

The Roles and Tasks of Social Workers in Northern Ireland in the 21st Century

Terms of Reference

The Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has therefore specified the following terms of reference for the development of a paper setting out a statement of the role, tasks and key principles of social work in the Northern Ireland context differentiating between:

- (a) those roles and tasks reserved only for social workers within and/or across work contexts
- (b) those roles and tasks for which social work is the professional discipline of choice within an integrated health and social care structure and/or other contexts
- (c) other core roles that support the purpose, values and principles of social work, but which may also be carried out by other staff and/or disciplines in the course of their work

A consultation paper should be developed within 3 months of the commission being awarded and ready for issue within 4 months. The consultation paper should be based on:

- the range of contexts in which social work is practised
- the range of statutory powers as defined in Northern Ireland legislation
- an analysis of work carried out elsewhere in the UK
- an analysis of other comparable international social work models
- current and emerging policies for children, families, adults, older people and carers impacting on social work in Northern Ireland

The consultation period will be carried out over a 3 month period.

A draft final report will be produced within 3 months of the end of the consultation period.

A final report will be ready for publication within 12 months of the commission being awarded.

Project Structure

It is envisaged that the Project will be supported with the following structure:

Project Reference Group
Project Steering Group
Core Project Team
Other Project Resources

Project Reference Group

This will be high level strategic group which will provide advice and guidance on the project. It will enable a range of constituencies to bring their particular perspective to the project and will quality assure its products. It will also assist in consulting with relevant constituencies.

Membership will comprise representation from:

RQIA

Trust Chairs
Trust Chief Executives
Trust Directors of Social Care
Voluntary Sector
Private Sector representation
NIPSA
BASW
UNISON
Queens University Belfast
University of Ulster
Service User
Probation
Criminal Justice
Education Welfare
PSNI
Nursing Profession
Community Development
NISCC Council Member
Mr Dominic Burke Regional Director of Social Services
Dr Jeremy Harbison NISCC (Chairing)

Steering Group

This will provide detailed oversight and direction to the Project Group and take responsibility for ensuring that the Terms of Reference are met within the agreed timescales.

Membership will comprise:

Brendan Johnson	Chief Executive, NISCC (Chair)
Patricia Higgins	Director of Registration, NISCC
Lorraine Simmons	Director of Education and Training, NISCC
Theresa Nixon	Director of Operations, RQIA
Christine Smyth	Office of Social Services (observer)
Representative	Director of Social Services
Representative	Probation Service
Representative	Voluntary Sector
Don Brand	SCIE

Core Project Team

This will involve:

Chief Executive, NISCC
Director of Education and Training
Director of Registration
Don Brand
Consultancy:

1. to prepare an overview of current messages from work in England, Scotland and other countries as appropriate
2. to prepare an overview of current policies which impact on the roles, tasks and functions of social workers in Northern Ireland

3. to assist with the preparation of consultation material and prepare an analysis of responses from consultation

Other expertise as appropriate

Broader Project Resource

NISCC Staff and Council Members

NISCC staff and Council Members will have much to contribute to this project from their specific areas of expertise and responsibility. Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that the organisation is kept fully engaged on progress of the project and can contribute effectively as appropriate.

Critical Readers

It will also be important to engage a number of critical readers to quality assure the various products of the project as they are developed.

Timescales

Short term

Short term tasks include:

- Agreeing and signing off Terms of Reference
- Disseminating information on the Project to the Sector
- Establishment and recruitment of Reference Group, Steering Group, Core team and engagement with Broader Project Resources
- Recruitment of NI Consultant
- Identification, collation and analysis of messages from key resource materials
- Project Initiation and Design

Longer term

This will require further detailed work as part of the Project Initiation Process. However at high level, the broad outline of the Project should be taken forward as follows:

Feb – March	Project initiation and development of initial scoping papers
April – May	Development of Consultation paper
May – July	Consultation period/consultation events
Aug – Sep	Collation and analysis of responses
Oct	Development of 1 st Draft of Report
Nov	Sign off final Draft of Report