Northern Ireland
Social
Care
Council

2021/22
Business Plan

Working together.
Making a difference.

Terms and Definitions Used in this Plan

Advocacy Groups	Groups and networks representing and involving people who use services and carers
BI	Business Intelligence is a technology that helps analyse information
Board	The Social Care Council Board is made up of 12 people and a Chair. They are appointed by the Minister for Health to make sure that the organisation is managing its work properly and is carrying out the functions that they were set up to do
CPD	Continuing Professional Development – ongoing learning and training
DoH	Department of Health – the government body responsible for Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland European Union
E-Zines	E-zines are electronic magazines that can be emailed or viewed online
FtP	Fitness to Practise – a registrant's suitability to work in social work or social care Higher Education Institutions – such as Ulster University and Queen's University
HR	Human Resources – manages staff well-being, development and their employment
HSC	Health and Social Care – the people, systems and facilities that provide medical and personal care and support
ICT	Information and Communications Technology – computers, networks, websites and Apps we use
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers – a worldwide body representing social work
IiP	Investors in People – an award for good standards in staff and organisation management and development
ISO	Interim Suspension Order – temporary action to stop a registrant working while we investigate a serious complaint
KPI	Key Performance Indicator – standards we use to measure how well we are doing our job
NI	Northern Ireland
PiP	Professional in Practice – a framework that supports and provides professional recognition for social workers' learning and development
PPI	Personal and Public Involvement is a term to describe how people get involved in the planning, commissioning, development, delivery and evaluation of the services they receive
PRTL	Post Registration Training and Learning – a minimum of 90 hours of learning that all registrants must complete during the cycle of registration
QA	Quality assurance is a review to confirm that the system, process or information is robust and correct
QI	Quality Improvement is a way to identify how a service, process or system can be improved
Register	The Social Care Council's register is an electronic list of social workers and social care workers working in Northern Ireland (and also students studying for the Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland). By law, social workers, social care workers and social work students must be registered. All those on the register are checked to make sure they are suitable to work safely in social work and social care. They must agree to meet standards for their behaviour, their work and their learning. They have to renew their registration regularly to confirm they are still suitable to remain on the Register,

Terms and Definitions Used in this Plan

Registrant	A person approved for registration on the Social Care Council's Register – social workers, social care workers and social work student
RQIA	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority – inspects Health and Social Care organisations to ensure standards are being met
3rd Sector	A term that is used to describe a range of organisations that are neither public sector nor private sector. It can include voluntary and community organisations
Sector Skills Council	UK wide bodies bringing together partners from employment and education to share sector intelligence and develop solutions to develop a skilled and sustainable workforce.
Social Care Council	Refers to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.
Social Care Worker	Individuals who provide support and/or personal care for people in their own homes, day care, residential care, or nursing home settings.
Social Worker	Individuals with a recognised social work qualification who improve and safeguard the social wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.
SOCRATES	Is the name for the ICT system in the Social Care Council that supports the registration and regulation of the social care workforce
Stakeholders	People who are involved with our work or who are affected by what we do
UK	United Kingdom

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Business Plan
April 2021-March 2022

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Council) is a public body, established by the Department of Health to help raise standards in social work and social care services. We are responsible for –

- Maintaining a register of social workers and social care workers in Northern Ireland;

- Setting standards for social workers and social care workers for their conduct, training and practice; and

- Setting standards for and regulating social work education and training in Northern Ireland.

There are just over 50,000 people working in social work or social care in Northern Ireland, and registered with the Social Care Council. This represents 5% of the working population in Northern Ireland.

Our Purpose

As a regulator, everything we do is focused on high quality safe and effective care. Our work is designed to support this through standards of social work and social care. We make a difference to the quality of social care services by regulating workforce standards and promoting continuous training and learning.

Through this work, we help support the development of a strong and professional social work and social care workforce. A workforce who provide safe, effective and compassionate care to ensure the best outcomes for people who use services and carers.

Our Vision and Values

The Social Care Council's Vision is 'To Improve Standards in Social Work and Social Care'. We have four Values which underpin our culture and explain how we will work with those around us –

- We promote **respect**

- We work with **integrity**

- We believe in **partnership**

- We strive for **excellence**

Measuring Our Impact

The Social Care Council Corporate Plan, and the annual Business Plans to support it, have been developed using an 'outcomes based approach'. The benefit of this approach is that our Corporate Plan clearly describes what we are trying to achieve and the difference we want to make.

We use a number of methods to find out about the difference we are making – from surveys, emails, online engagement and meetings with different groups. Since the impact of COVID-19 in March 2020, we have carried out all of our engagement activities online using video conferencing and webinars.

Strategic Themes for Our Business

When we developed our Corporate Plan, our stakeholders told us that we needed to focus on five key areas. We called these Strategic Themes:

Strategic Theme 1: Standards

Strategic Theme 2: Regulation

Strategic Theme 3: Workforce Development

Strategic Theme 4: Systems Leadership, and

Strategic Theme 5: Communication & Engagement.

This Business Plan describes the Strategic Actions (what we will do) and the Strategic Outcomes (the difference we want to see) during 2021/22.

IMPROVING Social Work and Social Care

STANDARDS   REGULATION   WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Our Plans

This Business Plan sets out what we want to achieve during the period April 2021 to March 2022 and reflects what we have learnt as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the public and community focus and reliance on the social care sector.

This Plan is developed on the basis that the pressures on the sector as a result of the pandemic will continue and the role the Social Care Council can play to support the sector directly, for example, through the provision of a range of resources and by being a systems leader – supporting the sector, the Department of Health (DoH) and employers and other interested groups or authorities. It is also important that we take on board learning from Independent Reviews such as those arising from Dunmurry Manor and Muckamore Abbey.

We remain committed to –

- Working in partnership

- Bringing together the knowledge, experience and expertise of all our stakeholders

- Encouraging innovation in the development and improvement of social work and social care services

- Engaging with people who are involved with our work, or are affected by it

Connecting | Supporting | Influencing

Social Work   Social Care   Social Care Council

Delivery of this Business Plan will be reported in our Annual Report for 2021/22 which will be available on our website at www.niscc.info. During the year we also account for our progress through quarterly business performance reports which are provided to the Board of the Social Care Council.

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Business Plan
April 2021-March 2022

Chief Executive's Introduction

The last twelve months have been the most difficult, challenging and life changing that many of us have faced in our lifetimes. The way we lived our lives and the things we took for granted were removed from each of us. Many people lost loved ones to the COVID pandemic, and many suffered but thankfully recovered from this dreadful virus. The health and social care sector came into its own – and had a very bright light shone on it highlighting its true value, reflected through the prism of a pandemic. Social workers, social care workers and students studying for a Degree in Social Work all responded to the call out to support the lives of everyone living in Northern Ireland. Many put their own personal and family lives on hold while they cared for the vulnerable and made all of us proud of our social care services.

We all hoped that moving into a new year we could leave the pandemic behind, however the continuing presence of the virus unfortunately means that lives are still being lost, people are still falling ill with the virus and the pressures on the sector remain. While there is hope, with the roll out of the vaccine, the Social Care Council, like many health and social care organisations, is planning to continue to deliver its business in a way that continues to support the sector – safely, effectively and meaningfully. The strategic direction of our work is guided by the Social Care Council Board. As we journey through this pandemic, myself and the Board Chair continue to provide updates and assurance for the Minister and the Department of Health on progress towards our strategic outcomes.

The Social Care Council has been working remotely since March last year. However in that time, it has been able to deliver all of its services albeit that has required a different approach – with tasks being delivered online, and engagement through video conferencing and webinars. We have learnt an awful lot along the way – including the benefit of maximising messages through social media channels and engaging through video conferencing, thereby reaching many more people than we would have otherwise been able to through face to face communication.

We have adapted to this new way of working exceptionally quickly and were able to deliver 'business as usual' within several weeks of remote working. There were many challenges along the way including, responding to the needs of the sector, the development of online learning resources, working with the Department of Health in their campaigns and importantly ensuring that those social workers and social care workers who were re-joining the workforce to support their colleagues could do so quickly and safely.

We therefore move into a new business year with a lot of learning and experience of how we can continue to support the sector over the next twelve months. This business year will be about consolidating what we have been doing – that is, doing more of what we do well and continuing to support social workers, social care workers and students. Our current Corporate Plan expired in March 2021, however we sought agreement to extend it to March 2022, to enable us to focus on front line priorities last year. We will therefore be using this year to work with registrants, employers, the sector, people who use services and carers and other interested groups, to develop a new Corporate Strategy. The Social Care Council is in a position to help shape and inform the leadership and strategic direction for the social work and social care workforce and we therefore want to ensure our new Corporate Strategy provides a framework in which we can deliver on workforce expectations.

We are also working with the Department of Health on a number of projects to support the Social Care Strategy for Transformation, including the delivery of a 'Compact'. This Compact will, for the first time, set out a contract between the social care sector and the Department of Health which aims to lay a foundation for partnership, based on mutual trust and respect.

We will continue to ensure we provide resources for registrants and employers that enable them to access the learning and tools they need to assist them in delivering front line services. We will continue to ensure that we offer a range of events and seminars online and in ways that enable the workforce to access these in a way that suits them best.

