



Colm Gildernew MLA  
Chair of the Health Committee  
Room 419,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Ballymiscaw,  
Stormont,  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ  
Tel: 028 9052 2556  
Email: [private.office@health-ni.gov.uk](mailto:private.office@health-ni.gov.uk)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: SUB-1420-2021

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021

Dear *Colm,*

## **PROGRESSION OF LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MOTIONS FOR VIRGINITY TESTING AND HYMENOPLASTY**

I am writing to advise on work surrounding Westminster's Health and Care Bill 2021 and in particular the requirement to lay a Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) for virginity testing and hymenoplasty to bring Northern Ireland in line with the rest of the UK.

An amendment to ban virginity testing was introduced onto the face of the Health and Care Bill 2021 at final report reading at the House of Commons stage in November 2021. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have since advised that they wish to introduce a ban on hymenoplasty. It is likely in early January the DHSC will seek to table a further amendment at this time to the introduced virginity testing ban provision to also reflect a ban on hymenoplasty.

Therefore it is my intention to bring forward a LCM in early January with regards to both the virginity testing and hymenoplasty amendments.

It will be necessary for the LCM to be debated in the Assembly before the Third Reading takes place in the House of Lords. At present, DHSC estimate that the Third Reading will be during the last week in February or the first week in March. My officials will keep in touch with the Committee Clerk regarding timings as this matter progresses.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robin Swann'.

**Robin Swann MLA**  
**Minister of Health**