

Mental
2021-2031 **Health**
Strategy



Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031
Consultation Document

Introduction

1. We would welcome your views on the draft Strategy to improve mental health outcomes in Northern Ireland.

Background

2. The publication of a 10 year Mental Health Strategy is identified as an immediate priority of the Northern Ireland Executive in New Decade, New Approach (NDNA).
3. Recent strategic direction for Mental Health in Northern Ireland has been reliant on the Bamford Review which published its reports between 2005 and 2007. The Review and its subsequent action plans were widely accepted to be a catalyst for the development of improved mental health and learning disability services in Northern Ireland, albeit with the recognition that some needs and gaps within services remained. It is now essential that the good work undertaken by statutory Health and Social Care organisations, independent contractors and the voluntary and community sector to progress the Bamford recommendations is consolidated and built upon.
4. The reports *"Building on Progress: Achieving Parity for Mental Health in Northern Ireland"*, commonly known as The Lord Crisp Report, and *"Health and Wellbeing 2026 - Delivering Together"*, both published in 2016, highlighted the changes to culture, structure and investment still required. These themes run through the draft Mental Health Strategy, which also places particular emphasis on the development of trauma informed and compassionate services.
5. The advent of the global COVID-19 pandemic have also changed the picture of mental health in Northern Ireland. Lockdown, shielding and social distancing, restrictions on funeral rites and the difficult circumstances surrounding bereavement during the pandemic have had a negative impact on the emotional wellbeing of many, including those with existing mental health conditions. In addition, evidence has shown increased levels of patient acuity presenting to mental health services. Early evidence indicates that the

mental health of our population is likely to be significantly impacted by these events, and the draft Strategy is fully cognisant of this changed landscape. The possibilities offered by new and novel technological solutions, as embraced during the pandemic, to enhance access and choice and improve outcomes are also a key focus of the draft Strategy.

6. The [Mental Health Action Plan](#) published on 19 May 2020 by the Health Minister, Robin Swann MLA, not only addresses immediate service improvement requirements but also acts as precursor to the new Strategy. The first action set out in the Action Plan is to ‘co-produce a sustainable mental health strategy based on the needs of people, created through cross Departmental, cross sectoral and multidisciplinary co-production’. The Action Plan also contains several actions to review services in parallel with the development of the new Strategy, to support and inform strategic decision making

Purpose

7. The draft Strategy sets out 29 high-level actions to take forward significant strategic change over the next decade. Not all actions will be initiated at once; implementation will be taken forward through a phased approach to ensure the greatest impact. Detailed plans will be developed to progress the implementation of the Strategy. The final Strategy will be accompanied by a funding plan for the same 10 year period.

Co-production

8. The Mental Health Action Plan lays the foundations for the draft Strategy. The Action Plan was co-produced over a period of eighteen months, with extensive input and direction from a wide range of stakeholders. This included those with lived experience, carers, community and voluntary organisations, academics, health professionals and their representative bodies, Health and Social Care organisations, politicians and governmental departments.
9. We have sought to consult and engage as broadly as possible during the development of this draft Mental Health Strategy. Social distancing

constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic meant that the more usual methods of co-production, such as face to face meetings, focus groups and engagement events, were not possible. Instead, co-production has been taken forward via virtual means.

Strategic Advisory Panel (SAP)

10. To support the Department in developing the draft Strategy, a Strategic Advisory Panel (SAP) was established to provide co-produced policy advice on key themes. The Panel's membership is made up of individuals with lived experience, representatives from statutory health and social care, the voluntary and community sector, academia, professional bodies, and the interim Mental Health Champion.
11. A number of voluntary and community groups, other organisations and individuals also provided early feedback on the SAP's work.

Virtual Stakeholder Engagement Events

12. Two virtual stakeholder engagement events took place on 5 October and 25 November 2020, each involving over 90 people.
13. The first event provided attendees with the opportunity to contribute to the policy development process from the beginning. Input was sought on the important elements for inclusion in the draft vision and founding principles, and key issues that should be addressed under 8 key, headline themes. The feedback and input received was of very high quality, and directly informed the development of the vision included in the draft Strategy, and the work of the Strategy Advisory Panel.
14. The second event on 25 November provided an opportunity for the Department to present an early draft vision, and the Strategic Advisory Panel to present on the key points covered in their policy advice papers. The Health Minister opened the event, and once again the feedback received was positive and extremely useful to the Department in finalising this draft Strategy for consultation.

