



Business Services  
Organisation



# 2023-2024 ANNUAL QUALITY REPORT

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## Foreword from BSO Chief Executive



Welcome to the Annual Quality Report for 2023-24 for the Business Services Organisation (BSO). During 2023-24, BSO continued to provide high-quality, value-adding, specialist professional services to our customers across Health and Social Care (HSC). This was achieved during a politically uncertain and financially challenging time for HSC, and as such I am extremely proud of the contribution of every individual and team within BSO.

I would like to recognise the dedication and commitment of our teams who have continued to drive excellence within their areas through automating processes, enhancing service delivery and delivering cost efficiencies to enable a consistent focus on quality improvement, customer engagement and collaborative working. I am delighted to acknowledge that many of our services were recognised for their innovation and continuous improvements both locally, nationally and internationally during 2023-24.

One year into delivering the recommendations arising from the BSO Strategic Review, we are increasingly customer focussed. BSO established a new and improved Directorate structure and business model. We developed a new Corporate Plan with an ambitious vision and objectives. We also delivered a new Customer Engagement Strategy to strengthen connections with our customers and internal service areas, alongside a Communication Strategy with clear branding which supports it.

On November 2023, in collaboration with South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT), the first Trust in Northern Ireland went live with a new single digital care record system, 'encompass'. 'encompass' is a Health and Social Care programme that enables every citizen in Northern Ireland who receives health and social care to have a single digital care record. This was a momentous occasion for both BSO and SEHSCT and involved a multitude of staff from both organisations working together, around the clock to ensure the successful roll-out, supporting a safer and more efficient health service for patients and users.

Looking ahead to the next year, our focus will be on the next stages and delivery of the BSO Review. We will be focusing on Digital enablement and how this will optimise our service delivery further. Our SLA Pilot Programme, completing the evaluation and expansion across further service areas. BSO our Cost and Operations Management, which will focus on improving our cost transparency and investing further in priority areas.

We will also continue to strive and invest in our people. We are continually developing our workforce with annual appraisals alongside continuous professional development. With the launch of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 2023, we acknowledge that the emphasis on our people's Health and Wellbeing is key to the ongoing delivery of a robust health and social care service.

During 2024, we will also be engaging in the re-accreditation of Investors in People, and for the first time we will also be seeking accreditation in Investors in Wellbeing. We are keen to cement our position as a leading employer within Northern Ireland.

We look forward to ongoing engagement with our stakeholders building on these priorities, which will see us continue to deliver a first-class, high-quality service across health and social care. In this context, it is my pleasure to present the Annual Quality Report 2023-24.

**Karen Bailey**

**Chief Executive**

**September 2024**

## 1.0 Introduction

Business Services Organisation (BSO) was established in April 2009, to provide a range of business support and specialist professional services to other health and social care bodies. These services include Procurement, Technology Support, Human Resources, Legal Services, Family Practitioner Services, Counter Fraud and Internal Audit. A range of shared services are provided, including Payroll, Payments, Accounts Receivable and Recruitment.

In 2011, the Department of Health launched the “Quality 2020,” – a Strategy to protect and improve quality across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland (NI).

The goals of the 2020 Quality Strategy are outlined below:

- **Transforming the Culture** – to encourage the achievement of a high-quality service, which further promotes, prioritises and develops cross-working partnerships between staff for the benefit of carers, clients and patients;
- **Strengthening the Workforce** – support staff to deliver change and take necessary decisions in delivering a high-quality service through education, empowerment and leadership development;
- **Measuring and Improving** – measure and deliver Quality Improvement through the effective use of accredited techniques to enhance capacity, patient safety and experiences;
- **Raising the Standards** – develop and maintain evidence-based standards in partnership with all stakeholders to establish a clear framework that will guide best practice; and
- **Integrating the Care** – using teamworking and shared learning (best practice) to further develop integrated care pathways.

BSO is represented by the Clinical Education Centre on the Quality 2020 Implementation Team. The Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE) Directorate have responsibility for co-ordinating the organisational approach to quality excellence within BSO.

The development of Annual Quality Reports is one of the designated tasks under the Strategic Goal of Measuring the Improvement in the Quality 2020 Strategy. This is the eleventh BSO Annual Quality Report. It highlights some of BSO’s key achievements in relation to quality excellence and continuous improvement during the year 2023-24.

BSO's mission is **“to provide high quality business services which support our customers to improve health and well-being”**.

Our Strategic Objectives for 2023-24 have helped us to fulfill our Mission in an increasingly challenging environment. They were the focus of everything we did during 2023-24 and we aimed to:

- Deliver consistent, high-quality services that add value to our customers.
- As a trusted partner, co-develop our services with our customers.
- Work smarter, to continually find more demonstrably efficient and effective ways of working with our customers and the Department of Health.
- Offer exciting and rewarding opportunities for our people to develop and grow their careers.
- Initiate, enable and support improvements in Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland.

By 2025 we aim to have achieved the following outcomes:

- Deliver a High-Quality service to our customers, with improved customer engagement and increased collaborative working.
- Modernise and retain a talented workforce, alongside succession planning.
- Create a culture of excellence, with a strong emphasis around equality, alongside positive health and wellbeing approaches.
- Implement a new Performance Management Framework, allowing BSO to track performance and plan future customer service delivery.
- Develop further new Digital Approaches to modernising and enhancing safer patient care.



## 2.0 Transforming the Culture

The Quality 2020 aim: **We will make achieving high quality the top priority at all levels in health and social care. We will promote and encourage partnerships between staff, patients, clients and carers to support decision-making.**

It is widely known that an organisation's quality of achievements is based on a diverse and inclusive workforce, whose dedication is to the Health and Wellbeing of its staff.

BSO are creating innovative solutions around health service delivery and promoting strong leadership across the organisation. Planning and developing cost-effective quality services for customers and service users. Whilst ensuring our people are at the forefront of all our decision-making processes.

This section of the report demonstrates some of the key developments and innovative approaches that BSO have incorporated to transform the culture and service. Many of these new approaches have been designed in light of BSO Strategic Review.

The BSO Strategic Review is guided by a five-year roadmap for change of how BSO deliver its services and how it functions. The BSO Strategic Review is led by Chair, Julie Erskine as the SRO, with the Directorate of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement supporting its implementation.

In 2023-24 there were a number of key workstreams of the BSO Review:





A number of new processes and strategies were established and launched as part of this review. One significant piece of work was the creation and roll-out of a Customer Engagement Strategy which was launched in October 2023. The focus of the Strategy for the subsequent three years is:

- To make it easier for our customers to engage in ways and on matters that are important to them.
- To be more accountable for the services we provide by engaging in customer forums and actively seeking feedback from our customers.
- To use customer feedback to improve our service provision and provide value for money.
- To systematically gather feedback from our customers and keep them informed about how this feedback has been used to drive continuous improvement.
- To embed customer engagement in all our service provision.

