



The **Regulation** and  
**Quality Improvement**  
Authority

# **RQIA Authority Meeting Held on Thursday 16 March 2023**

## **Summary**





New Authority Members who had taken up appointment since 1 February 2023 were welcomed to their first Authority meeting.

### Governance and Policy

- The Authority noted that the **draft DoH / RQIA Partnership Agreement** has been submitted to the DoH for their input and review. The final draft will be submitted to the DoH Governance Unit and then the Department of Finance (DoF) Supply in early April 2023. It is planned that the final version will be signed by the DoH and RQIA in April 2023.
- **Legal Issues:** The Authority was advised of the current Coroner's Inquest and a possible Judicial Review in respect of RQIA's duties to inspect / regulate mental health community services.
- **Board / Authority Effectiveness Audit:** The recent audit had received satisfactory assurance.

### Public Inquiries

Authority Members noted the following:

- Previous **Inquiry into Hyponatraemia Related Deaths** and the need to be cognisant of this, particularly the Implementation Programme work around "Duty of Candour" and "Being Open".
- **Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry (MAHI):** Chief Executive will give evidence in May. The RQIA's Statement under Rule 9 has been submitted.
- **COVID-19 Inquiry:** Information has been supplied to the Inquiry under Rule 9. Communications have also issued from the Inquiry with regard to continuing preliminary hearings for Module 3.
- **Infected Blood Inquiry:** RQIA has received a request to submit information to the Inquiry by late March 2023.

### Resources

Authority Members noted the challenging financial landscape for the next year. The Authority was reminded that careful decisions will be needed in respect of how RQIA's resources are applied, given the RQIA's legislative duties and requirements. The Authority agreed that RQIA must continue to keep the safety and quality of care of patients, service users, residents, at the centre of its work and decision-making.

### RQIA Strategic Plan 2022-2028

- **Public Consultation:** A response document to the Public Consultation in respect of the RQIA Strategic Plan 2022-2028 was approved. Five key areas had emanated from the consultation and have been addressed in the Strategic Plan, namely: Broader listening and involvement at service level and strategically; simplification of language, communications and awareness of inspection reports, and findings; the need to be clearer on RQIA's scope; more ambition in driving improvement and accountability and outlining achievement; and RQIA's independence and visibility.
- **Strategic Plan 2022-2028:** the updated Plan was presented as the final draft, incorporating key messages from the public consultation. Authority Members agreed the Plan is clear, open and comprehensive. The Strategic Plan for 2022-2028 was approved, subject to some suggested amendments, for submission to DoH.

### Financial Performance

Month 10 Report was reviewed. Projections are currently indicating a deficit at year-end, with commissioned pieces of work contributing to this. Discussions continue with the DoH in relation to the additional funding required for commissioned work and also in relation to requirements for public inquiries. Income in registration fees has decreased this year, with a reduced turnover in manager variations and new applications.

**Date of next Authority meeting: Thursday 20 April 2023**

An update from the **Business, Appointments and Remuneration Committee** was provided. This included:

- Workforce, Modernisation and Organisation Development Programme: Support Volunteers – update – noted.
- Quarter 3, 2022/2023 of the Activity, Performance and Outcomes Report – approved.
- RQIA Working Groups focused on Equality and Communications and Involvement – noted.
- Draft RQIA Equality and Disability Action Plan: 2023-2028 – approved for consultation.
- Digital: iConnect Business Continuity Down-Time in relation to a Software Upgrade, with the associated Business Case – noted.
- Update on Accommodation Move – noted.
- RQIA Policies: ICT Security and Associated Standards; Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery Policy and Response Plan and Whistleblowing – approved.
- Memorandum of Understanding and DAA: RQIA and Criminal Justice Inspection NI (CJINI) – approved.
- Update on RQIA's role in the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) and the Northern Ireland Sub-Group – noted.

Authority Members were also provided with an update from the **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee** including:

- BSO Annual Assurance Letter, setting out assurances, processes and governance arrangements – noted.
- Mental Capacity Business Case, outlining funding required to enable RQIA to fulfil its requirements under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) – noted.
- The Risk Management Strategy 2023-2024 – to be reviewed at a forthcoming Risk Management Workshop – noted.
- The Principal Risk Document (included risks relating to RQIA's capacity to deliver against current statutory requirements) – approved.
- Scheme of Delegated Authority – approved.
- Internal and External Audit Updates – approved.
- Standing Reports to the Committee – noted.