

Foreword

As Minister for Health I am determined to protect and improve the quality of health and social care services and ensure that these are safe, effective and focussed on the patient. Driving up the quality of services and outcomes for people will be my underlying priority. I am committed to working, not only to improve health but to tackle inequalities in health.

I am particularly pleased, therefore, to launch Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing for implementation. This Framework aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the population of Northern Ireland, reduce inequalities and improve the quality of health and social care in relation to mental health.

Service Frameworks aim to set out clear standards of health and social care that are both evidence based and measurable. They set out the standard of care that service users and their carers can expect, and are also to be used by health and social care organisations to drive performance improvement through the commissioning process. The Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing is one of four Frameworks to be issued for implementation to date and, that focus on the most significant causes of ill health and disability in Northern Ireland, namely: cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, cancer and mental health. Three further Frameworks, for learning disability, children and young people, and older people are currently at various stages of development.

This latest Framework has been developed actively involving a wide range of people across all aspects of health and social care including, patients, clients and carers, all of whose support has been invaluable. I would like to convey my sincere thanks, to you all, for your immensely important contribution.

The implementation of the standards contained within the Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing has the potential to improve the quality of mental health services for all the people of Northern Ireland.

Edwin Poots MLA
Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety