

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN (2019-2024) – YEAR 2 UPDATE - APRIL 2021

Measure: To promote awareness and understanding of issues faced by people with a disability and to ensure staff have the necessary skills to help promote a culture of positive attitudes. These measures will assist the Department in meeting PfGI 2 'Reduce health inequalities' and will contribute to PfGI 26 'Increase respect for each other' (TEO lead) and PfGI 42 'Increase quality of life for people with disabilities' (DfC lead)

Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021
1 Personnel Development/ Deliver Together engagement programme	All staff will have current training and access to a series of awareness sessions on diversity/ disability related issues, including sessions delivered directly by people with a disability and representative organisations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange staff awareness seminars on disability/ diversity related themes, at a minimum, 6 times a year. Where possible voluntary organisations/ disability groups will be invited to deliver sessions. 2. The in-house DoH publication 'the Pulse' will be issued 5 times a year to all staff and is a mechanism to raise awareness and promote diversity within the Department. Events and relevant issues will also be posted on the Departmental intranet as they arise. 3. The Department intranet will be kept up to date with relevant guidance and links, eg to ECNI website, and any new/ relevant issues will be notified to staff with signposting as appropriate. 4. The Equality Unit will issue a minimum of 2 equality/ disability articles per year, by e-mail or in the Pulse, to raise awareness and highlight statutory responsibilities. An article on the importance of using images that display positive images of people with a disability in 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due to the Covid Pandemic no seminars were held in 2020/21. Due to pressures on the Dept and redeployment of resources etc to combat Covid-19, awareness raising was online with examples included in Annex C. 2. Due to the Covid Pandemic, the Pulse magazine was paused and instead weekly communications issued to staff which focused on working from home, keeping in touch and engaged with staff. The Pulse magazine restarted in March 2021 and will issue quarterly going forward.

