



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Máinnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

REFRESHED DELIVERING CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

**Ensuring that effective workforce and workload
planning is embedded in practice for Nursing
and Midwifery**

**Equality Screening, Disability Duties and Human
Rights Assessment**

March 2026

Part 1 – Policy scoping

Part 2 – Screening questions

Part 3 – Screening decision

Part 4 – Monitoring

Part 5 – Disability Duties

Part 6 – Human Rights

Part 7 – Approval and Authorisation

Part 1. Policy scoping

1.1 Information about the policy

Name of the policy:

REFRESHED DELIVERING CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revision of extant policy, based on updated evidence.

In autumn 2023, the Delivering Care Task and Finish Group was formed to take forward a refresh of the framework with key areas of focus. The aim of refreshing the Delivering Care Policy Framework is to ensure that nursing and midwifery workforce and workload planning in Northern Ireland remains robust, evidence-based, and responsive to the evolving needs of the population and the HSC system.

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

This refreshed framework aims to provide a clear and regionally consistent approach to determining safe and effective staffing levels and effective skill mix across all fields of nursing and midwifery. It supports the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care now and into the future, whilst establishing clear lines of accountability and responsibility for workforce and workload planning, taking cognisance of future safe staffing legislation. It will support future workforce projections.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

This refreshed framework will provide a clear and regionally consistent approach to the provision of nursing and midwifery services to all members of society who need to avail of them. All Section 75 groups will benefit.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department of Health's Chief Nursing Officer commissioned the review of the extant policy, and it was completed using the co-production approach including a range of relevant stakeholders as listed in the updated document.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department of Health owns the policy. It will be implemented by the 5 regional HSC Trusts.

1.3 Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

Staff



Service users



Other public sector organisations



Voluntary/community/trade unions



Other, please specify

- Population of Northern Ireland
- Health and Social Care service users
- Government departments and policy officials
- Other Public Sector organisations and Arms-Length Bodies
- Local government
- Voluntary and Community organisations

1.4 Other policies with a bearing on this policy:

Policy	Owner(s) of the policy
Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy 2026	Department of Health

1.5 Available evidence

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact on individuals based on individual’s religious beliefs.
Political Opinion	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact by political opinion.
Racial Group	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact by racial group.
Age	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact by age. This means its actions, priorities, and outcomes are tailored to benefit people at every stage of life, from pregnancy, birth, early childhood through to older age.
Marital Status	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact by marital status.

Sexual Orientation	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact by sexual orientation.
Men & Women generally	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact on men and women generally.
Disability	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact on those with or without a disability.
Dependants	There is no evidence available to indicate that the updated policy framework will have a differential impact on those with or without dependents

1.6 Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Political Opinion	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Racial Group	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Age	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Marital Status	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Sexual Orientation	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Men & Women generally	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Disability	No evidence of specific need has been identified.
Dependants	No evidence of specific need has been identified.

Part 2. Screening questions

2.1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none

2.1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)		Level of Impact
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Minor/major/none
Religious belief	None Expected	None
Political opinion	None Expected	None
Racial Group	All HSCT recruitment and retention policies and programmes promote equality of opportunity for people from minority ethnic backgrounds.	Minor (positive)
Age	None Expected	None
Marital status	None Expected	None
Sexual orientation	None Expected	None
Gender (Men and women generally)	None Expected	None
Disability	None Expected	None
Dependants	None Expected	None

2.2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? Yes/ No

Section 75 Category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone in relation to their religious belief.
Political opinion		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone in relation to their political opinion.
Racial group	Yes, the policy will continue to promote equality of opportunity for people of different racial backgrounds.	
Age		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone in relation to their political opinion.
Marital status		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone in relation to their marital status.
Sexual orientation		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone in relation to their sexual orientation.
Men and women generally		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity

		for men and women generally.
Disability		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone with or without a disability.
Dependants		No, this updated policy framework will not provide better equality of opportunity for anyone with or without dependents.

