

2019/20

Business Plan

**Working together.
Making a difference.**



Terms and Definitions Used in this Plan

Advocacy Groups	Groups and networks representing and involving people who use services and carers
AYE	Assessed Year in Employment – the first year in assessed practice for newly qualified social workers
BSO	Business Services Organisation – provides a range of services for Health and Social Care organisations
CPD	Continuing Professional Development – ongoing learning and training
DoH	Department of Health – the government body responsible for Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland
FtP	Fitness to Practise – a registrant’s suitability to work in social work or social care
HR	Human Resources – manages staff well-being, development and their employment
HSC	Health and Social Care – the people, systems and facilities that provide medical and personal care and support
IAR	Individual Assessment Route – a study option for social workers to get a Social Care Council qualification
ICT	Information and Communications Technology –computers, networks, websites and Apps we use
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers – a worldwide body representing social work
IIP	Investors in People – an award for good standards in staff and organisation management and development
ISO	Interim Suspension Order – temporary action to stop a registrant working while we check out a very serious complaint
KPI	Key Performance Indicator – standards we use to measure how well we are doing our job
NI	Northern Ireland
PiP	Professional in Practice – Social Care Council qualifications for social workers who have been in practice more than a year
PRTL	Post Registration Training and Learning – 90 hours of learning that all registrants must do to keep their registration up to date
Registrant	A person approved for registration on the Social Care Register – social workers, social care workers and social work students
RQIA	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority – checks Health and Social Care organisations are doing their job well
SSSC	Scottish Social Services Council – registers social workers and social care workers working in Scotland
Sector Skills Council	The Social Care Council is part of a UK-wide Sector Skills Council set up to support employers to: develop the workforce
Social Care Council	Refers to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council – also described as the ‘Council’
VBR	Values Based Recruitment – checking that people joining social care understand the skills and qualities needed for the job
UK	United Kingdom

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Business Plan 2019/20

Introduction

We are pleased to present our Business Plan for the period April 2019 to March 2020. This is our third Business Plan from our 4-year Corporate Plan for 2017-2021.

Our Corporate Plan was developed using an outcomes based approach. The benefit of this approach is that our Corporate Plan clearly describes what we are trying to achieve and the difference we want our work to make for the social work and social care workforce. This includes promoting the benefits of regulation and standards and emphasising the contribution the workforce makes to improving and safeguarding the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.



When we developed our Corporate Plan, our stakeholders told us that we needed to focus on five key areas. We called these Strategic Themes:

- **Strategic Theme 1: Standards**
- **Strategic Theme 2: Regulation**
- **Strategic Theme 3: Workforce Development**
- **Strategic Theme 4: Systems Leadership, and**
- **Strategic Theme 5: Communication & Engagement.**

In this Business Plan, for each of the Strategic Themes we describe what we will do (our Strategic Actions) and what difference we will make (our Strategic Outcomes) to achieve our 4 year Corporate Plan.

We successfully delivered our objectives from the first two years of the Corporate Plan. This Business Plan builds on that work and explains, under each of the Strategic Themes, our objectives for 2019/20. These describe what more we will do this year, taking into account what we have already done and what we have learned. We will also develop a detailed Operational Plan to guide our work to deliver this Business Plan.

Through delivering our Corporate Plan we have learned that we need to keep doing more of what is working to support improvement in social work and social care practice. This includes sharing best practice through face to face engagement and continuing our development of accessible digital learning resources. We also need to continue supporting the regulated workforce and employers to embed the Standards of Conduct and Practice in their work. We rolled out registration to the Domiciliary and Day Care workforce and they are telling us that they are aware of the Standards, but that we need to do more to help develop their understanding. Through our learning and development work, we will engage with this workforce to demonstrate how the Standards apply to their day to day practice.

The social care workforce want the social care system to join up to support them in managing the many challenges they face. We will continue to work with employers and others in the social care system alongside the Department of Health to inform the strategic development of the workforce.

Through our work to promote careers in social work and social care, we have learned that there is an appetite among young people to follow a career in the social care workforce. Therefore, we will work with employers and education providers to develop a Learning and Improvement Framework that recognises qualifications and development opportunities for social care; and continue to support promotion and recruitment activities to make social work and social care attractive and accessible career choices.

By setting standards for education and training in social work, we ensure that social workers have the right knowledge and skills to deliver high quality services. We will work with all of our partners to improve and capture the difference that **social work** learning and professional development can make to people's experience of care and support.



Strategic Context

We need to take account of the environment we will be working in during 2019/20 and the need for us to be flexible and responsive to these challenges:

- **Brexit** – we are working with the Department of Health (DoH) and the other Health and Social Care bodies to ensure we will be able to operate our business as normal within the Brexit environment. We will ensure our services continue to be delivered to a high standard both during and post Brexit.
- **Transformation** – a number of projects have been sponsored by the DoH to support transformation for the social care sector. We will continue to work with the DoH to ensure the outcomes of these projects can be delivered during 2019/20 and beyond.
- **Landscape Review** – we are anticipating a review of our services and business to be carried out during 2019/20. The outcome of this Review will help shape the direction of our business for the next number of years.
- **Resources** – like other public sector organisations, we must manage our services within budget constraints and this presents many challenges including finding new and better ways to continue to deliver high quality services. We also recognise that budgetary challenges exist for social care employers which is why we are looking at innovative ways to support learning and development, for example by making better use of digital learning.
- **Technology** – the developments in technology present many opportunities for us to work in a smarter, more flexible and accessible way throughout our business. We will use technology and social media to support engagement, and get the balance right between electronic and face to face communication.
- **People working in Social Care** – the registered workforce has grown significantly over the last 3 years. There are now 42,000 people actively working in the social care sector. We therefore need to ensure that our services meet the needs of the social work and social care workforce. We will also use our data and workforce intelligence to help influence and shape social care transformation.



