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Dear Consultee

Public Consultation for the eHealth and Care strategy for Northern Ireland.

I am delighted to announce the launch of the public consultation for the eHealth and Care Strategy and the accompanying equality impact assessment.

The eHealth and Care strategy for Northern Ireland was developed with the help of a large number of stakeholders from inside and outside health and social care and it sets out the future of eHealth and Care in Northern Ireland over the next 5 years. The strategy has been designed to be easy to use and easy to read and has received plain English accreditation, unique among eHealth strategies in the UK.

Northern Ireland has already delivered significant improvements in eHealth over the last 5 years, making a difference for everyone, including patients, clients and carers. The strategy explains what has been delivered and how this has helped, including the development and delivery of an electronic care record across Northern Ireland, electronic X-ray systems and lots of other improvements.

eHealth will play a significant role in supporting the changes to services explained in “Transforming Your Care”, “Quality 2020” and “Making Life Better”. eHealth technology can operate at all levels across the HSC in Northern Ireland, supporting the HSC to improve services for everyone and making services more effective and efficient.

This strategy sets out how eHealth technology should change how the HSC works, with better communication, better information and better services to improve care and wellbeing. As the HSC introduces eHealth technology and new ways of working this will provide opportunities for local companies, investors and universities to grow a stronger eHealth sector and economic growth for Northern Ireland.

The eHealth and Care strategy will:

1. Support people by providing a range of eHealth services including the provision of better information, access to records, on-line appointment booking and remote care.
2. Share more information between health and care services to help front line professionals make safer, faster decisions.
3. Develop our use of information to tailor care and treatment around the needs of individuals and improve our planning processes.
4. Support service change and improvement. This includes building care professional leadership and relationships to support cultural and professional change for eHealth, helping patients, clients and carers influence the future of eHealth as well as delivering the technology.
5. Foster innovation with the education sector, community and voluntary organisations, other government departments and industry in order to improve health and well-being and to contribute to the potential for economic growth in Northern Ireland.
6. Maintain and improve what we have – making sure that the eHealth systems which patients rely on are maintained and ready for use when needed.

The eHealth and Care strategy provides more detail in each of these areas.

The public consultation process seeks your views on the proposals in the strategy and equality impact assessment. These can be found on the HSCB website at www.hscboard.hscni.net/consult/index.html along with the feedback form and other supplementary information. You can also use the online feedback form at www.surveymonkey.com/S/75Y5VLB You can send us your answers or comments by post or email at:

Post

eHealth and Care Strategy consultation

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A number of public meetings will be advertised in the press across Northern Ireland to provide a further opportunity to contribute to the consultation.

Yours sincerely



Seán Donaghy

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