We are uniquely placed to ensure the data we hold on our register of 50,000 people working in the social care sector in Northern Ireland, is used in such a way to inform and shape the social work and social care leadership system, so that the strategies for the future development and growth of the sector are based on the diversity, experience, professionalism and needs of that sector.

We have no doubt that we all face another challenging year and we want to ensure that, in the Social Care Council, we continue to **work together to make a difference** for all of our registrants, people who use services and carers, and the wider sector and interested groups.

Patricia Higgins

**Interim Chief Executive,
Northern Ireland Social Care Council**

Strategic Context

We are mindful that the delivery of our business takes place alongside a number of external and operational factors (sometimes called drivers) that have the potential to influence how we deliver our business. These drivers can provide opportunities as well as challenges. It is important that in setting our aims, objectives and outcomes for this year, we take into account the strategic context (and environment) in which we operate.

External

COVID-19 Pandemic
We need to continue to be responsive to the needs of the sector and those who use services and carers and ensure we re-prioritise our business accordingly. We must also be mindful of the longer term impact of the pandemic on society and the social care sector, and how this will change priorities for the future.

Brexit
We will continue to work with the DoH as Northern Ireland operates in a post Brexit environment to ensure our services and ability to support the sector operate in an effective and efficient way.

Quality and Safety
We are mindful of a number of independent reports which were released during the previous year and the impact these have for the social care sector, including those from Dunmurry Manor and Muckamore. We will continue to review the learning in all of these reports to ensure that we are operating safely and with regard to best practice.

Social Care Environment
The pandemic has brought a focus to the value and importance of the social care sector. There are also many challenges for the sector including recruitment, retention, terms and conditions and career pathways. We want to be able to work with the sector and interested groups to help channel the needs of this important workforce.

Operational

Landscape Review
We participated in a Landscape Review which is a review of our services and business that takes place every five years. The Review has set out clear challenges for the organisation to build on its ability to be a systems leader and a 'go to' organisation for the sector.

Technology and Information
Developments in technology present many opportunities for us to work in a smarter, more flexible and accessible way throughout our business. We will continue to improve our use of technology to provide a seamless service for our registrants and stakeholders, and become more efficient and effective in how we deliver our business. We will also use the information we hold to inform the systems leadership approach for the social work and social care sectors.

Resources
Like all public sector organisations, we must manage our services within budget constraints and this presents many challenges including finding new and better ways to continue to deliver high quality services. We also recognise that there may be more austere times ahead as the full financial cost of the COVID pandemic is realised while we, as an organisation, will be working hard to deliver our ambitions to support and make a meaningful difference for the social work and social care workforce.

Business Planning Assumptions

To develop our Business Plan for 2021/22 we consulted with our staff, our Board, our Partnerships and the DoH. During the consultation, we made the following planning assumptions:

- We will need to re-align our business priorities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure our resources are targeted to where they are most needed;

- We will be allocated a revenue resource limit to maintain our services at the current level of performance and quality; and

- No further responsibilities will be assigned to us without additional resource

Our Ambitions

The Social Care Council's Board developed the following ambitions to help shape the way in which we deliver our business. These are long term ambitions which will be integrated into the way we deliver our services, and will form part of our consultation on the new Corporate Plan. We have started work to give effect to these ambitions and will continue to do so during 2021/22.

Working in partnership with the DoH and our stakeholders, we aim to be:

- An Enabler for Social Care Transformation - Supporting and upskilling the workforce

- A Sector Leader for Data Analysis - Informing workforce planning and policy development

- An Agile and Innovative Regulator - Using innovative approaches to improve our services

- A Centre of Excellence for Social Work and Social Care - Supporting evidence based practice in social work and social care

Strength through PartnershipWorking

The Social Care Council has had a long history of working collaboratively in the design and delivery of its business across the social work and social care sector. Many of the objectives and outcomes described in this Business Plan require the involvement and collaboration of its Partnerships. The diagram overleaf describes how each of these Partnerships and Forums work to challenge, influence and advise the work of the Social Care Council.

- Participation Partnership – this includes people who use social care services and carers

- Registrants Forum – this includes registered social workers and social care workers, members of unions and professional associations

- Leaders in Social Care Partnership – this includes social care providers

- Professional in Practice Partnership – this includes social work employers and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Participation Partnership

- Improves participation and engagement with people who use services and carers in line with the principles of Co-production to support the work of the Social Care Council.

- Supports the Social Care Council to raise practice standards of registrants working in social work and social care.

- Hold the Social Care Council to account for their participation and engagement activities with people who use services and carers

PiP Partnership

- Identifies post qualifying education and training needs, gaps in provision and priorities for development and advises the social care council and the Board to ensure these are represented in the organisation's business.

- Facilitates the development of relevant provision to meet identified needs across sector.

- Keeps the PiP Framework under review and brings forward recommendation for development.

- Provides advice and guidance to the Board on matters relevant to the training and development.

External Perspective

Challenge

Influence

Advice

Expert Knowledge

Leaders in Social Care Partnership

- Provides a strong, positive voice for social care and promotes its value through improved understanding of its role, contribution to social wellbeing and contribution to the Northern Ireland economy.

- Develop a culture in social care that reflects the shared health and social care values of working together, excellence, compassion, openness and honesty.

- Lead from the edge- supporting people to innovate and to bring new ideas for person centered care from the margins into social care services.

Registrants Forum

- Provides advice and representation on the views of Registrants.

- Acts as a consultative body with the aim of promoting better communication and understanding between the Social Care Council and its Registrants

- Represents the views and expectations of Registrants on key aspects of the Social Care Council's work.

Strategic Theme 1: Standards

Putting Standards at the heart of Social Work and Social Care Practice and Education & Training

<mark>You said</mark> – The Social Care Council should put standards at the heart of social work and social care practice and education and training, to support the delivery of effective social care services both now and in the future.

Standards are the cornerstone of everything we do to strengthen the professionalism of the social work and social care workforce across NI.

The social work and social care workforce includes just over 50,000 people, 42,000 of whom are working in social care job roles. During the year 2020/21, there was a call out to those who had retired or left the social work and social care sectors, to return to their former profession to assist their colleagues in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 3,000 people did so. We anticipate that many of these people will continue to stay on the register and in their current roles, bringing an added dynamic to the sector with their previous valuable experience.

We are committed to working with this workforce and their employers to assist them in developing understanding of their responsibilities as a registered social care workforce. We will also continue to work with employers and educators to develop tools, knowledge and learning resources that will help them embed the Standards into their organisational policies and practices.
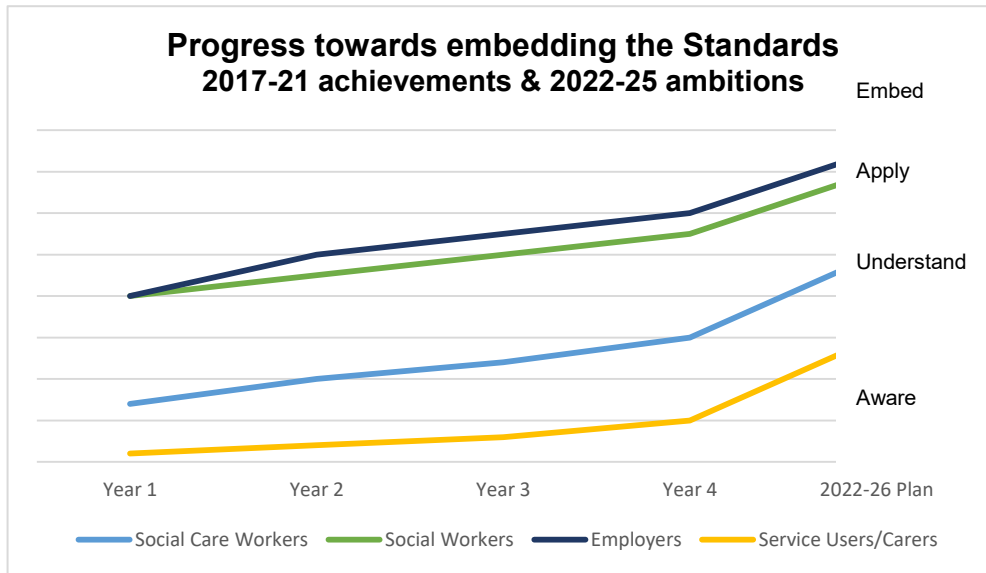
We are an agile and innovative regulator using our digital learning platforms to support the workforce in applying the Standards. Our objectives will include targets to ensure the majority of registrants and employers are regularly using the Standards to inform and improve their social work and social care practice.

By March 2022, we said we would achieve two strategic outcomes for Standards:

1. The Standards of Conduct and Practice are relevant, trusted, understood and embedded.
2. The Employer Standards support the delivery of effective social work and social care services.

