

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



DOH ALB Chairs

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 2556
Email: private.office@health-ni.gov.uk

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Dear *Colleagues,*

REBUILDING HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Following on from my commitment to update you all following the weekly meeting of the Management Board, please find below my update, following the Management Board meeting on Wednesday 18 November 2020, which considered a range of issues.

The Board received an update presentation on the implementation of the regional delivery of elective daycase procedures at the Day Procedures Centre (DPC), Lagan Valley Hospital.

Considerable progress has been made at the Day Procedure Centre at Lagan Valley Hospital. The DPC is currently providing much needed support to other Trusts in response to the downturn in elective services during this surge period, particularly for regional cancer diagnostic work. Urology, general surgery and ENT day procedure lists are already underway or are planned. So far, there has been positive feedback from staff and patients alike. In parallel, progress has continued in relation to the Cataracts and Veins prototypes.

The Board noted the extreme stresses throughout the system, as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 situation, however, considerable progress has been made to rebuild lists across all sites. The service delivery position across the HSC is dynamic and is related to staffing levels and the impact of rising numbers of Covid-19 patients.

The Board further noted the next steps which include pushing forward with the prototypes, supporting Trusts to deliver urgent and red flag cancer day procedures and engaging with a range of other surgical specialties to identify and prioritise procedure that are suitable for the DPC. The Board will continue to monitor the provision of elective services.

The Board also noted the actions contained in the second Action Plan of the Workforce Strategy. Updates were also noted in relation to Ophthalmic services and Children's Social Care.

The Board was also advised that the 'Phone First Clinical Triage and Assessment Service' commenced on 17 November 2020 at the Causeway Hospital. The aim is to further roll out the service in the Antrim and Craigavon Area Hospitals.

I trust that you find this update helpful and I look forward to our continuing discussion on the vitally important work of rebuilding HSC services in the weeks and months ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robin Swann', is positioned above the typed name.

Robin Swann MLA
Minister for Health