

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC HEFS 2 (10) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY SECTORAL FORMATS

NEWRY

10 NOVEMBER 2010

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

HEALTH SECTOR

1. The eleventh North South Ministerial Council meeting in the Health and Food Safety sectoral formats was held in the Newry on Wednesday, 10 November 2010. The meeting was attended by Michael McGimpsey MLA, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Barry Andrews, TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Michelle Gildernew MP, MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Minister McGimpsey chaired the meeting.

Child Protection

2. The Council welcomed the launch of the Child Protection Communication Strategy and Communiqué which aims to promote public awareness and assist everyone in their duty to safeguard children. These aspirations are encapsulated in the Communiqué which sets out ways in which co-operation will be taken forward to protect children, safeguard their welfare, exchange information and ideas, share good practice, develop protocols and ensure promotion of common public messages.

3. The Council also welcomed the launch of the North South Child Protection Hub (the Hub). This dedicated on-line child protection resource brings together research, policy and practice guidance, inspection reports, serious case reviews, court judgments, news articles and other printed and video publications in the field of child protection in both jurisdictions as well as published materials from other sources. The aim is that the Hub will be used by policy makers, professional practitioners, researchers, and educators to share and improve knowledge, develop evidence-based practice and ultimately assist the safeguarding of vulnerable children.
4. The Council also noted and welcomed ongoing progress on a range of child protection issues including work to develop a joint protocol dealing with children in care and those on the child protection register who move between jurisdictions, where there are concerns.

Radiotherapy

5. The Council noted the revised projected timescale for the development of a new satellite radiotherapy centre at Altnagelvin Hospital.

Cancer Research

6. Ministers noted that a conference is to be held in Belfast in November 2010 on the theme "The Value of Health Economics for future Cancer Services" and that a conference on population-based cancer research in Ireland was held in Dublin in October 2010 organized jointly by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry and the National Cancer Registry Ireland.

Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services (PCCS)

7. The Ministers noted that the arrangements for the Cross Border Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Surgery and Interventional Cardiology in Northern Ireland have been working very well to date.

Health Promotion

8. Ministers discussed ongoing co-operation on health promotion, drug and alcohol misuse and men's health and physical activity. The Drugs use in Ireland and Northern Ireland Prevalence survey will contain for the first time information on mephedrone and other "legal highs".

Suicide Prevention

9. Ministers noted progress on the All-Island Action Plan on Suicide Prevention. They noted the potential impact of the current economic situation on suicide and agreed to the inclusion of a new action –Suicide and the Economic Situation – within the action plan. They also welcomed the establishment of the new media monitoring service in Northern Ireland and the completion of the all-island evaluation of Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD (*safefood*)

***safefood* Progress Report**

10. Ministers discussed the range of research activities that are being taken forward by ***safefood*** including the cross-sectional population study on dietary salt intake, the qualitative research targeting the information needs of vulnerable and hard to reach groups in relation to food safety and that a number of new attitudinal research projects are under way. The Council noted the continuing success of ***safefood's*** promotional activities and welcomed ***safefood's*** sponsorship of an event in Belfast which focussed on tackling obesity in young people.

***safefood* Corporate Plan 2011-2013 and Business Plan 2011**

11. Ministers reviewed progress in finalising the corporate plan 2011-2013 and the business plan 2011 and that they will be brought forward for approval at a future NSMC meeting.

**Joint Secretariat
10 November 2010**