2.3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact Minor/major/none
Religious belief	None	None
Political opinion	None	None
Racial group	Reinforcing the HSCTs policies around equal opportunities in recruitment, employment and retention	Minor

2.4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide details
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None.
Racial group	Reinforcing the HSCTs policies around equal opportunities in recruitment, employment and retention	

2.5 Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. **Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?**

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

As detailed above people with multiple identities will benefit in the same way as those across the specific S75 groups i.e. mainly driven by improved equality of opportunity in recruitment, employment and retention within the HSC.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

As detailed above people with multiple identities will benefit in the same way as those across the specific S75 groups i.e. mainly driven by improved equality of opportunity in recruitment, employment and retention within the HSC.

2.6 Was the original policy / decision changed in any way to address any adverse impacts identified either through the screening process or from consultation feedback. If so please provide details.

No.

Part 3. Screening decision

3.1 Would you summarise the impact of the policy as;

No Impact



Minor Impact

Major Impact?

3.2 Do you consider that this policy/ decision needs to be subjected to a full equality impact assessment (EQIA)?

No.

3.3 Please explain your reason.

The refresh of Delivery Care policy framework is targeted at ensuring that effective workforce and workload planning is embedded in practice for Nursing and Midwifery. This will have benefits for all, regardless of section 75 category.

3.4 Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations? If so, give the reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

No. The policy is aimed at ensuring best practice based on current best evidence.

3.5 Timetabling and prioritising

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

Not Applicable

Part 4. Monitoring

Monitoring is an important part of policy development and implementation. Through monitoring it is possible to assess the impacts of the policy / decision both beneficial and adverse.

4.1 Please detail how you will monitor the effect of the policy / decision?

The effectiveness of the refreshed Delivering Care policy framework will be monitored by the Department, in partnership with key stakeholders who have an interest in this policy. The measure will also be subject to evaluation to ensure it achieves its intended outcomes. In addition to the core measure, a range of HSC measurement systems will be used to determine effectiveness.

4.2 What data will you collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy / decision?

DoH has access to a range of information from surveys, hospital data, service data, etc., and it is vital that this information is collated, analysed, and made available in a transparent and usable format. In addition, monitoring information collected will be reviewed to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and is required – data should not be collected unless it serves a purpose for strategic/policy development or performance management to focus on the information that provides the greatest insight.

Please note: - For the purposes of the annual progress report to the Equality Commission you may later be asked about the monitoring you have done in relation to this policy and whether that has identified any Equality issues.

Part 5. Disability Duties

5.1 Does the policy/decision in any way promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and/or encourage their participation in public life?

No.

5.2 Is there an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people or encourage their participation in public life by making changes to the policy/decision or introducing additional measures?

No.

Part 6. Human Rights

6.1 Does the policy / decision affects anyone's Human Rights?

Details of the likely policy impacts on Article 2 – Right to life:

ARTICLE	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NEUTRAL IMPACT
Article 2 – Right to life			X
Article 3 – Right to freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment			X
Article 4 – Right to freedom from slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour			X
Article 5 – Right to liberty & security of person			X
Article 6 – Right to a fair & public trial within a reasonable time			X
Article 7 – Right to freedom from retrospective criminal law & no punishment without law.			X
Article 8 – Right to respect for private & family life, home and correspondence			X
Article 9 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience & religion			X
Article 10 – Right to freedom of			X

expression			
Article 11 – Right to freedom of assembly & association			X
Article 12 – Right to marry & found a family			X
Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of the convention rights			X
1st protocol Article 1 – Right to a peaceful enjoyment of possessions & protection of property			X
1st protocol Article 2 – Right of access to education			X

6.2 If you have identified a likely negative impact who is affected and how?

At this stage we would recommend that you consult with your line manager to determine whether to seek legal advice and to refer to Human Rights Guidance to consider:

- whether there is a law which allows you to interfere with or restrict rights*
- whether this interference or restriction is necessary and proportionate*
- what action would be required to reduce the level of interference or restriction in order to comply with the Human Rights Act (1998).*

N/A

6.3 Outline any actions which could be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or to ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy/decision.

N/A

Part 7 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
---------------------	---------------------------	-------------

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Tim Johnston	Grade 7	19/03/2026
Approved by:		
Andrew Webb	Grade 6	23/3/2026
Copied to EHRU:		

The Screening Template is 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy (at least Grade 7), made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.