We want to ensure that we deliver the outcomes we aspired to when we developed our four year Corporate Plan. It will therefore be important that we deliver our Business Plan in the right way by doing the right things well.

We do not do this in isolation, but look to our partners and stakeholders to work with us.
This includes:

- **Participation Partnership for People Who Use Services and Carers**
- **Registrants Forum**
- **Workforce Development Partnership for Social Care**
- **Professional in Practice (PiP) Partnership for Social Work**
- **Registrants**
- **The Department of Health (DoH)**
- **People who use services and their carers**
- **Other regulators**
- **Employers, and**
- **Universities**



Assumptions for the Business Plan 2019/20

To deliver our Business Plan for 2019/20 we consulted with our staff, our Council, our Partnerships and the DoH and during the consultation, we made the following planning assumptions:

1

We will be allocated a revenue resource limit to maintain our services at the current level of performance and quality; and

2

No further responsibilities will be assigned to us without additional resource. (Our statutory functions are to register the social care workforce, regulate the standards of their conduct and practice, develop occupational standards for social workers and social care workers, ascertain the training required by social workers and social care workers, and set standards for and regulate social work education and training.)

Our Ambitions

During the consultation on our Business Plan, the Social Care Council developed the following ambitions to help shape the way in which we deliver our business. These are long term ambitions and we will start this year to build these ambitions into our Business Plan and the way in which we deliver our services.

Working in partnership with the DoH and our stakeholders, we aim to be:

- ***An Enabler for Social Care Transformation*** – supporting and upskilling the workforce
- ***A Sector Leader for Data Analysis*** – informing workforce planning and policy development
- ***An Agile and Innovative Regulator*** – using innovative approaches to improve our services
- ***A Centre of Excellence for Social Work & Social Care*** – supporting evidence based practice in social work and social care

Our Vision - Improved standards in social work and social care

Our Values

There are four key values which underpin our culture that set a foundation for how we work with those around us.

Respect
Integrity
Partnership
Excellence

We promote Respect

We are trusted by the sector to support good social work and social care practice. We respect the rights, dignity and inherent worth of individuals.

We work with Integrity

We work with integrity and are mindful of our responsibilities and hold ourselves and others to account. We are open, honest and respectful with all our stakeholders.

We believe in Partnership

We are a people focused organisation that is committed to doing what is right. Through genuine partnership, we work to ensure what we do makes a difference.

We strive for Excellence

We take a professional approach in putting standards at the heart of social work and social care. We proactively support the development of the social care workforce and we proactively support the development of our staff.

Our Purpose - To protect the public and safeguard service users through the regulation and development of the social work and social care workforce

Strategic Theme 1: Standards

Putting Standards at the heart of Social Work and Social Care Practice and Education & Training

The Social Care Council should put standards at the heart of Social Work and Social care practice and education and training, to support the delivery of effective social care services both now and in the future.

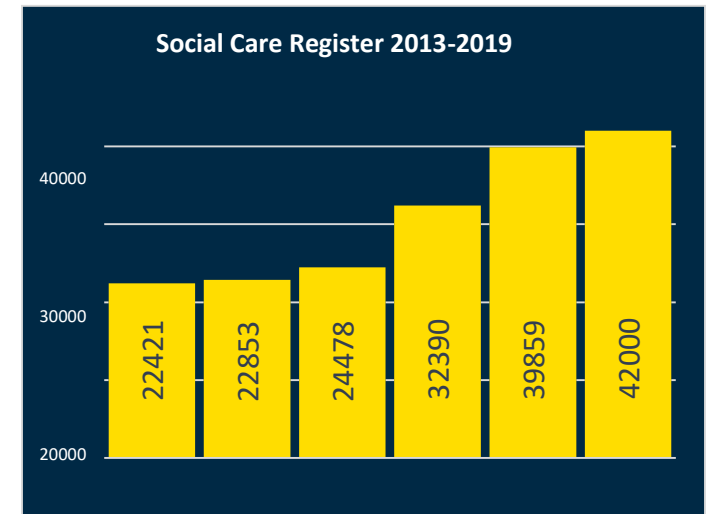
Delivering outcomes on Standards

Standards are the cornerstone of everything we do to strengthen the professionalism of the social work and social care workforce across NI. We have two strategic outcomes to achieve by 2021 in relation to Standards –

- Embed the Standards of Conduct & Practice; and
- Ensure employers meet their responsibilities in meeting the Standards

The social work and social care workforce includes 42,000 people, most of whom (35,000) are working in social care. Many of the 35,000 social care workers registered with us are relatively new to the register and at an early stage on their professional regulation journey.

We will therefore work with this workforce and their employers to assist them in developing their understanding of their responsibilities as a registered social care workforce. We will also work with employers and educators to develop the tools, knowledge and learning resources that will help them embed the Standards into their organisational policies and practices.



We will be an agile and innovative regulator using our digital learning platforms together with face to face engagement to support the workforce in applying the Standards. We will also set ourselves targets to increase the number of registrants and employers who are regularly using the Standards to inform and improve their social work and social care practice.

1

Standards - Achievements for 2018/19

Activities

What we did

Delivered a programme of Standards & engagement events to increase understanding about the benefits of registration and professional standards

Developed the Online Learning Zone to provide accessible free learning resources for registrants and employers

Consulted with registrants and employers about the impact of registration and standards on the quality of social care practice

Surveyed social work registrants about the impact of the Standards on professional practice and how best we can support them to develop their practice

Hosted Forums for Social Care Managers to build professional networks and update their practice

Outcomes

The difference we are making



400 Social Care Managers participated in 4 Forums

90% of participants said *“the learning from the event will improve my practice.”*

529 social workers responded to our survey about **Standards and Professional Regulation**

58% of respondents reported that the *“Standards are helping improve the quality of my practice.”*

850 social care workers and **109 employers** responded to our online survey for the Evaluation of Registration Policy Project

50% of social care registrants said they are *“using the Standards regularly at work”*

and

47% of employers said they are *“regularly using the Standards in workplace learning.”*



9 Learning Zone products launched this year including: **Adult Social Care, Social Care Induction, Safe and Compassionate Care**

- **700** users each month
- **88%** were new users

50 engagement events held involving:

- **900** Registrants
- **190** Social Care Managers
- **73** Service Users & Carers
- **27** Employers

1

What more we will do to support Standards during 2019/20 Putting Standards at the heart of Social Work and Social Care Practice and Education & Training

Strategic Actions (2017-2021)	Business Objectives During 2019/20 We Will –	Indicators of Success for 2019/20	Strategic Outcomes (2017-2021)
Work with registrants, employers and service users to support the consistent application of the Standards of Conduct and Practice	Deliver a programme of engagement with social care workers to raise awareness about the Standards and how to apply them in their work.	1. Increase by 10%, the number of social care workers reporting that they use the Standards regularly.	The Standards of Conduct and Practice are relevant, trusted, understood and embedded
	Deliver a programme of engagement with social workers to support the use of the Standards in their work and in their professional development.	2. Increase by 20%, the number of social workers reporting that the Standards are helping improve the quality of their social work practice.	
	Deliver a programme of engagement to raise awareness among people who use services, their carers and advocacy groups about registration and the Social Care Council Standards.	3. Increase by 10%, the number of people who use services, carers and advocacy groups engaging with us to learn more about registration and the Standards.	
	Work with employers and RQIA to develop ways to monitor use of the Employer Standards.	4. Increase by 20%, the number of employers using the Employer Standards regularly.	
			The Employer Standards support the delivery of effective social work and social care services

Strategic Theme 2: Regulation

Regulate the Workforce and Social Work Education and Training

The Social Care Council should ensure regulation is robust, agile, valued and trusted, to support good social work and social care practice.

Delivering outcomes on Regulation

Our role is to raise standards in social work and care practice; strengthen safeguards; and improve outcomes for people who use social work and social care services. We have set ourselves four strategic outcomes to further improve our regulatory function –

- **Registration is valued and trusted;**
- **We are an agile regulator continuously developing best regulatory practice;**
- **Social work education meets the needs of registrants and employers; and**
- **Fitness to Practise (FTP) decisions are trusted.**

It is important that we support registrants in maintaining their registration by making this as accessible as possible while promoting the value of registration both to registrants and those who receive social work and social care services. We will continue to review the ways in which we deliver our regulatory functions to ensure these meet changing needs and reflect best practice at all times.

Registration with the Social Care Council means that social workers and social care workers must work within the Standards of Conduct and Practice and remain fit and capable of delivering high quality services. By setting and monitoring standards for education and training, we support safe and effective practice. A small percentage of the workforce are referred to us to review their fitness to practise and while some are removed or suspended from the register, others require additional support and/or training to maintain their career. Following the significant increase in the size of the register the number of allegations we receive about a registrant's fitness to practise has also increased. It is therefore important that we continue to manage our processes efficiently and ensure we are staffed to deliver this function well.

2

Regulation - Achievements for 2018/19

Activities

What we did

Maintained the Social Care Register and updated processes for the **new database** and **online portal** to efficiently manage registration

Investigated and took action on Fitness to Practise Issues ensuring appropriate action was taken to maintain the integrity of the workforce and protect the public

Completed audits of PRTL for social workers and social care managers, and an audit of newly qualified social workers compliance with AYE standards - to ensure they are meeting the required Standards in their professional development.

Revised the Standards of Acceptance for Fitness to Practise issues to assist people in referring appropriate concerns to the Social Care Council

Published 'Relationships Matter' research to increase understanding of why people make complaints about social workers and to reduce causes of the complaints

Outcomes

The difference we are making

- **42,468** registrations maintained
- **8888** applications processed
- **307** registration suitability assessments completed
- **78** registrations updated to reflect Fitness to Practise decisions

- **37%** of registrants used the **Online Portal** to pay fees

- **34%** of registration **renewal applications** were online

Infographics to explain registration and fees were developed and shared

Analysis of complaints about social workers used in workshops/online guidance.

- 460** individuals referred to Fitness to Practise and the allegations assessed – resulting in:
- **401** new cases opened
 - **307** cases concluded
 - **70** Committee sittings for 142 considerations
 - **18** cases concluded by Consensual Disposal
 - **22** cases concluded and **5** decisions reviewed through Fitness to Practise Hearings

59 Sanctions applied regarding registrant's Fitness to Practise

- **44** Interim Order cases heard (26 reviews & 18 new)
- **15** Warnings
- **1** Undertakings
- **1** Conditions of Practice Order
- **2** Removals by Agreement
- **3** Suspension Order
- **29** Removal Orders

- **100%** of FtP referrals triaged within 3 days
- **100%** of Interim Order Hearings completed within 4 weeks
- **95%** of FtP cases closed within 15 months

PRTL Audit

- **64** registrant's audited
- **47** met the standards and **2** required additional information
- **13** deferred submission
- **2** voluntarily removed

40 social care workers involved in **Social Care PRTL Audit pilot**

AYE Audit

- **18** AYE submissions sampled and all met AYE Standards

2

What more we will do to support Regulation during 2019/20

Regulate the Workforce and Social Work Education and Training

Strategic Actions (2017-2021)	Business Objectives During 2019/20 We Will –	Indicators of Success for 2019/20	Strategic Outcomes (2017-2021)
Ensure the integrity and effectiveness of our registration, regulation and social work education functions	Support registrants and employers to meet their responsibilities in maintaining social care registration.	5. A minimum of 95% of registrants successfully maintain their registration throughout the year.	Social work and social care registration is valued and trusted
	Deliver an improvement programme to develop the online registration system so that it meets the needs of registrants.	6. A minimum of 60% of registrants use the online system to maintain their registration and pay their fee.	The Social Care Council is an agile regulator able to respond to changing need and demand
Improve the understanding of the role and contribution of regulation in securing public protection and enabling professionalism to thrive in social work and social care	Approve and assure standards of social work education and training at qualifying and post qualifying levels.	7. 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training are completed within required timescales and recommendations for improvement identified.	Social work education and training meets the needs of registrants and employers
	Work with the Degree Partnership to deliver improvements identified in the Review of the Degree in Social Work.	8. Improvement plan is developed for the Degree in Social Work and implementation is in progress.	
	Through engagement with the DoH, ensure our Fitness to Practise function has the right level of resource to effectively carry out our statutory duties.	9. All referrals and cases are managed in line with Fitness to Practise Rules and key performance indicators.	

Strategic Theme 3: Workforce Development

Develop the Social Work and Social Care Workforce

The Social Care Council should support the development of the social work and social care workforce to enable them to deliver safe, effective and values led care.

Delivering outcomes on Workforce Development

Our third Strategic Theme is about how we work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders to create a culture of continuous professional development. We have identified two strategic outcomes to support this work –

- **Social workers and social care workers are competent, compassionate and skilled in their practice, and**
- **That they have the knowledge, skills and competence to be able to respond to changing service needs in social care.**

There are 42,000 people actively engaged in the delivery of social care services across NI. This represents 5% of the entire NI workforce. The social care workforce provides compassionate, safe, quality and often complex care services to the NI population. It is therefore essential that the social care workforce is supported in a range of ways to suit their learning and development needs. In addition to developing a Learning and Improvement Framework for Social Care that recognises and supports career progression, we will continue to invest time and resources in developing our range of ICT enabled online learning and development programmes.



We are also an awarding body, delivering *Professional in Practice* (the professional development framework for social workers) to support continuous professional development. We will continue to develop this framework to ensure social workers have access to a range of learning to support existing and new practice. We will also work with social workers to ensure they use the full range of the framework to achieve recognition for their learning.

Our ambition is to become a Centre of Excellence for social work and social care, focused on supporting the workforce to improve practice underpinned by best available research and evidence. We will work with our registrants to deliver our ambition in this area, to support best practice and add value to the careers of those employed in social work and social care.

3

Workforce Development - Achievements for 2018/19

Activities

What we did

Revised and launched the Social Care Induction Standards Guidance and Manager's Programme to support managers and new members of the workforce

Reviewed and developed learning opportunities and qualifications for the social care workforce

Piloted Open Badges for social care training to support social care CPD and recognise in-service training and learning

Reviewed the Degree in Social Work to ensure its quality and curriculum delivers newly qualified social workers ready to meet service/sector needs

Developed and approved learning opportunities for PiP Framework to support social work CPD

Outcomes

The difference we are making

- **58 Ambassador** presentations to **380** students in schools/colleges
- **1254** young people engaged at Skills NI event
- **350 careers** teachers engaged at 2 regional conferences
- **230 registrants** participated in **4 lunchtime Seminars** and **19** watched online

5 organisations engaged in six month pilot to develop **Values-Based Recruitment** programme and guidance

- **51** people engaged at **3** Employment Academies
- **22** people engaged in Belfast City Council Social Care taster sessions
- **17** people new to social care gained employment

- **2 Open Badges** developed for PRTL and Deprivation of Liberty
- **4** members of pilot group achieved Open Badges

- **154** domiciliary care training events delivered
- **£69.5k** funding disbursed to support training costs

- **Level 4 Certificate in Leadership and Management** for Adult Social Care launched

- **225** social work students graduated from the Degree
- **177** new social workers employed and started the AYE
- **280** social workers engaged in PiP information sessions
- **176** social workers achieved PiP Awards
- **546** social workers achieved part PiP Awards

PiP Framework Extended

- **Work Based Learning Route** offering recognition for in-service learning and development
- **PiP Doctorate Programme** extending the academic range of PiP Awards

3

What more we will do to support Workforce Development during 2019/20 Develop the Social Work and Social Care Workforce

Strategic Actions (2017-2021)	Business Objectives During 2019/20 We Will –	Indicators of Success for 2019/20	Strategic Outcomes (2017-2021)
Promote and enable a culture of continuous learning and development in social work through the Professional in Practice framework.	Develop proposals for consultation on a system of revalidation to link Post Registration Training and Learning requirements with the Professional in Practice Framework for the social work profession.	10. Proposal agreed for consultation on revalidation of social worker registration through the PiP Framework.	Social workers and social care workers will have the knowledge, skills and competencies to be able to respond and adapt to changing service needs in social care.
Work in partnership with stakeholders to create a learning and improvement framework to ensure the social care workforce is skilled, confident and competent.	Work in partnership with stakeholder organisations to deliver careers and recruitment campaigns for social work and social care.	11. A minimum 75% of participants who engaged with the events and campaigns report an increased awareness of social work and social care careers.	
	Develop a learning and improvement framework for social care workers to integrate qualifications and professional development into the career structure.	12. A Learning and Development Framework for Social Care is in place.	
	Implement the Transformation project for Domiciliary Care Training to improve workforce skills and standards.	13. A minimum of 75% of those completing the training report it has improved their knowledge and will improve their practice.	
	Develop our resources for our digital learning platform to provide registrants and employers with greater access to learning and employment resources.	14. Increase by 20% the number of users engaging with our Learning Zone resources.	Social workers and social care workers are competent, compassionate, values led, confident and skilled in their practice.

