

**From the Permanent Secretary  
and HSC Chief Executive**



To: All DOH/HSC/ALB Staff

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Our ref:

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Dear colleagues

### **NHS 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

This week we mark the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of the creation of National Health Service and its sister organisation in Northern Ireland, the HSC.

It's a time to both celebrate its proud history and reflect on the future for health and social care provision.

Our health and social care system is nothing without its people and I wanted to begin this week by thanking each and every one of you for the contribution you make.

The work you do is cherished right across our society.

While I am very aware of the severe pressures you have been working under for a sustained period, I also see time and time again examples of the great care, expertise and innovation that happen on a daily basis throughout NI.

Every single one of us has cause to be deeply grateful to the health service for looking after us and our families, often at times of greatest need and anxiety.

Every one of us in a position of leadership has a heavy responsibility to help restore the HSC system to better health. We are facing severe budgetary challenges this year and I thank you for your efforts to continue to deliver key services and to find better, more cost-effective approaches.

The long-term plan must include sustained investment in the workforce – investment to grow and reward the current workforce fairly; investment to address the unmet demands we struggle to meet; and investment to modernise and take advantage of new technological opportunities.

As we look ahead to the next 75 years, the challenge is a big one.

I am convinced that all of the problems facing health and social care services are fixable.

But it will not be quick or easy. It will take sustained action from us all working as one team to a common goal allied to the investment I have already referred to and political leadership able and willing to take the challenging decisions about how to prioritise and resolve intractable issues about service delivery.

On NHS birthday week, we should remember the challenges that faced its architects in the 1940s, as society was emerging from the carnage of the second world war.

We can take inspiration from their resilience and their vision, as we work to rebuild and reshape provision.

For all its problems, the health service is still standing and still serving. It's our job to make sure that continues.

Happy birthday NHS and HSC.

Yours sincerely



**PETER MAY**