Our Progress

Embedding the Standards so that they are trusted, valued and understood has been a different journey for each of our key stakeholder groups – social workers, social care workers, employers and people who use services and carers. Our approach to promoting the Standards and ensuring they support the workforce therefore needs to be adapted to the needs of each group. At the end of 2017-21, we were able to demonstrate significant progress towards embedding the standards among registrants and their employers. Raising awareness and understanding amongst people who use services and carers is a longer-term outcome which is addressed in the Strategic Communications Plans for the next 3-5 years.

Progress towards embedding the Standards
2017-21 achievements & 2022-25 ambitions

Embed
Apply
Understand
Aware

Year 1   Year 2   Year 3   Year 4   2022-26 Plan

— Social Care Workers   — Social Workers   — Employers   — Service Users/Carers

Indicators of Success

- **81%** of registrant attendees said the 'Registration Matters' would assist them in maintaining their Registration & Standards (n=122 event feedback forms)
- **94%** of social workers said they apply the Standards at least once a week in their social work role (n=373 responses to 2019 Social Care Council regulation survey)
- **71%** of social care workers said the use the Standards at least once a month in their social care role (n=745 responses to 2019 DoH registration survey)
- **79%** of employers said they use the Standards at least once a month (n=134 responses to 2019 DoH registration survey)
- **75%** of people who use services and carers (or their advocates) said they knew how to complain about their care worker if they needed to (n=8887 responses to 2018 DoH Homecare Experience survey)

What we have learned:

- Awareness, understanding and use of the Standards is improving across the stakeholder groups
- There is movement towards more regular use of the Standards and for these to become part of everyday practice Stakeholders are at different stages in their understanding and use of the Standards and how they support good practice
- People who use services and carers have less awareness of the Standards but know how to report any concerns about a registered worker
- We need to increase our engagement and support to move all stakeholders from 'awareness' to 'embedding' the Standards

Objectives to Deliver Strategic Outcomes for Standards in 2021-22

Strategic Actions
(2017- 22)

Business Objectives
During (2021-22) We Will –

Indicators of Success
for (2021/22)

Strategic Outcomes
(2017-22)

Work with registrants, employers and people who use services and carers to support the consistent application of the Standards of Conduct and Practice

Deliver a programme of engagement with social care workers to raise awareness about the Standards and how to apply them in their work.

Deliver a programme of engagement with social workers to support the use of the Standards in their work and in their professional development.

Deliver a programme of engagement to raise awareness with people who use services and carers about the role of the Social Care Council and their confidence in the social care sector.

Work with employers and RQIA to develop ways to monitor use of the Employer Standards.

1. At least 70% of social care workers are reporting that they are aware of the Standards and know how to apply them in their practice.

2. At least 90% of social workers are reporting that the Standards are helping improve the quality of their social work practice.

3. Establish a benchmark of awareness of the role of the Social Care Council and confidence in the social care sector with people who use services and carers.

4. At least 80% of employers are reporting that they use the Employer Standards.

The Standards of Conduct and Practice are relevant, trusted, understood and embedded

The Employer Standards support the delivery of effective social work and social care services

Strategic Theme 2: Regulation
Regulate the Workforce and Social Work Education and Training

You said – The Social Care Council should ensure regulation is robust, agile, valued and trusted, to support good social work and social care practice.

Our role is to raise standards in social work and care practice; strengthen safeguards; and improve outcomes for people who use social work and social care services.

As a workforce regulator we are responsible for setting standards of conduct and practice for social workers and social care workers, and setting standards for social work and social work education and training. We have been working at ways to improve the experience of maintaining and engaging on registration for individual registrants and during 2020/21 we had to ensure we could do so online given the restrictions on having face to face contact.

We learnt a lot during the year about registrants' experience of online and telecommunications and we therefore redesigned our online Portal to improve the user experience – and remodeled how we manage email communications to improve how quickly we respond to queries sent by email. We will build on this during the year with targeted and generic engagement with registrants and employers to encourage and promote online interaction and engagement through our Portal. We will ensure our Register is up to date with everyone who is currently working in social work and social care.

The Standards of Conduct and Practice for social workers and social care workers set the benchmarks for good practice. All registrants must work within these Standards to remain fit and capable of delivering high quality services. Continuous learning and development is a requirement of registration and through our Workforce Development function we support registrants to develop the knowledge and skills required to practise safely and to a high standard. We also monitor adherence to maintaining their professional development.

By setting and monitoring standards for social work education and training at both qualifying and post qualifying levels we support safe and effective practice across the career spectrum. We regulate the delivery of the Degree in Social Work and Professional in Practice programmes through robust annual monitoring and review.

A small percentage of the workforce are referred to us to review their fitness to practise and while some are suspended or removed from the register, others require additional support and/or training to remain in practice.

Following the significant increase in the size of the register, the number of allegations we receive about a registrant's fitness to practise has also increased. It is therefore important that we continue to manage our processes efficiently and ensure we have the skills mix, systems and technology to deliver this function well.
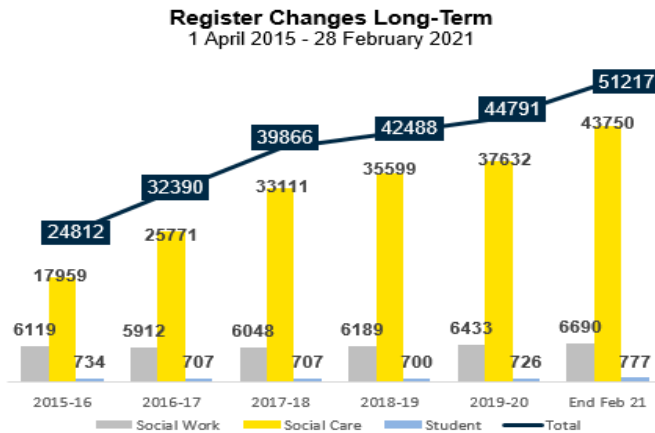
During last year we started to hold our Committee hearings remotely to ensure the safety of everyone involved – we will always ensure the safety of people comes first. As a result of this we are going to develop a proposal this year for 'hearings on demand' and we are going to put in place a smart electronic case management system to better support information and case management working electronically.

By March 2022, we said we would achieve four strategic outcomes for Regulation:
1. Registration is valued and trusted;
2. Social work education meets the needs of registrants and employers;
3. Fitness to Practise (FtP) decisions are trusted;
4. We are an agile regulator continuously developing best regulatory practice.

There are 50,000 people registered with the Social Care Council, providing high quality care and support to the community in Northern Ireland (register total shown below includes approx. 2,500 additional workers included on the Register during the pandemic). The register has grown significantly in the last number of years and it is important that we have the resources and systems in place to support the needs and expectations of that workforce. Last year we were able to demonstrate our progress as –

Register Changes Long-Term
1 April 2015 - 28 February 2021

106% increase in Live-Register count 2015-2021

Fitness to Practise Cases
1 April 2015- 28 February 2021

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	202
New Cases	278	466	766	306	276	3
Closed Cases	289	455	752	312	282	3

Indicators of Success
- 95% of registrants maintained registration
- 100% of FtP concerns triaged within 3 days
- 86% of FtP cases closed within 15 months
- Letters of Advice, Conditions of Practice Orders were used to enable registrants to improve their practice
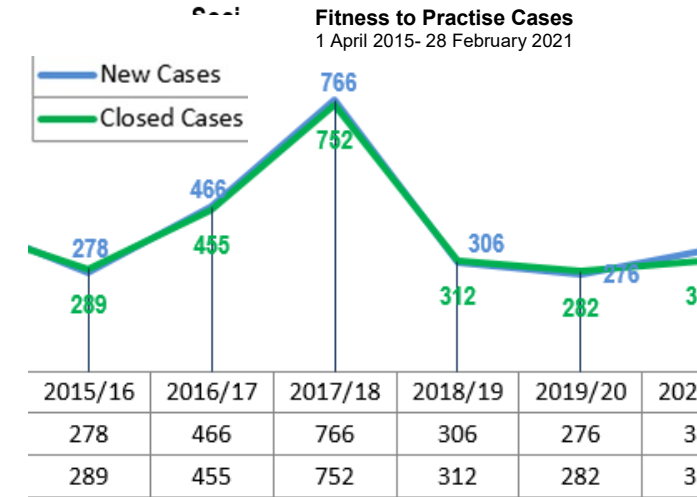
Indicators of Success
- 100% of the workforce sampled for PRTL met the requirement of 90 hours CPD (December 2020 Audit point)
- 81% of managers reported new social work graduates can practise competently (2019 Review of Degree)
- 171 social workers attained PiP Awards, including 3 Doctorate Level Awards (Summer 2020 assessment point)

What we have learned:

- We need to meet increasing demands on the Registration and Fitness to Practise functions, which will require a review of systems and application of ICT
- e need to implement recommendations from the Review of the Degree which support the development of new social workers
- We need to engage front line social workers and their managers to increase use of the PiP Credit system and Framework

Objectives to Deliver Strategic Outcomes for Regulation in 2021-22

Strategic Actions
(2017–2022)

Ensure the integrity and effectiveness of our registration, regulation and social work education functions

Improve the understanding of the role and contribution of regulation in securing public protection and enabling professionalism to thrive in social work and social care

Business Objectives
During (2021 -22) We Will –

Support registrants and employers to meet their responsibilities in maintaining social care registration.