Strategic Theme 4: Systems Leadership

Promote a systems leadership approach across the social care sector

The Social Care Council should promote a systems leadership approach to contribute to capacity building that will support leadership at all levels.

Delivering outcomes on Systems Leadership

Through our partnership work we are promoting and supporting a collective leadership approach within the social work and social care sector with the aim of improving quality in practice.

Through our partnership approach we are working to support the ambition of the HSC Leadership Strategy. We have supported and recognised social work leadership programmes within the *Professional in Practice* framework, and we have worked with stakeholders in the social care sector to build capacity for collective and collaborative leadership.

As the workforce regulator, the information and intelligence we hold about the social work and social care workforce is unique. Our ambition is to use our workforce intelligence to support the leadership challenges in social work and social care. Our data and intelligence can help to inform new thinking and policy development to support the objectives within the Programme for Government. We are building our capacity to gather and analyse the workforce information available to us.

In our role as Sector Skills Council*, we work with strategic groupings and approved skills bodies to address common issues across sectors and deliver on standards and qualifications. We develop and support strategic partnerships with key stakeholders to position the workforce and the needs of employers at the heart of future learning and skills policy.

We have continued to work with the Department of Health (NI) and other stakeholders to support a number of Transformation Projects and have been actively involved in sharing our data intelligence to inform policy such as the Power to People Report. We have also used our workforce intelligence to inform and influence other stakeholders, including local councils in their Community Planning role. This is important to ensure that the contribution of the social work and social care workforce is recognised as a key part of communities and community cohesion. We will continue to have conversations with local and central government to ensure social work and social care forms part of their shared plans.



*The Social Care Council is part of a UK-wide Sector Skills Council, licensed to support employers to: develop the workforce; reduce skills gaps and shortages; improve productivity and learning supply

4

Systems Leadership - Achievements for 2018/19

Activities

What we did

Strengthened connections between social care leaders to support collective leadership

Engaged sector leaders in workforce modelling and use of technology to support service improvement

Participated in DoH transformation and Brexit projects and work streams to provide expert knowledge and facilitate social care workforce engagement

Shared knowledge with local, national and international colleagues to promote best practice and innovation

Engaged and informed Local Council Community Planning about social care economic and community contribution

Outcomes

The difference we are making

30 Domiciliary Care Workers involved in 3 focus groups for DoH '**Power to People**' consultation on the views and experiences of front line practice

Leadership workshop hosted for our **Workforce Development Partnership** to support development of collective leadership culture that recognises and promotes collaboration and quality improvement.

Commissioned internationally renowned research 'Voices of Social Work through the Troubles' – exploring social workers' role during the NI conflict

Workforce planning and sustainability supported through workshops with social care managers and leaders for the **Domiciliary Care Systems Modelling project**

Our experience and knowledge has been shared with approx. 800 social work influencers from across 30 different countries including CLEAR Educational conference and IFSW Dublin seminar

Meetings with UK and Ireland regulators to monitor standards of education and regulation and share learning.

3 roundtable workshops were hosted for voluntary sector leaders. Participants have committed to establishing a network to discuss social work and care strategic issues

4 local Council Community Planning Leads have increased awareness of the benefits of including social care provision in community planning.

Brexit scenario planning undertaken within the HSC project board to manage transition effectively.

4

What more we will do to support Systems Leadership during 2019/20 Promote a systems leadership approach across the social care sector

Strategic Actions (2017-2021)	Business Objectives During 2019/20 We Will –	Indicators of Success for 2019/20	Strategic Outcomes (2017-2021)
Use our sector intelligence, engagement, networks and alliances to promote a collaborative working environment that will enable fresh ideas and approaches to inform the strategic development of the social care workforce	Work with Government Departments, Community Planning Leads and employers to inform strategic workforce planning and policy development.	15. The Social Care Council actively participates in strategic projects and work streams for social work and social care planning and development.	Capacity is built to use collective intelligence to effect real, meaningful and positive change in social work and social care standards and practice
	Develop our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our datasets for workforce demographics, qualifications, training and learning.	16. The Social Care Council produces workforce intelligence reports which inform business and strategic planning.	
Work in partnership with key stakeholders to strengthen capacity building to support and develop systems leadership at all levels across the social care sector	Strengthen engagement with our partnerships to inform strategic workforce planning and development.	17. Social Care Council partnerships and sub-committees are engaged in strategic sessions to debate issues affecting social work and social care workforce planning and development.	A systems leadership environment is created which provides for improved understanding and connection across the sector
	Work with social work and social care leaders to build collaborative partnerships to support transformation outcomes.	18. Social work and social care leaders participate in our events and share their insight and expertise to support transformation.	

Strategic Theme 5: Communication and Engagement

Communicate, Connect and Engage

The Social Care Council should ensure there is effective and meaningful communication and engagement to improve the understanding of what the Council does and the value of the social work and social care workforce.

Delivering outcomes on Communication and Engagement

Since our establishment in 2001, communication has remained a key theme: recognising that to deliver our statutory functions we need to effectively communicate with our registrants and stakeholders to successfully deliver our business. Our Corporate Plan expanded this to include engagement and we developed three strategic outcomes –

- Improving the public's perception of the social care workforce;
- Increasing confidence in the contribution the workforce makes; and
- Ensuring the views, experience and expertise of people who use services and carers inform our business.

