

# HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE REFORM

A monthly update for DHSSPS and HSC staff on Health and Social Care reform

December 2008



## Message from the Minister

Dear Colleague

Welcome to the December edition of Health and Social Care Reform. I trust you have found it useful in keeping you informed on how we are progressing with the reform agenda.

2008 has been a very eventful year for me and all those working within the Department and Health and Social Care. I know it has been a year in which you have faced uncertainties. I very much appreciate your commitment, co-operation and professionalism as we progress through, what is a very important phase for the future of health and social care

I set out my proposals for reform in February and undertook an extensive period of public consultation. I am glad to report that the Bill has now been endorsed by the Health Committee and the Assembly and I would hope that it will reach its final stage early in the New Year. This all means that we remain on schedule for implementation in April 2009.

We have made good progress in recent months in fleshing out the way in which the new bodies will operate. I am however aware of the important decisions still awaited by staff, in particular, the senior management structures, HR issues and the location of the new organisations. Significant progress is being made in these areas and I can assure you that we are making every effort to reach decisions as quickly as possible.

This is a very exciting time for health and social care. The agenda ahead of us is a busy one. As a service we must put patients and clients at the heart of our plans, making sure that services are responsive to local needs and an ever changing population. We must be efficient and continually strive to drive up performance. And we must begin to seriously tackle the health inequalities that are still rife in our society.

I have always had every faith that we have the high calibre and professional staff we need to deliver on this challenging agenda. The reforms that we are making will now ensure you have the best infrastructure in place to support you in your role.

I hope that even though this has been an unsettling time for many, you share in my excitement that this is a new era for us all.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy and peaceful New Year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael McGimpsey'.

Michael McGimpsey  
Minister  
Health, Social Services and Public Safety

# INTRODUCING THE NEW CHAIRS

## Regional Health and Social Care Board

**Dr Ian Clements MB BCh DRCOG MRCGP** lives in Newtownards where he has practised as a GP Principal for the past 27 years. Throughout his GP career, he has continually sought to improve healthcare services for patients through his involvement in the commissioning process having been appointed the Clinical Lead Commissioner in the East Local Commissioning Group at its inception; he will now be stepping down from this position. He is currently Chair of the Eastern Local Medical Committee and a member of the NI General Practitioners Committee. Previous posts include Chair of the Eastern Multifund, Chair of the Eastern Board GP Forum, executive committee member of both the National Association of Primary Care and NI Association for Mental Health and GP Medical Advisor to the former Ulster and Community Hospitals Trust.

## Patient and Client Council

**Mr John Keanie MBA** lives in Coleraine. He is a self employed business Consultant and also Company Chair of A2B (Access to Benefits for Older People). He was previously Town Clerk and Chief Executive of Derry City Council. Mr Keanie is a Lay Representative on the QC Complaints Committee of the Silk Appointments Commission. He is currently appointed, by the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI, to act as an independent assessor for Public Appointments to government bodies. In 1997 he was made Freeman of the City of London for work undertaken with "The Hon the Irish Society" in Community projects in Co Derry/Londonderry.

## Regional Business Services Organisation

**Mr Alexander Coleman LLB LLM** lives in Comber. He is a partner in a firm of solicitors in Belfast, with a particular interest in town planning. He is currently a non-executive member of the Eastern Board and has been a Lay Member of the Eastern HSS Board's Independent Review Panels, reporting on non-clinical complaints. Mr Coleman was solicitor to the Department's Human Organs Enquiry and Chair of the local branch of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 2001.

## Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Well-being

**Ms Mary McMahon MSSc BA** lives in Annsborough, Co Down. Since June 2002, she has been a self-employed social policy researcher and was previously co-ordinator with the Belfast Traveller Support Group from 1996 to May 2002. Ms McMahon is currently a member of Amnesty International (Mid-Down branch), a member of the Committee on the Administration of Justice and also of UNICEF. She is a Belfast Harbour Commissioner and a member of the Research Ethics Committee.

## Chief Executives

Chief Executives will be announced early in the New Year.

### NOTE FROM EDITOR

If you have any issues you would like to see covered in the E-bulletin or any general questions on the reform please contact us by e-mailing [editor@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:editor@dhsspsni.gov.uk)