



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Committee for Health

### Minutes of Proceedings

**3 March 2026**

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

**Present:**

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

**Apologies:** Alan Robinson MLA

**In Attendance:** Keith McBride, Clerk  
Michael Doran, Senior Assistant Clerk  
Shannen Lofthouse, Assistant Clerk  
Angela McParland, Assistant Clerk  
Jonathan Lamont, Clerical Supervisor  
Caroline Devlin, Clerical Officer.

The meeting commenced at 9.43am in closed session.

## **1. Apologies**

Alan Robinson MLA.

## **2. Closed Session- Committee Deliberations on the Adult Protection Bill.**

The Committee undertook its informal deliberations of the Adult Protection Bill.

The Committee was adjourned at 9.59am

*Alan Chambers MLA joined the meeting at 10.05am.*

The Committee resumed at 10.17am.

The Committee resumed its informal deliberations of the Adult Protection Bill.

The Committee agreed to request the following from the Department:

- Clarity on the duty to provide an independent advocate, including whether the wording can be strengthened to ensure an advocate is actively offered under Clauses 5–8;
- Views on the impact of specifying which type of professional may accompany a social worker during visits under Clause 5;

- Examples of what may fall under “other records” in Clause 8, along with the rationale for using broad terminology;
- Further explanation of how Clauses 7 and 8 will operate where an adult at risk lacks capacity, and whether these provisions will reduce the need for repeated court applications;
- The Department’s position on whether adults at risk should have a means to challenge applications for production orders under Clause 9; and
- A clearer outline of how the Bill will protect vulnerable adults within Trust-run settings, including what independent pathways are available for families who may be reluctant to raise concerns with Trust staff.

*Colin McGrath MLA left the meeting at 11.02am.*

*Órlaithí Flynn MLA left the meeting at 11.13am.*

### **3. 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 5 March.

*The meeting was adjourned at 11.27am.*

**Phillip McGuigan MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for Health**

**March 2026**