Communication and engagement with our registrants and others comes in many forms and we delivered a programme of events, seminars and face to face engagement last year. We also developed a Digital Transformation Policy to underpin how we will use ICT to communicate – in particular through the use of social media.

We have seen a solid growth in the use of social media and how it can help real time connections and the delivery of key messages. We will continue to build our social media platform during 2019/2020 including launching our new website to better meet the needs of those who access our information and services in this way.

We are continually listening to our stakeholder feedback and during 2018/19 we received over 70,000 emails and phone calls. We recognise that this represents 70,000 times when we can make the experience of engagement with us a positive and valuable one. We will find ways to gather and use that information to inform how we improve the delivery of our business.



5

Communication and Engagement - Achievements for 2018/19

Activities

What we did

Delivered communications campaigns to promote our business

Extended our digital platforms to include Instagram and Linked In

Engaged with employers, careers advisers and education providers to promote social work and social care careers

Engaged with local representatives to increase understanding of our role as social care regulator

Supported stakeholders to engage with our services and access information about what we do

Developed our capacity to involve people who use services and carers in our work

Outcomes

The difference we are making

Campaigns delivered across our website, social media and e-zines including:

- World Social Work Day
- Social work and social care careers
- Workforce registration
- Social Work Awards
- Professional in Practice

E-zines produced for **social work and social care** registrants to keep them in touch with our work

82 videos produced to promote social work and social care achievements on digital platforms

#Yes2SocialCare video campaign celebrating careers in care reached 27,980 people



- **14,000 website visits** (average) per month
- **49,000 page views** (average) on our website for social work and social care news and resources.

5,254 social media followers across all platforms

Communications and Engagement Team won **Skills NI 'Best Stand'** for social media promotion

4 new members recruited to the **Participation Partnership** to inform and advise on our work

60 people who use services **engaged** through partner events to extend **our capacity to involve** people who uses services and carers in our work

- **82,380 people supported** by our Customer Services Team
- **79% of people** responding to the Customer Survey reported positive satisfaction with the service

5

What more we will do to support Communication and Engagement during 2019/20 Communicate, Connect and Engage

Strategic Actions (2017-2021)	Business Objectives During 2019/20 We Will –	Indicators of Success for 2019/20	Strategic Outcomes (2017-2021)
<p>Through our Communications and Engagement Strategy we will:</p>	<p>Deliver an awareness campaign to promote the role and value of social work and social care as a regulated workforce upholding standards</p>	<p>19. Positive news and key messages about social work and social care are shared with key stakeholders through face-to face engagement, digital communications and local media.</p>	<p>Improved public perception of social workers and social care workers as a workforce that is committed to upholding standards.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new and progressive understanding of the role and contribution of workforce regulation in social care. 	<p>Deliver a programme of engagement with registrants to support them in their practice.</p>	<p>20. The Social Care Council directly engages with a minimum of 60% of the registered workforce through face-to face engagement or digital communications.</p>	<p>Increased confidence in the contribution of workforce regulation in serving and protecting the public, minimising risk and reducing harms by embedding and raising standards.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build, develop and maintain effective and supportive relationships with service users, carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders focusing on listening, learning and evolving. 	<p>Develop our digital resources to improve our connections with registrants, employers and our stakeholders.</p> <p>Demonstrate how the views of people who use services, carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders are informing our business and making a difference.</p>	<p>21. Social media plans are delivered, including the remodelling of the Social Care Council website and online registration service.</p> <p>22. Evaluation of our work with stakeholder partnerships and forums demonstrates that we are developing our capacity to use partnership, and co-production effectively.</p>	<p>The views, experience and expertise of people who use services and carers in informing our business is valued and can be evidenced.</p>

Infrastructure and Leadership

People, Resources, Governance, Quality, Systems,

To support the delivery of this Business Plan, the Social Care Council will ensure it has the right infrastructure and leadership in place across its people, resources, governance, quality and systems.

Delivering outcomes on Infrastructure and Leadership

To support the delivery of the Business Plan we must have the right infrastructure and leadership in place. This is across the areas of – People, Resources, Governance, Quality Improvement and Systems.

We were delighted to be awarded both IIP Silver and the IIP Good Practice Award for Health and Wellbeing in 2018. We established a small number of IIP oversight groups to lead on specific areas to improve the workplace experience and to ensure we deliver our IIP action plan.

We also launched our new ICT Registration and Regulation system during 2018/19, following months of development and testing. We will continue to make improvements to the new system during 2019/20 to ensure it is meeting the needs of those who use the system but also to find ways to streamline processes and procedures.

We have been working on agreeing our risk appetite and strategic risks so that we can effectively manage our risks during 2019/20 across all areas of our business. We will continue with this work during 2019/20. We were pleased to continue to receive satisfactory assurance in our risk audits and will aim to maintain that good level of governance going forward.

Having the right people in the right place doing the right things well is at the heart of what we are trying to achieve for all our staff, and we will work with our partners in the Business Services Organisation (BSO) to support the development of a HR Strategy and Learning and Development Strategy. This will take place alongside activity to agree and embed our values and behaviours across the organisation and actively drive up quality standards in all areas of work.