Deliver a programme to increase the number of registrants using the online Portal on a regular basis.

Approve and assure standards of social work education and training at qualifying and post qualifying levels.

Put in place an integrated smart electronic case management system which will support better data transactions for Fitness to Practise hearings and case management.

Review the register to ensure everyone on the register is actively working in social work and social care.

Indicators of Success
for (2021-22)

5. A minimum of 97% of registrants successfully maintain their registration throughout the year.

6. A minimum of 85% of registrants use the online system to maintain their registration.

7. 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training are completed within required timescales and recommendations for improvement identified.

8. Referrals and cases are managed efficiently in line with best practice, FtP Rules and key performance indicators.

Our Register is robust, accurate and quality assured.

Strategic Outcomes
(2017-22)

The Social Care Council is an agile regulator able to respond to changing need and demand

Social work education and training meets the needs of registrants and employers

Fitness to Practise decisions are trusted

Social work and social care registration is valued and trusted

Strategic Theme 3: Workforce Development
Develop the Social Work and Social Care Workforce

You said – **The Social Care Council should support the development of the social work and social care workforce to enable them to deliver safe, effective and values led care.**

Central to how we deliver on our objectives is our partnership working with a wide range of stakeholders to create a culture of continuous professional development. There are 50,000 people actively engaged in the delivery of social work and social care services across NI. This represents 5% of the entire Northern Ireland workforce.

The social care workforce provides compassionate, safe, high quality and often complex care services to the NI population. These services have come into their own during the COVID pandemic and have brought into sharp focus the need to ensure this workforce is well supported in all it must deliver. We have been working to find ways to share learning and development resources including through our Learning Zone which is available on our website at www.niscc.info

We want to build on this during this year so that advice, learning and support is only a click away through a mobile phone or laptop to access our services and resources. Our successful track record of hosting a series of informative lunchtime seminars with a diverse range of speaker, recommended last September and we used video conferencing and webinars to deliver these – enabling us to reach so many more people who were able to join us from work or home without travelling into Belfast City Centre.

We are also an awarding body, delivering Professional in Practice (the professional development framework for social workers) to support continuous professional development. We will continue to develop this framework to ensure social workers have access to a range of learning to support existing and new practice.

We want to review our intelligence gathering and engagement in relation to social work to support that workforce, and also continue to support the Adult Social Care Reform agenda.

We are also delivering a number of key projects in partnership with the Department of Health with a strong focus on the social care sector, including –

- **Development of a Social Care Compact** – which sets out a shared vision, values and principles for engagement between the DoH and independent sector social care providers;
- **Raising the Profile of Social Care** – a strategy to support a career in social care through the Learning Zone and the development of an annual award scheme for social care workers;
- **Social Care Workforce Development and Transformation** – a proposal for the introduction of a qualification based social care workforce register; develop and deliver a career structure framework for social care; and develop and deliver a CPD framework for the social care workforce;
- **Social Care Information and Strategy Dataset for Northern Ireland** – deliver a suite of systematic and standardised information reports and returns about the social work and social care workforce.

By March 2022, we said we would achieve two strategic outcomes for Workforce Development:

1. Social workers and social care workers are competent, compassionate and skilled in their practice, and
2. They have the knowledge, skills and competence to be able to respond to changing service needs in social care.

Our Progress

Entry to the Social Care Council's register for social workers is based on the attainment of an approved social work qualification, and a social worker's progression through their career is supported by the Professional in Practice framework. In contrast, entry to the register for social care workers does not require a qualification. Work is underway to develop a learning and development framework to support social care career progression. While the learning and development needs of these workforces are different we will continue to deploy our resources to support the specific needs and priorities of each workforce. Last year we were able to demonstrate our progress as -
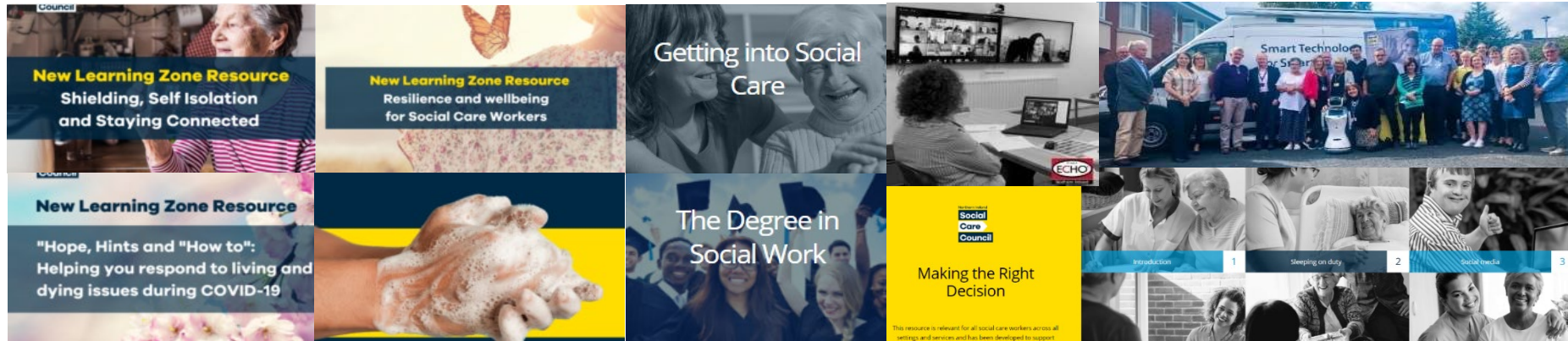
Indicators of Success

- 25+ online resources developed and refreshed to meet workforce needs
- 1.5k users on the Learning Zone each month
- 90k visits to the Learning Zone site since launch
- 86% of users said the resources would help them in their social care role
- 30+ social care managers actively engaged in the Social Care ECHO network
- 83% of ECHO participants agreed it enhanced their understanding of good Domiciliary Care practice (2020 ECHO evaluation)

Indicators of Success

- 431 Domiciliary Care Worker Learning & Development Sessions delivered (2018-2020 transformation project)
- 61% average improvement domiciliary care worker knowledge levels after participating in learning events.
- 9 lunchtime seminars hosted in-year, engaging 650+ registrants & employers
- 82% of Lunchtime Seminar attendees said the learning would improve their practice
- HSC qualifications reviewed and revised
- Interactive Careers guides published and careers events supported

What we have learned:

- We need to focus our resources on consolidating the Learning Zone and evaluating the use of existing products. Linking Social Work PRTL to PiP Credits would enable social workers to gain recognition for their learning & development within the PiP Framework
- Establishment of a Learning Framework for Social Care and a recognised career structure would attract more people to the workforce
- We need to promote domiciliary care training to support upskilling of the workforce
- Information and awareness sessions will help build digital confidence and improve digital skills in the workforce. Virtual learning networks will support social care managers to share learning and develop innovative approaches to service delivery

Objectives to Deliver Strategic Outcomes for Workforce Development in 2021-22

Strategic Actions
(2017-22)

Promote and enable a culture of continuous learning and development in social work through the Professional in Practice framework.

Work in partnership with stakeholders to create a learning and improvement framework to ensure the social care workforce is skilled, confident and competent.

Business Objectives
During (2021-22) We Will –

Develop proposals for consultation on a system of revalidation to link Post Registration Training and Learning requirements with the Professional in Practice Framework for the social work profession.

Work in partnership with stakeholder organisations to deliver careers and recruitment campaigns for social work and social care.

Deliver the workstreams arising out the Social Care Strategy Transformation.

Continue to develop our digital learning platform to provide registrants and employers with greater access to learning and employment resources.

Indicators of Success
for (2021-22)

9. Proposal agreed for consultation on revalidation of social worker registration through the PiP Framework.

10. A minimum of 85% participants who engage with the events and campaigns report an increased awareness of social work and social care careers

11. The DoH is supported in building a sustainable social care workforce.

12. Uptake in the number of people undertaking learning through the e-enabled technology available on our Learning Zone is increased by 10%.

Strategic Outcomes
(2017-22)

Social workers and social care workers will have the knowledge, skills and competencies to be able to respond and adapt to changing service needs in social care.

Social workers and social care workers are competent, compassionate, values led, confident and skilled in their practice.

Strategic Theme 4: Systems Leadership
Promote a systems leadership approach across the social care sector

<mark>You said –</mark> The Social Care Council should promote a systems leadership approach to contribute to capacity building that will support leadership at all levels.

Through our partnership work we are promoting and supporting a collective leadership approach within the social work and social care sector with the aim of improving quality in practice.

We are working to support the ambition of the HSC Leadership Strategy to 'create an organisational culture that recognises and promotes collaboration and quality improvement' and to support the Social Work Leadership programmes within the Professional in Practice Framework.

As the workforce regulator, the information and intelligence we hold about the social work and social care workforce is unique. Our continued ambition remains to use our workforce intelligence to support the leadership challenges in social work and social care. We are uniquely placed to collect and use this information to help inform strategic decisions to support the sector. This is particularly important as the social care sector continues to play a vital role in supporting so many people as they manage the impact of the COVID pandemic. We are also mindful that there are a range of challenges which the social care sector will need to support as result of the pandemic, including the impact on mental health, isolation, domestic abuse and bereavement.

