



The Regulation and
Quality Improvement
Authority

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

ACTIONS FOR DELIVERY

2022-27

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FOREWORD

The vision, core purpose and commitments of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) are set out in this draft Strategic Plan covering the next three to five years, along with our proposed actions for delivery.

We look forward to engaging with people across our communities in the coming weeks to discuss this Plan. It is essential that patients, service users, and their families, as well as service providers and those working in health and social care, contribute to and shape the way in which RQIA works to safeguard and improve safety and quality in health and social care services.

RQIA's powers and duties are set out in law, mainly in The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, The Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, and The Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.

The Department of Health Framework Document (2011) which sets out the roles and relationships of each of the Health and Social Care Bodies in Northern Ireland states that

"The RQIA is an independent health and social care regulatory body, whose functions include giving the Minister, through the Department, independent assessments of the quality, safety and availability of Health and Social Care Services; and regulating effectively those services which it registers and inspects."

The Authority is the RQIA's governing body. Authority Members are appointed by the Minister for Health. We are responsible and accountable to the Minister for ensuring that the RQIA fulfils its statutory functions, and works towards the overall aims and objectives set by the Department of Health and approved by the Minister. We are also responsible and accountable for setting RQIA's strategic direction, and ensuring the efficient, economic and effective use of our staff and other resources.

The Authority has handed down responsibility for the RQIA's day to day working to the Chief Executive. However, the Authority remains ultimately accountable for the totality of the RQIA's actions and performance; and key decisions - especially around strategic issues or anything which affects the RQIA's independence, impartiality or integrity, stay under the control of the Authority.

In planning how to deliver our duties, we have developed our Statement of Core Purpose

"To work together with others to improve safety and quality in health and social care services".

This Statement is underpinned by the shared values of the health and social care system, and the absolute requirement for care to be compassionate, effective and focussed on achieving the best outcome for each individual. It takes account of the impacts of COVID-19, recent public inquiries and the overarching need for transformational change of the HSC system.

The Authority is committed to give assurance to the public, through using its statutory powers to provide robust independent challenge and verification. The Authority is determined to inform, influence and drive change and improvement across the whole system, by working in partnership with patients, service users, families and carers, as well as with service providers, and with other regulators.

Please take the opportunity to get involved in shaping how RQIA tackles its statutory duties, by responding to the Consultation.



Christine Collins, MBE

Interim Chair

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Many people living in Northern Ireland access health and social care services at some part, or at many times, in their lives. People expect care and support to be safe, of high quality, to be compassionate and to assist each person achieve their best possible outcome. RQIA believes that too and our role is to register, inspect and report on safety and quality of health and social care services, to the Department of Health and the Minister, and to improve safety and quality as a result of our requirements for services to improve.

We gather a lot of data about services, and we ask people about their experience of health and social care services, both people who use services, their families and people who work there. We talk to other organisations who also have a lot of information about the safety, quality and experience of services.

We know that services need to change and are changing. There is a drive towards integrated planning, commissioning and delivery of services, and plans to improve access to urgent care and hospitals services. Social care is changing, with a focus on supported independence, human rights and safeguarding.

Regulation has to change too, to ensure that throughout and across services there remains a focus on improving safety and quality. That means equipping ourselves with technology to enable us to use the information we have so that we anticipate emerging issues and take preventative steps, and that we respond quickly to areas of risk.

Supporting and developing our staff is vital, so that we can carry out our role across a wide range of different types of services. Listening to service users, families, staff and those who represent a wide range of experiences is our priority.

We look forward to meeting you, listening to you, involving you in what we do, sharing and shaping our plans for improving Regulation.



Briega Donaghy
Chief Executive

ABOUT THE REGULATION AND QUALITY AND IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

The RQIA is Northern Ireland's independent health and social care regulator.

RQIA's relationships with the Department of Health, other HSC bodies and people in Northern Ireland are driven by **RQIA's Duties** to:

- Keep the Department informed about the availability and quality of services drawing on its regulatory functions;
- By review and inspection, encourage improvement in the quality of health and social care services; and
- Register, inspect, and enforce adherence to standards in certain independent sector providers.

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES.

OUR CORE PURPOSE

RQIA's core purpose is:

Working together to improve safety and quality in health and social care services.

