

**Title: A Framework for Sharing Intelligence Among Regulators of Health and Social Care in NI (including Emerging Concerns Protocol)**

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Presented by: Helen McVicker, Head of Fitness to Practise**

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## **ACTION REQUIRED**

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

RQIA, in collaboration with the NI Joint Regulator's Forum, has developed this Framework and Protocol to support regulators of health and social care in NI to share information that may indicate risks to people who use services, their carers, their families or staff. The Protocol provides a trigger mechanism for responding to new areas of concern relating to patient/service user safety whereby partner organisations can be brought together swiftly to share information and respond early to any safety concerns.

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## **BACKGROUND**

The development of the Framework and Protocol will bring NI in to line with the other countries of the UK who have been operating Emerging Concerns arrangements for some time. The Framework and Protocol are designed to work alongside the existing bilateral arrangements that already exist between organisations in the form of MOU's and Data Sharing Agreements. They are specifically aimed at supporting collaborative working across several member organisations to support decision making, agree supportive actions or to further escalate concerns with one or more organisations.

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## **KEY ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

As a co-signatory to the Framework and Protocol, the Social Care Council will participate in Bi-Annual Shared Intelligence Meetings and Emerging Concerns meetings. We will also be able to trigger an Emerging Concerns meeting where we identify an emerging risk or concern to patient/service user safety.

Any issues or concerns regarding individual registrants will be managed through existing Fitness to Practise processes.

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## **ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

All co-signatories to the Framework and Protocol have consulted with their constituencies and sought approval from their respective Executive Leadership Teams and Boards. RQIA has also consulted with the Patient Client Council.

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Framework and Protocol are approved and made available for publication on the Council's website.

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

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