We have remodelled how we provide systems leadership for the social care sector and have established a Leaders in Social Care Partnership which aims to put a sustainable framework in place to support, among many things, the value of social care in delivering services to the citizens of Northern Ireland.

Last year we participated in an independent Landscape Review which fundamentally reviewed our role, purpose and future direction. The outcome of the Landscape Review has been shared with our Board and the DoH and confirms the organisation is very much at the forefront of supporting social work and social care in Northern Ireland. It also challenged the organisation's future direction including developing a strong systems leadership role for the sector and the role of its Board Members in that regard. We are working through the recommendations with the DoH and the role we can play in the years to come, and will also use our new Corporate Strategy as the vehicle through which we will deliver on the Board's ambitions for the future, including becoming a Centre of Excellence for the sector. We will also develop a 'State of the Nation' report on the social work and social care sector to share learning and inform strategic direction and decision making.

By March 2022, we said we would achieve two strategic outcomes for Systems Leadership:

1. A systems leadership environment is created which provided for improved understanding and connection across the sector

2. Capacity is built to use collective intelligence to effect real, meaningful and positive change in social work and social care
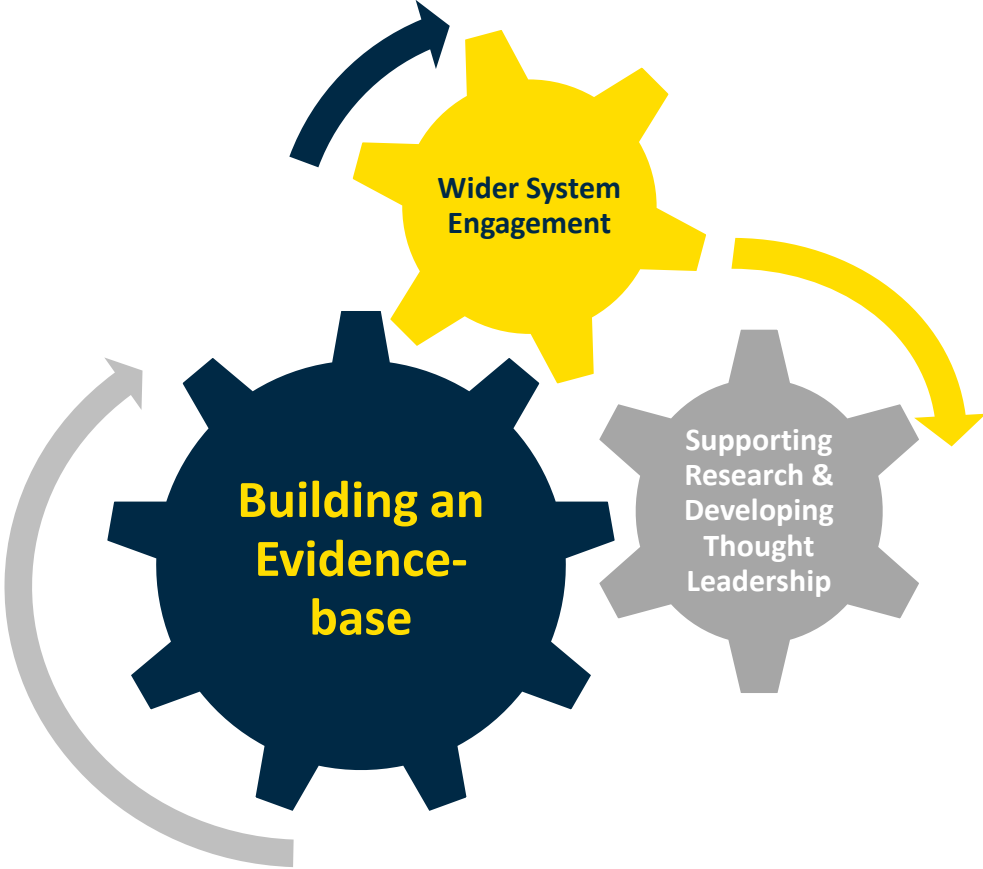
Our Progress

Significant progress has been made to establish the networks required to provide a strategic voice for social work and social care. We have also increased our capacity to use our workforce data to influence and inform change and will continue to do this next year and beyond. Last year we were able to demonstrate our progress as –
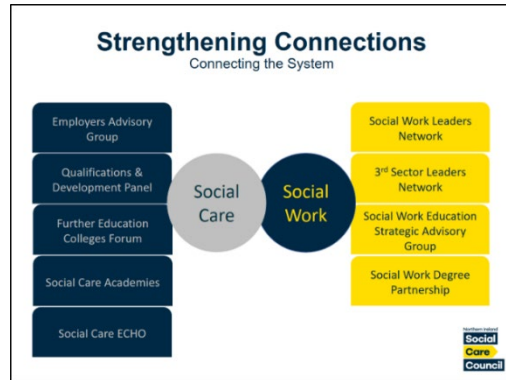

Indicators of Success

- Effective groups and partnerships are connected and engaged to provide a strategic voice for sector interests
- Social Care Leaders at all levels being connected (Social Care Managers & Employers Advisory Group)
- Social Work Leadership Network (3rd sector Leaders)
- Leaders in Social Care Partnership
- Social Care Compact being developed
- Strategic engagement for Social Care transformation
- UK & Ireland HSC Regulators Forum
- EU Brexit implementation
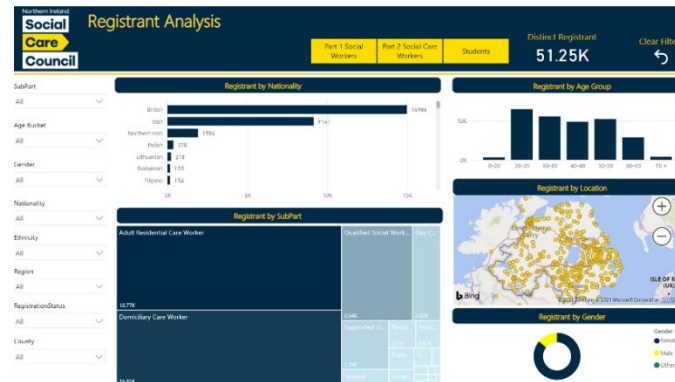
Indicators of Success

- Live reporting on Register profile
- Live reporting on PiP engagement & achievement
- Systems Modelling for Domiciliary Care Workers
- Workforce Data informing DoH Workforce Strategy
- Social Care Academies established to connect local government & employment
- Collaborated on research into Technology for Social Care & Social Worker's Identity
- Delivered surveys & analysis for DoH Rapid Review of Domiciliary Care, AYE Experiences
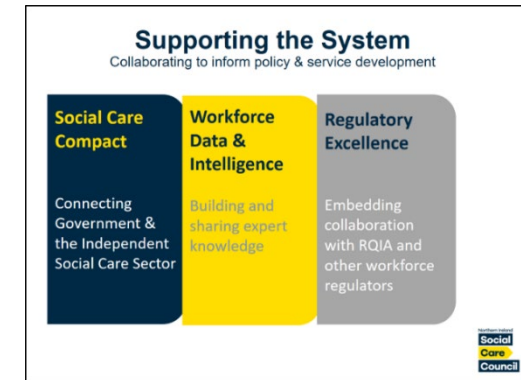
What we have learned:

- We must increase our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our information;
- A strategic voice is needed to help shape social work and social care as Health & Social Care Transformation moves forward
- Insight from sector leaders is needed to inform strategic workforce planning and development

Objectives to Deliver Strategic Outcomes for Leadership in 2021-22

Strategic Actions
(2017–22)

Use our sector intelligence, engagement, networks and alliances to promote a collaborative working environment that will enable fresh ideas and approaches to inform the strategic development of the social care workforce

Work in partnership with key stakeholders to strengthen capacity building to support and develop systems leadership at all levels across the social care sector

Business Objectives
During (2021-22) We Will –

Work with the DoH and other Government Departments, Community Planning Leads and employers to inform strategic workforce planning and policy development.

Continue to develop our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our data for workforce demographics, qualifications, training and learning.

Through the Leaders in Social Care Partnership, we will support the transformation and development of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland.

Develop a pathway to deliver on the recommendations arising out of the Landscape Review.

Indicators of Success
for (2021-22)

13. The Social Care Council actively participates in strategic projects and work streams for social work and social care planning and development.

14. The Social Care Council produces workforce intelligence reports which inform business and strategic planning, including a State of the Nation Report each year.

15. The Leaders in Social Care Partnership programme of work for 2021/22 is delivered across the strategic priorities of vision, inclusion and innovation.

16. The Social Care Council develops a model to be a systems leader for the social care workforce and wider sector.

Strategic Outcomes
(2017–22)

Capacity is built to use collective intelligence to effect real, meaningful and positive change in social work and social care standards and practice

A systems leadership environment is created which provides for improved understanding and connection across the sector

Strategic Theme 5: Communication and Engagement
Communicate, Connect and Engage

You said – The Social Care Council should ensure there is effective and meaningful communication and engagement to improve the understanding of what the Social Care Council does and the value of the social work and social care workforce.

