



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Health

Minutes of Proceedings

27 November 2025

Meeting Location: Lecture Theatre, South West Regional Hospital, Enniskillen

Present: Phillip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Donnelly MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Alan Chambers MLA
Linda Dillon MLA
Diane Dodds MLA
Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Colin McGrath MLA
Alan Robinson MLA.

Apologies: Nuala McAllister MLA

In Attendance: Keith McBride, Clerk
Roisin Gallagher, Senior Assistant Clerk
Michael Doran, Senior Assistant Clerk
Shannen Lofthouse, Assistant Clerk
Angela McParland, Assistant Clerk
Jonathan Lamont, Clerical Supervisor
Noel Gallagher, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 2.03pm in public session.

1. Apologies

Nuala McAllister MLA.

2. Chairperson's Business

Members of the Health Committee met at Mater Hospital on Wednesday 26 November, where they received their seasonal flu vaccinations and visited the Psychiatric Assessment and Treatment Hub (PATH) and looked at the services offered there. Members received an overview of the facilities and the support provided to patients, noting the importance of the Hub in delivering specialist mental health care.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and request an update on the business case for PATH at the Mater.

The Chair also thanked the local businesses that met with the Committee at the Killyhevlin Hotel, as well as Cancer Focus in Enniskillen for hosting a tour and

demonstrating the services they provide to the local community. Thanks were further extended to the team at South West Acute Hospital for hosting the Committee meeting today, as well as facilitating a tour of the premises and highlighting the dedication of staff across the health sector.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to receive an update on the business cases on establishing Cancer Focus hubs in Belfast City Hospital and Altnagelvin Hospital

3. Draft Minutes

The Committee agreed the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2025.

4. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

5. Save Our Acute Services- Oral Briefing

The following representatives from Save Our Acute Services joined the meeting at 2.09pm:

- Ms Helen Hamill;
- Mr Jimmy Hamill; and
- Ms Karen Eccles

The representatives briefed the Committee in relation to the challenges faced by patients within the Western Trust.

Diane Dodds MLA joined the meeting at 2.15pm.

Linda Dillon MLA joined the meeting at 2.17pm.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their briefing.

6. Western Health and Social Care Trust- Oral Briefing

The following officials joined the meeting at 3.22pm:

- Mr Neil Guckian, Chief Executive, Western Health and Social Care Trust;
and
- Dr Tom Frawley, Chairperson, Western Health and Social Care Trust; and
- Dr Brendan Lavery, Medical Director, Western Health and Social Care Trust;
and
- Ms Teresa Molloy, Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate
Services, Western Health and Social Care Trust

The officials briefed the Committee with an overview of services in the Western Trust. Officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information on a number of issues.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked officials for the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a written briefing from the Department on procedures for making decisions to remove services from a hospital.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting up-to-date detail on the Minister's vision for the South West Acute Hospital

and on building adequate health services for Fermanagh.

Linda Dillon MLA left the meeting at 5.01pm.

7. Adult Protection Bill- Oral Briefing from Western Health and Social Care Trust.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to reschedule an alternative date for this oral briefing

8. Homecare Services- Written Briefing from the Department.

The Committee noted a written briefing from the Department regarding Homecare Services.

9. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding a Review of Deliverability of Mental Health Strategy.
- ii. The Committee considered a response from the Department regarding mesh related medical complications and myalgic encephalomyelitis.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Mesh Ireland for comment.

- iii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding the Care of Deaf People in the Health System.
- iv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding the inpatient Mental Health Unit at the Belfast City Hospital.

v. The Committee considered a response from the Department with regards to the Establishment of a Mother and Baby Unit.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Action on Postpartum Psychosis.

vi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding Indemnity Arrangements in Support of the Royal College of Physicians Participation in the DOH Neurology Review.

vii. The Committee considered a response from the Department regarding Neurology Recall Patients.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Neurology Action for information.

viii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for Justice regarding Removal of Reasonable Chastisement.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request to be copied into the response from the Department.

ix. The Committee noted correspondence from Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee regarding legislation on Tobacco and Vapes.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting a briefing note on the issues raised.

x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding the conduct and impartiality of members of Northern Ireland Civil Service.

- xi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding a revised Outturn and Forecast Outturn 20205-2026 Guidelines.
- xii. The Committee noted correspondence from Paul Frew MLA regarding the publication of the Consultation Summary on Individual Duty of Candour.
- xiii. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding a copy of correspondence to DoH Social Services Office.
- xiv. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding the RCN appearance at Health Committee on 13 November

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider this with other written evidence for Adult Protection Bill.

- xv. The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding National Insurance contributions.
- xvi. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding the Women's Health Action Plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward this to the British Heart Foundation.

- xvii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding a follow up on Serious Adverse Incidents within Belfast Trust.
- xviii. The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding the NI Migrant Centre.
- xix. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding the Implementation of the Adoption and Children Act (NI) 2022.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider post legislative scrutiny and to request further written updates on progress every six months.

- xx. The Committee considered a response from the Department regarding Respite Services.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider further in its strategic priorities.

- xxi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding the RHI Closure Bill.

- xxii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee regarding the Performance of Restricted Procedures by Health Trusts.

- xxiii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health and Social Care regarding a letter to House of Lords NI Scrutiny Committee.

- xxiv. The Committee noted correspondence from Independent Health and Care Providers regarding Real Living Wage.

- xxv. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding ringfenced funding.

- xxvi. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding a complaint against a Special Advisor.

- xxvii. The Committee noted a response from RQIA regarding Emergency General Surgery at South West Acute Hospital.

10. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed to the draft forward work plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to a draft press release on today's visit to South West Acute Hospital. The Chair reminded members of the Palliative Care Inquiry Report Launch Event which will take place on 2nd December.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to the draft press release for the Palliative Care Inquiry Launch Event.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place in Room 29 at 2pm on 4 December.

The meeting was adjourned at 5.40pm.

Phillip McGuigan MLA

Chairperson, Committee for Health

4 December 2025