		<p>Departmental publications will issue before September 2019.</p> <p>5. To increase awareness and support for specific disability related events these will be highlighted to staff e.g. Deaf Awareness Week, Carers Week, Mental Health Awareness Week etc</p>	<p>3. Ongoing. This year included an article on the new translation service on Nidirect which enables instant translation of content into over 100 languages and a new Research and Data page to assist in completing equality screenings.</p> <p>4. Emails to all staff issued on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Annual Statement; The 'Independent Mechanism' in Northern Ireland (IMNI) responses on Disability and Covid; and relevant training offered by NIHRC/ CAL/ ECNI. • encouraging sign-up to the Equality Commission (ECNI) Webinars Section 75 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. • advice regarding statutory obligations in relation to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act during the Covid 19 pandemic, including concerns raised by ECNI. • Email promoting ECNI on-line event to launch the data sign-posting guidance 'Section 75:
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			<p>Using Evidence in Policy Making’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on equality obligations and the new accessible screening template. • Email to relevant staff on Equality Commission (ECNI) ‘Briefing Note on Need for Equality Data’ • Pulse article issued on: 25 years of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) - 25 things you might not know about disability (Disability Action article reproduced by BBC) <p>5. Articles and notifications issued as appropriate – see Annex C of the APR.</p>
2 Training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff will complete Unconscious Bias training e-learning, organised by NICSHR Centre for Applied Learning (CAL), every 3 years. • Liaison with the Equality Commission for NI to arrange and deliver training on Section 75 and disability duties to Department staff, including senior management. 	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place at the Joint ECNI/ NICS Forum and Equality Practitioners Group meetings (and at the Training sub-group involving ECNI, CAL, TEO, DfC, DAERA and NIA) regarding equality training, however, progress has been paused due to Covid-19</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at specific disability related training, as appropriate. 	<p>and other pressures on the Department.</p> <p>A significant number of online awareness events have been offered to staff, particularly around mental health, stress and emotional well-being. Details can be found in the APR.</p> <p>As part of the Deliver Together monthly message we published a Disability Action piece reproducing a BBC article '25 things you didn't know about Disability' to mark 25 years since disability rights were enshrined in law under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).</p>
3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	To develop a fuller awareness of issues facing NICS/DoH staff leading to a better understanding of the needs and requirements of people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental representation at quarterly NICS Diversity Champions Network meetings, taking action within DoH as required and active involvement in discussions and input to the Diversity Action Plan. Timely implementation of relevant actions from the NICS Disability Champion and Working Group(s). 	<p>DCN Meetings were held on: 17 June 2020 8 Oct 2020 28 Jan 2021 10 March 2021</p> <p>The DoH Diversity Champion represents DoH in a central Diversity Champions Network (DCN), co-chaired by the Director of NICS HR. The DCN and NICS HR have worked</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely implementation of relevant actions from the DoH Dignity and Diversity Action Team (established Nov 2019) to create a more diverse and positive working environment, free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. • Facilitate meetings of an internal support group within DoH for staff who are parents/carers for a child with a disability (1st meeting held in Dec 2018). 	<p>collaboratively to produce a NICS Diversity Action Plan to set out plans for progressing diversity and inclusion within the NICS across four key themes, including disability.</p> <p>DoH continues to advertise events to all staff including; the Chinese New Year, events corner and a Joseph Rowntree Foundation event on Ethnicity and COVID-19.</p> <p>Due to the pandemic, the DoH Dignity and Diversity Action team did not meet during 2020/21 however, Deliver Together continue to use the group as a sounding board.</p> <p>3 meetings of the DoH Support group took place in 2020/21</p>
	EHR leads maintain a current understanding of issues faced by the sector and of emerging policies and issues within the DoH and HSC, and update staff as relevant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department's EHR Unit will arrange and Chair a minimum of 3 meetings of the Equality and Human Rights Steering Group annually to discuss key issues and share knowledge and good practice. (Membership includes HSC, NIAS and Fire and Rescue Service). • Departmental EHR staff will attend relevant training/information events held by the Equality Commission 	<p>Despite Covid-19, redeployment of staff and pressures across the Department, the EHRU chaired meetings on 19 November 2020 and 16 February 2021. Despite efforts to arrange guests for the meetings this was not possible due to Covid 19 pressures.</p>

		<p>and other relevant groups and disseminate, as appropriate, throughout the Department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue of relevant guidance/ updates as required. 	<p>EHR staff participated in training and awareness events as outlined in section 1(1) of APR and continue to be active participants of the TEO Equality Practitioners Group; the ECNI/ NICS Equality Forum and the Joint Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum</p> <p>See response at (1) and section 1(1)/ Annex C of APR re Pulse / intranet articles and emails to staff.</p>
4 ECNI Mental Health Charter	To create an open and inclusive workplace culture which displays respect for those with mental ill health.	The Department will promote and participate in any initiatives arising from the NICS commitment to the Mental Health Charter to ensure support for managers and staff and promote mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.	A significant number of online awareness events have been offered to staff, particularly around mental health, stress and emotional well-being. Details can be found in the APR.
Measure: To promote awareness and understanding of difficulties faced by people with a disability and to ensure their voice is heard. These measures will assist the Department in meeting PfGI 2 'Reduce health inequalities' and contribute to PfGI 26 'Increase respect for each other' (TEO lead) and PfGI 42 Increase quality of life for people with disabilities (DfC lead).			
Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021