### *Our Customer Focus:*

The BSO Customer Engagement Strategy focuses on 5 areas:



A Pilot Service Level Agreement (SLA) process was also established in collaboration with internal service areas and customer organisations. Building on the Customer Engagement Strategy, customers co-designed and contributed valuable feedback towards the final document design. Improvements included: clearly defined contract managers on both sides; clear and robust KPIs; exclusion and a regular meeting schedule to review, agree and sign off SLAs. This new approach has encouraged and developed further partnership working with customer organisations. The new template was piloted within three BSO service areas – Payroll, Legal Services (DLS), and Procurement and Logistics Services (Pals). Once evaluation of the pilot is complete during 2024-25, the Organisation will look to roll it out across other service areas.



Another important milestone for BSO and the Digital Directorate was the collaborative delivery and launch of encompass. On the 9 November 2023, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust was the first Trust to 'Go Live' with the new programme encompass is a clinically and operationally led integrated care record system providing real-time up to date information to those providing care for patients, supporting them make efficient patient centred decisions. A staggered implementation process is being rolled out across the remaining Trusts with all go live dates to be achieved by the end of 2025.



## 2.1 Our Board

The Executive and Non-Executive Directors of BSO Board provide dedicated leadership for the organisation and are responsible for ensuring the organisation achieves its strategic objectives. The strategic direction for BSO is guided by the Department of Health (DoH) and by the Minister for Health. BSO Chief Executive is accountable to the Board for the performance of the organisation.

BSO Board and its Committees maintain a focus on quality by discussing performance information, including key quality indicators, on a regular basis. This information is presented through:

- Governance and Audit Committee (GAC)
- Business Development Committee (BDC)
- Monthly Corporate Balanced Scorecard
- Monthly Finance Report
- Quarterly Report on Performance against Annual Business Plan
- Quarterly Human Resources and Corporate Services Report
- Annual Report

- Compliance with Audit Reports and Controls Assurance Standards
- Quality Awards and Accreditations updates
- Corporate Customer Satisfaction Survey with associated improvement action plans

In addition, BSO Board has reviewed its Corporate Risk and Assurance Report on a bi-annual basis and quarterly through its Governance and Audit Committee. The Board does this with a view to assessing prospective risks to quality of services and ensuring that appropriate controls and assurances are in place. Meetings of BSO Board are regularly scheduled to be held within the organisation. These meetings, together with presentations from service areas provide a further means of assuring quality of performance.

## **2.2 Senior Management Commitment to Quality Improvement**

BSO staff have continued to deliver a high-quality service in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and in the current challenging financial environment faced within HSC. BSO remain dedicated to continuous quality improvement alongside developing stronger governance, policies, methodologies and our commitment to putting our customers and wider service areas at the forefront of everything we do.

BSO service areas continued to engage with customers and service users through the use of customer satisfaction surveys. These surveys provided valuable feedback around the service delivery as well as information around any issues or concerns within areas. The feedback provided is disseminated back to all staff to co-ordinate and action improvements as well as sharing any positive feedback left for staff.

Many of BSO service areas have continued to shape and develop new strategic models of working to ensure the continued high-quality delivery of their service. Examples of these include:

### **Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE)**

The Corporate Communication team developed and launched their Communications Strategy during 2023 as part of the wider BSO review. They work to ensure key messages around innovative developments and approaches to working together are being delivered across the organisation and to the public. They support and guide service areas and customer organisations around interdependent styles of working. They ensure important messages are communicated effectively to the public via their social media channels and new website. These new media channels have allowed for stories and achievement from BSO colleagues and service to be delivered to multiple audiences.

## People and Place



A new LearnHSCNI website was launched in May 2023. This modern and innovative website provided all HSC staff with easy access to a wide range of digital, classroom & blended learning courses. This new system replaced HSC Learning with a single modern and engaging platform. The new website allows for a more streamlined delivery of training across the HSC and allows users to manage their own training schedules as well as add in additional CPD training.

## Recruitment Shared Services Centre (RSSC)

Within the RSSC the Head of Service has been instrumental in leading on an internal review of processes and collaborating with customers on the transformation of the end to end recruitment process across the HSC. This end to end review came from ongoing engagement and feedback from customers at the forums around the RSSC process and how it could be improved. The feedback was looked at in depth to see where RSSC could make improvements across the service.

## Family Practitioner Services (FPS)

During 2023-24, FPS begun a sustainability initiative of moving towards being a paperless service within their service area. This was developed following stakeholder engagement around quality and service improvements. A paper distribution of Memoranda of Pharmaceutical Services and Drug Alerts was withdrawn from service and alternative digital formats were made available. This improvement highlights the importance of strong communication with key stakeholders and a willingness to evolve and adapt in an ever-changing environment.

## Counter Fraud and Probity Services (CFPS)

Probity Services has continued their collaborative engagement with colleagues within SPPG to ensure the strongest quality of service is delivered. During 2023-24, a programme of work was carried out with the Ophthalmic Adviser to consider the enhanced services specifications and specifically the wording of the same to improve both the clarity and the delivery of this service for those who use it. This improvement came on the back of engagement and consultation with service users. A similar approach was taken around Counter Fraud Services whereby a review was undertaken on the back of engagement with customers organisations to improve and refine the preliminary enquiry process, this process is currently being embedded.

## **Procurement and Logistic Services (PaLS)**

During April 2023, PaLS introduced innovative team meetings across multiple functions within their service area. This provided a forum for all staff to generate new ideas and explore and experiment new ways of working together within the service area. As a continuous improvement initiative, this gave a voice to all staff and an opportunity for all staff to experience project work alongside supporting innovation and quality improvements across PaLS.

## **2.3 Quality Culture within BSO**

BSO continue their ongoing mission to develop stronger methodologies within the organisation to enhance quality improvements, develop lean models of working and increase innovation and excellence across the organisation. Some examples of this include:

### **Legal Services (DLS)**

Legal Services achieved re-accreditation ISO 9001 and Lexcel re-accreditation during 2023-24. Lexcel is the Law Society's quality mark for client care, compliance and practice management for law firms. This accreditation lasts for 3 years with an annual maintenance visit at the end of years 1 and 2 with a full re-assessment at end of year 3. This quality mark showcases the strong commitment to quality care being delivered by BSO Legal team to their clients. This accreditation was achieved through tested interviews with managers, solicitors, and support staff, alongside reviews of management documentation. The report recognised 13 areas of good practice within Legal services. Both achievements highlight the continued high-quality service being delivered by Legal to all its clients.

