

Rural Needs Impact Assessment

Section 1: Define activity subject to Section 1(1) of Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Short title describing activity being undertaken that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016:

Service Delivery Plan

**1B. Are you Developing, Adopting, Implementing or Revising a Policy a Strategy or a Plan? (Underline or Circle)
Or are you delivering or designing a public service? (Underline or Circle)
What is official title of this Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public service (if any)?**

Belfast Trust Service Delivery Plan July-September 2021

1C. Give details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service:

This is a quarterly plan in a series of rebuild plans to illustrate what the Trust will do to rebuild its services. Many measures within the Plan constitute an incremental attempt to return to service provision, as was, prior to Covid-19 whilst others constitute temporary changes to facilitate service delivery but also to facilitate an agile response to a further surge.

The majority of the Trust's services are delivered to people who are not from a rural community. However, we do deliver regional services. Our plan does not have a differential impact on people in rural areas because the proposals apply equally to people both in urban and rural areas (e.g. the regional fertility clinic- rapid access clinic is opened for emergencies only).

In addition, our plan includes increases to capacity for a range of regional services e.g. Regional Acquired Brain Injury Unit.

Due to continue social distancing and infection control requirements the Trust will continue to use telephone clinics and virtual IT solutions which will enhance the accessibility of regional services for people who live beyond Belfast. However, the Trust is mindful of the need for good connectivity and so will continue to monitor this innovation through feedback from service users and will strive to provide a hybrid service delivery model. Our plan will be continuously reviewed, informed by service user feedback and aligned to regional discussions and priorities.

This quarterly service delivery plan constitutes an overarching rebuild plan to show how the Trust will incrementally deliver services. By the very nature of the rebuilding work, it is anticipated that the majority of these actions will have a positive impact on people from both urban and rural needs. Our Plans have been developed aligned to the Department of Health's overall priorities to:

- Ensure Equity of Access for the treatment of patients across Northern Ireland,
- Minimise the transmission of COVID-19; and
- Protect the most urgent services.

In developing this quarterly plan in a series of Rebuild Plans, Belfast Trust is mindful of the Department of Health's mission stated in the Rebuilding HSC Services Strategic Framework September 2020 which indicated that the overarching principle is: "To incrementally increase HSC service

capacity as quickly as possible across all programmes of care, within the prevailing COVID-19 conditions. The aim will be to maximise service activity within the context of managing the ongoing COVID-19 situation; embedding innovation and transformation; incorporating the Encompass programme; prioritising services; developing contingencies; and planning for the future all at the same time.”

This Service Delivery Plan, from July-September 2021 continues to focus on the delivery of services to the most vulnerable people in our community, on services for those people who urgently require acute care, planned cancer surgery and time-critical surgery in a safe environment and ensuring equity in our approach. Any remaining theatre staffing capacity is utilised to support the restart of elective surgery where possible. The Trust’s commitment to provide safe compassionate care to all those who need it continues, although this will mean delivering services in a different way because of social distancing but as previously referenced, services will be offered on a hybrid basis where virtual or telephone consultations are not feasible for people in rural areas. This hybrid option will also reduce the need for people to travel from rural areas and reduce costs.

1D. What definition of ‘rural’ is the Trust using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service:

The Trust uses the default definition of “rural” as developed by the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group i.e. that “*rural is classified by those settlements with populations of less than 5,000 together with the open countryside*”.

Rural settlements and wider countryside



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Section 2 - Understanding impact of Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If response is NO Go To Section 2E.

2B. How is it likely to impact on people in rural areas?

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently?

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas		Community Safety or Rural Crime		Agriculture-Environment	
Education or Training in Rural Areas		Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas		Other, please state below;	
Rural Development		Broadband/Mobile Communications in Rural Areas			
Poverty or Deprivation in Rural Areas		Rural Business, Tourism or Housing			

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

As with previous quarterly rebuild or service delivery plans, by virtue of their incremental nature, this plan will have positive impacts on both people in urban and rural areas. The Trust is working to safely and effectively increase capacity across its services on both a local and regional basis. Our priority remains the continued safety of our patients, service users and staff, while supporting our carers and families, during this pandemic. Inherent in this plan (as with previous quarterly plans) is the need to be responsive and flexible given that services may need to be stood down if a future outbreak of the virus occurs. HSC Trusts work together to ensure available capacity, whether in critical care or elective (planned care) was prioritised for those considered to be in most clinical need on a regional basis, regardless of the Trust area in which they reside.

If you completed 2E above GO TO Section 6

SECTION 3 - Identifying Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Trust taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas, relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service? Yes No if the response is NO, GO TO Section 3D

3B. Which of following methods or information sources were used by the Trust to identify these needs?

Consultation with relevant stakeholders / Survey or Questionnaire / Research / Statistics / Publications / Other methods.
Please provide details:

3C. What social and economic needs of the people in rural areas have been identified?

3D Please explain why no steps were taken by the Trust to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

SECTION 4 - Considering Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. What issues were considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the policy, strategy, plan or public service been changed by consideration of the rural needs identified?
 Yes No if the response is NO, GO TO Section 5C

5B. If yes, how have rural needs influenced the policy, strategy plan or public service?

5C. If no, why have the rural needs identified not influenced the policy, strategy, plan or public service?

Section 6: Documentation:
6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Trust and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.
 I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by: Orla Barron

Job Title/Directorate Equality and Corporate Planning Lead

Signature:		Date:	July 2021
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Approved by:

Job Title/Directorate

Signature:		Date:	
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