



Message from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the fourth edition of the COPNI e-briefing.

This month Claire Keatinge completed her term as Northern Ireland's first ever Commissioner for Older People, and I am confident that older people throughout Northern Ireland will have benefited from real, positive change. The recruitment process for a new Commissioner has commenced and arrangements have been put in place for the interim period.



Evelyn Hoy, Chief Executive, The Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland

The day-to-day work of the office will carry on and we will continue to speak to Government, Committees and public authorities on advice published by the former Commissioner.

Whilst all of the priorities for action in the former Commissioner's Corporate Plan [Hope, Confidence and Certainty](#) have been delivered, implementation of some of the recommendations to Government are still outstanding. It is vital that we now see the commitment required by decision makers to take action on the former Commissioner's advice and make Northern Ireland a great place to grow older.

Claire Keatinge completes her term as Commissioner



*Linda Robinson, Age NI, Claire Keatinge, Junior
Minister Jennifer McCann MLA and Nixon Armstrong*



Gretta Reid and Claire Keatinge

The former Commissioner for Older People, Claire Keatinge launched a report summarising her advice to Government throughout her term at a celebration event on International Day of Older Persons, 1 October. Over 150 older people attended the launch and they were thanked for supporting COPNI's work. Claire spoke about the positive change which has taken place as a result of her advice to Government, but gave a warning to decision makers that they still have work to do. Recommendations where implementation of key elements are still outstanding include:

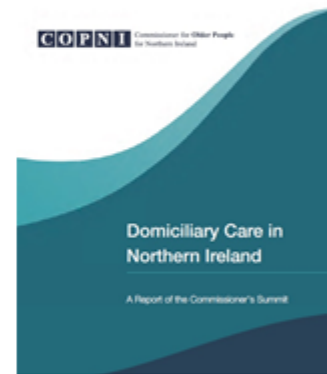
- Addressing the low level of uptake of carers assessments to better support older carers
- Reforming Adult Social Care legislation
- The steps needed in order to better protect older people in regulated care settings and to improve the services that they receive
- Bringing forward Adult safeguarding Legislation – an Adult Safeguarding Policy is not enough
- Valuing an ageing workforce and supporting older people to remain in work for longer

Whilst Claire has ended her term, the office will continue to push for Government to implement her evidence based recommendations which are needed to improve the lives of older people in Northern Ireland. All of the recommendations made by the former Commissioner are in [*The Commissioner's Report - A Summary of Advice to Government 2011-2015*](#).

Older people need more and better care at home

On her last day of office, Claire issued advice to the Health Minister and said that older people need more and better care at home to live dignified and fulfilled lives.

The advice was provided following a Summit held in September where older people and stakeholders involved in domiciliary care services were brought together to consider what is already working in the system and what needs to change. A regulatory domiciliary care framework supported by a regional tariff, development of a regional commissioning model, measures to ease workforce issues and a review of regulatory standards and inspection methodology were all advised.



The Health Minister is currently reviewing the recommendations and we will continue to push for implementation to ensure older people can be confident that they will receive high quality care at home when they need it, at the level that they need it and regardless of where they live. [Click here to read the report.](#)

Overhaul of Adult Social Care essential



Joe Duffy, QUB, Claire Keatinge, Marj Aitken, Raphael Wittenberg, LSE and Gavin Davidson, QUB

The former Commissioner published advice to Government calling for modernisation and reform of Adult Social Care legislation in Northern Ireland to better support the changing needs of an ageing population.

[Prepared to Care? Modernising Adult Social Care in Northern Ireland](#), reviewed law and policy on Adult Social Care and included findings from engagement with older people on their understanding and experiences of Adult Social Care. It found that current legislation around Adult Social Care is outdated and overly complex with older people unaware what Adult Social Care services they are entitled to or how to access them.

There is a clear need for a new single legislative framework for Adult Social Care, either as new or a consolidation of existing legislation. It must have older people at the heart of it, providing clarity on eligibility and entitlement to services, and it must have funding and resources prioritised to support the implementation.

Preventative support measures are key to better future planning and Claire called for all older people in Northern Ireland to be offered a Support Visit at 75 by an appropriately trained health and social care worker.

Nominated Neighbour scheme

COPNI and the PSNI recently launched the 'Nominated Neighbour' scheme. This is an initiative that if an unrecognised caller comes to the address of an older or vulnerable person when they are alone in the house, the caller will be handed a card instructing them to contact their 'Nominated Neighbour', who will then try and check the caller's identity.

We are encouraging neighbours and relatives to get involved with the scheme and assist older members of the community to feel safe from unwanted callers in their homes. For more information or to receive a copy of the Nominated Neighbour card for yourself or a neighbour, contact communications@copni.org or call 028 9089 0899. PDF versions of the [Nominated Neighbour card](#) and [information leaflet](#) can also be downloaded from our website.



Evelyn Hoy, Chief Executive, The Commission for Older People for Northern Ireland and Superintendent Simon Walls, PSNI launch the 'Nominated Neighbour' scheme

In the Assembly

The Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety received a briefing from the former Commissioner on [Changing the Culture of Care Provision in Northern Ireland](#).

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Within *Changing the Culture of Care Provision in Northern Ireland*, Claire issued advice to the Health Minister on the steps which need to be taken in order to better protect older people in regulated care settings across Northern Ireland, and to improve the services they receive. At Committee the issues contained within the report were raised in the context that they have not received a commitment in full from either the former or current Health Minister.

Recruitment of a new Commissioner

The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is seeking to appoint a new Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland to champion the interests of older people.

Junior Ministers Jennifer McCann and Emma Pengelly have '[urged applications from those interested in this high profile and influential role](#)'.

Completed application forms must be returned to arrive not later than noon on Monday 7 December 2015. For more information and to apply, please [click here](#).



The former Commissioner met with residents from Nazareth House Care Village in September and is pictured with resident Gertie Kerrigan who was celebrating her birthday.



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