### **Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE)**

The Corporate Communications team developed the new BSO branding website as an outworking of BSO review. This now provides clear guidance, tools and downloadable support material to all BSO colleagues. This further enhances BSO brand and gives clear identity to all of our service areas and Directorates, and also supports service delivery across the HSC.

During 2023-24 the team also supported service areas to recruit new staff with innovative digital recruitment strategies. These enhanced and supported service areas with many of their recruitment challenges and showcased the strong coordinated approaches being used by the communications team to support service areas and customer organisations.

## 2.4 Customer Engagement

As BSO has grown and developed, always evolving and trying to provide additional mechanisms to engage and work with our customers on a regular basis to enhance communication and to review and improve the quality of our service. These include:

**Arms' Length Bodies (ALB) Forum.** This Forum was established to support the smaller customer organisations providing them an opportunity to work more collaboratively with BSO. The Forum meets quarterly to discuss the quality service delivery.

**Legal Customer Forum.** This Customer Forum was established in February 2023, to provide a mechanism for Trusts to work more closely with BSO Legal Services to improve the quality of services provided. The Forum meets quarterly.

**Strategic Customer Forum.** After customer feedback this Forum was established to allow conversations to be held at a more strategic level to support customer needs. The Forum meets bi-annually.

**Additional Customer Fora.** BSO continue to work with customers and understand the importance of this engagement. BSO Directorates continue to engage with customers on a variety of platforms including over 100 Fora facilitated by the following service areas:

- Shared Services
- PaLS
- HSC Leadership Centre/CEC Centre
- HSC Pension Services
- ITS
- Equality Unit
- Counter Fraud and Probity Services
- Family Practitioner Services (Including Interpreting Services)

### Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE)

During 2023-24 SP&CE also developed the new BSO Partnership Agreement alongside the Arms' Length Bodies (ALB). This sets out the arrangements between the Business Services Organisation (BSO) and the Department of Health. It explains the overall governance framework within which BSO operates, including which the necessary assurances are provided to stakeholders. Providing a new model 'relationship document' setting out the partnership arrangements between an ALB and DoH. This new BSO Partnership Agreement was rolled out in 2024-25 and published widely.

## Summary

BSO continues its drive to foster an improvement culture within the organisation. Playing a vital role, it continues to transform and build on key relationships with customers, through additional mechanisms such as the many new strategies, policy developments, enhanced collaborative working and from the outworking's of the BSO Strategic Review. Staff are given the voice and opportunity to feedback new ideas around improvements across service areas. BSO regularly report on key performance through monthly, quarterly and annual reports and provide assurances to customers around the services provided. Customer fora continue to play a pivotal role in enhancing communications between customers and BSO.



### 3.0 Strengthening the Workforce

The Quality 2020 aim: **We will provide the right education, training and support to deliver high quality service. We will develop leadership skills at all levels and empower staff to take decisions and make changes.**

BSO champions strong leaders and endeavors to empower staff to facilitate change. BSO highlight and showcase the development of new and innovative processes to communicate and deliver robust governance procedures that give assurance to customers. Whilst continually learning and evolving skills in line with the ever-changing HSC landscape.

This section of the report reports looks at some of the key actions being undertaken within Directorates focusing on staff wellbeing and professional development. It will also reflect on some of the new policies and strategies that have been developed to support the growth and ongoing development of BSO.

This is being achieved through a variety of ways within BSO:



#### People and Place

During 2023-24 the People and Place Directorate launched its three-year People Strategy. This Strategy is aimed at creating a safe and thriving culture for all BSO staff, so they can deliver on BSO's key strategic and operational objectives. This Strategy is also supported and enhanced by the Health and Wellbeing and Digital Strategies. We will improve and learn from utilising new digital experiences, alongside supporting our staff's health and wellbeing to create a safe and healthy working environment.



## Four Pillars of People Strategy 2023-26

The strategy has four pillars; Culture, Leadership, Modernised Workforce & Staff Experience. Through our action plan we expect to see improvements in all of these areas. Within each pillar, you have identified a number of workstreams that is important to your work life.



Working together

### What does this mean?

We work together for the best outcome for people we care for and support. We work across Health and Social Care and with other external organisations and agencies, recognising that leadership is the responsibility of all.



Openness & Honesty

### What does this mean?

We are open and honest with each other and act with integrity and candour.



Excellence

### What does this mean?

We commit to being the best we can be in our work, aiming to improve and develop services to achieve positive changes. We deliver safe, high-quality, compassionate care and support.



Compassion

### What does this mean?

We are sensitive, caring, respectful and understanding towards those we care for and support and our colleagues. We listen carefully to others to better understand and take action to help them and ourselves.

BSO Learning & Development team continued to coordinate and deliver multiple training sessions across some of our key HR areas, this continues to support and enhance staff knowledge and key service delivery across the HSC. The staff uptake and feedback continue to be positive and has highlighted the ongoing appetite for personal and professional development within BSO.

Session	No. of Sessions Delivered	No. of Attendees (BSO & ALBS)
Recruitment & Selection	16	219
Appraisal Training for Managers	10	98
Interview Skills (Band 2-7)	2	30
Attendance Management Training	16	220
Conflict Bulling & Harassment	2	33
Managing Challenging Conversations Courageously	4	64
Minute Taking Skills	7	106
<b>Totals</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>770</b>

The Learning and Development team also organised BSO Leadership Conference which was held on 27th June 2023. It was an energising and uplifting day of inspiring speakers and a fantastic opportunity to learn and reflect on topics such as Leadership, Psychological Safety and Emotional Intelligence.



The theme of the Conference was RISE:

- **Recognising our People**
- **Innovating our Services**
- **Stabilising our Future**
- **Energising our Workforce**

It was a day to reconnect with colleagues and celebrate leadership across the organisation. It allowed a space for staff to put key questions to the Executive Leadership Team and the BSO Board in an open and transparent way.

### **Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement Directorate (SP&CE)**

SP&CE facilitated a number of workshops and training sessions with service areas and leaders to support service delivery further both corporately and organisationally. The learning from these sessions helped develop new processes and procedures to support all BSO Service Areas. These included:

- Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) Training (April 2023)
- Quality Improvement Fundamentals Training (April 2023)
- Amberwing Training Workshop (January 2024)




The training was used to support and have meaningful discussions with service areas around KPI reporting and the development of new KPIs using the OBA method. Looking beyond the numbers behind the data and asking 'who' or 'what' is better off. SP&CE also developed a new process that supported service areas in developing clear and robust explanations for any KPI underperformance within service areas. Feedback was taken onboard and a pro-forma guide was developed which asked five key questions around the reasons for underperforming and what mitigations were being actioned to improve performance.

### **Digital**

As part of the ongoing Strategic workforce planning initiative within BSO, ITS developed a simple to use SharePoint site that provided a pool of Job Descriptions for managers to use across all job families. Staff could navigate the site to see what training and expertise a job might require. This resource supported staff in preparation for promotion and this support provides clearly defined career pathways.

For management this Strategic Workforce Planning Group was integral to support and coordinate workforce requirements to meet the next five years of growth and allows the Senior Leadership Team to focus on recruitment and training within key areas across digital.

# Job Description Library

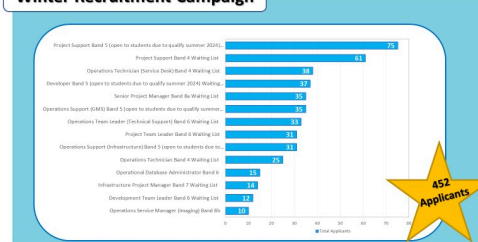
Transferable	Time Management	Maximise Recruitment
<p>Standardising generic JDs enables multiple teams with similar skill sets to recruit together.</p> 	<p>Waiting list recruitment allows managers to draw down from existing waiting lists, this significantly <b>accelerates</b> time it takes to fill posts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recent Vacancy</li> <li>Prevents Project Delays</li> </ul> 	<p>Waiting list recruitment ensures the most effective use of recruitment activity, <b>reduces number of recruitment activities</b> required thus <b>saving</b> on resources associated with recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time and labour costs</li> </ul> 

## Summary

- Champions career progression within BSO ITS
- Provides visibility of roles for recruiting managers & staff within BSO ITS
- Regulates and provides Governance around editing JD's
- Promotes best practice for movement within the organisation
- Facilitates Capacity Planning
- [Link to Site](#)



### Winter Recruitment Campaign



## JD Forums

We grouped JD's together into **Four** Skill Areas

- Technical
- Systems Support
- Developer
- Project Management

[illegible]

Summer Review 2024

## Clinical Education Centre (CEC)

CEC continued the delivery of multiple key training programmes to all across the HSC. There was a total of 67,238 people having completed/attended a programme during 2023-24.

CEC continues to develop and grow its workforce through a delivery of high-quality education services underpinned by effective governance arrangements. Programmes are designed, developed and reviewed in-house, through established Specialist Interest Governance Groups (SIGGs). Each year, the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council (NIPEC) reviews a sample of CEC programmes on behalf of the DoH, in accordance with established quality monitoring processes.

During 2023-24, three CEC staff successfully achieved their Post Graduate Certificate in Education for Healthcare from Ulster University. A staff member was also awarded the Ann Snee Award for demonstrating excellence.

## Family Practitioner Services (FPS)

During 2023-24, FPS maintained excellence by using PRINCE II methodology for all projects undertaken, whilst incorporating process mapping and incorporating lean methodologies to identify any potential business and service improvements.

## **Internal Audit**

BSO Internal Audit produced its first learning brief during 2023-24. It was designed to share learning and good practice around a common audit issue (staff in post checking process). The learning brief was discussed at a virtual session with clients, prompting and informing discussion around the learning topic. This learning brief was designed to sit alongside our audit reports and existing shared learning reports to clients.

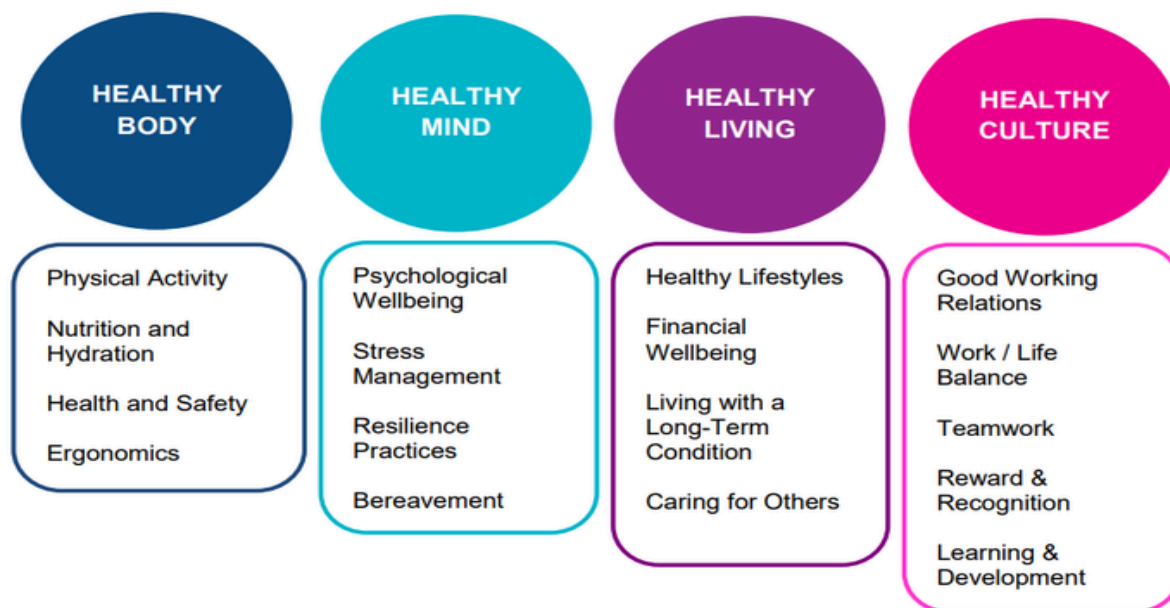
## **Payroll (Shared Services)**

The Senior Management Team also availed of a bespoke payroll legislative changes course to ensure they had the most updated knowledge of the many changes that occur year on year. This ensures they are fully trained to deliver upon the changes and implement them within the service.

## **3.1 Health and Wellbeing**

### **People and Place Directorate**

During 2023-24, BSO People and Place launched its new Health and Wellbeing Strategy aimed at promoting the positive Health and Wellbeing of People. The promotion of positive Health and Wellbeing remains a top priority for BSO Leadership. BSO want to create a happy and safe space for our staff to develop, grow and create a strong workforce where people thrive. By supporting our staff to continually learn, communicate new ideas in a safe and trusted space, we create the leaders of BSO for tomorrow.



The Health & Wellbeing Strategy has 6 key priorities:

- Health and Wellbeing has strong Executive and Board level support
- Using data to target specific interventions that will make a difference for people
- Working in partnership with Occupational Health and our wellbeing partners
- Embedding just and learning culture
- Create a positive work environment
- Maintaining good emotional and psychological wellbeing

There were also multiple events, workshops and supporting material developed to promote positive health and wellbeing across BSO during 2023-24:

- Managers Guide to Support Good Mental Health at work
- Blood Drives
- Financial Wellbeing Programmes
- Cancer Focus Events

## Leadership Centre

The Leadership Centre supported the HSC system and DoH to develop a new regional framework for HSC Staff Health & Wellbeing in the Workplace – Strengthening our Core. Central to the development of the framework was engagement with the HSC Workforce. Delivered through a series of outreach events, over 1,000 colleagues from across HSC engaged with the process and provided valuable insights into issues that affected them. The feedback and learning were used to inform the framework.



