Health & Social Care Board's Directorate of Integrated Care for their work in supporting and developing general practice over the past years.

RCGPNI hope that the focus on developing the landscape of primary care with a focus on delivering services at community level will continue under the new arrangements.

Comments on specific Clauses:

Clause 1 – RCGPNI would express concern at the lack of detail regarding commissioning structures with the dissolution of the Local Commissioning Groups (LCGs). Primary Care has a history of significant representation on the LCGs. It is vital that the development of new commissioning services will continue to include primary care voices bringing important insight into local population health need particularly at this time of Multidisciplinary Team development and integration with community and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector services.

Clause 2- RCGPNI supports the clarity regarding the transfer of responsibility for primary care contracts to the Department of Health.

Regarding areas specifically relating to social care and children, the transfer of responsibility to the Health & Social Care Trusts (HSCT) is recognised and appropriate. There is opportunity here however to clarify the lines of responsibility for management and training in safeguarding at primary care level. Since the establishment of the Safeguarding Board for NI, there has been confusion over the representation for primary care physicians and lines of responsibility for oversight of training and support of safeguarding in primary care. This bill offers an opportunity to revisit the issues inherent in the current structures affording an opportunity to strengthen links with the HSCT safeguarding processes.