How RQIA's core purpose supports the health and Social Care System in Northern Ireland and is based on the programme for Government's draft outcomes framework.

RQIA will aim to ensure a Health and Social Care System that delivers on commitments:

- Our Children and Young people have the best start in life
- We all enjoy long healthy active lives
- We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives
- We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

RQIA will promote the department of Health's integrated system of health and social care designed to:

- Secure improvement in the physical and mental health of the people in Northern Ireland;
- Secure improvement in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness; and
- Secure improvement in the social wellbeing of people in Northern Ireland

To achieve our core purpose we have set our strategic objectives

OUR CORE PURPOSE

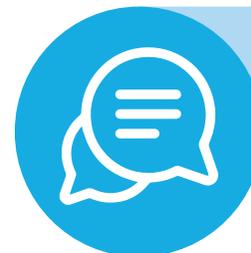
Improving safety and quality in health and social care services

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (OUTCOME FOCUSED)



REGULATION

Provide an independent view on the quality of health and social care services against required standards through robust regulation including inspection, reporting and enforcement



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Building relationships and partnerships that expand our knowledge and add expertise to achieving our objectives



IMPROVING SAFETY & QUALITY

Improve safety and quality through effective information gathering, involving listening and creating networks to share learning, good practice and adopt improvement



INFORMING SERVICE TRANSFORMATION

Informing service transformation by using our findings to influence policy decisions, raise standards and shape future services

DELIVERING ON OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS WE WILL TAKE AND HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

OUTCOME

Provide an independent view on the quality of health and social care services against required standards through Regulation

- Develop ways for **service users and families to share their experience** of services and their concerns, and ensure this evidence is firmly rooted in our regulation processes and decisions
- Provide an **effective registration** service to ensure providers have the ability to provide high quality, sustainable services from the outset and when things change in their organisation
- **Implement a service inspection programme** across regulated services, including care homes and childrens services, and hospital and community mental health and learning disability services, and acute care, using intelligence led risk assessment, and evidence the steps we have taken to secure quality improvements
- **Report on the findings of inspections** in a timely way and ensure publication enables stakeholders to have appropriate access to information on services to meet their needs
- Develop a service **Review programme**, based on intelligence and stakeholder engagement, Report on findings and make recommendations on service and system wide improvements required to ensure safety, effective and compassionate care
- Ensure **transparency** on our **Framework for Regulation** - the elements of how we go about regulation consistently, proportionately and underpinned by human rights - and ensure through clear guidance that providers can effectively engage with the processes
- Advise the Department of Health on **unregulated services** to consider in reviewing the scope of Regulatory legislation

We will measure this by:

Registration

- Report % of registration completed within 3 months of all required information being received
- Surveyed views of providers and review of complaints raised with us about registration
- Actual cost of processing compared to any available benchmarks and fees raised
- Number/% of newly registered providers with improvement requirements at first inspection

Inspection Schedule and Reporting

- Monthly updated publication on our website of Inspections completed (by service / facility), date public publication of Report due and reasons for any delayed Reports
- % of statutory inspections completed compared to number expected (published quarterly)
- % of Reports published within target timeframe (published quarterly)
- Publication of Children's Services reports when template agreed with young people and advocates (commencement date subject to co-production)

Assurance Framework and Review Programme

- Engage with wide range stakeholders on what service areas / issues should be reflected in the final published Review Programme.
- Develop a programme of engagement opportunities and publish evidence of that engagement with stakeholders, views and findings on the Assurance Framework.

How will we deliver this Outcome? Actions:

Involve and Listen to Service Users and Families

To do this we will: ask service users and families about their experience during inspections; and we will share our findings and actions with them to ensure they are aware of and understand the actions taken and what we have told the provider to improve, and share the outcomes after we have re-inspected

Deliver an efficient and effective Registration function

To do this we will:

- Involve Providers in developing guidance for registration processes
- Optimise our authority to secure robust evidence from providers of competence and service sustainability
- Set and monitor targets for registration processing that takes account of service risks and current service pressures context
- Review actual costs for processing registrations compared to industry benchmarks and fees charged

