



Corporate Plan 2017–2021



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Foreword

The changing nature of social care and the complex environment within which we work require both a robust and adaptable system of workforce regulation.

With the support of the Department of Health (DoH) NISCC has made good progress in key areas; introducing a new Fitness to Practise model of regulation, developing Professional in Practice to underpin continuous professional development in social work, completing the policy on the regulation of the social care workforce, and supporting key partnerships with registrants, employers, education, training organisations and service users and carers.

The overall vision for NISCC focuses on protecting the public, safeguarding vulnerable people and ensuring confidence by those who use social care, the wider public and the workforce.

To achieve our vision we must work to enable change through a genuine partnership with community groups and individuals who use services, the workforce of today and tomorrow, key stakeholders across the system and policy makers.

These changes will lead to more trust and understanding from service users and the public about the standards associated with the social care workforce. It will also help us move towards an evolving, positive culture of continual learning and development within the workforce.

Through our work over the life of this plan, and through the work of others, we expect to see the social care workforce becoming more confident and skilled in using new knowledge; applying new ways of working that focus on personalised and compassionate care.

As the social care workforce regulator our core activities will focus on standards of conduct and practice, working to see that they are applied consistently across all areas of social work and social care practice, improving public protection and improving quality and outcomes for people who use social services.

We will work to ensure the integrity of social care workforce registration is maintained on an ongoing basis and there is trust and confidence in the Fitness to Practise process.

We will increase our capacity to collect and analyse workforce intelligence, building a stronger evidence base to influence workforce planning and support future facing workforce development.

“improving quality and outcomes for people who use social care services”

“ working together towards solutions ”

NISCC has an important role in helping to maintain positive relationships through our approach to systems leadership.

We will work with Government, DoH Office of Social Services and others across organisational boundaries, and with people who use services and with carers, on the basis of a shared ambition, working together towards solutions. We commit to developing these leadership characteristics in our work, brokering new knowledge, ideas and relationships across the care system in Northern Ireland.

We are uniquely placed to work across the whole system in building, energising and strengthening a collaborative environment that will drive positive change.

In developing this plan we have engaged with a broad range of stakeholders to help us identify NISCC priorities and align them with the key drivers for social care in the coming years.

We used their feedback to model scenarios to shape our strategic direction within a changing environment.

Our Corporate and Business Plans have been developed using an outcomes based approach ensuring we can clearly demonstrate the benefits of regulation and standards for the social care workforce and underpin the contribution of social care to improving and safeguarding the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.



Strategic Context



The focus is on developing an environment characterised by trust, partnership and collaboration.



The context for the NISCC Corporate Plan is framed by the challenge for change and transformation in health and social care in Northern Ireland. This challenge is highlighted in key documents published in October 2016 by the Minister for Health and the expert panel Chaired by Professor Rafael Bengoa – *Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together and Systems, Not Structures: Changing Health and Social Care*. The plan has also been developed within the context of the Northern Ireland Executive Draft Programme for Government (Consultation Document published in October 2016).

Core to the Minister's vision is a new model of care which is co-produced and person-centred and focused on prevention, early intervention, supporting independence and wellbeing.

NISCC has adopted the principles of Co-production with those who use services which has enabled new and innovative ways of working to support transformation. The focus is on developing an environment characterised by trust, partnership and collaboration. The Minister's vision looks to link social care

more strongly with improving and safeguarding the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities and supports the implementation of the social work strategy *Improving and Safeguarding Social Wellbeing*. It supports the roll out of *Quality 2020 Attributes Framework*, *the Review of Adult Social Care* and the realignment and growth in community development resources, building a community asset based approach to health and social care.

The report from the expert panel Chaired by Professor Rafael Bengoa states that in order to transform services fundamentally a modern health and social care workforce that can work collaboratively to meet the needs of the population will be required.

When the regulation and registration of the social care workforce is completed in April 2017 it will be the largest regulated workforce within the HSC with 35,000 people working for over 500 employers across the statutory and independent sectors. Reconfiguring the health and social care system will depend on the ability of the system to reshape this workforce to support new models of care.

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The skills and capacity of the social care workforce is integral to successful transformation.

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The Northern Ireland Executive published for consultation in October 2016 a draft Programme for Government (PfG) designed to deliver improved wellbeing for the people of Northern Ireland. Within PfG is a strong emphasis on economic activity and employment – with more people working in better jobs; improved qualification levels – with a recognition that skills underpin many of the societal changes to which PfG aspires. The transformation of health and social care will require growth in the social care workforce to meet increasing demand.

