



7 April 2006

PB/LW/COM/10

Reform Unit
Room D4.30
Castle Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

For the attention of Maura O'Brien

Dear Sir/Madam

Consultation on Draft legislation to Establish Five New Integrated Health and Social Service Trusts

The above consultation document was received by the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery (NIPEC) in February 2006 with a closing date for receipt of responses of 7 April 2006. NIPEC was formally established in October 2002 as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), sponsored by the DHSSPS with a remit to support the practice, education and professional development of nurses and midwives in Northern Ireland.

The consultation paper specifically invites comments on the approach to determining the boundaries of the new Health and Social Services Trusts. Given NIPEC's specific focus, we have no issues to raise with the approach to determining the boundaries of the new Health and Social Services Trusts, and did support the creation of five such organisations in our response to the Review of Public Administration Consultation, March 2005.

This consultation paper does invite respondents to submit views on any other issues that should be taken into account in the reorganisation of the Trusts. NIPEC would wish to use this opportunity to reiterate important points raised in the earlier consultation response, particularly in relation to valuing the capacity of the current workforce. We are aware of the loss of valuable expertise during previous re-structuring initiatives and would strongly advocate appropriate impact assessments are undertaken as part of the change management process.

NIPEC's corporate area involved in Practice and Quality Development promotes the contribution of various activities to improving standards of care, contributing ultimately to the Clinical and Social Care Governance responsibilities of organisations. Successful practice and quality development activities require leadership at all levels in the organisation and investment in an infrastructure to promote and support their contribution to promoting and ensuring safe and effective care. With the proposed structural changes within the HPSS there is a risk that the infrastructure developed by some organisations will be lost during this time of significant change.

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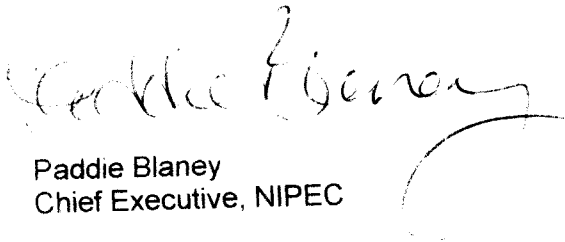


INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

NIPEC has recently developed and launched the Development Framework web site www.nipecdf.org. These resources have been developed to support the development of nurses and midwives to enable them make a significant contribution to the delivery of safe and effective care and services. The Development Framework online should form part of the professional development infrastructure within all of the new HPSS Trusts. Investment in resources, either human or otherwise, to support competence development is widely acknowledged as a fundamental requirement to improving and sustaining standards of care.

NIPEC is pleased to have had the opportunity to respond to this consultation document, and I submit the above points for your consideration.

Yours sincerely



Paddie Blaney
Chief Executive, NIPEC