<p>5 Consultation/ stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>Appropriate engagement and interaction with sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When organising meetings/ events, the time of day, appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required, will be considered. • The use of social media through the DoH twitter account for greater awareness of consultation documents and quicker feedback. • Where possible, pre-engagement prior to formal consultation and consideration of outreach pre-engagement with S75 groups and specific disability community based groups where relevant. • As per NICS Policy Making Guide (February 2017) adopting the models of co-production, co-design and co-create to ensure policies are developed in 	<p>Ongoing. Organised as required by individual policy areas. However, due to Covid restrictions engagement has been online during 2020-21.</p> <p>Ongoing. Twitter is used to raise awareness of consultations and other relevant issues.</p> <p>Details of early stakeholder engagement are included in the 2020/21 Annual Progress Report (APR) and include co-production on the draft Mental Health Strategy; development of a consultation document on a regional Care and Justice Campus which included representatives of children and young people with experience of the secure care centre and a Programme Stakeholder Reference Group to facilitate engagement (VOYPIC, Start360, Include Youth, NIACRO, Extern); and targeted consultation to establish a new regional service delivery model for separated and unaccompanied asylum seeking</p>
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		<p>partnership with stakeholders, with voluntary and community groups, charities etc., as well as the people who are most likely to be impacted or otherwise affected by the implementation.</p>	<p>children, aided by VOYPIC who held ‘conversations’ with 10 young people who had arrived in NI as S/UASC.</p> <p>As above, and in APR.</p>
6 Information/ publications	<p>All information will, where possible, be made available in other formats on request.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative formats, which may include Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print, will be provided in a timely fashion, usually within 20 working days. • Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities. Where appropriate, this will include Easy Read. 	<p>Easy read versions were produced for the consultations on the draft Mental Health Strategy; Legislative options to inform development of an Adult Protection Bill; the new substance abuse strategy; and Improving Health within Criminal Justice.</p> <p>Children’s and teenage versions of the new joint Health and Education Strategy for looked after children and care-experienced children and young people ‘A Life Deserved: “Caring” for Children and Young People’ in Northern Ireland</p>

			were published alongside the Strategy on 19 February 2021. A children's version was also produced for the consultation on the regional Care and Justice Campus.
Measure: To promote a culture of positive attitudes that will attract disabled applicants by removing barriers that will affect them and also supporting disabled employees. These measures will assist the Department in meeting PfGI 2 'Reduce health inequalities' and contribute to PfGI14 'Improve the skills profile of the population' (DfE lead), PfGI 16 'Increase the proportion of people in work' (DfE lead), PfGI 26 'Increase respect for each other' (TEO lead) and PfGI 42 Increase quality of life for people with disabilities (DfC lead).			
Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021
7 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	To create a NICS workforce we want for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the work experience placement scheme for people with disabilities, offering a minimum of 1 placement per year. • Participate in the annual International Job Shadowing Day in April each year to offer a minimum of 1 placement within the Department of Health. • Support implementation of any recommendations from DoF, the NICS Disability Champion and Working Group(s) on placement opportunities, career development and management support for disabled staff, within reasonable timescales. <p><i>Note: Since April 2017, responsibility for the Human Resources function in all NI Departments has passed to NICSHR which is located in the Department of Finance. The Department of Finance S75 Action Plan and the Disability Action Plan now include all Human Resource activity that will be taken across the Northern Ireland Civil Service during the period 2017 – 2022.</i></p>	<p>Due to COVID Pandemic, the work placement scheme was postponed last year however, DOH will publicise the placement scheme and support placement when opportunities arise again</p> <p>As above. See also section 3 on DCN.</p>