Since our establishment in 2001, communication and engagement has remained a key theme: recognising that to deliver our statutory functions we need to effectively communicate with our registrants and stakeholders to successfully deliver our business. Over the last number of years we have invested time promoting social care careers, developing our social media presence and creating engagement forums to help connect better with the sector.

During 2020/21, our approach to communications and engagement went fully online – with a focus on social media channels – sharing information, advice and many resources. We also worked closely with the Department of Health in its campaigns for the sector – including the call out to those who had left the sector, inviting them to rejoin; promotion of the value of the social care sector and the vaccination programme. Our dual approach with the Department of Health enabled these key messages to reach out to all of the sector who were, and remain, under immense pressure.

We delivered our engagement activity online with video conferencing and hosted webinars and lunchtime seminars to hundreds of individuals – something which would have been a challenge to do in a face to face environment. We hope however to get to a point, when it is safe to do so and government advice allows it, to have both an online and face to face approach to communication and engagement. In the meantime however our plan is to keep engaging in the way we did last year.

We will be finding ways this year to engage all of our registrants and the entire sector to help us develop a Corporate Strategy for the next four years that addresses the expectations and needs of the workforce, and builds on what society has learnt about the value of the social care sector. Social workers and social care workers will be at the heart of our strategy and it is therefore essential we have their voice and they have our ear.

We have therefore designed our approach to communication and engagement into three clear themes –
- Raising awareness of the role of the Social Care Council
- Raising the profile of social work
- Raising the profile of social care

By March 2022, we said we would achieve three strategic outcomes for Communications and Engagement:

1. Improving the public's perception of the social care workforce
2. Increasing confidence in the contribution the workforce makes
3. Ensuring the views, experience and expertise of people who use services and carers inform our business.
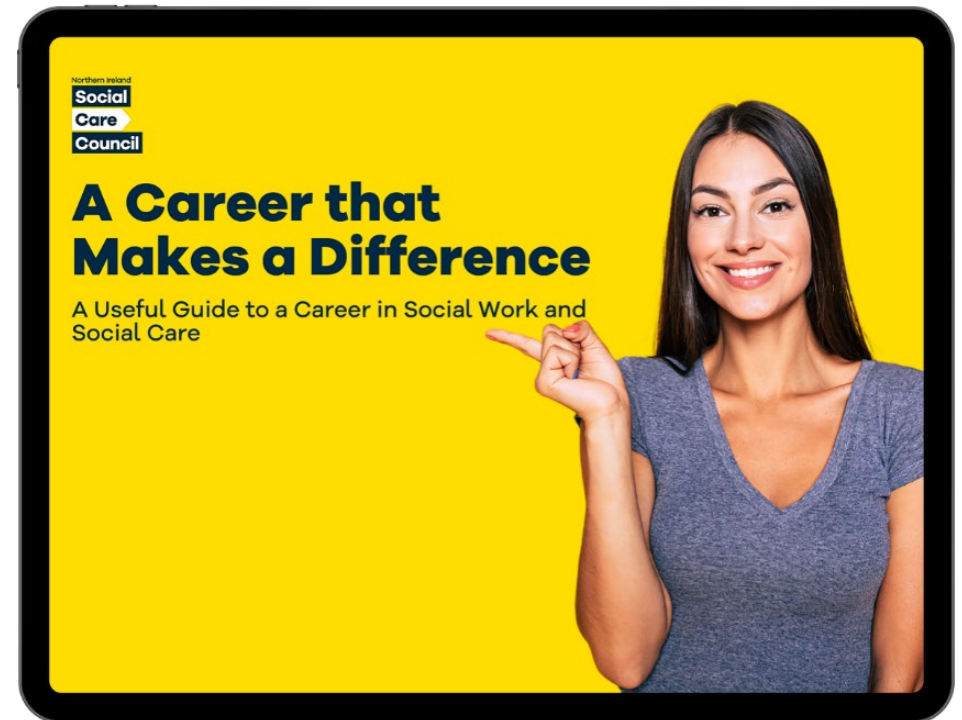
Our Progress

A significant programme of engagement has been delivered to engage the workforce with their registration responsibilities. Extensive work has also been undertaken to refresh the Social Care Council profile and messaging. Last year we were able to demonstrate our progress as –

#ProudtoMakeaDifference
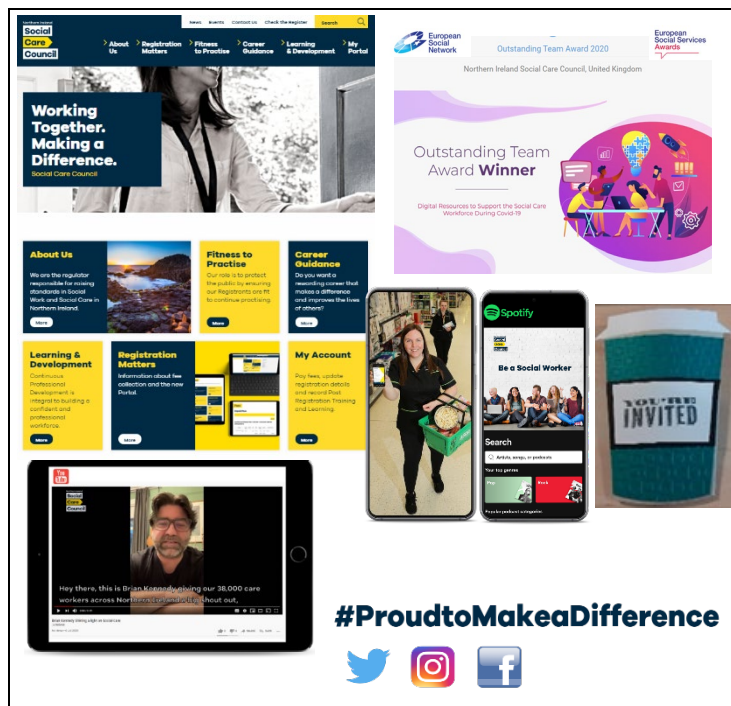
- Digital and social engagement is growing & adapting with 80k+ reach and 10k engagement achieved each month through an average of 40 posts created for social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn).
- Targeted communications creating 40% 'open rate' on direct email campaigns
- Website redevelopment supporting 30k website visits per month
- Social Work Advertising campaign increased UCAS Social Work applications (Queens +17% & Ulster University +20%
- Website accessibility improved with Browsealoud enabling 700 people per month to use translation & audio functionality
- Public endorsements generated to celebrate the contribution of social work & social care
- Online promotion of Learning Resources attracted votes to win European Social Services Award
- Participation and Forum members have been supported to keep connected in a way that suits their needs. (online meetings, 1-2-1 phone calls and printed updates sent by post)

What we have learned:

- A Communication and Engagement Strategy will support and co-ordinate our key efforts and messages Communications must be clear and easy to understand
- People who use services and carers involvement in our work must be evidenced and the outcomes shared with other stakeholders
- Online resources are essential in reaching such a large and disparate stakeholder group Improving public perception is a long term outcome
- More work is required to solidify communication and engagement with our immediate stakeholders – registrants, employers, people who use services and carers

Objectives to Deliver Strategic Outcomes for Communication and Engagement in 2021-22

Strategic Actions
(2017-22)

Create a new and progressive understanding of the role and contribution of workforce regulation in social care.

Build, develop and maintain effective and supportive relationships with people who use services and carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders focusing on listening, learning and evolving.

Business Objectives
During (2021-22) We Will –

The Social Care Council – we will engage with all of our stakeholders to help us develop a new Corporate Strategy for 2022 – 2026 that meets the needs of the social work and social care workforce.

Social Workers – we will deliver our Communication and Engagement Plan for 2021/22 to engage the profession and raise the profile of Social Workers.

Social Care Workers – we will deliver our Communication and Engagement Plan for 2021/22 to support the transformation and development of the social care workforce.

Indicators of Success
for (2021-22)

17. The role, purpose, vision and function of the Social Care Council is clearly mapped out and enables the organisation to meet the needs of registrants, interested public and the sector.

18. Consistent messages on the value of social work are established, and further embedding of the Standards is evident.

19. Baselines are established for awareness levels of the value of social care as an active career choice.

Strategic Outcomes
(2017-2022)

Improved public perception of social workers and social care workers as a workforce that is committed to upholding standards.

Increased confidence in the contribution of workforce regulation in serving and protecting the public, minimising risk and reducing harm by embedding and raising standards.

The views, experience and expertise of people who use services and carers in informing our business is valued and can be evidenced.

Infrastructure and Leadership
People, Resources, Governance, Quality and Systems

To support the delivery of this Business Plan, the Social Care Council will ensure it has the right infrastructure and leadership in across its people, resources, governance, quality and systems.

The Social Care Council is an IIP Silver accredited employer and retains the IIP Good Practice Award for Health and Wellbeing. It has a workforce that supports a range of front line and back office functions, supporting the overall delivery of the Social Care Council's Business Plan. The Senior Leadership Team chaired by Patricia Higgins (Interim Chief Executive) has worked with staff to ensure its staffing resource is deployed to support its business priorities.