Having the right people, in the right place, at the right time requires a workforce which is safe, effective and agile in its responsiveness to changing service user needs. The skills and capacity of the social care workforce is integral to successful transformation.

The social care sector supports the economic and social fabric of Northern Ireland. A recent study undertaken by Ulster University Economic Policy Centre on behalf of NISCC, NIAMH, Cedar Foundation and Bryson Care, found that the Adult Social Care Sector supports employment for over 100,000 people in Northern Ireland and contributes £821m in Gross Value Added (GVA). Social care is one of the most geographically diverse sectors. It provides access to employment, education and training for those that may otherwise not have had the opportunity or support.

Employment in social care which is generated within communities contributes to the local economy, and supports community cohesion.

The reform of professional regulation in health and social care remains a key consideration in the UK. Northern Ireland will be the first country in the UK to have completed the regulation and registration of the social care workforce and is well placed to lead conversations on the role of regulation in quality assurance and quality improvement. These conversations will focus on the development of a robust, responsive and agile system of workforce regulation that will protect the public and support the workforce to respond effectively to changing needs and new ways of working.

Workforce regulation is an enabler in the process of transformation, a valuable partner in supporting quality improvement.

who we are and what we do

OUR VISION

Improved standards
in social work
and social care.

OUR PURPOSE

To protect the public and
safeguard service users
through the regulation
and development of the
social work profession
and the social care
workforce.

OUR VALUES

Excellence

we are committed to excellence
in everything we do

Respect

we respect the rights, dignity
and inherent worth of individuals

Partnership

we are a listening and learning organisation
– working in partnership to ensure what we
do makes a difference

Integrity

we are honest and work in
an open and transparent way.



How our Corporate Plan was developed

In November 2015, NISCC began a creative conversation about the nature of care in Northern Ireland in the future with a range of individuals, groups and organisations. We asked people to consider how, collectively, we can achieve the vision in the face of uncertainty.

We adopted a five step approach to help us consider the current and future service delivery context for social workers and social care workers as outlined below:





we asked, you said, we will...



We explored, with a range of individuals and represented groups, three questions that formed the basis of what our future might look like, including the services we provide and what factors might influence that picture. These scenarios were:

- > **What will social care look like in 10 years' time?**
- > **What does NISCC need to do to support the workforce to deliver the social care of the future?** and
- > **What is driving change in social care?**



As part of this process, we spoke with representatives from a range of interested groups, including:

- > **Service users and carers;**
- > **Registrants;**
- > **Employers;** and
- > **Education Providers.**

They told us that their priorities for NISCC were themed around five areas which they believe the Council should focus on. These are:



NISCC 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.

NISCC should ensure **Regulation** is robust, agile, valued and trusted, to support good social work and social care practice.

NISCC should support the development of the social work and social care workforce to enable them to deliver safe, effective and **value led care**.

NISCC should promote a **systems leadership** approach to contribute to capacity building that will support leadership at all levels.

NISCC should ensure there is effective and meaningful **communication and engagement**, to improve the understanding of what NISCC does and the value of the social work and social care workforce.

we will...



We have taken these **five themes** and framed them in this **Corporate Plan**. The Corporate Plan will cover the period April 2017 to March 2021, a period of four years which is in line with the NI Assembly's Programme for Government.

We have thought through the themes and considered what success would look like if we effected the change and what we would need to do by way of strategic actions to ensure we are on the right track to achieve the change required.

We have set out these outcomes and strategic actions in the next section of this Corporate Plan and these will be the focus of our energy and commitment over the next four years.

Alongside this Corporate Plan we have published our annual Business Plan (for 2017/18) which provides the detail of what we will do in year 1 towards the achievement of this Corporate Plan. We will build on that year after year to ensure we are continuing to do the right things in the right way, and making change where that is necessary.

We will ensure we have the rights skills and resources to deliver and will keep all stakeholders engaged throughout the life span of this Corporate Plan.

This Corporate Plan and our supporting Business Plans will be reviewed on a regular basis and we will share our progress through a range of communication channels.



1

Putting Standards at the heart of Social Work and Social Care practice and education and training

Setting and raising standards in social work and social care practice, education and training and ensuring these are at the heart of the work of NISCC.