<p>8 Equality in Public Appointments and meeting the objectives of the Executive's policy (Feb 2016) of attaining greater diversity in public appointments.</p>	<p>Working to expand our outreach to people with disabilities and ensuring equality of opportunity for people with a disability in applying for public life appointments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of contact lists to ensure they are up to date, and specifically including groups representing people with disabilities to ensure a wide outreach when advertising public appointments. • At the outset of each public appointment competition liaison with DoH Press Office to ensure that all social media avenues are utilised and that all advertising and promotion specifically mentions that the Department is interested in seeking applications from people with disabilities. • At the outset of each public appointment competition the advertisement will be re-tweeted by the Executive to ensure it reaches a wider audience. • At the outset of each public appointment competition ensure that data relating to equal opportunities monitoring is requested and collected from applicants with disabilities on a voluntary basis. • The Department will continue to liaise with Disability Action as a means of outreach to disabled people to encourage their participation in public appointments. • Input to Annual Report for the Head of the NI Civil Service to include information on the involvement of people with disabilities in public appointments. • All documentation and advice relating to public appointments will be carefully considered in terms of language, images and format to ensure ease of accessibility for people with a disability. "The Information Booklet and Application Form for public 	<p>EHRU equality contact list updated annually.</p> <p>Ongoing – Public Appointments Unit (PAU) has continued to apply each of the Performance Indicators and Targets in column 3.</p> <p>Column 3 has been updated in line with progress recorded for April 2021.</p>
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		<p>appointment competitions can be provided in alternative formats. All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants with a disability”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoH is contributing through the Public Appointments Forum to the development of a Diversity 5-Year Strategic Action Plan (2016-2021) which aims to improve diversity in Public Appointments in N. Ireland and implementing all measures subsequently agreed. DoH is participating as a member of one of a series of cross-departmental sub-groups which aim to improve diversity in Public Appointments in Northern Ireland • DoH operates the Guaranteed Interview Scheme in all its Public Appointment competitions. This scheme encourages applications from applicants with disabilities, those with long term impairments or with health conditions that are expected to last at least 12 months. In these instances, provided the applicant has demonstrated in their application form that they meet the criteria for the post, the applicant will be offered a guaranteed interview. 	
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Measure: To improve the health of people with a disability and thus enhance opportunities for participation by disabled people in public and private life. These measures will assist the Department in meeting PfGI 2,3,4 & 7 ‘Reduce health inequalities’, PfGI 5 ‘Improve the quality of the healthcare experience’, PfGI 6 ‘Improve mental health’ and PfGI 9 ‘Improve support for adults with care needs’. They also contribute to PfGI 42 ‘Increase quality of life for people with disabilities’ (DfC lead).

Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021
9 Long Term Conditions (LTC) Policy Framework	The policy framework and action plan, being taken forward by the PHA and HSCB, supports people living with long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department will attend meetings of the Regional Long Term Conditions Implementation Group, chaired by the Director of Public Health, and will oversee the rolling 5-year action plan to implement the development 	Actions are ongoing to support people with long term conditions. Services have aimed to continue to support people living with long term