15. The above engagement was also supplemented by meetings and discussions with stakeholders on particular points during the Strategy development process.

Virtual Reference Group

16. A Virtual Reference Group has also been established to provide a mechanism for all interested parties to be kept informed about the development of the draft Strategy via the issue of regular e-newsletters. These newsletters will continue to issue throughout the process to consult on and finalise the Strategy, and throughout the implementation process. To sign up to the newsletter, please visit the Department's website:
<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/doh-1/doh-mental-health-strategy-virtual-reference-group/>.

Funding of the Strategy

17. The draft Strategy does not include indicative costings. A separate Mental Health Funding Plan will be published alongside the full Strategy, and will provide a spending plan for mental health for the full period of the strategy, 2021-2031. The spending plan will be informed by and be reflective of the actions set out in the final Strategy, which we aim to publish in July 2021.
18. It is important to note the timescales and costs outlined in the spending plan, when published, will be indicative and will require further prioritisation, workforce mapping and planning to ensure delivery. The investment required is in addition to existing expenditure in mental health services, and is dependent on new funding becoming available. Any investment in mental health services will have to be balanced against other service priorities and in the context of the Department's financial settlements, and this will determine the rate at which new investments are made.

Implementation of the Mental Health Strategy

19. The implementation of the Mental Health Strategy will be a significant project and will span over the full 10 year life span. The implementation will be

inclusive and cross sectoral and will draw on existing co-production structures.

20. It will not be possible to start implementation of all the actions simultaneously. As part of the consultation process we are seeking views on the prioritisation of the actions in the Strategy.

Impact assessments

21. A number of impact assessment screenings have been completed, and the outcome of these is available in Annex A to this document. The full screening documents are also available as part of the suite of consultation documents.

How to Respond

22. We are seeking views on the draft Mental Health Strategy, and invite written responses by no later than **26 March 2021**.
23. You can respond online by accessing the Northern Ireland Government Citizen Space website and completing the online survey there. A link to the Citizen Space website can be found on the Department's Mental Health Strategy Consultation website: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/mentalhealthstrategy>
24. We would prefer responses using Citizen Space, however, if you wish to send an email or hard copy of your response please send it to:
- Department of Health
Adult Mental Health Unit
Room D4.26
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3SQ
mentalhealthstrategy@health-ni.gov.uk

25. The full set of consultation questions are provided in Annex B to this consultation document.
26. When you reply, it would be very useful if you could confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation. If you are replying on behalf of an organisation, please include:
- your name;
 - the name of your organisation; and
 - an e-mail address.
27. If you have any queries, or wish to request a copy of the draft Strategy in an alternate format, please contact the Department using the email address below to make your request:
- mentalhealthstrategy@health-ni.gov.uk.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses

28. We will publish a summary of the consultation responses and, in some cases, the responses themselves but these will not contain any personal data. We will not publish the names or contact details of respondents, but will include the names of organisations responding.
29. For further information on how we will process data and your rights see our Privacy Notice in Annex C of this document and at the following link:
- <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/mental-health-strategy-privacy-notice>

What Happens Next

30. A number of virtual engagement events will be held during the consultation period. Information on these events will be published on the Department of Health website and will be distributed through the newsletter.
31. Following the close of the consultation on 26 March 2021, all responses and feedback will be collated for review by the Department of Health, and a

consultation report will be produced. The consultation report will be published alongside the final Strategy and Funding Plan.

Annex A: Impact Screening Outcomes

Full impact assessment screening documents are available as part of the full suite of consultation documents, and can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/mentalhealthstrategy>

A summary of the outcome of each is provided in the table below:

Impact Assessment Screening	Outcome
Equality/Human Rights	No significant impact identified or is not possible to quantify at this stage – full impact assessment not required
Regulatory	No significant impact identified or is not possible to quantify at this stage – full impact assessment not required
Rural	No significant impact identified or is not possible to quantify at this stage – full impact assessment not required
Children’s Rights	No significant impact identified or is not possible to quantify at this stage – full impact assessment not required

Annex B: Consultation Questions

(a word version of the consultation response questions is available on Department's website: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/mentalhealthstrategy>).