Deliver a risk informed Inspection Schedule across regulated services, with timely publishing of our Reports

To do this we will:

- Plan the delivery of inspections to optimise the use of the intelligence we gather and respond to emerging risks

- Publish our delivered Inspection programme monthly including the facility / service inspected, dates of inspection and Report status (*with the exception of children's services*)
- Develop a reporting template in collaboration with children and young people, advocates and commissioners to enable publication of children's services reports while protecting children and young people
- Recommend that Providers ensure services users, families, carers and staff are aware of inspections, their findings and actions being taken (as appropriate) and promote direct access to RQIA for any concerns

Visibility of our Assurance Framework and Review Program

To do this we will:

- Review our 'Framework for Regulation' to ensure it sets out simply its key elements, and engage with Stakeholders to inform, involve and shape its delivery
- Engage on our Review Programme to ensure issues that are important to people are reflected in our work

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

OUTCOME

Improve safety and quality through effective information gathering and create networks to share learning, good practice and adopt improvement

- Publish key themes and outcome indicators identified during our Inspections relating to safety, quality and experience so that providers can use this information in driving their own improvement programmes and workforce development
- Facilitate the sharing of learning and good practice across similar services by facilitating improvement networks and events in collaboration with commissioners, other regulators and providers with the service users voice at the centre of all shared learning
- Engage with Department of Health (DoH) on ensuring effective accountability for the implementation of regulatory recommendations
- Publish our final Reviews including the review of the Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) process to ensure a new fit for purpose process is developed and implemented
- Build on collaboration with Commissioner, service user and families representatives to make and evidence improvement in Care Homes since the publication of Home Truths
- Undertake the Deceased Patient Review (Neurology Public Inquiry) and report findings, to Department and with families, with DoH directing further steps. RQIA to reflect how to take forward the follow up learning and apply it into our regulatory work
- Support Public Inquiries and in particular ensure RQIA provides the information required by the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry Team in a timely way, and other Public Inquiries, so that lessons are learnt and that RQIA embed that learning in our Regulatory scope and work

We will measure this by:

- Publication of key themes and outcome indicators twice annually by service type
- Undertake a stock take of progress made since publication of 'Home Truths' and further actions
- Publish our Review of the SAI process
- Complete current phase of the Deceased Patient Review (DPR) and engage with DoH and with families
- Publish our Review Programme and include in it how we plan to take forward learning from the DPR work
- Report progress on our provision of information and support to the work of Muckamore Abbey Hospital Public Inquiry through our Authority meetings
- Publish number of improvement events held, attendees and focus of the learning

How will we deliver this Outcome? Actions:

- Through our Information service, we will use the quality improvement plans and enforcement actions we have taken to identify issues and collate themes and outcomes - we will publish and share these issues with stakeholders and providers
- Build relationships with other organisations to plan joined up quality improvement initiatives
- Work with other organisations including family representatives to complete and publish a stock take of progress on Care Homes improvement and develop further actions, including how complaints contribute further to RQIA work
- Plan and prepare with stakeholders, for the publication of the SAI Review Report, and liaise with DoH on taking forward the work necessary to effect the recommendations
- Plan for and support families to have access to and understand the individual reports of deceased loved ones, and liaise with DoH on the way ahead
- Establish an Inquiries Team to ensure we have robust capacity in place to respond to the requirements of the Muckamore Abbey Hospital public inquiry, and subsequent other public inquiries including COVID-19

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

OUTCOME

Create sustainable relationships and partnerships that expand our reach and add expertise and support to achieving our objectives

- Ensure visibility of RQIA role and our purpose so as to enable the Public, Service Users and families to both inform RQIA and to have access to information we have gathered on service safety, quality and access, to support their particular needs, through effective involvement and meaningful engagement
- Develop strategically important relationships with key organisations to:
 - Share information that is important to service users, families, communities and staff about service delivery issues or expected changes mindful to the managing the impact of change for service users, their families and staff
 - Ensure we share intelligence (under pinned by appropriate Information Governance), and that RQIA take a lead to develop a mechanism for identifying shared emerging issues that require a collective response
- Develop relationships with academia and organisations that can lift our capability through workforce, skills and knowledge and assist us with expertise in key issues so that we prepare for the future