	<p>term conditions to optimise their health and well-being through, for example, information and education to enable self-management.</p>	<p>areas identified in the Long Term Conditions Policy Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department will ensure an annual progress report is completed to report progress on the implementation of the framework and LTC action plan, including actions to support improved access to patient education programmes. • A number of key areas have been identified for the LTC Implementation Group for 2018-2020. These include continuing to work with key stakeholders in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to patient education programmes and support self-management to improve patient care, including through use of digital technology. • Continue to implement the Diabetes Strategic Framework. This work includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a regionally agreed foot pathway to be implemented from 2019 that should in the future result in fewer amputations; ➤ Modernisation of the retinal screening service to reduce the likelihood of visual loss in diabetic patients; ➤ The introduction of a regional Diabetes Prevention Programme in February 2019 for people with pre diabetes with a view to preventing or delaying the onset of diabetes. • Encourage and support the use of technology in care pathways to support people living with long term conditions. This includes: 	<p>conditions through the pandemic, including through online delivery of patient education and self-management programmes and other resources, including for example the establishment of a COVID-19 diabetes telephone support helpline and e-mail support which operated during April to June 2020 to provide clinical advice and information for people living with diabetes.</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Magic project on stroke is a technology small business research initiative funded from Horizon 2020 funding. This project is trialling the use of innovation and technology to improve stroke care in the community following hospital discharge. All 5 Trusts in N Ireland are participating in the testing of the prototypes; ➤ <i>My Stroke Guide</i> has been developed by the Stroke Association as a website to provide on-line stroke support. It provides information on prevention, services, support groups and managing the consequences of stroke with over 200 videos to provide people with advice about stroke and recovery; ➤ NI Direct https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/strokes contains up to date information on the causes, symptoms and prevention of stroke. It also provides information and advice on other long term conditions; ➤ The Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record (NIECR) has a diabetes care pathway in place to enrol patients with diabetes onto the system. This allows systematic care to be provided and should in the future measure outcomes of care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve services for people living with chronic pain; • Ensure that a holistic approach is taken to support people living with co-morbidities recognising that people over the age of 65 frequently have more than one long term condition and require tailored support to help them manage their conditions effectively; 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers – continue to support carers and ensure their views are heard, for example through the Public Health Agency’s ‘10,000 more voices’ initiative, in order to improve people’s experience of health and social care. 	
10 Mental Capacity Act	Implementation of the Mental Capacity Act to provide a single statutory framework governing all decision making in relation to the care treatment (for a physical or mental illness) or personal welfare of a person aged 16 or over, who lacks capacity to make a specific decision for him/herself.	<p>Full commencement of the Mental Capacity Act including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations in operation Code of Practice published Relevant workforce training completed <p><i>A date for commencement has yet to be agreed and is subject to Executive agreement and allocation of resources. Draft Code of Practice, Regulations and supporting documents have been shared with an implementation reference group in preparation for commencement.</i></p>	<p>The first commencement phase of the Mental Capacity Act for the purposes of deprivation of liberty, research, money and valuables continues.</p> <p>Further implementation work has been paused during the Departments response to the C-19 pandemic. Further commencements are subject to resource availability, Executive approval and funding.</p>
11 Regional Trauma Network	Comprehensively address the legacy of the conflict and address unmet mental health needs (though services would not be limited to trauma acquired in this way) through the establishment of a Regional Trauma Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve individual, family and community experience of mental health trauma care - the network would provide care at the appropriate level, in the appropriate setting. The ‘soft launch’ of Phase 1 of the RTN is due to begin in September 2019. <i>(under review)</i> Increase the overall capacity of mental health services through the provision of over 40 new whole time equivalent HSC posts, with associated training and research. Improve the psychological and social outcomes for individuals, their families and communities who have been traumatised as a result of the conflict by establishing clear clinical outcomes measurement and 	Progress on implementation of the Regional Trauma Network has been delayed due to the emergency Covid-19 pandemic taking priority. Next steps on implementation are currently being considered and it is anticipated that further progress can be made during 2021.

		<p>delivering services in response to findings and trends. Phase 1 of the RTN will run from September 2019 (<i>under review</i>) – March 2020. Once completed, Phase 2 and 3 will be rolled out up to September 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a Partnership Agreement between TEO and DoH to govern the operation of the Service by April 2019. <p><i>Full operation of the new Service is subject to the required resources being secured.</i></p>	
12 Service Framework for Mental Health	Development of a revised Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing setting out standards of care that individuals, their carers and wider family can expect to receive from the HSC system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation took place in the spring of 2018. Thirty-one responses were received and are being analysed by the Department and the HSCB/PHA. The Service Framework is being amended in light of the comments received. • Standards reflecting the agreed way of providing care and a common understanding about what HSC providers and users of services can expect to provide and receive will be published following the necessary approvals in 2019/2020. • A Standardised Audit Template and Reporting Timeline will be designed which will deliver baseline data regarding Phase I implementation by 31 March 2021. • Trusts will report to the HSCB annually against the Framework. • A Managed Care Data Set developed as part of the Mental Health Informatics Project will be designed to gather data across the Domains and Standards from Phase II. 	Work on the Mental Health Service Framework has been paused until the Service Framework Programme Board make a decision on the future of the Programme.