Strategic Actions

- 1 Develop a range of accessible and adaptable learning methods and models for the registered workforce and their employers to support the application of Standards in Practice.
- 2 Work with registrants, employers and service users to support the consistent application of the Standards of Conduct and Practice.



Outcomes

- ▶ The Standards of Conduct and Practice are relevant, trusted, understood and embedded;
- ▶ NISCC Standards for Employers support the delivery of effective social work and social care services.

2

Regulate the Workforce and Social Work Education and Training

The functions of Registration, Fitness to Practise, and the Regulation of Social Work education establishes clear benchmarks for good social work and social care practice.



Strategic Actions

- 1 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.
- 2 Ensure the integrity and effectiveness of our registration, regulation and social work education functions.



Outcomes

- ▶ Social work and social care registration is valued and trusted;
- ▶ NISCC is an agile regulator able to respond to changing need and demand;
- ▶ Social work education and training meets the needs of registrants and employers;
- ▶ Fitness to Practise decisions are trusted.

3

Develop the Social Work and Social Care Workforce

Better outcomes for people who use social care services will be achieved by a regulated workforce that delivers safe, effective and values led care.



Strategic Actions

- 1 Promote and enable a culture of continuous learning and development in social work through the Professional in Practice framework.
- 2 Work in partnership with stakeholders to create a learning and improvement framework to ensure the social care workforce is skilled, confident and competent.



Outcomes

- ▶ Social workers and social care workers are competent, compassionate, values led, confident and skilled in their practice;
- ▶ 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.

4

Promote a Systems Leadership approach across the Social Care sector

Through collaborative partnership working, the NISCC will facilitate new thinking and fresh perspectives to reduce harms, minimise risks and improve quality in the delivery of social care services.



Strategic Actions

- 1 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.
- 2 Work in partnership with key stakeholders to strengthen capacity building to support and develop systems leadership at all levels across the social care sector.



Outcomes

- ▶ A systems leadership environment is created which provides for improved understanding and connection across the sector;
- ▶ Capacity is built to use collective intelligence to effect real, meaningful and positive change in social work and social care standards and practice;
- ▶ The NISCC Standards for Employers support the social work and social care workforce to deliver safe and effective care

5

Communicate, Connect and Engage

Effective and meaningful communication and engagement will support the delivery of this Corporate Plan.



Strategic Actions

- 1 Through the delivery of our Communications and Engagement Strategy, create a new and progressive understanding of the role and contribution of workforce regulation in social care.
- 2 Through the delivery of our Communications and Engagement Strategy, build, develop and maintain effective and supportive relationships with service users, carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders focusing on listening, learning and evolving.



Outcomes

- ▶ Improved public perception of social workers and social care workers as a workforce that is committed to upholding standards;
- ▶ Increased confidence in the contribution of workforce regulation in serving and protecting the public, minimising risk and reducing harms by embedding and raising standards;
- ▶ The views, experience and expertise of service users and carers in informing our business is valued and can be evidenced.



Evaluation

As is set out in this Corporate Plan, we are committed to delivering on and describing the outcomes of our achievements. To ensure we reach these outcomes in the ways described will require careful and robust planning and evaluation.

We must ask ourselves:



Evaluating what we are doing is not a one off exercise or just part of the annual reporting mechanisms which are in place. We are confident that we have the skills, ability and enthusiasm to deliver this Plan and we will use this Plan as a living document keeping us focused and responsive in delivering our agenda.

We will use this plan, delivery and evaluation model over the next four years and report our progress through our Annual Report and on our website. We will encourage all stakeholders to engage with us throughout this process and continue to value the feedback, challenge and support provided.



Structure and Leadership

To support the delivery of this Corporate Plan over the next four years, NISCC needs to ensure it has the right infrastructure and leadership in place in the following areas:



People

NISCC will ensure it is an employer of choice, and will employ, develop and retain hard working, skilled staff who are committed to delivering quality services.



Resources

NISCC will deploy its resources within robust and accountable governance frameworks to ensure it delivers value for money and is capable of delivering its commitments over the next 4 years.



Governance

NISCC will deliver all its business against good governance best practice to meet its statutory, legal and professional obligations to ensure it provides safe and effective regulation to help protect the public and safeguard service users.



Quality

NISCC will develop and demonstrate a strong position on quality improvement through the Quality 2020 Attributes Framework to ensure quality improvement is fully integrated in all aspects of its business.



Systems

NISCC will make better use of technology to develop and invigorate systems, including IT systems that are focused on those who use its services and can enable staff to focus on front line services.



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