## 3.2 Training & Engagement Opportunities

### Interpreting Services

The Interpreting Service trained and registered 29 new interpreters between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 to meet priority language demand. All newly registered interpreters attended a mandatory BSO 5-day new interpreter induction programme which included specialised sessions delivered by HSC Trust staff from maternity services, mental health, social services, speech and language therapy, radiotherapy, health visiting, and bereavement. This new training will equip interpreters across a wide range of settings thus providing a strong and valuable service.

### Counter Fraud and Probity Services (CFPS)

During 2023-24, three new investigators achieved accreditation status of Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist (ACFS). A programme of ongoing training has been delivered to support new staff in their investigative roles and ensure that investigations continue to be conducted to the appropriate standard. Advice and guidance are provided at all stages of an investigation and if gaps in knowledge are identified then appropriate training is provided which includes close one to one mentoring when required.

### Accounts Receivable (Shared Services)

During 2023-24, Accounts Receivable had 8 new members of staff that undertook and passed their professional Chartered Institute of Credit Management Studies. This will expand our staff's knowledge of credit and debt collection and support the wider industry by giving them a greater insight into the practices and procedures of other businesses and how they manage credit. This further supports BSO service delivery as customers will recognise the value of continued advancement and new methodologies of working to support quality and ongoing improvements.

### Leadership Centre

In January 2023 a total of 397 applications were made to the Graduate Scheme for the September 2023 intake. This reflected an increase on the 345 applications to the Scheme in 2022-23. Following the implementation of a range of quality improvements the HSCNI Graduate Trainee Scheme welcomed 15 new trainees across 7 pathways (HR/OD, General Management, Pals, Engineering, Accountancy, ITS and encompass). BSO liaised with regional Graduate Trainee Schemes in Scotland, Wales and England to develop partnerships and shared learning generating peer support and joint development opportunities for HSCNI trainees in 2024.

## Business Services Team (BST)



The Business Services Team continuously strive to improve processes and ensure all staff have the appropriate skills and capability to deliver an effective service through accredited improvement techniques such as PDSA model and ensuring that every member of the team is aware of how they can contribute towards the overall aims and quality of the team and the wider HSC.

## Legal Services (DLS)

During 2023-24 Legal services identified gaps in support to its clients. Legal organised and provided a number of different training sessions for clients across the five Health and Social Care Trusts. One training titled 'Legal Aspects of Assessment of Need' was delivered by Rosie McGinn and Philip Henry KC (Kings Counsel) and was attended by over 261 participants. The feedback received has further supported Legal to develop further trainings in support of customers and clients around key areas within legal services.

### Summary

BSO's development and implementation of the People Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy is key to strengthening our workforce to continue to improve the quality of service offered to our customers. Ongoing learning and development of staff has encouraged new and innovative ways of working together to deliver a strong HSC service.



## 4.0 Measuring the Improvement

The Quality 2020 aim: **We will improve outcome measurement and report on progress for safety effectiveness and the patient/client experience. We will promote the use of accredited improvement techniques and ensure that there is sufficient capacity and capability with the HSC to use them effectively.**

BSO continues to use renowned and accredited processes to analyse and interpret data to inform strategic decision making. Learning outcomes are shared within the organisation and applied as practice quickly and efficiently.

Quality improvement initiatives are also being designed and implemented and shared across the organisation as best practice.

This section outlines some of those methodologies that are used to measure and improve.

### 4.1 Measuring Improvement within BSO Service Areas

#### Investors in People (IIP)



Since 2018, BSO have been accredited with Investors in People (IIP) Silver. This ensures BSO are delivering excellent people practices and provides recommendation on how to improve. During 2023-24, BSO undertook its 24-month review as part of its IIP accreditation, with the assessor reporting BSO was continuing to meet the standards set out in the award. BSO Executive Leadership Team (ELT) decided to move forward to include the additional accreditation of 'We Invest in Wellbeing' Award with the reaccreditation process for 2024-25.

Pulse Surveys were issued throughout 2023-24, to measure employee engagement and provide staff an opportunity to suggest improvements to the workplace environment. Each survey focused on the areas below:

- Recognition & Appreciation
- Talent Management, Training, Development & Progression
- How connected staff feel to the team and organisation
- HSC Values

Across each Survey, engagement largely increased with a notable rise in people reporting they would recommend BSO as a great place to work and people feeling appreciated for the work they do which is a great reflection of BSO commitment to our People.

Pulse Survey	Pulse 1 – January 2023	Pulse 2 – April 2023	Pulse 3 – August 2023	Pulse 4 – February 2024
Overall Engagement Score	3.74	3.79	3.93	3.81

## Pensions

During 2023-24, the Pensions service introduced a new member and pensioner self-service portal with easy access through all HSC devices. This service allowed for staff to request information around their pension and allowed for greater control. There were over 30,000 people who registered to utilise the service during this year.

## Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement Directorate (SP&CE)

SP&CE undertook a review in 2023-24 around the delivery of Customer Satisfaction Surveys. This key measure is used to evaluate performance and satisfaction around service delivery. A new process was developed to create five core questions and service areas were encouraged to develop a further five nuanced questions for each of their areas. This would allow for benchmarking across the organisation around customer satisfaction rates.

During 2023-24, SP&CE facilitated the development of the new Corporate Business plan with new vision of **‘Making delivery of health and social care possible’**

# BSO Vision and Values

## Our Vision:

"BSO – making delivery of health and social care possible"

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (HSC)  
VALUES**

The HSC values are central to everything we do and are aligned to our Corporate Objectives listed below which ensure we deliver against our BSO vision:

