

From the Acting Chief Social Services Officer
Mr Sean Holland



Department of

Health, Social Services and Public Safety

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí

MÄNNYSTRIE O

Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 0561
Fax: 028 9052 0574
Email: sean.holland@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Our Ref:

Date: 10 February 2009

Circular: HSS (OSS) Training 1/2009

Chief Executive of each HSS Board
Chief Executive (Designate) of Health & Social Care Board
Chief Executive of each HSC Trust

For Information to:

Directors of Social Services of each HSS Board
Directors of Social Services of each HSC Trusts
Chief Executive, NISCC
Chief Executive (Designate) of Public Health Agency

Dear Colleague

PSS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING STRATEGY 2006-2016 SECURING THE PRIORITIES – 2009/2010

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS - 2009/2010

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Circular details arrangements for securing the strategic priorities of the PSS Development and Training Strategy (the Strategy) in Northern Ireland from 1 February 2009. They have been devised to take account of the changing context of social care provision with 5 new Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts established from 1 April 2007 and plans for one Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), to replace the 4 Health and Social Services Boards (HSS Boards) from 1 April 2009.

2. PSS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING STRATEGY 2006-2016

- 2.1 The Strategy is designed to provide a policy direction for the development of the PSS workforce through a period of major structural change and into the future. The main emphasis in the Strategy is on supporting the Government's Safety and Quality Agenda by ensuring the social work and social care workforce have access to relevant training and development opportunities so they are competent to undertake the work expected of them. The Strategy also aims to improve the qualification base of the social work and social care workforce and, in time, to link training and/or qualifications with registration with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC).
- 2.2 The Strategy is intended to meet the development and training needs of all social care employees from the point of entry into the workforce and throughout their careers. As such it covers:
- organisational development and training plans;
 - induction training;
 - basic training and/or qualifications linked to jobs and registration requirements;
 - ongoing development and training opportunities for all staff;
 - development of specialist expertise;
 - strategic leadership and professional management capability; and
 - the workplace as a 'field of learning'.
- 2.3 This Strategy is supplemented by other key learning and development strategies including:
- the revised Regional Children Order Training Strategy (2007) (COT Strategy) which sets out an overarching training framework for the children's services workforce designed specifically to facilitate improvements in the quality of children's services, and thereby promote better outcomes for children; and
 - the Development Strategy for PSS staff in Children's Services (2008) which supports the reform and modernisation programme in Children's Services.

3. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 With the structural changes flowing from the Review of Public Administration (RPA), it is necessary to ensure appropriate procedures are in place to ensure the priorities of both the Strategy and the COT Strategy in 2009/10 are secured.
- 3.2 From 1 February 2009 – 31 March 2009 the relevant nominated personnel for commissioning PSS training on behalf of each HSS Board will ensure the planning and bidding process for 2009/10 and the accounting arrangements for 2008/09 are maintained and that Trust plans, bids and end-year reports are completed and submitted within the agreed time frames.

4. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 For 2009/10 the following arrangements will apply:

- The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) through the Office of Social Services (OSS) will be responsible for the monitoring of end reports on 2008/09 spend and performance. These should be submitted to the OSS in the normal manner and within the agreed time frame.
- **From 1 April 2009, the HSCB will assume responsibility for commissioning PSS Development and Training activity within the statutory sector under contract linked to achieving the strategic priorities in the Strategy. The OSS will work with personnel in the HSCB to ensure a smooth transition of commissioning responsibilities from the 4 HSS Boards and to ensure that PSS training arrangements, including reporting and accountability requirements, are agreed and in place for 2009/10.**
- HSC Trusts will be responsible for the submission of training plans and bids for 2009/10 to the HSCB and the delivery of the commissioned training activity for 2009/10. As such, the Trusts will manage training resources including staff, plant and equipment associated with the process.

5. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The DHSSPS, through the OSS, will provide the HSC with clear direction regarding PSS training priorities, targets, outputs and outcomes to support:

- achievement of the strategic objectives of the PSS Development and Training Strategy;
- the Regional Social Work Degree Trainee Scheme;
- the provision of sufficient practice learning opportunities;
- contribution to delivery of professional social work training at qualifying and post-qualifying levels; and
- the continuous professional development needs of registered social workers and social care workers.

