



**PRESS RELEASE**

**27 February 2009**

**NORTH WEST INFORMATION EVENING FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING  
DISABILITY SERVICE USERS, THEIR CARERS AND PROVIDERS**

On 1 April 2009, the functions of the Mental Health Commission transfer to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) under changes in health and social care structures in Northern Ireland.

Phelim Quinn, RQIA Acting Chief Executive, stated: **"From April the RQIA will have specific responsibility for keeping under review the care and treatment of patients with a mental disorder. RQIA will build upon the previous work of the Mental Health Commission, keeping a strong focus on the rights of the individual. RQIA will also ensure wider engagement with those involved with mental health and learning disability services"**.

To find out what these changes mean for service users, their carers and providers, a series of evening information events are being held in the **Waterside Theatre, Londonderry on Thursday 19th March from 7 - 9pm.**

Mental Health Commission Chairman Noel McKenna added **"I welcome the RQIA's plans to strengthen the work previously carried out by the Mental Health Commission. I would encourage all those with an interest and involvement in mental health and learning disability to attend an information evening."**

To book a place, contact Patricia Corrigan at RQIA, email: [patricia.corrigan@rqia.org.uk](mailto:patricia.corrigan@rqia.org.uk) or Tel: 028 9051 7516. Please provide your name, organisation (where relevant), contact details, any special access requirements, and state your preferred venue.

**ENDS**

**For further information:**

please contact: Malachy Finnegan, RQIA Communications Manager,  
Tel:028 9051 7485, or email: [malachy.finnegan@rqia.org.uk](mailto:malachy.finnegan@rqia.org.uk)

### **Editors' Notes**

A number of Information Evenings are taking place across Northern Ireland during March.  
These are:

Burnavon Arts & Cultural Centre, Cookstown Tuesday 10 March, 7pm - 9pm

Waterside Theatre, Londonderry Thursday 19 March, 7pm - 9pm

Further information on what these changes mean for service users, their carers and providers of mental health and learning disability services is available on RQIA's website at [www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk).

### **About RQIA**

RQIA is the independent body responsible for monitoring and inspecting the availability and quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland, and encouraging improvements in the quality of those services. RQIA's main functions are:

- to inspect the quality of services provided by health and social care (HSC) bodies in Northern Ireland through reviews of clinical and social care governance arrangements within these bodies;
- to regulate (register and inspect) a wide range of services delivered by HSC bodies and by the independent sector. The regulation of services is based on minimum care standards to ensure that service users know what quality of services they can expect to receive, and service providers have a benchmark against which to measure their quality; and
- from 1 April 2009, with the transfer of functions of the Mental Health Commission to the RQIA under the Health and Social Care (Reform) Bill, we will undertake a new range of responsibilities for people with a mental illness and those with a learning disability. These include: preventing ill treatment; remedying any deficiency in care or treatment; terminating improper detention in a hospital or guardianship; and preventing or redressing loss or damage to a patient's property.