

**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:**

Belfast Trust Rebuild Plan: Delivering the Right Care, in the Right Place and at the Right Time: April –June 2021

**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)?**

Rebuild Plan

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

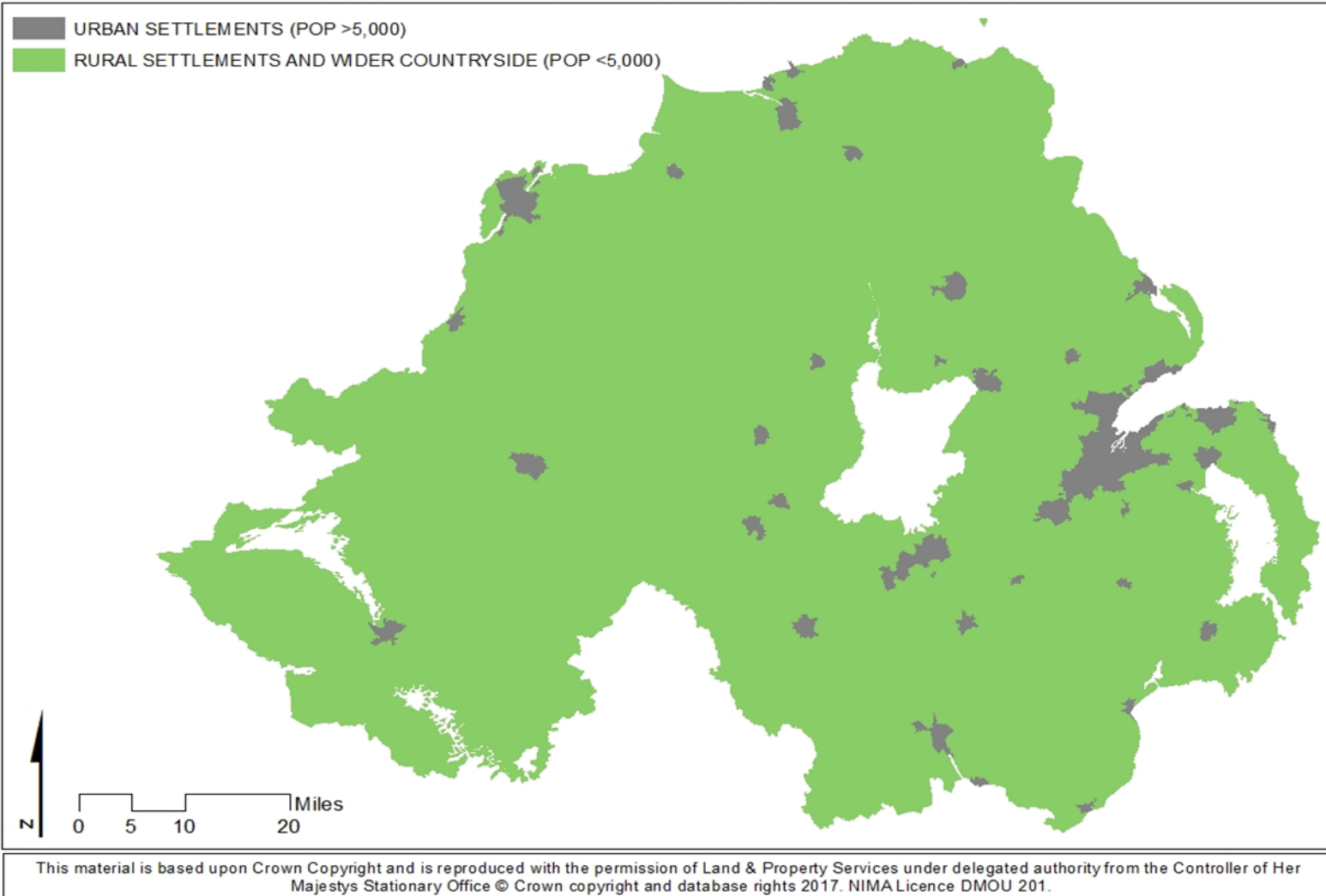
Following the impact of the Covid pandemic, the Trust has been working incrementally to rebuild its services – this quarterly plan represents what the Trust will do between April and June of 2021. Our priority remains the continued safety of our patients, service users and staff, while supporting our carers and families, during this pandemic. Inherent in this plan (as with previous 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 worked 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. The Trust remained committed to providing a carefully considered, balanced and evidence-based response according to the levels of the pandemic and to only re-introducing services when it was safe to do so. We have also learnt from experience and engagement over the last year and developed innovative ways to deliver services and facilitate health and social care. This Rebuild Plan aims to balance the need to protect life whilst also stepping-up and delivering services which are safe, effective and compassionate. As set out by the Department of Health, the key Principles of the Plan include:

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

**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



### 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.

Our Plan entitled : BHSCT Rebuild Plan April – June 2021: Delivering the Right Care, in the Right Place and at the Right Time is the next stage in our incremental approach to service delivery following a Covid-19 world pandemic.

On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the World Health Organisation officially declared Covid-19 a pandemic due to the speed and scale of transmission. As a result the Health and Social Care sector faced unprecedented pressures in their primary aims to:

- (i) Safeguard lives by reducing the further spread of the Covid-19 virus; and to
- (ii) Prevent the HSC system from becoming overwhelmed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the demands this is placing on the whole HSC system.

During the pandemic measures were taken to try to best deal with the demands and consequences of Covid 19 and were undertaken with the utmost urgency to protect life and address urgent public health matters. Many services across Belfast Trust and beyond continued to operate throughout the pandemic, albeit on a reduced scale while other services had to be stood down because of clinical, patient or staff safety, as well as physical and workforce capacity constraints.

The Trust recognises that there are a number of policy leads/decision makers across HSC who likewise must comply with the Rural Needs Impact Assessment duties in the development, implementation and review of the Minister for Health’s “Strategic Framework for Rebuilding HSC Services” in NI and in the development and implementation of HSC Trusts Rebuild Plans. The Trust therefore commits to collaborate, as necessary, with all relevant HSC organisations in seeking to ensure the fulfilment of these statutory duties.

Please note the following factors considered when deciding that our policy is not likely to impact people in rural areas:

- This is an overarching rural screening to gauge the cumulative impact of the measures within our Rebuild Plan for April to June 2021 to deliver services post covid-19 surge. The Trust is committed to monitoring those measures in the Plan over the next three months in terms of the impact on people in rural areas and further stand-alone rural screenings will be undertaken as appropriate.
- Many of the 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 Trust remains wholly committed to engage, comprehensively impact assess and consult should we wish to make any of these changes permanent. We have learnt much from our Trust wide ‘Learning from Covid’ initiative which includes listening to service users, patients and carers to influence our future service delivery Plans

- It is noted that the majority of the Trust's services are delivered to people not from a rural community as defined by the Inter Departmental Urban Rural Definition Group (2015). The services that come within the remit of this assessment therefore are restricted to services delivered regionally by the Trust. We are also mindful that a Rural Needs Impact Assessment is proportionate to the scale of the potential impact and relevance of the activity being undertaken
- When considering the impact on people from a rural community, the Trust is mindful that it is important to consider in full the potential impact on rural needs and that we are clear about what is a need and what is desirable. (In general, a need can be considered to be something that is essential to achieve a standard of living comparable with that of the population in general e.g. can the people in the rural area access key public services such as health and social care?.

**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.

<b>Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:</b>	Orla Barron		
<b>Job Title/Directorate</b>	Equality and Corporate Planning Lead		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2021
<b>Approved by:</b>			
<b>Job Title/Directorate</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	