

Dear Stakeholder,

HEART SURGERY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND CHILDREN: PUBLIC CONSULTATION

On 25 September 2012 the Health Minister, Edwin Poots, announced the commencement of a public consultation on the future commissioning of paediatric cardiac surgery and interventional cardiology for the population of Northern Ireland. This letter outlines the consultation process and how you can make your views known.

Consultation Process

A consultation document has been prepared by a Working Group and approved by the Minister. The Working Group included representatives from the HSC Board, Public Health Agency, Trusts, Patient Client Council, parents and parent groups.

A copy of the consultation document is enclosed; additional copies are available at www.hscboard.hscni.net/consult/PCCS_Consultation

The consultation process will last for a 12-week period ending **Friday, 21 December 2012**. The consultation process offers an opportunity for all stakeholders to consider and comment on: the proposed service specification for the commissioning of paediatric cardiac surgery and interventional cardiology; the proposed criteria against which service model options will be assessed; and potential service model options, taking account of the potential implications of each of the options.

The HSC Board will be arranging a series of public meetings during the consultation period across Northern Ireland. These meetings will be advertised via websites, press releases and classified advertising in advance.

I would ask that you use your available networks of communication to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible are informed about the consultation.

The Board is committed to making information as accessible as possible and to promoting meaningful engagement with those who use the services we commission. The consultation document can be made available on request and where reasonably practicable in an alternative format e.g. braille, audio formats, large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

How to respond

Comments are invited on the consultation questions listed in section 6 of the consultation document. A separate response template is available:

- From www.hscboard.hscni.net/consult/PCCS_Consultation
- By e-mailing pccsconsultation@hscni.net;
- By phoning 02890 553904 – *for text relay prefix with 18001*

Responses should be sent to:

E-mail: pccsconsultation@hscni.net
Written: Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services Consultation
Health and Social Care Board
12-22 Linenhall St
Belfast, BT2 8BS

Responses can also be made online at the following web address
www3.hscni.net/PCCS/questionnaire.html

The consultation process will close at **5pm on Friday, 21 December 2012**.
All responses must be received by this date.

Before you submit your response, please read Annex A in the consultation document regarding the confidentiality of responses to public consultation exercises in the context of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

What happens after the consultation?

Following the end of the consultation period, the Working Group will develop a post-consultation document, incorporating an analysis of responses and recommendations on the future delivery of services for the population of Northern Ireland. The Minister will consider this document before making a decision on the future model for the provision of paediatric cardiac surgery and interventional cardiology for the population of Northern Ireland in early 2013.

I look forward to your views on this very important service for the children of Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dean Sull". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

DEAN SULLIVAN
Director of Commissioning and Chair of PCCS Working Group