- Working Together
- Excellence
- Openness & Honesty
- Compassion



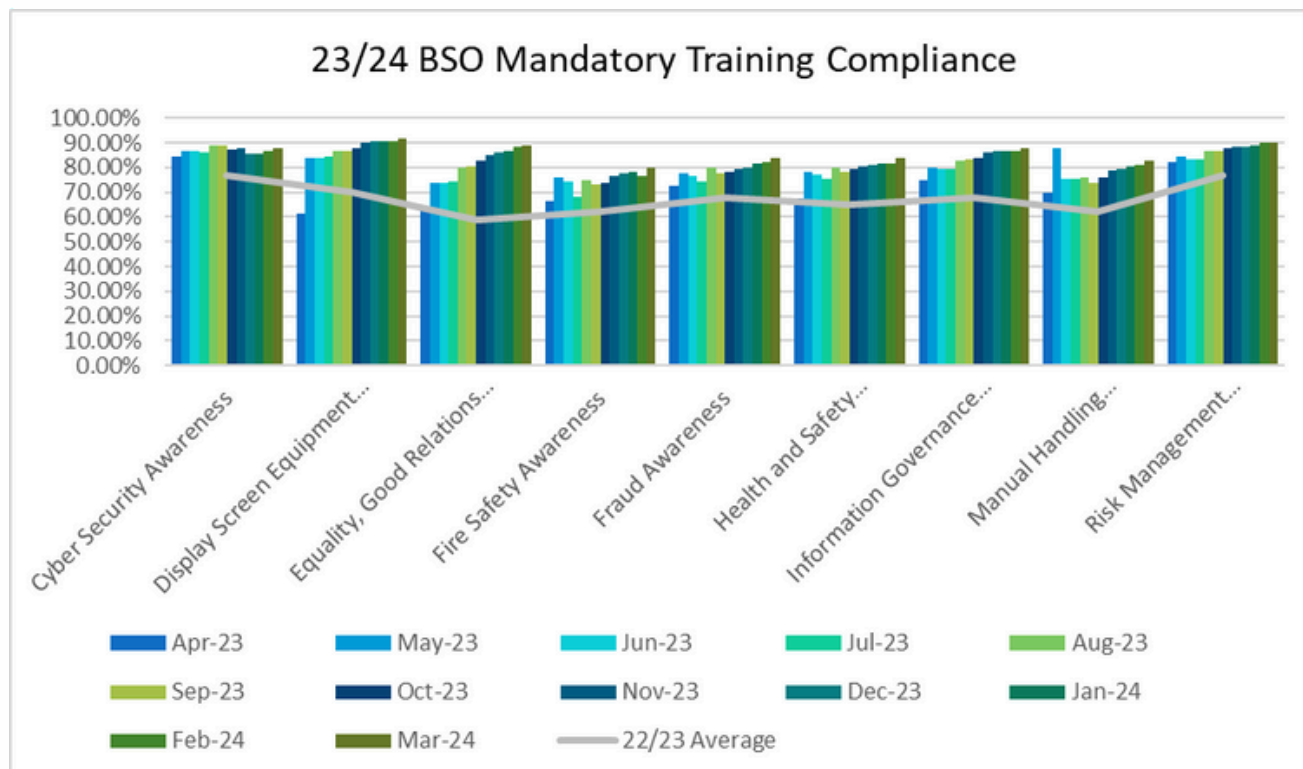
SP&CE also developed the Integrated Governance and Assurance Framework. This Integrated Governance and Assurance Framework sets out the BSO Board's arrangements for Integrated Governance, organisational structure and accountability arrangements. It is anticipated that the document will be finalised and rolled out during 2024-25.

The corporate communications team continue to implement new Google Analytics reports across BSO Service areas and have enhanced the ability to learn about how BSO communicate with all its audiences using new web and social media software that provides a holistic overviews of marketing communications and engagement activity.

## People and Place

The organisational management and workforce information team strengthened governance around the workforce through the introduction of Power BI leavers dashboard and the use of SharePoint to drive the oversight of core roles on HRPTS, payroll outliers, staff in post reports and vacancy reports. This together with the introduction of monthly ELT workforce reports has improved the governance in BSO.

The Learning and Development Team continued to report on mandatory compliance rates on a monthly basis. Since the ability to report accurately and the implementation of LearnHSCNI, all mandatory courses have seen a substantial increase in compliance compared to 2022-23.



## Recruitment Shared Services Centre (RSSC)

RSSC have developed and enhanced manager visibility through the development and use of PowerBI dashboard reporting mechanisms. This quality and service improvement has further enhanced and supported customer reporting functionality.

## Family Practitioner Services (FPS)

FPS accredited official statistics began the process of transition to an automated release using an 'Reproducible Analytical Pipeline' (RAP) methodology which is best practice and enhances the quality of the outputs.

The Honest Broker Service worked with a wide range of stakeholders (including commissioners and data providers) to review the Honest Broker Service Governance Board Terms of Reference. The Governance Board continues to be re-branded as the new HSC Data Access Committee with a refined scope and scrutiny process for approving access to HSC data for research.

## Office for Research Ethics Committees (OREC)

During 2023-24, OREC held two training and development days for volunteers who sit on the two Research and Ethics Committees. One of these events focused on developing and enhancing leadership skills enabling volunteers to become part of the NHS/HSC Charing team.

In 2023-24, OREC reviewed 128 new research proposals and 179 amendments to existing research proposals were reviewed. Any researcher wanting to conduct research must obtain a number of different approvals prior to the start of their project. OREC have begun working more closely with HSC Research and Development (R&D) departments alongside clinical governance to develop a more streamlined and joined up governance process around patient research.

### **Summary**

Measuring improvements through the use of new processes and strong governance, as well as benchmarking across areas of best practice were employed by BSO. Transitioning new approaches based on ongoing feedback from our customers showcases our ongoing commitment to delivering strong cost-effective and high-quality services.

## 5.0 Raising the Standard

The Quality 2020 aim: **We will establish a framework of clear evidence-based standards and best practice guidance. We will establish dynamic partnerships between service users, commissioners and providers to develop, monitor and review.**

The Quality 2020 Strategy has emphasised the importance of the voice of the service user. Their contribution to policy and procedures is essential to build a service user-based healthcare system.

BSO continues to engage with customers and service users to identify any new areas for improvement or development, and plan accordingly. Looking at models of best practice and industry standards BSO strive to be forward thinking having customers and HSC at the forefront of all developments and this supports the strong BSO Frameworks that are in place to ensure good governance procedures are in place and we provide assurance and accountability to our customers.

This section within the report looks at new collaborative processes that have created new policies and procedures around best practice.

### Finance

The first-year implementation of the BSO Review was the key driver in the restructure of the Finance Directorate. The new Finance Directorate now includes: Finance, Payroll, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Pensions and Internal Audit.

This also brought opportunity for the Finance Directorate to play a key contributory role in many of the large programmes delivered through BSO. Finance provided key support and engagement around encompass, equip, financial systems upgrade, pension services delivery redesign and support around other key digital service initiatives.

### Legal Services (DLS)

A commissioned Strategic review was conducted in 2021, by associates from the Leadership Centre. They identified a number of recommendations for Legal Services to implement and transform its services provision. These included:

- Ensuring its funding model and resources are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Legal Service and its clients.
- The development and implementation of a workforce strategy, to ensure Legal Services has the required staff to meet the needs of both Legal Services and its clients.
- Adopting the appropriate modern systems, processes and tools to enable it to meet clients' requirements for legal services.

