



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Health

Minutes of Proceedings

Tuesday 30 June 2026

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Danny Donnelly (Deputy Chairperson)
Linda Dillon MLA
Nuala McAllister MLA
Alan Robinson MLA

Apologies: Phillip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)
Alan Chambers MLA
Diane Dodds MLA
Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Colin McGrath MLA

In Attendance: Keith McBride (Clerk)
Michael Doran (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Roisin Donnelly (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Shannen Lofthouse (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Aidan Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)



The Deputy Chairperson took the Chair.

The meeting commenced at 9.41 am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Oral Briefing from National Autistic Society and Forgotten Voices NI

The following officials from the Department of Health joined the meeting at 9.39 am:

- Shirelle Stewart, Director, National Autistic Society
- Julie Tipping, Parent;
- Claire Miller, Parent;
- Carly Braiden, Parent; and
- Laura Flannigan, Parent

The representatives briefed the Committee on the ongoing crisis for families of autistic children with high support needs, including those featured in the BBC Spotlight programme *I Am Not Okay*.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.



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As there was no decision-making quorum, the Committee agreed to defer agreement on the action to be taken until the next meeting on 2 July 2026.

3. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place at 2 July at 2.00 pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.53 am.

Danny Donnelly MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Health
3 September 2026