5.2 The HSCB will commission training to meet social work and/or social care training targets and monitor the performance of HSC Trusts in respect of training activity for 2009/10. This includes responsibility for allocating funding to support agreed training plans and targets and monitoring the achievement of training targets and expenditure of allocated funds. The HSCB will also work with the HSC Trusts to ensure existing or new regional arrangements for training are maintained and supported during 2009/10, including partnership arrangements with educational

- institutions to ensure the continuing relevance of professional training to service needs, regional consistency and value for money.
- 5.3 The HSCB is responsible for reporting to the OSS on the performance of HSC Trusts in respect of achievement of targets, outputs and outcomes and overall spend.
- 5.4 HSC Trusts will be responsible for providing training in accordance with allocated funding and training plans and targets as agreed including the management for training personnel, plant and equipment. Where appropriate, HSC Trusts should include other disciplines, agencies and/or sectors in their PSS training programmes to support better outcomes for service users and carers and to improve the quality and safety of service provision. In line with established practice, HSC Trusts should NOT charge social care staff from the voluntary sector for such training.
- 5.5 The 5 HSC Trusts will be responsible for streamlining their arrangements for planning and delivering training to ensure the new structural arrangements achieve their objectives of improving efficiency, economy and effectiveness. Where appropriate, HSC Trusts are expected to collaborate with the HSCB to agree and achieve regional consistency in unit costs for training activity.

6. RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

Baseline Funding

- 6.1 Funding to secure the provision of PSS training and/or achievement of relevant vocational or post qualifications for the social care workforce is currently included in Board baseline allocations by this Department.
- 6.2 Baseline funding is intended to support access of social workers and social care workers at all levels to relevant training and development opportunities and, as such, should be used for the following purposes:
- the Regional Social Work Trainee Scheme;
 - provision of practice learning opportunities;
 - post-qualifying training for social work staff;
 - statutory sector employer participation in Education and Training Partnership activities at qualifying and post qualifying levels ,including contribution to the delivery of regional programmes;
 - National Vocational Qualifications in Care for social care staff;
 - training for social work and social care staff in Children's Services, including training to support the implementation of the Reform Programme to modernise Children's Services;
 - in-service training to ensure social work and social care staff are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to practise safely and effectively and to remain eligible to re-register with the NISCC;

- where appropriate, relevant professional leadership and/or management training for social work/social care staff;
- training to support implementation of recommendations for social work or social care staff from case reviews, inspections and RQIA;
- training to support new and emerging policy or service developments;
- where appropriate, contribution to agreed shared training initiatives with other disciplines, agencies or sectors to strengthen partnership working, in respect of co-operating to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.
- appointment to (training and/or administrative staff) support training activity in agreed areas.

These training activities are not exhaustive and may change to reflect strategic priorities in terms of policy, quality, safety and/or improvements in service delivery.

- 6.3 Baseline budgets to support PSS training, as reported by the 4 HSS Boards in 2008/09 are expected, with any agreed uplifts, to continue to be available to secure PSS training within the statutory sector for social care and social work staff in line with para 6.2 above.

DHSSPS Funding

- 6.4 Additional funding has been provided since 1991 by the DHSSPS to supplement baseline PSS training budgets in order to secure specific strategic objectives including:
- PSS Training Strategy targets, in particular improving the qualification base of both social care staff (NVQs) and social workers (PQ);
 - the provision of practice learning as part of employer's partnership commitment to the delivery of the Degree in Social Work;
 - where necessary, supplementary funding to support agreed annual intake to Regional Social Work Degree Trainee Scheme;
 - where appropriate, professional supervision training and relevant professional leadership/management training;
 - Children's Services training in line with statutory requirements and service needs;
 - where appropriate, specific training activity to support agreed Departmental priorities; and
 - supporting registered social work and social care staff to undertake relevant continuous professional development at vocational or post-qualifying levels to maintain eligibility to re-register with the NISCC.

