

**VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION IN THE WORKPLACE HSC
FRAMEWORK – A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT
JUNE 2022**

Introduction from Minister

In 2020/21 the total number of incidents of violence and aggression towards staff in each of the 5 HSC Trusts and NIAS ranged between 604 and 5310. It is a sad reality, however, that many incidents of violence and aggression which occur go unreported as staff may have resigned themselves to such incidents being 'part of the job'. I, and my Department, have been clear – no level of violence or aggression towards HSC staff is acceptable, everyone has the right to feel safe from the threat of violence and aggression in the workplace. HSC staff spend their working days caring for others and saving lives, and their safety should never be in question.

HSC Trusts and Trade Unions have collaborated in development of a draft framework policy which sets out the health and social care sector's commitment, in partnership with staff representatives, to the management of violence and aggression towards staff in the workplace and to ensuring that associated structures and support are in place to ensure staff, the public and patients are safeguarded from violent and antisocial behaviour.

The Department of Health (DoH) is conducting a consultation on the final draft of the Violence and Aggression in the Workplace HSC Framework. I would encourage everyone with an interest to read the documents and respond to the consultation. It is vital everyone responds to support or challenge the proposals within this policy. It is not uncommon that most respondents to consultation tend to be organisations or individuals raising issues in relation to the policy in question but it is also important that individuals in agreement with the current draft of the policy also respond to ensure the consultation captures an accurate representation of viewpoints.

Freedom of Information

Please see the attached Appendix to the consultation response document concerning the confidentiality of responses to consultations.

Purpose of consultation

This consultation seeks views on the final draft of the Violence and Aggression in the Workplace HSC Framework.

Scope of the Consultation

We are keen to hear the views of all those with an interest in this issue including:

- members of the public;
- community and voluntary sector organisations;
- health bodies;
- health professionals;
- local councils; and
- other Government Departments and agencies.

Body/Bodies Responsible for the Consultation

This consultation is being undertaken by the Pay and Employment Branch in the Department of Health.

Duration

This consultation will be open from 27 June 2022 to 26 August 2022.

Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation, please write to Workforce Policy Directorate, Room D1, Castle Buildings, Stormont, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3SJ or e-mail the Department at: P&E@health-ni.gov.uk.

How to Respond

The draft framework and its consultation documents can be accessed at:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-violence-and-aggression-workplace-hsc-framework>

Online:

You can respond online on the 'Citizen Space' web service and complete the online survey there. The online version, along with the draft framework and consultation

documents can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-violence-and-aggression-workplace-hsc-framework>

Hard Copy or Email:

Alternatively you can respond using the consultation response document and returning it to Workforce Policy Directorate, Room D1, Castle Buildings, Stormont, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3SJ or via email to P&E@health-ni.gov.uk, **however we would much prefer responses by Citizen Space.**

When you reply, it would be very useful if you could confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation. If you are replying on behalf of an organisation, please include:

- your name;
- your position (if applicable);
- the name of your organisation;
- an address of your organisation (including postcode); and
- an e-mail address.

Consultation Response

We will consider the responses received and publish an outcome report on the Department's website.

Accessibility

Alternative formats of this consultation document and the questionnaire (such as other languages, large type, Braille, easy read and audio cassette) may be made available on request. Please contact the Department (at the email address below) to discuss your requirements.

Consultation Principles

This consultation is being conducted in line with the Fresh Start Agreement – (Appendix F6 – Eight Steps to Good Practice in Public Consultation Engagement)¹.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/479116/A_Fre

These eight steps give clear guidance to Northern Ireland departments on conducting consultations.

Feedback on the Consultation Process

We value your feedback on how well we consult. If you have any comments about the consultation process (as opposed to comments about the issues which are the subject of the consultation), including if you feel that the consultation does not adhere to the values expressed in the Eight Steps to Good Practice in Public Consultation Engagement or that the process could be improved, please address them to:

Workforce Policy Directorate, Room D1, Castle Buildings, Stormont, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3SJ or Email: P&E@health-ni.gov.uk or e-mail P&E@health-ni.gov.uk

Equality and Rural Screening

As per the Department of Health's Equality Scheme² and in order to comply with the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016³, this policy has been screened for both Equality/Human Rights and Rural Needs impacts. These screening documents are both available at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-violence-and-aggression-workplace-hsc-framework>. These screenings have indicated that there are no adverse impacts in relation to the policy proposals.

As part of this consultation, we welcome comments on these screening documents or inputs on areas where those responding may feel we should take further information into consideration in any future screening.

[sh Start - The Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan - Final Version 20 Nov 2015 for PDF.pdf](#)

² <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/doh-equality#toc-0>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/19/contents>

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses

For this consultation, we may publish all responses except for those where the respondent indicates that they are an individual acting in a private capacity (e.g. a member of the public). All responses from organisations and individuals responding in a professional capacity will be published. We will remove email addresses and telephone numbers from these responses; but apart from this, we will publish them in full. For more information about what we do with personal data please see our consultation privacy notice⁴.

Your response, and all other responses to this consultation, may also be disclosed on request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR); however all disclosures will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) (EU) 2016/679.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential, so that this may be considered if the Department should receive a request for the information under the FOIA or EIR.

DoH is the data controller in respect of any personal data that you provide, and DoH's Privacy Notice, which gives details of your rights in respect of the handling of your personal data, can be found at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-violence-and-aggression-workplace-hsc-framework>
