

Annex 2 – Annual Engagement Plan

The following Engagement Plan outlines the key areas of engagement between Department and RQIA.

Engagement Plan 2026/2027

Policy Development and Delivery Add details of the planned engagement between the RQIA and the DoH in relation to development and monitoring of existing and new areas of policy.

Policy Area	Frequency/Timing	Lead DoH/RQIA Officials
Review of Regulation.	As and when required subject to approval of a bill team to take forward this work; & Departmental priorities	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
Full Cost Recovery Model (Fees and Frequency of Inspections).	engagement has already taken place during 25/26 and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
Mental Health Services: RQIA’s Responsibilities under the Mental Health	engagement has already taken place during 25/26	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel

Policy Development and Delivery
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Policy Area	Frequency/Timing	Lead DoH/RQIA Officials
Order 1986 and the Mental Capacity Act. Mental Health Services: Community.	and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID (When required) RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
Registration of Independent Medical Agencies.	engagement has already taken place during 25/26 and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
Registration of Independent Clinics; and RQIA's Role in the Oversight of HSC Trusts' Duty of Quality.	engagement has already taken place during 25/26 and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
<i>Fostering standards</i>	Engagement has already taken place during 25/26	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel

Policy Development and Delivery
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	and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	and Authority Members along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID (When required) RQIA Officials
<i>Use of Direct Payments to provide overnight accommodation/short breaks</i>	Engagement has already taken place during 25/26 and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID (when required) RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
Minimum Standards of Dental Care and Treatment	Engagement has already taken place during 25/26 and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	DoH Chief Dental Officer RQIA Director/Assistant Director of Independent Healthcare RQIA and the DoH will continue to take forward policy discussions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Authority Members and Chairs of its Business and Remuneration, Legislative and Policy, and Mental Health Committees along with relevant DoH Officials. DoH Policy Leads Sponsor EBM & QSID (if required) RQIA Directors & CE, Authority members and Committee chairs
<i>Scoping work and</i>	Meetings and	RQIA and the DoH will take forward

Policy Development and Delivery

Add details of the planned engagement between the RQIA and the DoH in relation to development and monitoring of existing and new areas of policy.

Policy Area	Frequency/Timing	Lead DoH/RQIA Officials
<i>Amendment to existing Regulation and Improvement Authority (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005</i>	engagement has already taken place during 25/26 and will continue as required. April 26 to Mar 27	policy discussions and relevant actions during 2026/2027 with appropriate personnel and Policy Leads in relation to considering and making amendments to the 2005 regs (within the scope approved by Minister) DoH Policy Leads Sponsor Branch, QSID, RQIA CE, RQIA appointed Expert drafter and RQIA L&P committee

Strategic Planning

Activity	Date	Lead Departmental / RQIA Official
RQIA Strategic Planning Workshops – encompassing strategic planning and risk identification. Informed by input on Departmental priorities/plans and risk areas	Sufficiently well in advance of the Business Year to inform development of the Business Plan for the year ahead. Feb/March to June	EBM & QSID Chair, Authority & CE
Engagement on the draft Management Plan and identification of areas of strategic interest to the DoH to inform further scheduled engagement during the year	Sufficiently well in advance of the Business Year to inform development of the Management Plan for the year ahead. Feb/March to June	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch, Policy Areas Chair, Authority & CE Head of Corporate Affairs
RQIA will share its Annual Management Plan for 2026/2027 with the Department, to be informed by input on Departmental priorities / plans and risk areas	February – March preceding next financial year beginning April	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch Policy Areas Chair, Authority & CE Head of Corporate Affairs
Approval of the RQIA	March to June	EBM QSID

Strategic Planning

Activity	Date	Lead Departmental / RQIA Official
Management Plan		
RQIA will report on progress made in the delivery of the Strategic / Management Plan’s aim and objectives via its quarterly Outcomes, Performance Activity Report.	All RQIA’s quarterly POARs are formally shared across all DOH Policy leads when received. The same process also applies to RQIA’s quarterly update reports to the DoH. Note that quarterly POARs and Update reports are only listed on two meetings’ agendas during the year.	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch Policy Leads Chair, Authority & CE & Directors, and Head of Corporate Affairs

Joint Working
Add details of any interchange opportunities, and/or joint programme/project delivery boards

Activity	Frequency/Timing	Lead DoH/RQIA Official

Authority Appointments
Add details of any engagement related to Public Appointment exercises

Activity	Date	Lead DoH/RQIA Official
During the year, RQIA will engage with the Department, via the Public Appointments Unit, in respect of any forthcoming Authority appointments, such as the need to appoint an Authority Chair and any other vacant Authority positions that become vacant	As scheduled by DoH PAU Delivery of these appointment competitions will be subject to PAU discussion and agreement with PAU regarding timetabling.	RQIA Chair, CE DoH Public Appointments Unit DoH Sponsor Branch

Chief Executive Recruitment

Add details of any engagement related to the recruitment of a Chief Executive (if anticipated during the year ahead). RQIA should engage with the DoH at an early stage in the event of the recruitment of a new Chief Executive. While recognising the role of the Authority as employer, the DoH will work closely with the RQIA in the recruitment and selection process in line with extant guidance.