We will measure this by:

- Undertake baseline survey of views of key stakeholders in terms of knowledge and experience of RQIA work, and measure at annual intervals
- Publish outcomes from the Communications and Engagement Collaborative
- Publish MoUs that underpin relationships

How will we deliver this Outcome? Actions:

- Develop the RQIA Communications and Engagement Collaborative to create a forum for involvement through a 'network or networks', with patients, public professionals, providers and others, so that lead organisations and alliances can engage with RQIA and create open lines of communication for mutual benefit
- Invest in key individual organisation relationships by having regular meetings with senior RQIA staff and other organisations
- Develop refreshed Memos of Understanding (MoU) for clarity on the sharing of information between organisations
- Trial a data sharing agreement for shared working, to explore for example opportunities for intelligence and analytical skills, with appropriate governance arrangements
- Share responsibilities for maintaining the collaborative forums, including with other UK and Ireland regulators, professional regulators in NI and others, by attending regular meetings, sharing administrative costs and bringing issues for discussion
- Develop a draft approach to a 'Shared Emerging Issues Protocol'
- Create relationships with professional bodies and with universities through our Professional Advisory leads

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

OUTCOME

Use our findings to influence policy decisions, raise standards and inform service transformation

- Plan, undertake and publish high quality service reviews on issues that are important to people and set out our findings and evidence, making recommendations on improvement and for strategic service reform
- Collate inspection findings, by service or theme, and identify key issues producing high calibre reports of findings that are shared, to influence the raising of standards in existing services, in new developing services and in developing our regulatory work
- Liaise regularly with policy makers, commissioners and regulators on the findings and recommendations of reviews and collated Inspection findings (by service or theme), with a focus on influencing workforce training and development, and to influence policy position and service development plans
- Engage with political and community leaders to ensure dialogue that enables shared issues and open lines of communication
- Host collaborative events that give public visibility to robust evidence and gain support for raising standards and influencing service reform by adopting the recommendations into planned service delivery models
- Evidence the need to review and modernise regulatory legislation so that the scope of regulation supports new ways of working in health and social care and keeps people safe through ensuring standards are set and met for currently unregulated services

We will measure this by:

- The publication and delivery of the Review Programme
- Produce a calendar of public engagement, publications activity and planned events for the year
- Report on RQIA presence in contributing to regional national and other events and activities
- Paper submitted to DoH on unregulated services

How will we deliver this Outcome? Actions:

- Lead an engagement and assessment process to identify the key service themes – across programmes of care- that will be taken forward in our 'Reviews' programme and begin delivery of reviews from early summer
- Develop our capacity for public relations and engagement through expanding our communications function; plan a calendar of activities over the course of this year identifying key reports publication timescales, and plan to ensure they are widely circulated and facilitate discussion
- Develop our capacity for events hosting and management, to create a platform for and promoting awareness of key findings and review publications
- Participate in other regional and others events and initiatives that create opportunities to share RQIA role and work and build networks
- Plan engagement sessions with political leaders
- Develop a paper to submit to the DoH (and ongoing adding to that) identification of service issues that under existing legislation, do not fall inside regulatory scope - seeking a consideration of a review of the legislation

OUR ENABLING PRIORITIES

To enable the delivery of our Strategic Outcomes we will progress three organisational Enabling Priorities:

1.

Excellence in governance and collective leadership, promoting a culture of safety, openness and compassion.

2.

Developing a confident, competent and supported workforce.

3.

Ensure effective management of our resources including finance, information technology and accommodation.

ENABLING PRIORITY 1

GOVERNANCE

Excellence in collective leadership and effective governance

Objective:

- To ensure we have effective organisational capability, control, stewardship and accountability
- That our behaviours (organisational and individual) are underpinned by human rights principles including dignity, respect and equality
- That we demonstrate the shared values of the HSC of compassion, openness, working together and excellence

Deliverables in-year:

- Completed new organisational structure
- Draft Strategic Plan with facilitated Consultation
- Outcome based Performance and Accountability Framework implemented
- Partnership Agreement with DoH completed

ACTIONS:

Organisational restructuring and Leadership

Complete the organisational restructuring to align staff resources and roles to the 3 Operational Directorates; build the corporate and business capacity of the organisation through developing Corporate Affairs and Business Services function, in collaboration with BSO shared services; invest in collective leadership and develop our culture based on human rights and shared values.