- 6.5 It is anticipated DHSSPS funding for commissioning PSS Training in the statutory sector will be delegated to the HSCB in 2009/10 and should continue to be used to supplement baseline PSS training budget for the purposes outlined in this Circular.
- 6.6 This funding to support HSC Trusts training plans is intended as additional to the Trust's own investment in training through the baseline budget or other supplementary funding and is limited. It may not be possible therefore to support the totality of a Trust's bid for supplementary funding and priority will be given to supporting the Degree in Social Work arrangements and training and/or qualification targets linked to NISCC re-registration requirements. As such, HSC Trusts should ensure training plans and associated bids for supplementary funding for 2009/10 to the HSCB are based on key priorities and reflect Value for Money.

7. PROCEDURES

- 7.1 HSS Boards, as commissioners of training, will be required to work with HSC Trusts to agree development and training priorities and plans for 2009/10 for social work and social care staff designed to support the acquisition of knowledge, skills and relevant qualifications in line with job roles, service requirements, robust social care governance practice and NISCC registration requirements.
- 7.2 Plans will distinguish training activity covered by baseline funding from additional training activity for which supplementary funding is required. The nature, volume and quality of training to be provided by each funding category should be explicit. Any proposed variation in the use of baseline funding and/or supplementary funding as agreed through the commissioning process will need the prior approval of the HSCB.
- 7.3 The OSS, in consultation with the HSS Boards, will agree relevant priorities, targets, outputs and outcomes for HSC Trust training/qualification activity for 2009/10.
- 7.4 In the event of any difficulties emerging in the delivery of agreed training plans in 2009/10 which may jeopardise the agreed volume or targets, the HSCB must be notified at the earliest opportunity. The HSCB will be responsible for resolving difficulties or performance issues with HSC Trusts. In the event of the HSCB being unable to resolve any reported difficulties, these should be reported to the OSS.

8. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 From 1 April 2009, the HSCB will co-operate with the OSS to ensure commissioning of PSS training for 2009/2010 is managed with minimum disruption. The OSS will provide ongoing advice and assistance to the HSCB in 2009/10 to ensure a smooth transition from the 4 HSS Boards and business continuity.
- 8.2 The HSCB, in collaboration with the OSS, will work to ensure commissioning and performance management arrangements for PSS Training from 2010 onwards build on existing good practice established by the OSS and the 4 HSS Boards. A revised Circular for commissioning and performance management arrangements for PSS Training from 2010 onwards will be issued by the OSS.

- 8.3 It is anticipated that the revised arrangements for commissioning and performance management of social care training will provide further opportunity to:
- allow for economies of scale;
 - secure regional standards and priorities;
 - allow for local planning and delivery;
 - make best use of scarce resources; and
 - make any adjustments required to reflect the new structural arrangements and any associated equity gaps.

9. **TIMESCALE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 9.1 The provision of this Circular will take effect from 1 February 2009.

10. **ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 10.1 HSC Trusts will continue to report through HSS Boards until 31 March 2009, following which they will report directly to the HSCB.
- 10.2 HSS Boards will report to OSS on the delivery of agreed training plans and allocated funding for 2008/2009 within agreed timescales.
- 10.3 The 5 HSC Trusts will submit interim and end year reports on the delivery of agreed plans and allocated funding for 2009/2010 to the HSCB within agreed timeframes.
- 10.4 The HSCB will report to the OSS on the outcomes of the interim monitoring and end year accountability reports from the 5 HSC Trusts within agreed timescales.

11. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

- 11.1 Any queries regarding the transitional arrangements for commissioning of PSS Training in the statutory sector for 2009/10 should be made directly to Veronica Callaghan in the first instance.

Veronica Callaghan
Office of Social Service
DHSSPS
Room C3.5
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ

Telephone No: (028) 9052 0729
Fax: (028) 9052 8159
E-mail: veronica.callaghan@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



SEAN HOLLAND
Acting Chief Social Services Officer