Activity	Date	Lead DoH/RQIA Official
During the 2026/27 year, RQIA will engage with the Department in respect of the recruitment to the Chief Executive's position.	Expect to engage autumn 2026	RQIA Chair, CE DoH Sponsor Branch

Assurances

Add details of the timetable for submission of key assurance sources and any other assurance related activity

Action	Date	Lead DoH/RQIA Official
Chair Appraisal	Following the end of the Business year. After Authority Appraisals have been completed by the Chair and the annual Review of Authority Effectiveness has concluded	EBM Chair
DoH Attendance at ARAC	Attendance as observer Once per Year	ARAC Chair RQIA Head of Corporate affairs Head of Sponsor Branch
BSO HIA Assurance Statements	Mid-Year End Year	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch RQIA Authority, CE and Head of Corporate Affairs (BSO HIA)
Draft Governance Statement	Mid-Year End Year	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch RQIA CE and Head of Corporate Affairs
Annual Report and Accounts	Annually	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch Chair, Authority & CE & Directors, and

Assurances
Add details of the timetable for submission of key assurance sources and any other assurance related activity

Action	Date	Lead DoH/RQIA Official
		Head of Corporate Affairs
Report to those Charged with Governance	Annually	EBM QSID Sponsor Branch Chair, Authority & CE & Directors, and Head of Corporate Affairs All items listed in actions are included/reported on in Authority and ARAC papers sent to DoH during year as appropriate during the year.
Engagement on other planned NIAO reports		
Head of Internal Audit Annual report/Opinion	Mid-Year and End year	
Internal Audit Strategy and Plans	March to April	
Internal Audit External Quality Assessment	To be conducted at least once every five years	

Budget Management
Add details of the information and returns to be provided.

Item and Purpose	Date	Lead DoH/RQIA Official
Engagement on budget requirements and Forecast Expenditure for the Financial Year	Continual	Accounting Officer Finance Advisor Finance Policy, Monitoring, Planning and Accountable Leads including Counter Fraud Unit EBM QSID Sponsor Branch Chair, Authority & CE & Directors, and Head of Corporate Affairs
DoH approval of the annual budget	Annual	
Monthly Financial Management Returns	Monthly	
Monthly Cash Forecast	Monthly	
Monitoring Round Returns	Quarterly	
Provisional Outturn	Ongoing	
Final Outturn	End year	

Other**Tailor as required to reflect the specific requirements**

Item and Purpose	Submission Date	Lead DoH/RQIA Official
Accounting Officer - Fitness to Act as Accounting Officer	Annual within mid-year assurance statement	EBM QSID RQIA CE
Fraud Reporting	Immediate reporting of all frauds (proven or suspected including attempted fraud	RQIA CE Fraud Liaison Officer DoH will report frauds immediately to DoF and C&AG.
Fraud Reporting	Annual fraud return commissioned by DoF on fraud and theft suffered by RQIA.	Accounting Officer / Financial Advisor Fraud Liaison Officer
Media management protocols – independence of RQIA to engage with media/announcements of corporate and policy communications significant to RQIA - arrangements to share press releases where relevant – ensure no surprises.	As Required	Press Office RQIA Senior Communications Manager/Information Manager
Preparation of business cases – Department and RQIA to consider working together to share expertise where appropriate.	As Required	Chief Executive Directors Financial Advisor / BSO Finance EBM QSID Sponsor Branch
Whistleblowing cases/ Speaking Up/Raising Concerns.	As Required	Governance Unit RQIA Chair RQIA Speak Up Champion (Authority Member) Chief Executive Head of Corporate Affairs

Meetings Schedule 2026/2027

Meeting	Date	DoH/RQIA Attendees
Biannual Liaison Meeting (Formal)	15 April 2026	QSID and QRIB RQIA Chief Executive RQIA Directors, Head of Corporate Affairs, Head of Business Services
Stock-Take Meeting (Formal)	6 May 2026	Deputy Secretary, Healthcare Policy Group, QSID RQIA Chair RQIA Chief Executive
Ground Clearing: Governance (Formal Governance Process)	End Year (2025/2026) 20 May 2026	Deputy Secretary, Healthcare Policy Group, QSID, QRIB RQIA CEx, Directors, Head of Corporate Affairs, Head of Business Services
Accountability Meeting: Governance (Formal Governance Process)	End Year (2025/2026) 10 June 2026	Permanent Secretary (Only End Year) Deputy Secretary, Healthcare Policy Group QSID RQIA Chair RQIA Chief Executive
Biannual Liaison Meeting (Formal)	14 October 2026	As Above
Stock-Take Meeting (Formal)	21 October 2026	As Above
Ground Clearing: Governance (Formal Governance Process)	Mid-Year (2026/2027) 11 November 2026	As Above
Accountability Meeting: Governance (Formal Governance Process)	Mid-Year (2026/2027) 9 December 2026	As above Except Permanent Secretary (Permanent Secretary designates EBM as Chair for MY)