All staff have been working remotely from home since last March following government advice that those who are able to work from home should do so, and the organisation has been able to deliver all parts of its business working remotely. It is hoped to enable staff to return to the office environment when it is safe to do so and the pandemic has fundamentally changed the purpose of an office environment, proving that work is a function and not a location.

This year we will however be preparing for our planned move to new accommodation at James House in Belfast City Centre which is part of a large project to share accommodation in one site bringing about many financial and other efficiencies. The learning from the current pandemic will be built into the plans for the new premises and we will keep our stakeholders informed of progress at key points.

We have continued to support the health and wellbeing of our staff and during the year received the outcome of the HSC Cultural Assessment Survey which was a very positive report on the organisation, reflecting the collaboration and leadership across everyone at all levels and in all teams.

We will also start to develop a People Strategy this year to ensure our organisation has the right structure, skills and resources to enable it to successfully deliver our new Corporate Strategy over the next four years.

By March 2022, we said we would achieve the following strategic outcomes for Infrastructure and Leadership:

1. People - the Social Care Council is an employer of choice
2. Resources - resources are deployed within robust an accountable governance frameworks
3. Governance - business is delivered against good governance best practice
4. Quality - quality improvement is fully integrated in all aspects of Social Care Council business
5. Systems - technology is used to improve systems and processes

Our Progress

Our KPI's in relation to absences, appraisals, and finance continue to be met. We have adapted our programme of staff engagement to use virtual tools to connect and collaborate on our work. We have learnt that a QI approach to reviewing systems/functions can produce positive outcomes. Last year we were able to demonstrate our progress as –

Indicators of Success

- Staff supported to adapt to remote working in the pandemic
- A new approach to staff appraisals introduced to focus on wellbeing & personal development
- Monthly All-Staff engagement events hosted with teams rotating opportunity to present their experiences to colleagues
- Staff engaging in Health and Wellbeing activities
- Positive staff feedback to pulse surveys
- Focus retained on recognising staff contributions and achievements through highlight reports and congratulatory emails and online meetings
- Staff completed learning plans
- Staff absence managed and supports provided to assist those affected by the pandemic & changes to working conditions.
- Prompt payment targets met
- Break even position monitored & impacts of COVID communicated to DoH, with financial support allocated by DoH to achieve breakeven
- Boards, Committees & Partnerships meetings adapted for online delivery throughout the pandemic
- Performance and Governance reports completed to provide assurance on business progress
- Audits facilitated to provide external assurance on business delivery/progress

What we have learned:

- A QI approach to reviewing specific business functions/activities can lead to positive change and improvements. The system to support staff and managers in managing absences is fit for purpose
- It is important to use a range of methods to engage and involve staff in delivery of the business
- Health and wellbeing activities are having a positive impact

Objectives to Deliver Strategic Outcomes for Infrastructure and Leadership in 2021-22

Strategic Actions
(2017–22)

Effectively deploy and engage our Corporate Services to support the successful delivery of our Corporate Plan

Business Objectives
During (2021-22) We Will –

People - Deliver the actions identified for 2021/22 business year arising from the Investors in People Report.

Develop a People Strategy with support from BSO HR.

Resources - Manage our resources to maximum effect and within regulatory and statutory guidelines and legislation

Governance - Deliver effective governance including risk and information management in line with relevant legislation and guidance.

Quality -Deliver on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2021/22 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan

Systems – Develop new ways for registrants, employers and others to connect through online technology

Indicators of Success
for (2021-22)

20. Social Care Council is placed to retain its IIP status.

21. Social Care Council has the right skills, structure and resources to support it over the next four years.

22. Business Plan for 2021/22 is successfully delivered and the Social Care Council achieves its break even target at the end of the financial year.

23. The Board receives assurance through audit and governance reports that the Social Care Council is delivering safe and effective governance.

24. Staff are supported to engage in quality improvement activity within their own business area and as part of projects working across the organisation.

25. Registrants, employers and others have access to an app, digital identity, online Portal and fully enabled IT to engage with us on their mobile phones and other devices.

Strategic Outcomes
(2017–22)

The Social Care Council is an employer of choice; employing, developing and retaining hard working, skilled staff who are committed to delivering quality services.

Resources are deployed within robust and accountable governance frameworks to ensure the Social Care Council is capable of delivering its commitments.

Business is delivered against good governance best practice to meet all statutory, legal and professional obligations.

Quality improvement is fully integrated in all aspects of Social Care Council business.

Technology is used to improve systems and processes to support delivery of front line registration and regulation services.

Appendix 1 - Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

We have a number of Key Performance Indicators across our business functions which are an accessible way for our stakeholders to quickly review what we are doing and to what level of satisfaction/completion. These KPI's have been in place for a number of years and we will therefore test and review their appropriateness and strength as part of our engagement and consultation on our new Corporate Plan.

We report on our KPI's in our Annual Report and in quarterly reports to our Board, both of which are available on our website at www.niscc.info

What We Will Measure		KPI's
Theme 2 Registration	1. We will provide quality services that achieve a minimum of 85% stakeholder satisfaction throughout the year	**85%**
	2. We will process 100% of completed applications/renewals within 20 working days of submission.	**100% within 20 working days**
	3. We will update the register for all Fitness to Practise decisions within 2 working days of receipt of the information.	**2 Working days**
Theme 2 Regulation Social Workers & Social Care Workers	4. We will triage all referrals to the Fitness to Practise Team within 3 working days.	**3 Working days**
	5. We will conclude 100% of Interim Suspension Order (ISO hearings within 4 weeks of referral.	**100% within 4 weeks**
	6. We will conclude 90% of Fitness to Practise cases within 15 months of opening the case.	**95% within 15 months**
Theme 2 Regulation Social Work Education	7. We will complete 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training within timeframes agreed with providers and identify recommendations for improvement.	**100%**

What We Will Measure

KPI's

Infrastructure People	8. We will ensure our staff absence levels do not exceed 3.5% during the year.	**3.5%**
Infrastructure Finance	9. We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying 95% of undisputed invoices within 30 days	**95% within 30 days**
	10. We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying 75% of undisputed invoices within the 10 day prompt payment target.	**75% in 10 days**
	11. We will manage our finances to achieve financial breakeven target of 0.25% or £20k (whichever is greater).	**0.25% / £20k**
Infrastructure Systems	12. We will ensure the Online Registration Portal is available at least 98% of time during the year.	**98%**

Appendix 2 - Evaluation - Tracking Achievement of "Indicators of Success"

Our current Corporate Plan was developed using an outcomes based approach. The benefit of this approach is that our Corporate Plan clearly describes what we are trying to achieve and the difference we want our work to make for the social work and social care workforce.

This Business Plan is supported by our Evaluation Framework and Performance Management Framework. We use these tools to help evidence our progress, highlight what is working well and identify areas for improvement. The Evaluation Framework supports us to undertake evaluation on two levels:

- Engage with our key stakeholders – DoH (as our sponsor department), registrants, employers, partners, people who use services and carers - to gather their views on our progress against the five Strategic Themes; and

- Be a learning organisation – evaluating the impact and quality of our work and using this to improve what we do in the future.

Reporting on the outcomes of the Business Plan activities

Our evidence will be gathered using a combination of evaluation tools and activities. A summary of the sources for this information is provided in the tables overleaf. This will include:

- Analysing routinely generated business information,

- Targeted surveys,

- Focus groups,

- Audits, and

- Feedback from engagement activities and events.

Updates on progress against the Evaluation Framework are included in quarterly performance reports to Board and these are published at www.niscc.info

	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
1. Standards	1. Ensure that at least 70% of social care workers are reporting that they use the Standards regularly.	**50%**	• Evaluation of Registration Policy – tracking survey/focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms • PRTL audit submissions
	2. Ensure that at least 90% of social workers are reporting that the Standards are helping improve the quality of their social work practice.	**58%**	• Social workers and professional regulation – tracking survey • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms • PRTL audit submissions • PiP Credit submissions
	3. Establish a benchmark of awareness of the role of the Social Care Council and confidence in the social care sector with people who use services and carers.	**Benchmark to be defined**	• Evaluation of Registration Policy – focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms
	4. Ensure that at least 80% of employers are reporting that they use the Employer Standards regularly.	**47%**	• Evaluation of Registration Policy – survey & focus groups • Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms RQIA regulation activity feedback
	Indicators of Success	**Baseline**	**Information Sources**
2. Regulation	5. A minimum of 95% of registrants successfully maintain their registration throughout the year.	**90%**	• SOCRATES registration reports • Registration KPI report • QI project for registration maintenance • Customer Service – monthly feedback survey PRTL Audit – outcomes report
	6. A minimum of 70% of registrants use the online system to maintain their registration and pay their fee.	**35%**	• • SOCRATES registration reports Customer Service feedback •
	7. 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training are completed within required timescales and recommendations for improvement identified.	**100%**	• Monthly performance management reports • Degree Partnership meeting actions QA monitoring outcomes - Degree in Social Work and Practice Learning • PiP Partnership Committee meetings QA monitoring outcomes - Professional in Practice

