

**Title: Chief Executive's Report**

**Date: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Presented by: Patricia Higgins, Chief Executive**

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## **ACTION REQUIRED**

<b>This Paper is</b>	<b>For Information</b>
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## **SUMMARY**

This report outlines key activity undertaken during the period October and November 2023

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## **BACKGROUND**

The report gives an overview of the delivery of business to support registrants and stakeholders.

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## **KEY ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

None

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## **ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

Continued active engagement with all stakeholders to ensure the Social Care Council's business activity reflects the needs of the social work and social care workforces.

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

N/A

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## **ATTACHED DOCUMENTS AND/OR LINKS HERE**

Appendix I - CEO's report

## **Appendix I**

### **Chief Executives Report**

#### **Board Meeting: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

This brief report covers the period October and November 2023.

## **1. External Engagement**

### **Meetings and Presentations**

During this reporting period I have been engaged in a number of strategic meetings and presentations:

#### **1.1 Social Care Collaborative Forum**

A workshop was held with members of the Social Care Collaborative Forum (SCCF), facilitated by Heather Moorhead from NICON. The purpose of the workshop was to begin to build a collective leadership approach within the Forum. The workshop was well received and we intend to continue to do this work with Forum members in parallel to business meetings of the Forum.

A workshop is also planned in early December with members of the Fair Work Forum, many of whom are also members of the SCCF. This workshop will have an external facilitator and will review the existing Terms of Reference and membership of the Forum, with a view to agreeing the way forward.

#### **1.2 NICON Conference 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> October**

I attended the annual NICON Conference, along with the Chair and SLT. I participated in 2 sessions:

- I was a member of a panel in a fringe session on The Executive Office's (TEO) strategy 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls'. My input focussed on the role that social work and social care can play to support the strategy. The Director of Regulation and Standards and I are meeting with representatives from TEO to discuss how the Council can support information sharing and potentially the development of learning resources.
- I facilitated a parallel session on the work of the Social Care Collaborative Forum, which consisted of a small panel of Forum members discussing their reasons for participating in the Forum, and the work the Forum is undertaking.

#### **1.3 Independent Health Care Providers (IHCP)**

I was asked to participate as part of a judging panel for the IHCP social care awards. The awards cover individual, team and leadership categories in residential home,

nursing home and home care settings. The calibre of applicants was impressive with inspiring examples of compassionate care. The awards ceremony is on the 30<sup>th</sup> November and I have been asked to present the Leadership award.

I also spoke at the launch of the IHCP Employers Charter in the Long Gallery which was sponsored by Paula Bradshaw, MLA. The Charter sets out good practice standards for employers in the recruitment and retention of staff and mirrors the Council's standards for employers of social care workers.

#### 1.4 Professional Standards Authority

The Professional Standards Authority regulates Healthcare Workforce Regulators and Social Work England. I was asked to provide a presentation to the PSA Board about our approach to the regulation of social workers and social care workers. The Scottish Social Services Council, Social Care Wales and Social Work England also made presentations.

#### 1.5 RQIA Roundtable event

I was invited to participate in a panel at the RQIA event: “‘Speak Up’ – Regulation in an open health and social care system”. The panel focussed on ‘being open’ and the challenges facing staff working in health and social care. The event explored the role regulation can play in enabling an open and candid culture in the HSC.

#### 1.6 Social Care Podcast

I participated in a Podcast hosted by Newcross Healthcare, a health and social care agency based in London. Newcross have a podcast series called ‘Voices of Care’ and have recorded a number of interviews with senior leaders across health and social care in the UK. The host was interested in hearing the NI perspective and ensuring the series has a UK focus. In the podcast I discussed the challenges and opportunities facing the social care workforce and described the work of the Social Care Collaborative Forum. The podcast will air in January on the Newcross website.

#### 1.7 Social Work video – ‘Changing Lives’

The promotional video ‘Changing Lives – the vital role of social workers in children’s services in NI’ was launched in South West Regional College. The HSC Trusts developed the video and we supported the launch event and promotion of the video.

The video is available on our website and will form part of the Degree in Social Work campaign: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sLpP6dNzDM>

## **2. Other Meetings Attended**

2.1 During this period, I have also engaged in the following meetings:

- GMC NI Advisory Forum
- NI Social Work Leadership Network
- NIPEC regarding work on the Delegation Framework
- NICON Management Committee

International meetings:

- Along with the Director of BASW NI, I presented at an international conference on Social Work and Political Conflict. The event was hosted by QUB and we presented the research we published on the 'Voices of Social Work through the Troubles'
- We have supported the formation of an international social work regulators forum through the CLEAR organisation (Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation of which we are a member). The participants are from the UK, Ireland, USA and Canada. We have been discussing the issue of professional identity in social work and the common challenges that exist, with a view to a possible international piece of work to promote a stronger social work identity.
- SLT met with representatives from the Workforce Development and Innovation Institute (WIDI), RMIT University in Melbourne, to discuss our workforce development work in social work and social care. WIDI is focussed on the social services sector in Australia and are keen to share their work and learn from ours as they tackle similar issues and challenges in workforce recruitment and retention.

Meetings Chair and CEO:

The Chair and I met with:

- Chair and CEO of the Children's Court Guardian Service
- Chair and CEO of the Patient and Client Council
- Chair and CEO of RQIA

2.2 Upcoming meetings and events:

- Chair and CEO meeting with SBNI
- Launch of film 'Where There's A Will There's A Way' – a conversation with Joanne Sansome and Professor Joe Duffy. The film will launch on 1 December at the QFT. This was a collaboration between Joanne, Joe and the Council and tells the inspirational story of Joanne's journey as an activist and academic.

**Patricia Higgins**

**6 December 2023**