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**Northern Ireland Social Care Council  
 Registrants' Forum  
 Tuesday 15 September 2015, 10.30am  
 in NISCC Offices, Belfast**

**Present**

Roberta Magee (Chair) (UNISON)  
 Loughlin Duffy (NIPSA)  
 Sharon Scott (Extra Care)

Carolyn Ewart (Deputy Chair) (NIASW)  
 Dillon McMahon (Positive Futures)  
 Nichola Shanks (Beacon Well Being)

**Apologies**

Jackie Craig (Four Seasons HC)

Nora McMahon (Student Rep, QUB)

**In Attendance**

Patricia Higgins (Director of Regulation and Standards)  
 Paul Rooney (Professional Adviser)  
 Helen McVicker (Professional Adviser)

Maureen Heaney (Communications Officer)  
 Susie Nelson (Minute Taker)

		<b>Action</b>
<b>(1)</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone and members introduced themselves. Apologies were noted from Jackie Craig and Nora McMahon. The Director of Regulation & Standards advised that Nora has been nominated as the QUB student representative. Nora was unable to attend the meeting due to placement commitments but should be available for the next meeting.	
<b>(2)</b>	<b>Codes of Practice</b>	
2.1	<u>Update on Standards of Conduct and Practice</u> Ms McVicker introduced the new Standards and advised that they will be launched on 30 September 2015. A series of information roadshows will be held throughout October to disseminate the Standards, and they will take effect from 1 November. They will	

		<b>Action</b>
	<p>provide guidance, support and protection for registrants and will form the regulatory framework for NISCC as we move to Fitness to Practice. The Standards of Conduct are an updated version of the Codes; some additional standards have been added, for example, use of social media, use of public and private monies, duty of candour. The Standards of Practice are new and are based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Social Work and Common Induction Standards for Social Care. NISCC will ensure that all registrants will receive 1 hard copy of the Standards, via Employers. The Chair stressed the importance of sending the copies to the right person within each Employer, to ensure that they are distributed to registrants.</p>	
2.2	<p><u>Discussion on Employers Code of Practice</u>  Ms. McVicker explained that the Employers Code was reviewed as part of the formal consultation process, and that there was overwhelming feedback about the lack of status as NISCC does not have the authority to enforce it. The Employers Code will remain as it is for now and a working group will be established to look at the Employers Code. The Director of Regulation &amp; Standards asked for representation from the Forum to sit on this working group alongside NISCC, DHSSPS, RQIA and other stakeholders. Detailed discussions ensued and it was noted that staff face conflict between adhering to the NISCC Code and meeting employer expectations, e.g. around caseload management and people are frightened to whistle-blow. There is a particular gap in relation to statutory social work within the Trusts as RQIA does not regulate this sector, yet this is where most of the issues tend to come from. The Director of Regulation &amp; Standards advised that NISCC is hoping to develop Guidance for Staff on how to escalate concerns/issues in addition to the Employer Code. It was agreed to dedicate the Forum's next meeting to looking at this Guidance. In the meantime, Ms McVicker will carry out a scoping exercise and asked members to forward any contributions they may have.</p>	<b>HMcv/ALL</b>
<b>(3)</b>	<b>Update on Fitness to Practise</b>	
3.1	<p>The Director of Regulation &amp; Standards informed members that the NISCC Conduct Model is moving to become a Fitness to Practice Model, in line with all other regulators. The legislation has to be changed and it was hoped that the Fitness to Practice model would come into force in March/April 2016 but given the issues with the Assembly, this may be delayed. NISCC are however continuing on track as planned and have drafted a set of Fitness to Practice Rules.</p> <p>This model will be better as it looks to the future and the following</p>	

		<b>Action</b>
	<p>benefits were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built in additional sanctions i.e. conditions on practice</li> <li>• Opens opportunity to look at consensual agreement whereby a full committee/hearing process may not be required</li> <li>• Built in power to obtain information from third parties</li> <li>• Built in transitional arrangements (will come into effect the day after it becomes legislation)</li> <li>• Have to be registered in NI to work in NI</li> <li>• Give Care Tribunal the power to vary sanctions</li> </ul>	
<b>(4)</b>	<b>Principles of Engagement with Registrants</b>	
4.1	<p>The Director of Regulation &amp; Standards explained how the NISCC Participation Forum developed a document 'Principles of Participation' for the Council. The Council are keen for the Registrants Forum to produce a similar document to look at how NISCC engages with registrants and how do we ensure that we are taking account of the registrants needs. Ms Ewart, Ms Shanks and Mr McMahan agreed to join a small steering group with the Director of Regulation &amp; Standards and Mr Rooney to work on this. The group will bring it back to the next meeting of the Registrants Forum.</p>	<b>CE/NS/DMcM/ PH/PR</b>
<b>(5)</b>	<b>Roll-out of registration to domiciliary and day care staff</b>	
5.1	<p>The deadline for roll-out of registration to domiciliary and day care staff is December 2016. The Director of Regulation and Standards advised that Mark Bradley, Director of Corporate Services at NISCC has spoken to Employers at a senior level in relation to the roll-out of registration, and explained that whilst some organisations want information roadshows, others don't. Belfast H&amp;SCT will be the first to introduce the roll-out, and Ms Magee explained that BH&amp;SCT would like to do it in stages. NISCC are holding information sessions on the roll-out of registration during lunchtime at the Standards workshops in October.</p> <p>The Director of Regulation and Standards informed members that Employers who sit on the NISCC Workforce Development Partnership are currently working on a Training Framework around Social Care to look at how training is being recorded and identify training needs for the future.</p> <p>It was noted that Domiciliary Care Staff can be a difficult group to contact, and it was suggested to use the text service for those who don't have an email address.</p> <p>Members discussed their use of the NISCC Portal online and agreed that although there have been some minor technical issues, the Portal is very user-friendly and is the best way to keep registration up to date.</p>	

		<b>Action</b>
<b>(6)</b>	<b>Social Care Manager Network</b>	
6.1	The Director of Regulation and Standards explained that a lack of support for Social Care Managers has been raised through discussions at the NISCC Workforce Development Partnership meetings. In response to this, Jan Houston, Professional Adviser, NISCC is establishing a working group to look at setting up a Social Care Manager Network, similar to one in Wales. Ms Magee, Ms Scott and Ms Shanks agreed to represent the Registrants' Forum on this group. The Director of Regulation and Standards will forward meeting dates and any other information.	<b>RM/SS/NS/PH</b>
<b>(7)</b>	<b>NISCC Corporate Plan</b>	
7.1	The Director of Regulation and Standards informed members that Council are currently working with an organisation called IRISS to develop the NISCC Corporate Plan in terms of workforce planning and corporate planning. Rob Rae from IRISS (3 <sup>rd</sup> Horizons) is very engaging and is keen to meet with the Registrants Forum for a half day workshop in November/December 2015, which will provide the opportunity for a string registrants' voice in the NISCC Corporate Plan. The Director of Regulation and Standards will confirm the date as soon as possible, and encouraged members to attend the workshop.	<b>PH/ALL</b>
<b>(8)</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
8.1	Ms Heaney advised that the NISCC website is being re-designed and encouraged members to complete a short questionnaire that they will receive via email, to provide NISCC with their feedback on the website.	<b>ALL</b>
<b>(9)</b>	<b>Dates for future meetings</b>	
9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016, 10.30am at NISCC. This meeting will be dedicated to two items on the Agenda – Principles of Engagement and Raising Concerns</li> <li>• Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016, 10.30am at NISCC</li> </ul>	

Roberta Magee, Chair of Registrants' Committee  
**Northern Ireland Social Care Council**