

Written Ministerial Statement

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Health, Social Services and Public Safety

UPDATE ON ACTIONS TO TAKE FORWARD RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REPORT OF THE INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

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Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The purpose of this statement is to provide you with an update on the actions to take forward recommendations from the "Report of the Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland".

In former Minister Wells' oral statement to the Assembly on 18 November 2014 he advised the House that a Health and Social Care Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Response Team would be established to consider each of Professor Marshall's recommendations from the report as they relate to health and social care.

The Response team, led by my Department, has now been established and is made up of senior representatives from the Health and Social Care Board, the Public Health Agency and each of the five Health and Social Care Trusts. It is supported by an Implementation Group, led by the former Director of Children's Services of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Bernie McNally, OBE.

With the agreement of the Ministers of Education and Justice a Senior Officials Group has been established, made up of representatives from all three departments. The senior officials group is responsible for taking forward those recommendations which are cross-departmental.

I have today published an Implementation Plan, which sets out very clearly how the HSC will implement each of Professor Marshall's recommendations over the next few years through to November 2017. Implementation is being undertaken in three phases and it is my intention to implement a significant proportion of the recommendations in Phase 1, that is, within one year of the publication of the Marshall Report. Implementation of some recommendations will take longer, particularly those relating to service developments.

I remain committed to implementing all of HSC recommendations as quickly as possible and in full. I will work with Ministers Ford and O'Dowd to ensure that we collectively deal effectively with child sexual exploitation in Northern Ireland where it exists and more importantly, minimise the risk of it occurring in the first place. Without doubt, we will need the support of elected members, parents, carers and the wider community and I am confident that it will be provided.

A copy of the HSC Marshall Implementation Plan will be provided to all Members and it will be published on my Department's website.