## Equality Unit

Equality Unit facilitated and engaged with numerous customer organisations to develop new Equality and Disability Action Plans for 2023-28. They also co-ordinated and conducted a public consultation in partnership with colleagues and client organisations. They then used this information to assess and carefully consider the outcomes and outworkings, which in turn were used to further develop and inform their work. This collaborative engagement with stakeholders was key to delivering quality service and influencing policy development and sustaining excellence.

## Family Practitioner Services (FPS)

The Honest Broker Service, which facilitates access to HSC data for accredited research and internal service improvement initiatives, revamped and updated its website. Improvements included a video tutorial to improve transparency around how patient data is used and accessed.

## Procurement and Logistic Services (PaLS)

During 2023-24, PaLS achieved successful certification of ISO9001 / CECOPS / STS. PaLS also introduced newly trained Internal Auditors across functions and sites to support the culture and quality of service delivered within each team.

PaLS ensured regular performance review meetings via Trust Procurement Boards were held with stakeholders to provide ongoing assurance of continued high-quality service provision.

## Digital Directorate

BSO are currently delivering against a five year Digital Vision that aims to improve the services we deliver to our customers by providing our staff with the appropriate tools they need to work more quickly and efficiently, while also improving the governance of the organisation by providing managers and leaders improved business information to inform evidence based decision making. The work will continue to reside standards in the service provided.

A Digital Oversight Group has been established that prioritises investment on BSO led projects such as:

- Artemis Contract Management software
- oneAdvanced Risk Management software
- Digital Literacy training courses
- Payroll CRM
- Recruitment PowerBI Dashboards
- BSO ITS Digital Partner



- Recruitment PowerBI Dashboards
- BSO ITS Digital Partner

### Office for Research Ethics Committees (OREC)

OREC also held their Annual Conference in April 2024. The main points of discussion were around ethical reviews and legislation, with importance placed on research involving adults lacking capacity and studies involving the use of human tissue.

OREC also introduced workshops for researchers, outlining key issues that the Research and Ethics Committees (RECs) consider when reviewing a research proposal, whilst highlighting common mistakes made in new applications. These workshops aimed to improve the quality of new research applications, thereby reducing the burden on our REC volunteers and streamlining the review process.



### People and Place Directorate

BSO continued its Pilot Hybrid Working Scheme for a further 12 months. Following Covid and reviewing relevant statistics within BSO it found this model of working had a number of key benefits. These included improved staff engagement levels, better reported work life balance, improved productivity of staff and better employment offer to potential employees. An evaluation process was undertaken which considered staff experience of hybrid working, manager experience of it alongside external benchmarking, this continues to be monitored and will be reviewed annually.

## Corporate Services

BSO Estates team continued implementing the new BSO Asset Management Strategy across BSO and some of the key areas being focused on are:

- Adoption of flexible / hybrid working arrangements
- Maximising the number of workstations which can be provided in any location
- Maximising the use of the larger buildings currently occupied by BSO

During 2023-24, the Estates team commenced and managed the refurbishment projects in BSO Headquarters and BSO Boucher Crescent and these plans have been designed to make the office workspace modern and fit for purpose for our BSO staff. Some works have been completed in this financial year and have delivered exceptional value for money.

## Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE)

The corporate communications team also implemented a new booking process around delivery of work from best practice models across other HSC communication teams to support staff with their workload. This will also help the team manage capacity and expectations around delivery of work within the organisation.

## Clinical Education Centre (CEC)



CEC senior staff were actively engaged in the Allied Health Awards (AHA) in 2023. By judging and presenting the service improvement award at the celebration event in October 2023. CEC staff also judged and presented the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Nurse of the Year and Team Manager award at the RCN Nurse of the Year event in June 2023.

## **Accounts Receivable (Shared Services)**

Accounts Receivable continued to be a key contributor to the regional working groups such as equip and FPL Data Archiving during 2023-24. We represented our service and ensured our requirements were raised, discussed and considered in conjunction with others. This collaborative working ensures we develop and maintain a high-quality service delivery.

### **Summary**

BSO continue to develop and update Frameworks based on best practice and evidence of benchmarking such as with PaLS ISO accreditation. BSO understand the importance of continued collaboration with our customer organisations as evidenced with OREC and Communications teams. Improvements continue as new models of working are developed by enhancing and incorporating quality and innovation.

## 6.0 Integrating the Care

The Quality 2020 aim: **We will develop integrated pathways of care for individuals. We will make better use of multi-disciplinary team working and shared opportunities for learning and development in the HSC and with external providers.**

BSO continue to look towards models of best practice in training and development of its staff. Using only the most accredited and high performing of providers, to deliver positive outcomes for our service users and customers organisation. This section of the report looks at some of the key ways we collaborate and work with others to deliver safe and strong service delivery.

### Clinical Education Centre (CEC)



During 2023-24, the Clinical Education Centre (CEC) developed a number of eLearning programmes in response to an identified regional need in relation to swallowing. In collaboration with the Public Health Agency, CEC developed a number of programmes to support the Swallow Aware Campaign.

They also worked in collaboration with the Toward Zero Suicide Collaborative, which was led by the DoH. An important regional education resource in mental health care was developed out of this collaboration. The SHARE guidelines and supporting eLearning package for mental health were subsequently launched in December 2023.

CEC continued to deliver highly accredited training across the HSC. During 2023-24, 41% of the programmes offered by CEC were open to a multi-professional audience. This continues to grow and facilitates cross-disciplinary learning together with clinicians from different professional backgrounds learning together. This supports innovation and best practice especially in relation to common aspects of particular treatment approaches and interventions.

### Family Practitioner Service (FPS)

During 2023-24, the General Medical Service (GMS) were a core participant in the HSC resettlement group, ensuring the HSC was represented at all levels of the refugee resettlement scheme with particular reference to Department for Communities (DFC) (reception and resettlement group), Home Office and Community and Voluntary partners. FPS continued to work closely with the DoH and HSC Trusts in sharing learning and outcomes and developing new digital services, to enhance and facilitate entitlement checking.

## Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE)

The SP&CE Complaints and Whistleblowing Manager continued to review and disseminate all information around complaints received during 2023-24. During this time 56 complaints were received.



There has been a slight decrease in the number of complaints received with 56 during 2023-24 and 64 received during 2022-23.

BSO continue to welcome complaints so that lessons can be learned around how we can continue to improve our services being delivered. All complaints are discussed with staff and implementing lessons learned around specific complaints helps all service areas mitigate future complaints around these particular issues.

## Counter Fraud and Probity Services (CFPS)

CFPS continued to hold regional lesson learned groups where fraud liaison officers from HSC Hospital Trusts could meet with and discuss issues arising from CFS casework, emerging risks and trends. These meeting groups were developed to mitigate risks identified across the jurisdiction. CFS also advises all client organisations if issues or risk discussed at this group are of wider application.

