



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for Health

## Minutes of Proceedings

**26 June 2025**

**Meeting Location:** Room 29, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

- Philip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)
- Danny Donnelly MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Alan Chambers MLA
- Linda Dillon MLA
- Diane Dodds MLA
- Órlaithí Flynn MLA
- Nuala McAllister MLA
- Colin McGrath MLA
- Alan Robinson MLA

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Keith McBride, Clerk

Shannen Lofthouse, Assistant Clerk

Angela McParland, Assistant Clerk

Jonathan Lamont, Clerical Supervisor

Martina Mullin-O'Hare, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at xxxxpm in public session.

### **1. Apologies**

No apologies were received.

### **2. Chairperson's Business**

### **3. Draft Minutes**

The Committee agreed the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2025.

### **4. Matters Arising**

None.

### **5. Oral briefing from Northern Ireland Youth Assembly**

The following representatives joined the meeting at xxxxpm:

- Brooke Ewing, Northern Ireland Youth Assembly Member,
- Christine Farry, Northern Ireland Youth Assembly Member,
- Donal Mullan, Northern Ireland Youth Assembly Member,
- Fionn McCoy, Northern Ireland Youth Assembly Member, and
- Daniel Gracey, Northern Ireland Youth Assembly Member.

The officials provided an update on the work of the Youth Assembly.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

## **6. Committee Inquiry: Access to Palliative Care Services – Department of Health**

The following representative joined the meeting at xxxxpm:

- X
- x

The representatives briefed the Committee on access to palliative care services.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for attending.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

## **7. Cytology Screening Review – Oral briefing from Department of Health, Public Health Agency, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Southern Health and Social Care Trust**

The following officials joined the meeting at xxxxpm:

Professor Lourda Geoghegan, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health

Paul Cavanagh, Director of Hospital Commissioning, SPPG

Dr Joanne McClean, Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency

Moira Kearney, Interim Director of Cancer and Specialist Services, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Stephen Austin, Medical Director, Southern Health and Social Care Trust

The officials provided an update to the Cytology Screening Review.

The presentation included a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

**Agreed:**

**8. Written Briefing: Department of Health – Winter Preparedness**

The Committee considered a written briefing from the Department of Health on winter preparedness.

**9. Written Briefing: Department of Health – Implementation of Hospital Car Parking Charges**

The Committee considered a written briefing from the Department on the implementation of hospital car parking charges.

**10. Written Briefing: Violence and Aggression toward Staff**

The Committee considered a written briefing from the Department on violence and aggression toward staff.

**11. SR 2025 No. 117 The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (General) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025**

The Committee considered Statutory Rule 2025 No. 117 The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (General) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025.

**12. Adult Protection Bill**

**13. Correspondence**

- i.* The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding Budget Priorities, June Monitoring and Legislation Programme.

- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding the Royal Victoria Hospital Maternity and Children's Hospital.
- iii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding financial support for medical students.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this response to BMA NI.

- iv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding amendments to Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order.
- v. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding PEG surgery.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to Parents4PEGS NI.

- vi. The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding paediatric waiting lists.
- vii. The Committee noted correspondence from Belfast Health and Social Care Trust following a recent briefing.
- viii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department on the new Maternity Hospital.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Department for a timeline for the completion of the Review.

- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance on Administrative and Financial Provisions Bill.
- x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance on the Northern Ireland Fiscal Council Bill.

- xi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance on the Analysis of 2025-26 Outturn and Forecast Outturn.
- xii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Justice on the Reasonable Chastisement – Equal Protection Bill.
- xiii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Nursing and Midwifery Council on Strategic Objectives and Targets on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- xiv. The Committee considered correspondence from Action on Postpartum Psychosis regarding the delay in establishing a Mother and Baby Unit.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to seek further information on the work undertaken to progress a Unit.

- xv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee on proposed EU pharmaceutical legislation.
- xvi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education on Cruse bereavement support in schools.
- xvii. The Committee considered correspondence from Sarcoma UK requesting to meet with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would consider this request.

- xviii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Executive Office regarding the Mother and Baby Homes Bill.
- xix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Equality Commission regarding the Supreme Court judgement in FWS versus the Scottish Ministers.

- xx. The Committee noted correspondence from Save Our Acute Services following a recent written briefing from the Department of Health.
- xxi. The Committee considered correspondence from Community Pharmacy NI following a correction made by the Department of Health during a recent briefing.
- xxii. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding correspondence from the Department to Caleb's Cause.

#### **14. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered a draft Forward Work Programme.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme.

#### **15. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **16. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place at 2pm on Thursday 11 September 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at xxxxpm.

**Philip McGuigan MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for Health**

**11 September 2025**