Personal details	
Name	
Email address	
Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?	Yes/No (delete as applicable)
Organisation (if applicable)	
Vision and Founding Principles	
Do you agree the vision set out will improve outcomes and quality of life for individuals with mental health needs in Northern Ireland?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree (delete as applicable)	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Do you agree the founding principles set out provide a solid foundation upon which to progress change?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree (delete as applicable)	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Theme 1: Promoting wellbeing and resilience through prevention and early intervention	
Do you agree with the ethos and direction of travel set out under this theme?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree (delete as applicable)	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Do you agree with the actions and outcomes set out under this theme?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree (delete as applicable)	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Theme 2: Providing the right support at the right time	
Do you agree with the ethos and direction of travel set out under this theme?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree (delete as applicable)	

Please add any further comments you may have	
Do you agree with the actions and outcomes set out under this theme?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree <i>(delete as applicable)</i>	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Theme 3: New Ways of Working	
Do you agree with the ethos and direction of travel set out under this theme?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree <i>(delete as applicable)</i>	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Do you agree with the actions and outcomes set out under this theme?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree <i>(delete as applicable)</i>	
Please add any further comments you may have	
Prioritisation	
If you had to prioritise the actions set out above, which top 5 actions would you take forward (with 1 being the most important to you, and 5 being the 5th most important to you)?	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
Finally, is there any one key action which you feel is missing from the draft Strategy?	
Impact Assessments/Screenings	
Do you agree with the outcome of the Impact Assessment screening?	
Fully Agree / Mostly Agree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Mostly Disagree / Fully Disagree <i>(delete as applicable)</i>	
Please add any further comments you may have	

Annex C: Mental Health Strategy Public Consultation Privacy Notice

Data Controller Name: Department of Health (DoH)
Address: Castle Buildings, Stormont, BELFAST, BT4 3SG
Email: MentalHealthStrategy@health-ni.gov.uk
Telephone: 02890523311

Data Protection Officer Name: Charlene McQuillan
Telephone: 02890522353
Email: DPO@health-ni.gov.uk

Being transparent and providing accessible information to individuals about how we may use personal data is a key element of the [Data Protection Act \(DPA\)](#) and the [EU General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR). The Department of Health (DoH) is committed to building trust and confidence in our ability to process your personal information and protect your privacy.

Purpose for processing

The Department of Health has developed a draft 10 year mental health strategy which is published for public consultation. We are encouraging organisations and institutions to respond but also people with lived experience and carers. We will process personal data provided in response to consultations for the purpose of informing the strategy. We will publish a summary of the consultation responses and, in some cases, the responses themselves but these will not contain any personal data. We will not publish the names or contact details of respondents, but will include the names of organisations responding.

For the purpose of this consultation the only data we will process is the information provided by the individual when they respond to the consultation, as follows:

- Name
- Email address
- Name of organisation (if responding on behalf of an organisation)

Lawful basis for processing

The lawful basis we are relying on to process your personal data is Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR, which allows us to process personal data when this is necessary for the performance of our public tasks in our capacity as a Government Department.

How will your information be used and shared

We process the information internally for the above stated purpose. We don't intend to share your personal data with any third party. Any specific requests from a third party for us to share your personal data with them will be dealt with in accordance the provisions of the data protection laws.

How long will we keep your information

We will retain consultation response information until our work on the subject matter of the consultation is complete, and in line with the Department's approved Retention and Disposal Schedule [Good Management, Good Records](#) (GMGR).

What are your rights?

- You have the right to obtain confirmation that your data is being [processed, and access to your personal data](#)
- You are entitled to have personal data [rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete](#)
- You have a right to have personal data [erased and to prevent processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right [to 'block' or suppress processing](#) of personal data, in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [data portability](#), in specific circumstances
- **You have the right to [object to the processing](#)**, in specific circumstances
- **You have rights in relation to [automated decision making and profiling](#).**

How to complain if you are not happy with how we process your personal information

If you wish to request access, object or raise a complaint about how we have handled your data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer using the details above.

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you can complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
casework@ico.org.uk