



The **Regulation** and
Quality Improvement
Authority

RQIA Authority Meeting Held on Thursday 8 December 2022

Summary

Regulatory Activity

- The Authority recognised the acute service pressures across health and social care; in this pressured environment the continuing programme of regulatory activity including physical inspections and reporting is an important safeguard for safety of patients, service users and staff.
- In recent weeks, RQIA has inspected a number of Emergency Departments / Services. Reports of findings and actions recommended will be published on the RQIA website as soon as possible.
- Enforcement actions are ongoing in relation to a number of registered services. Details are available on RQIA's website (See 'Enforcement').

RQIA Reviews

- RQIA published the Report of the Expert Panel of Records of Deceased Patients (Neurology) on 29 October 2022. Authority Members acknowledged their sincere gratitude to families involved in this challenging review. Next steps will focus on taking forward its recommendations, working with other regulators and stakeholders.
- The Authority noted progress on the RQIA Maternity Services Review fieldwork, including considerations on safety and culture, and welcomed the engagement plan with service users and staff.

Public Involvement

- Authority Members welcomed Mr Charles Little to the meeting, accompanied by representatives from the Mental Health Champion's Office and Patient and Client Council (PCC), to discuss the recent Review of the Systems and Processes for Learning from Serious Adverse Incidents in Northern Ireland and the Mental Health Strategy.
- Mr Little presented a compelling account of the experiences of his family and the response of the wider health and social care system following the manslaughter of his parents-in-law in May 2017 by an individual known to mental health services.
- Following discussion, it was agreed that RQIA would include a preface to its Review (published June 2022), to ensure it advocates a change to the regional SAI Protocol to include the victims and their families, and to reflect the importance of the involvement of the Coroner in the process, which the Review had not covered. The Authority agreed to work in partnership with Mr Little, the Mental Health Champion and PCC to ensure the Department of Health is clear on the amendments required to the SAI Regional Protocol; and thanked Mr Little for his valuable and constructive contribution to this important work.

Public Inquiries

- Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry: an update on the preparatory work for RQIA's participation in the Public Inquiry was presented by the RQIA's recently appointed independent legal support service.
- COVID-19 Public Inquiry: Preliminary hearing for Module 2 (Northern Ireland) took place on 2 November 2022. RQIA has applied for Core Participant status for Module 3; the decision of Inquiry Chair on this matter is now awaited.
- Urology: Authority Members noted the Inquiry public hearings have commenced.

Strategic Plan and Improvement

- RQIA held a Stakeholder Involvement Event on 23 November 2022 to ask a group of service users, their families and some members of the general public on developing improved ways to listen to, and benefit from, the experience of service users.
- Draft Strategic Plan 2022 to 2027: 14 week public consultation period closed on 17 November 2022, with 170 individuals and organisations engaging in this consultation exercise. An initial report on responses was presented to the Authority. A workshop is scheduled in January 2023, to consider the responses and how the Strategic Plan should be refined. The revised Strategic Plan will be shared with the Department of Health and presented to the Authority for approval in March 2023.
- Proposals to publish Inspection Reports relating to Services for Children and Young People: The Authority noted progress in collating the results of this consultation and recent engagement with the Information Commissioner's Office. A summary report will be presented to the Authority at a workshop in January 2023.

Financial Performance

- Month 7 Report was reviewed. Members noted that the budget surplus is reducing as staff recruitment has progressed. Projections are currently indicating an overspend of circa £100k, specifically related to work to support RQIA's engagement with the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry.

Governance and Policy

- The Authority noted ongoing work on the Audit into Board Effectiveness and Self-Assessment. A draft action plan has been prepared for discussion at the Authority Workshop in January 2023.
- Authority Members were provided with an update from the Business, Appointments and Remuneration Committee. This included:
 - o Progress on legal services issues;
 - o Workforce plans;
 - o Quarter 2 of the Activity Performance and Outcomes Report;
 - o Authority approval of Human Resources Policies (Attendance and Grievance);
 - o Consideration of the Vexatious Concerns Policy;
 - o Authority approval of RQIA's Annual Quality Report 2021-22; and
 - o Authority endorsement of a memorandum of understanding with the NI Fire and Rescue Service.
- Authority Members were also provided with an update from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee including:
 - o Authority approval of Principal Risk Document (included risks relating to capacity to deliver on statutory requirements and the accommodation move);
 - o Progress on the Mental Capacity Act business case;
 - o Internal and External Audit Updates; and
 - o Authority sign off of Mid-year Assurance Statement.

An update in relation to the forthcoming planned industrial action and RQIA's business contingency plans was also provided to the Authority.