Infrastructure and Leadership - Achievements for 2018/19

Activities *What we did*

Staff development managed and their contribution to business development supported

IIP Silver accreditation and Health and Well Being Awards achieved - achieved and action plan developed

Intranet and staff newsletter- launched to improve internal communications

Performance monitored – Delivery on objectives and KPIs reported and mitigating actions implemented

Resources managed to ensure finances will meet breakeven target and value for money is achieved

Registration and Regulation ICT system - in place and development work ongoing

Outcomes *The difference we are making*

Staff development and well-being programmes recognised by IIP

IIP Silver and Good Practice Award for Health and Wellbeing - first NI public sector organisation to achieve this

2.79% staff absence remaining below our KPI of 3.5%

Feedback from IIP assessment:

- There is a clear structure supported by good team work
- There is a willingness to involve and listen

4 staff workshops held to update on business progress and share ideas on planning for 2019/20.

2 Risk management workshops were held for Council and managers to review risk processes, carry out environmental scanning and plan for 2019/20

Risk Training provided for new members and to refresh existing knowledge.

Finances managed breakeven achieved with an £8k surplus

Prompt payment targets met for 30 days and 10 days payments

Online Registration Services were available **98%** of the time. **10,000** portal sessions logged (monthly average)

SOCRATES Change Board established to support user input from all business areas in ongoing development of the database and Portal service

Quality Improvement projects established for

- Registration maintenance
- Social Care PRTL

What more we will do to support Infrastructure and Leadership during 2019/20

People, Resources, Governance, Quality and Systems

Strategic Actions (2017-2021)	Business Objectives During 2019/20 We Will –	Indicators of Success for 2019/20	Strategic Outcomes (2017-2021)
Effectively deploy and engage our Corporate Services to support the successful delivery of our Corporate Plan	People Deliver the actions identified for 2019/20 business year arising from the Investors in People Report.	23. liP Oversight Groups, which involve staff from across the organisation, ensure the successful implementation of the liP Action Plan and develop any new actions arising from the 2019 HSC Staff Survey.	The Social Care Council is an employer of choice; employing, developing and retaining hard working, skilled staff who are committed to delivering quality services.
	Resources Manage our resources to maximum effect and within regulatory and statutory guidelines and legislation.	24. Business Plan for 2019/20 is successfully delivered and the Social Care Council achieves its break even target at the end of the financial year.	Resources are deployed within robust and accountable governance frameworks to ensure the Social Care Council is capable of delivering its commitments.
	Governance Deliver effective governance including risk and information management in line with relevant legislation and guidance.	25. Council receives assurance through audit and governance reports that the Social Care Council is delivering safe and effective governance.	Business is delivered against good governance best practice to meet all statutory, legal and professional obligations.
	Quality Deliver on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2019/20 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan.	26. Staff are supported to engage in quality improvement activity within their own business area and as part of projects working across the organisation.	Quality improvement is fully integrated in all aspects of Social Care Council business.
	Systems Deliver our 2019/20 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.	27. SOCRATES Change Control Board ensures that system changes and developments are planned to deliver improved services, taking into account user feedback.	Technology is used to improve systems and processes to support delivery of front line registration and regulation services.

Appendix I - Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

These Key Performance Indicators will be used to demonstrate how effectively we achieve against our 2019/20 Business Plan Objectives. Additional KPIs will be used in operational plans and workplans across the organisation.

	What We Will Measure	KPIs
Theme 2 Registration	1. We will provide quality services that achieve a minimum of 85% stakeholder satisfaction throughout the year	85%
	2. We will process 100% of completed applications/renewals within 20 working days of submission.	100% within 20 working days
	3. We will update the register for all Fitness to Practise decisions within 2 working days of receipt of the information.	2 working days
Theme 2 Regulation (social workers & social care workers)	4. We will triage all referrals to the Fitness to Practise Team within 3 working days.	3 working days
	5. We will conclude 100% of ISO hearings within 4 weeks of referral.	100% within 4 weeks
	6. We will conclude 90% of Fitness to Practise cases within 15 months of opening the case.	90% within 15 months
Theme 2 Regulation (social work education)	7. We will complete 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training within timeframes agreed with providers and identify recommendations for improvement.	100%
Infrastructure People	8. We will ensure our staff absence levels do not exceed 3.5% during the year.	3.5%
Infrastructure Finance	9. We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying 95% of undisputed invoices within 30 days	95% within 30 days
	10. We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying 75% of undisputed invoices within the 10 day prompt payment target.	75% in 10 days
	11. We will manage our finances to achieve financial breakeven target of 0.25% or £20k (whichever is greater).	0.25% £20k
Infrastructure Systems	12. We will ensure the Online Registration Portal is available at least 98% of time during the year.	98%

Appendix II - Evaluation – Tracking Achievement of ‘Indicators of Success’

Our Corporate Plan for 2017–2021 was developed using an outcomes based approach. The benefit of this approach is that our Corporate Plan clearly describes what we are trying to achieve and the difference we want our work to make for the social work and social care workforce.

This Business Plan will be supported by our Evaluation Framework and Performance Management Framework. We use these tools to help evidence our progress, highlight what is working well and identify areas for improvement. The Evaluation Framework supports us to undertake evaluation on two levels:

- ✓ **Engage with our key stakeholders** – DoH (as our sponsor department), registrants, employers, partners, service users and carers - to gather their views on our progress against the five Strategic Themes; and
- ✓ **Be a learning organisation** – evaluating the impact and quality of our work and using this to improve what we do in the future.

Reporting on the outcomes of the Business Plan activities

Our evidence will be gathered using a combination of evaluation tools and activities. A summary of the sources for this information is provided in the tables overleaf. This will include:

- Analysing routinely generated business information,
- Targeted surveys,
- Focus groups,
- Audits, and
- Feedback from engagement activities and events.