	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
	8. All referrals and cases are managed in line with Fitness to Practise Rules and key performance indicators.	100% of referrals and 90% of cases	SOCRATES Fitness to Practise reports Fitness to Practise Team KPI report • Fitness to Practise Committee KPI report •
3. Workforce Development	**Indicators of Success**	**Baseline**	**Information Sources**
	9. Proposal agreed for consultation on revalidation of social worker registration through the PiP Framework.	**Ongoing**	• Project group updates Feedback from participants
	10. A minimum 85% of participants who engaged with the events and campaigns report an increased awareness of social work and social care careers.	**85%**	• Engagement activities – delegate feedback forms Ambassador feedback
	11. A Learning and Development Framework for Social Care is in place.	**Ongoing**	• Project group updates
	12. Maintain the number of people undertaking learning through the e-enabled technology available on our Learning Zone.	**700 Per month**	Website analytics User feedback surveys
4 .	**Indicators of Success**	**Baseline**	**Information Sources**
	13. The Social Care Council actively participates in strategic projects and work streams for social work and social care planning and development.	**Ongoing Programme**	• Project Team updates/reports • Updates to Council meetings from Council Members and senior • staff on projects they lead on/participate in
	14. The Social Care Council produces workforce intelligence reports which inform business and strategic planning.	**Ongoing Programme**	• Workforce Development Partnership reports • PiP Partnership Committee reports Degree Partnership reports Monthly performance management reports Reports published on Registration & Fitness to Practise trends

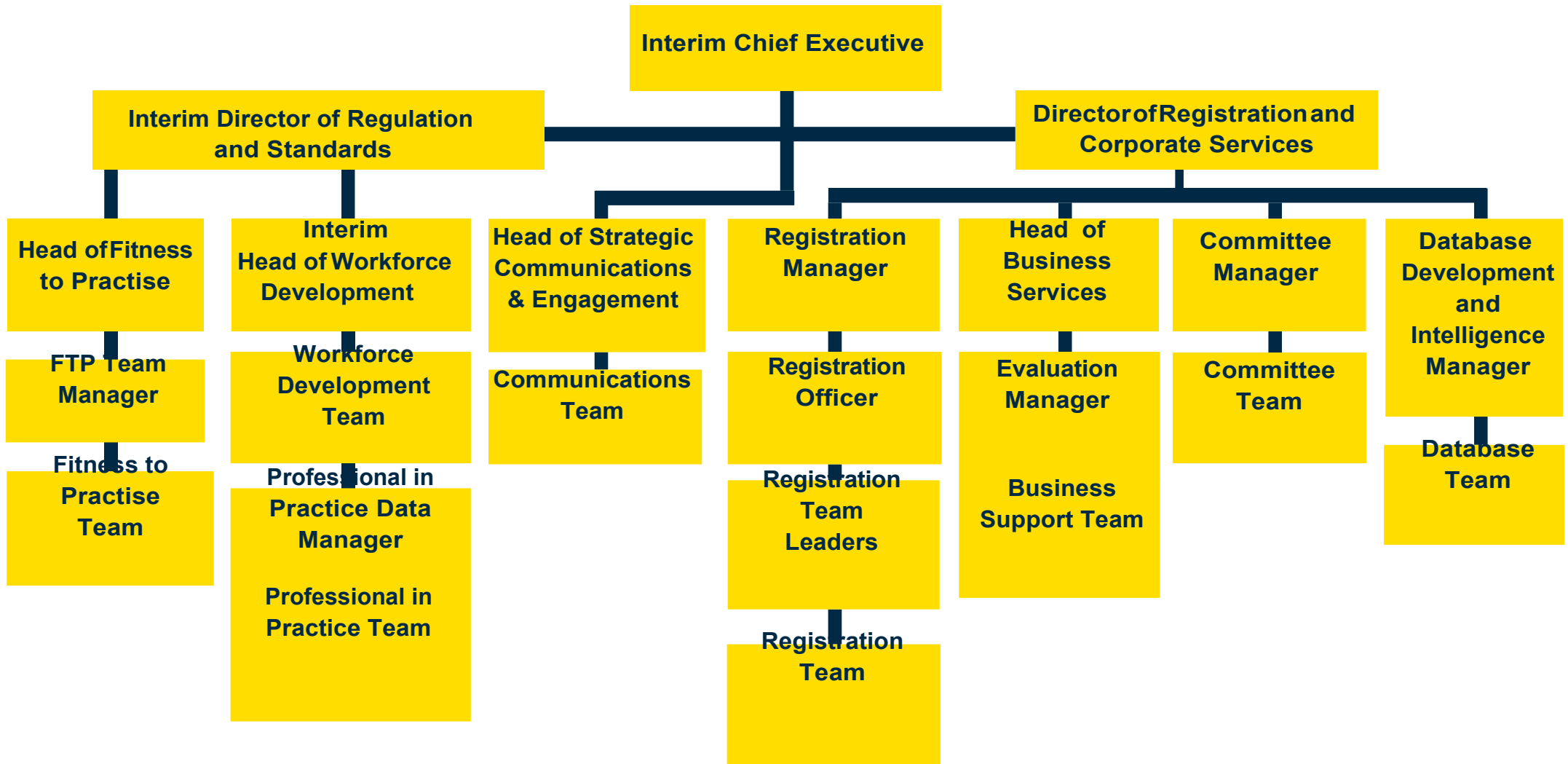|	Indicators of Success	Baseline	Information Sources
	15. The Leaders in Social Care Partnership programme of work for 2020/21 is delivered across the strategic priorities of vision, inclusion and innovation.	**Ongoing Programme**	Partnership and Committee meetings – action notes Joint planning sessions across partnership groups – feedback and action notes
	16. The sector will work together to provide leadership to support the social work profession.	**Ongoing Programme**	• Joint working across strategic groups – feedback and action notes • Feedback from participants
	Indicators of Success	**Baseline**	**Information Sources**
5. Communications	17. Baselines are established for awareness levels of the Social Care Council with interested public, people who use services and carers.	**Ongoing Programme**	Communication Team monthly report Direct engagement – participant feedback Email campaigns - MailChimp reports on opening rates Quarterly E-zines for social work and social care registrants - MailChimp reports on click rates/subscribers Website news – analytics reports on engagement and user behaviours Local media stories - media monitoring reports Social media – analytics and insights reports on reach and • reactions
5. Communications	18. Consistent messages on the value of social work are established, and further embedding of the Standards is evident.	**Ongoing Programme**	
5. Communications	19. Baselines are established for awareness levels of the value of social care as an active career choice.	**Ongoing Programme**	
	Indicators of Success	**Baseline**	**Information Sources**
Infr astr	20. Social Care Council is placed to retain its IIP status at the end of the 2020/21 business year.	**Ongoing Programme**	• Action notes • Feedback from participants· • Outcomes from HSC Staff Survey Recommendations from IiP Assessor
Infr astr	21. Business Plan for 2021/22 is successfully delivered and the Social Care Council achieves its break even target at the end of the financial year.	**Ongoing Programme**	Monthly performance management reports • Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22

22. The Board receives assurance through audits and governance reports that the Social Care Council delivers safe, effective governance.	**Ongoing Programme**	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reports NI Audit Office report Internal Audit Reports
23. Staff are supported to engage in QI activity within their own business area and as part of projects working across the organisation.	**Ongoing Programme**	Action notes Feedback from participants Feedback from end users
24. SOCRATES Change Board ensures system changes/ developments are planned to deliver improved services, taking into account user feedback.	**Ongoing Programme**	Action notes Feedback from participants Feedback from end users

Organisation Structure 2021/22

Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Interim Chief Executive

Interim Director of Regulation and Standards

Director of Registration and Corporate Services

Head of Fitness to Practise
- FTP Team Manager
- Fitness to Practise Team

Interim Head of Workforce Development
- Workforce Development Team
- Professional in Practice Data Manager
- Professional in Practice Team

Head of Strategic Communications & Engagement
- Communications Team

Registration Manager
- Registration Officer
- Registration Team Leaders
- Registration Team

Head of Business Services
- Evaluation Manager
- Business Support Team

Committee Manager
- Committee Team

Database Development and Intelligence Manager
- Database Team

Our Values

There are four key values which
underpin our culture that set
a foundation for how we work
together and with those around us.

Respect
Integrity
Partnership
Excellence

We promote Respect.

We are trusted by the sector to support good social work and social care practice. We respect the rights, dignity and inherent worth of individuals.

We work with Integrity.

We work with integrity and are mindful of our responsibilities and hold ourselves and others to account. We are open, honest and respectful with all our stakeholders.

We believe in Partnership.

We are a people focused organisation that is committed to doing what is right. Through genuine partnership, we work to ensure what we do makes a difference.

We strive for Excellence.

We take a professional approach in putting standards at the heart of social work and social care. We proactively support the development of the social care workforce and we proactively support the development of our staff.

Our Vision - Improved standards in social work and social care

Our Purpose - To protect the public and safeguard service users through the regulation and development of the social work and social care workforce

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