13 Autism Strategy	Implementation of the Autism Strategy (2013-20).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department is committed to providing a Progress Report on the Autism Act (NI) 2011 to the Assembly every 3 years. • A second Progress Report has been drafted and shared with NICS Departments and HSCT for feedback. The Report is being updated in light of comments received (Feb 2019). Guidance is being sought on the statutory requirement to lay the Report before the Assembly with the aim of laying within the 2019/20 year. 	<p>Following approval from the Minister, the second Progress Report for the Autism Strategy 2013-2020 was laid in the Assembly, in line with statutory requirement, on 27 February 2020.</p> <p>The current autism strategy came to an end in December 2020. Preparatory work had been undertaken to inform priorities for a revised strategy for implementation in 2021. Stakeholder engagement was due to commence in March however this work was paused due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Discussions are underway to plan how this work will resume.</p> <p>Autism – Interim Strategy 2021-2023 was published on 8 March 2021</p>
14 Rare Disease Implementation Plan	Implementation of the UK-wide Rare Diseases Strategy by 2020. The Strategy provides for a holistic approach to caring for people with a rare disease and to maximise available resources for research, innovation and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A joint interim progress report to Ministers, from the 4 UK Health Departments, was published in February 2018 and, with the UK Government and other Devolved Administrations, the Department will progress implementation of the 51 commitments of the UK-wide Rare Diseases Strategy by 2020, including the additional commitment to further collaboration with ROI. 	<p>The UK Rare Diseases Strategy came to a close in Dec 2020. In anticipation of this, work to develop a post-2020 UK wide Rare Diseases Framework was undertaken throughout 2019 and 2020, with NI taking part in a UK wide National Conversation survey in 2019 to collate the views of people living</p>

	<p>collaboration to benefit the entire rare disease community. It also aims to improve awareness and encourage providers of health and other public services to consider the effects of rare diseases on people's lives when developing and managing services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A NI Implementation Group oversees delivery of the NI Rare Diseases Implementation Plan, focussing initially on four priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a communications review to address gaps identified for rare disease patients and inform service improvement; • a clinical training needs analysis; • scoping work on the development of rare disease registry; and • participation in the UK 100,000 Genomes Project by establishing the first Genomic Medicine Centre in Belfast and submitting 1200 rare disease and cancer samples for analysis by March 2019, with the strategic aim of developing local capability to revolutionise how rare diseases are diagnosed and treated in future. 	<p>and working with rare diseases. The results of the National Conversation informed the development of the new UK Rare Diseases Framework which was published in January 2021 by all 4 Health Ministers of the UK.</p> <p>Work has now commenced in NI to develop a NI Rare Diseases Implementation Plan under the new Framework.</p> <p>Progress on actions throughout 20/21 under the previous Implementation Plan has been delayed due to the pandemic response, however ongoing priority actions will be brought forward into the new NI Implementation Plan.</p> <p>Progress on the NI priority actions is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NI involvement in 100k Genomes Project continues to identify and confirm novel rare disease diagnoses for NI Rare Disease patients. Over 440 patients were included in the analysis and a diagnosis has been established in approximately 20% of these
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			<p>cases, in line with the experience across the UK 100,000 Genomes Project as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work is continuing on the genome sequences of patients who have not yet received a diagnosis from Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) and the project has developed local capability across the HSC, creating a platform for further service development and access to WGS for NI Rare Disease patients. - During 2020/21, development of dedicated rare disease teaching sessions to undergraduate medical, nursing and biomedical university curricula to be delivered across NI universities has commenced. - COVID-19 related rare disease research includes investigating the impact of the 2020 pandemic on people living with a rare disease, their caregivers, and the third sector organisations who support them. Several publications have been developed and the research was presented at the Public
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			<p>Health Conference 'Picking up the Pieces - Public Health and COVID-19' in November 2020.</p> <p>- The NI Rare Disease Partnership has built on the success of the 2-year Stronger Together pilot project from 2018-20, by launching Phase 2 of the Project, funded by the Rank Foundation, with NIRDП supporting community activator and navigator roles from October 2020. As part of Phase II, the Stronger Together Virtual Support Hub provides hands on support to those in the community and signposts to existing service provision in relation to both physical and mental health support. Where no service provision currently exists, the Project will seek to work with key stakeholders to develop programmes to help fill the gaps. The newly launched "Living Well With" sessions is the first of such programmes.</p>
15	Following the Inter-Departmental Review,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the Housing Adaptations Final Report and Action Plan are subject to Ministerial and NI Executive 	Work was paused on the publication of the Final Report