Updates on progress against the Evaluation Framework are included in quarterly performance reports to Council and we will be publishing performance reports on our website from 2019/20 in addition to our Annual Report and Accounts. Our website is www.niscc.info

We will also be producing a ‘Report Card’ for 2019/20 to demonstrate the impact of the work we have completed against each of the strategic outcomes. These will be shared with our stakeholder groups and published through our social and digital media to raise awareness of the benefits of social work and social care regulation, standards and workforce development.

Evaluation – Summary of Information Sources

	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
1. Standards	1. Increase by 10%, the number of social care workers reporting that they use the Standards regularly.	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of Registration Policy – tracking survey/focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms • PRTL audit submissions
	2. Increase by 20%, the number of social workers reporting Standards are helping improve the quality of their social work practice.	58%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social workers and professional regulation – tracking survey/focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms • PRTL audit submissions
	3. Increase by 10%, the number of people who use services/ carers/ advocacy groups engaging to learn about registration/standards.	60 individuals 15 orgs/groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of Registration Policy – focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms
	4. Increase by 20%, the number of employers using the Employer Standards regularly.	47%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of Registration Policy – survey & focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms • RQIA regulation activity feedback
	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
2. Regulation	5. A minimum of 95% of registrants successfully maintain their registration throughout the year.	90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOCRATES registration reports • Registration KPI report • QI project for registration maintenance • Customer Service – monthly feedback survey • PRTL Audit – outcomes report
	6. A minimum of 60% of registrants use the online system to maintain their registration and pay their fee.	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOCRATES registration reports • Customer Service feedback
	7. 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training are completed within required timescales and recommendations for improvement identified.	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly performance management reports • Degree Partnership meeting actions • QA monitoring outcomes - Degree in Social Work and Practice Learning • PiP Partnership Committee meetings • QA monitoring outcomes - Professional in Practice
	8. Improvement plan is delivered for the Degree in Social Work.	New indicator for 2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly performance management reports • Degree Partnership meeting actions • Strategic Advisory Group meeting actions • Degree Programmes - Management Board meeting actions
	9. All referrals and cases are managed in line with Fitness to Practise Rules and key performance indicators.	100% of referrals and 90% of cases (full details included in KPIs on page 25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOCRATES Fitness to Practise reports • Fitness to Practise Team KPI report • Fitness to Practise Committee KPI report

	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
3. Workforce Development	10. Proposal agreed for consultation on revalidation of social worker registration through the PiP Framework.	New project for 2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project group updates • Feedback from participants
	11. A minimum 75% of participants who engaged with the events and campaigns report an increased awareness of social work and social care careers.	New indicator for 2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms • Ambassador feedback
	12. A Learning and Development Framework for Social Care is in place.	New indicator for 2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project group updates • Feedback from participants
	13. A minimum of 75% of those completing the Domiciliary Care training report it has improved their knowledge and will improve their practice.	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation forms from participants • Follow up surveys/meetings with managers of those participating • Project progress reports
	14. Increase by 20% the number of users engaging with our Learning Zone resources.	700 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website analytics • User feedback surveys
	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
4. Systems Leadership	15. The Social Care Council actively participates in strategic projects and work streams for social work and social care planning and development.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Team updates/ reports • Updates to Council meetings from Council Members and senior staff on projects they lead on/participate in
	16. The Social Care Council produces workforce intelligence reports which inform business and strategic planning.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Development Partnership reports • PiP Partnership Committee reports • Degree Partnership reports • Monthly performance management reports • Reports published on Registration & Fitness to Practise trends
	17. Social Care Council partnerships and sub-committees are engaged in strategic sessions to debate issues affecting social work and social care workforce planning and development.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Strategic sessions – action notes • Partnership and Committee meetings – action notes • Joint planning sessions across partnership groups – feedback and action notes
	18. Social work and social care leaders participate in our events and share their insight and expertise to support transformation.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action notes • Feedback from participants

	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
5. Communication and Engagement	19. Positive news and key messages about social work and social care are shared with key stakeholders through face-to face engagement, digital communications and local media.	Registrant E-zines issued quarterly Campaigns planned for business activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Team monthly report • Direct engagement – participant feedback • Email campaigns - MailChimp reports on opening rates • Quarterly E-zines for social work and social care registrants - MailChimp reports on click rates/subscribers • Website news – analytics reports on engagement and user behaviours • Local media stories - media monitoring reports • Social media – analytics and insights reports on reach and reactions
	20. The Social Care Council directly engages with a minimum of 60% of the registered workforce through face-to face engagement or digital communications.	50%	
	21. Social media plans are delivered, including the remodelling of the Social Care Council website and online registration service.	Social media plans developed Web remodeling initiated 2018/19	
	22. Evaluation of our work with stakeholder partnerships and forums demonstrates that we are developing our capacity to use partnership, and co-production effectively.	New indicator for 2019/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action notes from meetings • Feedback from members/participants
	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
Infrastructure	23. liP Oversight Groups ensure successful implementation of liP Action Plan / develop any new actions arising from Staff Survey.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action notes • Feedback from participants • Outcomes from HSC Staff Survey • Recommendations from liP Assessor
	24. Business Plan for 2019/20 is successfully delivered and the Social Care Council achieves its break even target	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly performance management reports • Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20
	25. Council receives assurance through audits and governance reports that the Social Care Council delivers safe, effective governance.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit and Risk Management Committee reports • NI Audit Office report • Internal Audit Reports
	26. Staff are supported to engage in QI activity within their own business area and as part of projects working across the organisation.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action notes • Feedback from participants • Feedback from end users
	27. SOCRATES Change Control Board ensures system changes/ developments are planned to deliver improved services, taking into account user feedback.	Ongoing programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action notes • Feedback from participants • Feedback from end users

May 2019



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