



## **Belfast Trust**

### **Accountability and Oversight Arrangements – SIF Level 5**

#### Background

Belfast HSC Trust have been assigned the highest level (level 5) on the Support and Intervention Framework, the Department's Performance Accountability Framework.

The reasons for this emanate from the findings of the independent review of Cardiac Surgery, however their wider applicability to the Trust more generally is being reviewed. This includes culture, the conditions for being open/speaking up and clinical governance. Staff and public confidence is a thread which will run through the delivery of the Action Plans and will be at the heart of the Oversight arrangements.

#### Support

The Trust will be provided with external independent expertise to assist with the development of actions and their implementation. Arrangements have been made with the following experts, the cost of which will be borne by the BHSCT:

- Peter McBride\* – ToR appended; and
- Name TBC\* – draft ToR appended.

Both independent experts will support the Trust's Cardiac Surgery Action Plan and importantly consider related matters of culture, the conditions for being open/speaking up and clinical governance oversight at a Trust wide and Corporate Level.

*A member of the independent review team for Cardiac Surgery has been asked to attend the accountability and assurance meeting for Cardiac Action Plan implementation – this is TBC and will be notified if/when confirmed.*

#### Structure of Accountability and Assurance arrangements

- Operational Performance

SITREP meetings and reporting have been in place since February 2025. Over that time frequency has changed from daily to weekly. SITREPs focus on matters relating to the operational delivery of the Cardiac Surgery service and business continuity matters. Weekly SITREPs are expected to continue and may be varied in frequency on review by the SPPG Chief Operating Officer and the PHA Chief Executive.

A key focus of this group will be the development of cardiac surgery capacity plan under the waiting list 25/26 project and continued consideration of operational risks and mitigations.

- Trust Cardiac Surgery Oversight Team

The Trust has set up an internal Oversight Team to deliver recommendations from the Independent Review (ToR appended). Mr Peter McBride and Drxxx TBC will attend and support the Oversight Team as required, providing constructive challenge, advice and support relating to their individual ToR's (both appended).

The Oversight Team will provide a formal update report to the Department and PHA Accountability and Assurance Group (see below) no less frequently than monthly. Regular review meetings will consider progress and actions between these formal reports.

- Departmental and PHA Accountability and Assurance Group

This Group will ensure that the Action Plan for Cardiac Surgery is delivered by the Trust with pace and urgency. The Group will consider the work of the independent experts at organisational and corporate wide level within the Trust. Given these 2 separate but related strands and the individuals required to be involved this will be discharged in 2 parts as set out in the tables below.

<b>A) Trust Cardiac Surgery Action Plan</b>	<b>B) BHSCT Organisation and Corporate Issues</b>
<p>Representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COO SPPG and PHA CX (co-chairs)</li> <li>• Director of Hospital Care Services, SPPG</li> <li>• Director of Public Health, PHA</li> <li>• Director of Performance, SPPG</li> <li>• Chair, BHSCT</li> <li>• Chief Executive, BHSCT</li> <li>• Medical Director, BHSCT</li> <li>• Director of ACCTSS, BHSCT</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Performance, BHSCT</li> <li>• Attendance where available by Independent Experts (* see support section above)</li> <li>• <i>TBC – member of the independent Cardiac Surgery Review Team</i></li> <li>• Other colleagues by agreement of the Chairs</li> </ul> <p>Administration via COO's SPPG office</p>	<p>Representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COO SPPG and Deputy Secretary Sponsor DOH (Co-Chairs)</li> <li>• Chief Executive, PHA</li> <li>• Chair, BHSCT</li> <li>• Chief Executive, BHSCT</li> <li>• Independent Experts (*see support section above)</li> <li>• Other colleagues by agreement of the Chairs</li> </ul> <p>Administration via COO's (SPPG) office</p>
<p>Timing of the meetings will be fortnightly</p> <p>(expected Friday afternoon for 1 hour, 2pm to 3pm)</p>	<p>Timing of meetings will be fortnightly, immediately following the Cardiac Surgery Action Plan meeting</p> <p>(expected Friday afternoon for 1 hour (3 pm to 4pm)</p>
<p>Meetings will focus on the Action Plan, Progress, Next Steps and Risks.</p>	<p>Meeting will focus on the work of the external independent experts and related actions for the Trust. This will also include any actions from the Cardiac Surgery plan which have wider applicability, or for consideration.</p>
<p>Formal reporting will be to Permanent Secretary and Minister for Health within 2 working days of meeting.</p>	<p>Formal reporting to the Permanent Secretary and Minister within 2 working days of meeting.</p>