



24 March 2009

New Duties for Health and Social Care Regulator

Today Dr Ian Carson, Chairman of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), has welcomed the transfer of functions of the Mental Health Commission to RQIA underannounced the appointment of Glenn Houston as Chief Executive of RQIA - Northern Ireland's independent regulator of health and social care services.

RQIA Chairman Dr Ian Carson said: **"I am delighted to welcome Glenn Houston to RQIA at an important time for our organisation, and for health and social care in Northern Ireland. With new structures being implemented from 1 April - which include the transfer of the functions of the Mental Health Commission to RQIA - I believe that RQIA, led by our new Chief Executive, is well placed to deliver on this newly expanded remit. Glenn Houston brings a wealth of experience to RQIA, having worked in a wide range of health and social care services over the past 29 years, which will greatly benefit us at this time."**

Glenn Houston said: **"Much has been achieved by RQIA over the past four years through its inspection and review activities, and it is my intention to build upon these achievements. In the past year RQIA has carried out an independent review of the outbreak of Clostridium Difficile in the Northern Trust. In addition, we have conducted over 2,200 announced and unannounced inspections at nursing and residential care homes, and other health and social care facilities in Northern Ireland."**

Mr Houston continued: **"This is a challenging time for RQIA, taking over a range of important responsibilities for mental health and learning**

disability services which were previously discharged by the Mental Health Commission.

We are also currently undertaking two major reviews - one on child protection and another on maternity services across Northern Ireland, as well as monitoring cleanliness standards in our hospitals, through ongoing unannounced hygiene inspections.

RQIA's key priority is the protection of vulnerable people, and we will use our full range of legislative powers to ensure this is the case. It is also my intention as the incoming Chief Executive to focus on delivering a robust regulatory framework for all health and social care services."

The RQIA Chairman concluded: **"I wish to congratulate Glenn Houston on his appointment and to wish him every success in this challenging role."**

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Editors' Notes

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, established in April 2005 under *The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003*, is the independent health and social care regulatory body for Northern Ireland. In its work RQIA encourages continuous improvement in the quality and availability of health and social care services through a programme of inspections and reviews.

The RQIA's main functions are:

- To inspect the quality of health and social care services provided by Health and Social Care (HSC) boards, trusts and agencies in Northern Ireland. These inspections take the form of reviews of clinical and social care governance arrangements within HSC bodies.
- To regulate (i.e. register and inspect) a wide range of health and social care services delivered by HSC bodies and the independent sector. The regulation of services aims 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.

- From April 2009, with the transfer of duties of the Mental Health Commission to the RQIA, under the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009, the RQIA will undertake a new range of responsibilities for people with mental ill health 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 the patient's property.

**Glenn Houston BA CQSW MIHM
Chief Executive, RQIA**



Glenn Houston joined RQIA as Chief Executive in March 2009. Mr Houston has 29 years experience of working in the health and personal social services in Northern Ireland. He was appointed Director of Women's and Children's Services and Executive Director of Social Work in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust in April 2007. Before taking up this appointment he was Chief Executive of the former Craigavon and Banbridge Community Trust.

Glenn has held a number of other senior appointments in the HPSS in Northern Ireland. In 1996, he became Director of Planning and Information in Homefirst Community Trust and in 2002 was appointed Director of Mental Health Services, taking a leading role in the reform and modernisation of hospital and community based services.

Glenn was a member of the Steering Committee of the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability.

He completed the Top Management Programme at the King's Fund in 2000.

In 2007 was appointed to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.