Housing Adaptations Services Action Plan	implementation of the recommendations from the Report and Action Plan will ensure better collaboration, more effective use of resources and better delivery of services.	agreement given the cross cutting nature of the review/action plan. Due to the current political situation this has not been able to be further progressed, however, the Department will continue to work with DfC and the Housing Executive including the adoption and rollout of a Housing Adaptations Toolkit to help disabled and older people visualise and discuss proposed housing adaptations, during 2019.	and Action Plan due to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the auspices of a reconvened Joint Housing Adaptations Steering Group, the Department in partnership with NIHE have commenced a comprehensive stock take of the Review to date. Officials are currently engaging with DfC colleagues to agree the next key steps required in taking this important work forward.
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Measure: To support people with a disability to achieve their optimal potential for personal development and social inclusion. These measures will assist the Department in meeting PfGI 2 'Reduce health inequalities' and PfGI 5 'Improve the quality of the healthcare experience'. They will also contribute to PfGI11 'Improve educational outcomes' (DE lead), PfGI 12 Reduce educational inequality (DE lead), PfGI 28 'Increase the confidence and capability of people & communities' (DfC lead) and PfGI 42 'Increase quality of life for people with disabilities' (DfC lead).

Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021
16 Service Framework for Children & Young People	Development of a Service Framework for Children & Young People, including children with a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Service Framework is currently in development and will be launched subject to the necessary approvals in 2019/20. It is expected that the Framework will provide multi-agency support to children and their families through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ better access to person-centred information ➤ greater involvement in decision-making ➤ timely interventions and treatments ➤ greater levels of independence ➤ access to short breaks and palliative care. 	Work on the Children and Young People Service Framework has been paused until the Service Framework Programme Board make a decision on the future of the Programme.
17 Stroke Services	As part of the wider program of reform of services under Deliver Together, the Department launched a public consultation on reshaping hospital-based stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consultation will run until 18 June 2019. The Department aims to consider responses and produce a Consultation Outcome Report within the 2019/20 year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In total 19,510 responses to the consultation were received. Over 1,600 people participated in public and targeted (focused on stroke survivors and carers) consultation events.

	<p>services on 26 March 2019 to 30 August 2019. The consultation will run for 12 weeks and focus on hospital-based stroke services and the need to consider these services in the context of wider stroke services including rehabilitation. The aim is to significantly change stroke services for the better, saving lives and reducing disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details and scale of change will be agreed following consultation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department has completed an analysis of the responses to the consultation and the Minister is currently considering the way forward in the context of Rebuilding HSC Services.
Measure: To ensure accountability and assurance as part of the Department's Business Planning process.			
Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021
18 Accountability and assurance	<p>The oversight of Arm's length Bodies (ALB's) governance and performance will enable the monitoring of ALB's compliance with the Disability Duties. The sponsor branches are responsible for ensuring ALBs address issues of concern at the Accountability Review.</p>	<p>The Department will annually ensure, through steps in the assurance and accountability framework, that all ALBs discharge their disability duties.</p>	<p>Ongoing. ALBs continue to report to sponsor branches and policy leads as appropriate, highlighting any relevant issues.</p>

Measure: To ensure Disability Action Plan, Equality Action Plan and Equality Scheme, are up to date and address any emerging issues.

Policy Area	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Year 2 Update April 2021
19 Statutory requirement and best practice	To have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations for its Section 75 obligations, and commitment to meeting its disability duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plans will be a standing item on the EHR Unit Business Plan to ensure ongoing monitoring and reporting. • Annual review and updating, as required 	<p>Ongoing - business plan objectives rolled forward into 2019/20.</p> <p>2019-2024 DAP and EAP reviewed and updated April 2021.</p> <p>New Equality scheme will be submitted for consideration by Minister when resources allow.</p>