Strategic Planning and Outcomes

Develop our Draft Strategic Plan and prepare for public consultation, engaging with political representatives, and with policy leads, commissioners, the public, services users and their representatives to finalise the plan and report on its delivery and outcomes.

Performance Management

Adopt an outcome focussed performance and accountability arrangement across the organisation so that all staff can see their role and work contributing directly to RQIA's objectives and outcomes.

Partnership Agreement

Develop our sponsoring arrangements with Department of Health so that there is clarity on how we perform our functions as an Independent Regulator and ensure accountability for our effective delivery of those functions and organisational stewardship; clarify how RQIA will fulfil its role post the HSC Board closure; and reflect on how to ensure the implementation of recommendations of Regulatory work and clarity on accountability for this.

ENABLING PRIORITY 2

WORKFORCE

Develop a confident, competent, supported and enabled workforce

Objective:

- To ensure we are an employer that demonstrates the safety and wellbeing of staff is our priority
- To ensure personal and professional development is actively supported to ensure confidence and capability
- To ensure we recruit and develop staff with the skills and competency to undertake regulatory work across the broad range of health and social care services within our regulatory scope
- To seek to ensure our staff profile is reflective of the communities served, valuing equality and diversity
- To secure the workforce capacity required to enable us fulfil our statutory scope and requirements

Deliverables in-year:

- Welcome and Induction Programme launched
- Staff Safety and Well Being Programme
- Recognition and Appreciation Strategy and Delivery Plan - implemented
- Strategic Outline Case for Workforce Plan
- Business Case for Workforce development over 3 years
- Monitoring workforce vacancy rate

ACTIONS:

Welcome and Induction

Refresh our programme to combine effective self-service induction through e-programme, facilitated induction, direct supported learning and supported in the field work.

Training and Development

Ensure every member of staff has a personal development plan and professional development is facilitated across our staff groups.

Staff Wellbeing

Provide a range of safety and wellbeing programmes accessible to staff and evaluated and adjusted to ensure providing effective support, alongside occupational health.

Recognition and Appreciation (R&A)

Launch and implement our R&A plan and evaluate impact, making improvement as it progresses.

Recruitment

Reduce our vacancy rate by effective and timely permanent recruitment to posts and succession planning.

Workforce Planning

Set out the Workforce and business case for the investment in skills and capacity to deliver on our objectives and statutory requirements. Immediately expand opportunities for peer review, lay assessors, professional placements in training, peripatetic staff and commissioned expertise.

ENABLING PRIORITY 3

RESOURCES

Ensure effective management of our resources including Finance, Information Technology and Accommodation

Objective:

- To ensure we optimise the utilisation of public funds and registration income through effective financial management
- Develop our Digital infrastructure to maximise our use of information and intelligence to direct our work and support staff in planning for, and during, inspections to work effectively
- Review our use of office bases and consider how we optimise the opportunity to attract and retain staff across the region balancing with value for money in infrastructure

Deliverables in-year:

- Finance / Budgetary & Spending Plan
- Implementation Plan and Evaluation on iConnect upgrade
- Relocation Plan to James House
- Options paper for home working and base options
- Full Business Case for iConnect replacement

ACTIONS:

Finance

Ensure we plan and spend our allocation and income to maximise the delivery of our strategic objectives. Devolve responsibility for effective Directorate, Business Unit & Corporate Affairs financial management.

Digital and Intelligence

Upgrade the existing information system iConnect to ensure compliant with service and maintenance contract requirements; develop the specification, business case and procurement process to replace iConnect with a system that meets our needs in terms of our

strategic objectives, and secure the required investment for same, both capital and revenue.

Accommodation and Mobile Working

Relocate our HQ to James House, Belfast and consider the issues linked to office based and home based working, finding a model that suits our business needs.



The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

7th Floor, Victoria House
15-27 Gloucester Street
Belfast
BT1 4LS



Tel: 028 9536 1111



Email: info@rqia.org.uk



Web: www.rqia.org.uk



Twitter: @RQIANews

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