



**NORTHERN IRELAND PRACTICE AND EDUCATION  
COUNCIL FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY**

# **Performance Management Framework**

**April 2021**

Any request for the document in another format or language will be considered

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## 1. Introduction and Context

In general terms, Performance **Measurement** is seen as a process of evaluation against specific objectives, standards or historical data enabling judgement to be made on the relative position or progress towards priorities, services and responsibilities.

Performance **Management** is the process of learning from the measurement and driving change and improvement.

Performance measurement is the essential foundation on which performance is built. But, although performance indicators are important they are not the only way of assessing performance. The emphasis on performance measurement carries with it the risk that the process becomes an end in itself. Therefore, it is important that sight is not lost of the fundamental objectives of performance measurement:

- **Improved service** - performance measurement is one essential element in performance management to secure continuous improvement in services
- **Improved accountability** - clarifying the outputs and outcomes that are achieved for the resources used makes it easier to hold organisations accountable.

Performance measurement can contribute to effective services; can help improve performance by identifying good practice and opportunities to learn from others. It can also ensure that the organisation is focused on its key priorities, and that areas of poor performance are investigated.

The HSC Framework Document (DoH, 2011)<sup>1</sup> describes Performance Management and Service Improvement within the context of the HSC as follows:

*“This is a process of developing a culture of continuous improvement in the interests of patients, clients and carers by monitoring health and social care performance against relevant objectives, targets and standards, promptly and effectively addressing poor performance through appropriate interventions, service development and, where necessary, the application of sanctions and identifying and promulgating best practice.”*

The current Management Statement/Financial Memorandum (MSFM)<sup>2</sup> agreed between NIPEC and the Department of Health (DoH) sets out the overall aim for NIPEC within the founding legislation as being *“to improve the quality of health and care by supporting the practice, education and performance of nurses and midwives”*(para 2.1.1).

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<sup>1</sup> The governance and accountability arrangements in the current HSC Framework Document were temporarily changed with effect from June 2020 for a period of up to 2 years. Three new paragraphs were inserted to make amendments to particular aspects of the Department’s current delegation of its statutory authority to the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), Public Health Agency, Health and Social Care Trusts and the Business Services Organisation. The amendments will be kept under regular review by the Department and following the 2 year period, a consultation will take place on substantive and longer term changes to the Framework Document, reflecting the dissolution of the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB).

<sup>2</sup> The MSFM was due to be replaced by a Partnership Agreement with implementation to be phased in across HSC throughout 2020-21. However the implementation was postponed due to pressures across HSC in respect of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

In addition, the MSFM states that *“the Department determines NIPEC’s performance framework in light of the Programme for Government (PfG), the Department’s wider strategic aims, and current PfG objectives and targets. The key standards, targets and actions to be delivered by NIPEC are set out in NIPEC’s Annual Business Plan supported by their five-year Strategic Plan”* (para 2.2.1).

NIPEC is funded directly by the DoH on the basis of priorities and objectives set out in its annual corporate business plan, which is approved by the DoH (para 3.1 HSC Framework Document, DoH, 2011).

The Minister for Health is accountable to the Assembly for the activities and performance of NIPEC. The Minister’s responsibilities include approving NIPEC’s strategic objectives and the policy and performance framework within which NIPEC will operate and keeping the Assembly informed about NIPEC’s performance, as part of the HSC system (para 3.1.1. MSFM).

This Performance Management Framework has therefore been designed to support NIPEC Council’s oversight of organisational performance management and to assist NIPEC staff in ensuring that the organisation:

- responds to the needs of its stakeholders;
- prioritises what gets done and ensuring there are enough resources to deliver it;
- improves accountability for delivery;
- ensures NIPEC provides value for money;
- motivates and manages staff by recognising achievements.

In developing this Performance Management Framework, NIPEC has based it on the following properties:

- **Aligned and Effective** - the Performance Management Framework accurately reflects business strategy and objectives;
- **Measurable** - the Performance Management Framework measures the key drivers of business value;
- **Trusted** - data is accurate, credible, and believed to be so by staff;
- **Trackable** - metrics are trackable and comparable over time;
- **Adaptable** - the PMF feeds into strategic planning and can evolve to meet business needs;
- **Efficient** - information is presented in a consistent and easy to understand manner and data is gathered at a reasonable level of effort.

## 2. Performance Management Framework

NIPEC's **Performance Management Framework** sets out the reporting arrangements on various elements of performance for the organisation. For the reasons indicated above, **reporting against Business Plan performance is the chief expression of NIPEC's Performance Management Framework**. To date, it has been the practice for the DoH to use NIPEC's Annual Business Plan as a basis for Accountability Reviews and check progress periodically throughout the year. NIPEC also uses its Annual Business Plan internally to guide action and update performance metrics and risk registers.

The quarterly reporting mechanisms to Business Team and Council involve progress monitoring on the statutory responsibilities of NIPEC, including the **key corporate and professional priorities and actions of the organisation which are** contained within NIPEC's Business Plan.

These reports set out the actions being taken to achieve individual targets against organisational objectives set out in the Business Plan.

To facilitate corporate transparency, NIPEC views key performance indicators (KPIs), both financial and non-financial, as an important component of the information needed to explain an organisation's progress towards its organisational goals. Whilst there are numerous KPIs identified for HSC organisations, the need within NIPEC is for those which are relevant to NIPEC's activity. The general consensus in management consultancy in regard to setting an appropriate number is that between four to ten measures are likely to be adequate for most types of organisations. Therefore, on this basis and referencing the annual Business Plan, corporate activity is extracted to be monitored and recorded within the KPI process as either a monthly or yearly figure. A copy of the KPI monitoring table is presented to each meeting of the Business Team, Audit and Risk Committee and the Council.

In addition, a Professional work plan, tabled at Council meetings, specifically reports on progress against professional objectives set out in annual Business Plans which is denoted by a blue/green/amber/red rating. Where performance is denoted as amber or red, mitigating actions are specified.

A key element of using data from the performance management framework is to inform future business planning, and to ensure that organisational objectives are linked directly to staff objectives. Within NIPEC there is a staff appraisal system which ensures that business plan objectives are delivered and the achievement of organisational goals are implemented, actively monitored and reported on by staff.

NIPEC will continue to develop its performance management reporting mechanisms to ensure that the process is relevant and leads to improved service delivery.

### 3. Monitoring of Performance

NIPEC monitors its progress on an ongoing basis against the corporate objectives within the business plan via the key reporting mechanisms outlined above in addition to the following:

- **Business Team Meetings** - at each team meeting feedback is given on how NIPEC is progressing against its workload activity;
- **Audit and Risk Committee Meetings** - in addition to the KPI Monitoring Table, the following critical success factors are considered:
  - Financial breakeven projections at the year-end;
  - Policy Grid;
  - Risk Assurance Framework and Operational Risk Register;
  - Compliance with Audit Reports;
  - Updates on Quality Awards and Accreditations.
- **Council Meetings** - at each Council meeting verbal feedback and/or written reports are presented, as appropriate, in either narrative and/or quantitative formats to update members on current progress or inform them of new work initiatives.
- **Staff Performance and Development Process** - each member of staff participates in the staff appraisal system which links the appropriate organisational objectives to individual staff objectives and is aligned to staff development objectives.