## Business Services Team (BST)

During 2023-24, the Business Services Team (BST) completed a full programme of works, this required working across multiple sections and areas of BSO service areas to ensure the full development and roll out of the service which encompassed all components of the Finance Procurement and Logistics upgrade to eFinancials version 6.

## Digital

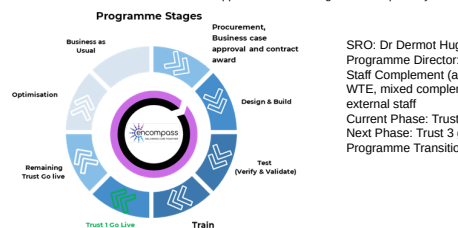
BSO Digital has continued to deliver against a large and complex portfolio of works, with major “Go Live” in all the following programmes during 2023-24:

- NIPACS+
- CoreLIMS
- NIPIMS
- NIDIS
- encompass
- Technical Enablement

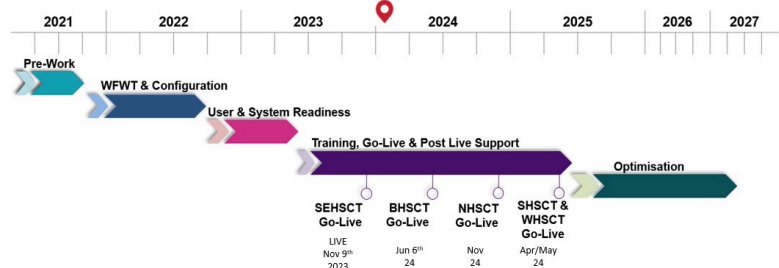
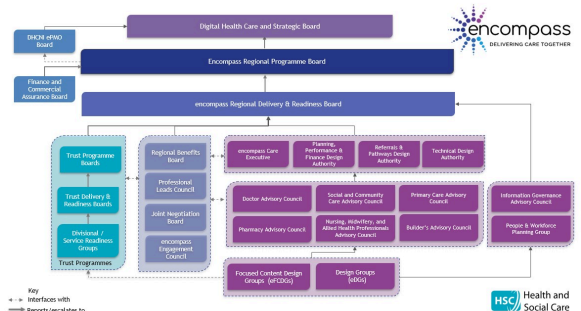
These programmes are transformative and are providing customers with the tools to alter and develop how they work and draw together a range of expertise from across all disciplines of the HSC.

## Digital Portfolio Encompass

**Overview**  
encompass is a regional programme delivered through BSO on behalf of DHCNI and is the flagship programme within the SRO. The programme aims to provide a single Electronic Health Care Record for all citizens within Northern Ireland, replacing legacy ICT systems and processes within all Trusts, with a “once for Northern Ireland” standardised approach across a range of clinical pathways within both the Acute and the Community.



SRO: Dr Dermot Hughes  
Programme Director: Raied Abdul Karim  
Staff Complement (at peak incl. backlog): 309  
WTE, mixed complement of internal and external staff  
Current Phase: Trust 2 go live  
Next Phase: Trust 3 go live  
Programme Transition to BAU Date: 2027



Summer Review 2024

## 6.1 Accreditations and Recognitions

### Finance

Many of the service areas that now sit within the newly constructed Finance Directorate have been busy enhancing and developing quality services and have received multiple accreditations during 2023-24.



Accounts Payable achieved the Accounts Payable Association (APA) Q Accreditation during quarter 3 of 2023-24, obtaining a Payment Centre of Excellence Accreditation status. Further engagement with APA has also brought forward the Assess Customise Train (ACT) staff accreditation programme, this was launched during Quarter 4 of 2023-24. This new training accreditation has been added to all new staff training packages, which will further enhance the knowledge of staff to deliver a strong quality service. This accreditation showcases the quality and excellence of Accounts payable services being provided to all BSO customers.

Accounts Receivable also now hold the Centre of Excellence in Credit Management Award and achieved Quality Accreditation (CICMQ) which was awarded to them in March 2024, this demonstrates their ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, best practice, excellence and quality.

During 2023-24, an External Quality Assessment (EQA) (professionally required every 5 years) concluded that BSO Internal Audit Unit generally conforms (which is the highest rating) to the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) performed the EQA of BSO Internal Audit during February and March of 2024. They concluded that:

“It is our opinion that the overall conclusion of BSO Internal Audit Unit’s self-assessment is correct”.

The report stated:

“It is clear from stakeholder interviews and survey results that BSO Internal Audit Unit is well regarded with stakeholders describing the Unit as ‘highly professional’ and providing an ‘excellent service’”.

## Digital



Programme Manager for Blood Producing and Tracking (BPAT) within the Digital Directorate, Paddy Breen won an outstanding Leadership Award at the Leadership Awards which were held at Stormont Hotel Belfast in October 2023. This was another achievement outlining the excellence of quality being provided for the HSC.



## Legal Services (DLS)

Legal continue to undertake numerous initiatives highlighting and promoting the continuous development of staff. They achieve this through monthly lunch & learn schedules which support staff CPD requirements for legal professionals. They also provide full access to a new inhouse SharePoint library with enhanced training for shared learning regarding Mental Health Law.

One apprenticeship was also completed and Legal now have a fully qualified solicitor in place. For the first time, Legal have also introduced three law students to the team to complete to a one-year placement. This will support their learning and development and will give the students a broad understanding of working within a large and busy public sector health organisation.

## People and Place Directorate

During 2023—24 People and Place Human Resources and ITS support team staff were shortlisted in the 'Best Resourcing and Talent Strategy' category at the 2023 CIPD Awards.



## Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE)



During March 2023, Darren Sessions Corporate Services Complaints and Whistleblowing Manager was awarded certification from the Business Continuity Institute (BCI). This certification showcases the strong understanding and principles of Business Continuity as defined by the BCIs Good Practice guidelines and is globally recognised as the go to publication for good practice.

### Summary

BSO continues to develop strong leaders within their field of expertise, promoting shared learning throughout teams and across the organisation.

## 7.0 Conclusion

The 11th BSO Annual Quality Report has been produced in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department of Health. The format of the report follows the five Strategic Goals of the Quality 2020 Strategy. These Strategic Goals are:

- Transforming the Culture
- Strengthening the Workforce
- Measuring the Improvement
- Raising the Standards
- Integrating the Care

Working in partnership with our customers, BSO continues to play a pivotal role in the achievement of these goals. This report documents some of the valuable contributions made by BSO in making the delivery of health and social care possible.

Looking ahead to 2024-25, BSO have developed 3 new Corporate Objectives. These were designed to innovate, support and build further strategic partnerships with our people and customers.

BSO will continue to innovate and design new approaches to delivering a strong value adding health care. Investing in our staff, whilst enhancing collaborative approaches and customer excellence. Integrating and sharing best practice and learning across our organisation and with our customers.