



Commissioner for Older People  
for Northern Ireland

PHA Corporate Plan Consultation

Public Health Agency

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## **RE Public Health Agency, Draft Corporate Plan 2017-2021**

I am writing to you on behalf of the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (COPNI) in relation to your consultation about the Public Health Agency's Draft Corporate Plan 2017-2021. The role of the Commissioner is to promote awareness of issues relating to older people and to be an authoritative independent champion for them.

The Commissioner agrees with the Outcome proposed in this Corporate Plan which is most relevant to older people that "*All older adults are enabled to live healthy and fulfilling lives.*" The Commissioner also agrees with the aims of other outcomes "*all individuals and communities are equipped and enabled to live long healthy lives,*" and that "*all health and wellbeing services should be safe and high quality.*" However whilst agreeing with the principles set out by these Outcomes, the Commissioner would welcome further details about what the Public Health Agency will do to help deliver these outcomes for older people.

The Commissioner also welcomes the commitment that the PHA will work in partnership with others to "*ensure older people are valued, respected and protected, and that every opportunity is afforded them to live healthy and fulfilling lives,*" including provision for multi-agency healthy living programmes, intergenerational initiatives, and self management support programmes. Partnership working and inter agency programmes have particular relevance to older people, as they are likely to deal with different parts of the health and social care system throughout their lives, and would benefit from a more genuine integration of the system across funding and budgets, commissioning of services and the creation of a genuinely collaborative system.

COPNI believes it is correct that the Public Health Agency "*where possible*" has aligned the objectives of this Corporate Plan with the PfG and Making Life Better.

However COPNI has highlighted to the Executive that there are areas where the PfG does not take sufficient account of the Active Ageing Strategy, another document which the Commissioner believes should be incorporated into the PHA's Corporate Plan.

During review of the PfG, COPNI highlighted that certain Indicators, including Indicator 5, which is to 'Improve the quality of the healthcare experience', with the lead measure, 'percentage of people who are satisfied with health and social care (based on their recent contact)' could be better supported by linkage with the Active Ageing Strategy. In response to the consultation on the draft Programme for Government, COPNI commented that it was striking that the Delivery Plan did not make any reference to the Active Ageing Strategy at all, which was surprising given the high number of relevant programmes listed in the Action Plan of the AAS, 'Care – Dementia Services', 'Dignity – Decision Making (Mental Capacity)', 'Care – My Home Life' and 'Carers Support (Short Breaks)'.

One omission from the Corporate Plan is the split of resources between Health and Social Care, which is key for older people and COPNI believes the shift of budget from hospital services to primary and community and social care services proposed that was envisaged by TYC has not happened. While the Public Health Agency cannot change policies in all these areas by itself, the Commissioner hopes that the PHA, through its responsibilities, which include encouraging more effective inter-sectoral working and enhanced partnerships, will promote and advocate for an appropriate re-balancing or re-allocation of funds.

If you would like to discuss any of these queries in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact the Policy Team via:

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Yours faithfully,

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