



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Health

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 8 October 2026

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Phillip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)
Alan Chambers MLA
Diane Dodds MLA
Alan Robinson MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Danny Donnelly (Deputy Chairperson)
Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Nuala McAllister MLA
Colin McGrath MLA

Apologies: Linda Dillon MLA

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



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Aidan Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)

Caroline Devlin (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 2.03 pm in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Oral Briefing from the Department on Legislative Consent Motion – UK Health Bill

The following officials from the Department of Health joined the meeting at 2.03 pm:

- Vincent Ramirez, Head of Infected Blood and Urology Services Inquiries
- Oversight; and
- Eddie Murphy, Acting Head of Medicines Legislation Unit

Officials briefed the Committee on the forthcoming UK Health Bill.

Colin McGrath MLA joined the meeting at 2.07 pm.

Alan Chambers MLA joined the meeting at 2.10 pm.

Nuala McAllister MLA joined the meeting at 2.24 pm.

A question and answer session followed.



The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson updated Members on the NICON conference, which included a session on the global health and social care workforce.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to host an event in Parliament Buildings to provide an opportunity for those experiences to be shared.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk would draft a Committee motion in support of the health and social care global workforce for Members consideration.

The Chairperson noted correspondence Committee Members received from the Ladies with Letters campaign.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from Ladies with Letters into the Forward Work Programme.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2026.



5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Oral Briefing from the Department - Budget

The following officials from the Department of Health joined the meeting at 2.29 pm along with the following Departmental officials:

- David Keenan, Interim Finance Director;
- Danielle Mallen, Head of Financial Management;
- Paul Montgomery, Investment Director; and
- Catherine Fitzpatrick, Head of Capital Resources

Officials briefed the Committee on officials briefed the Committee on the Department's budget position.

Órlaithí Flynn MLA joined the meeting at 3.01 pm.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Health on a number of issues discussed.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

7. Written Briefing from the Department – Mental Health Strategy

The Committee considered a written briefing from the Department of Health on the Mental Health Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to the Mental Health Champion for comment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an updated table detailing planned investment against actual expenditure for the mental health strategy.

8. End of Session Report

The Committee reviewed the End of Session Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the End of Session Report.

9. Correspondence

- i. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding postnatal care in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Lumifide for information.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

- ii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding Enhertu availability on the NHS.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to the individual for information.

- iii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding Community Pharmacy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Community Pharmacy for information.

- iv. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding emergency general surgery at South West Acute Hospital.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Save Our Acute Services for information.

- v. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding Trust winter surge plans.

- vi. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding Adult ADHD services in Northern Ireland.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to the individual for information.

- vii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding costs relating to the Independent Reconfiguration Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek further clarification on the amount that has been set aside by the Department.

- viii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding clarification on the encompass monthly reboot.

- ix. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding an introduction of a Practitioner Health Service in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Doctors in Distress for information.

- x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding ovarian cancer public awareness campaigns.

- xi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding an individual's complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

- xii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding cancer waiting time statistics.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek assurances that no further corrections are required to the waiting list data.

- xiii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust regarding regulatory concerns.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to the individual for information.

- xiv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust in response to concerns of a potential suspension maternity services of Daisy Hill Hospital.

- xv. The Committee considered correspondence from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust regarding a response to Independent Health and Care Providers Brokerage process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Independent Health and Care Providers when all responses are received.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

- xvi. The Committee considered correspondence from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust regarding a response to Independent Health and Care Providers Brokerage Process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Independent Health and Care Providers when all responses are received.

- xvii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding the Regional Balance Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Health to request to be copied into any response given to the Bill Consultation.

- xviii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Speakers Office regarding a public petition relating to pancreatic cancer.

- xix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Communities regarding rural affairs research.

- xx. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Communities regarding the Anti-Poverty Strategy.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

- xxi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Justice regarding safeguarding, accountability and justice in faith organisations.
- xxii. The Committee noted correspondence from Northern Ireland Assembly Public Engagement team regarding an Older People's Parliament event.
- xxiii. The Committee noted correspondence from Protective Mothers NI regarding political priorities and public resources.
- xxiv. The Committee noted correspondence from Lumifide regarding post-natal care.
- xxv. The Committee considered correspondence from Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health regarding the state of child health in Northern Ireland.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward to the Department for comment.
- xxvi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.
- xxvii. The Committee noted correspondence from Sodium Valproate Redress Alliance with a copy of a letter to the First and Deputy First Minister.



Northern Ireland Assembly

- xxviii. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding the Southern Trusts Children's Social Care and Information Governance.
- xxix. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding a complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.
- xxx. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding veteran care.
- xxxi. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual regarding a complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Clerk took Members through the Forward Work Programme and outlined the proposed plan for forthcoming Committee business. The Committee discussed alternative Forward Work Programme options in the event that the legislation is not introduced.

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



11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Committee moved into closed session at 4.09 pm.

12. Adult Protection Bill

The Committee discussed outstanding matters relating to the Adult Protection Bill.

13. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Thursday 15 October at 2.00 pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.28 pm.

Phillip McGuigan MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Health



Northern Ireland
Assembly

15 October 2026