

# PATHOLOGY BLUEPRINT PROGRAMME

## Programme Newsletter 01

### In this issue:

- CMO's welcome
- What is the Blueprint Programme?
- NI Pathology Network involvement p2
- Message from the Programme Director p2
- Key facts p2
- How the programme came about p3
- How might this impact me? p3
- How to contribute p4
- Meet the Programme Board p4

### What is the Pathology Blueprint Programme?

The Pathology Blueprint Programme will explore options for moving the management of laboratory services from each Trust into a single regional pathology management structure, along with the entirety of the NIBTS, and the functions of the NI Pathology Network.

### What does the programme aim to do?

This programme will work with you as stakeholders to co-produce an outline design for a single regional pathology management structure, along with a recommendation on the best option for hosting it. This recommendation will be submitted to the Department of Health and Minister for approval in 2023.

### Why are we doing this?

HSC pathology services need to be equipped to meet the growing challenges and demands that we face, and to resolve them through a regional approach. Doing so will help to reduce unnecessary duplication, increase consistency and standardisation of laboratory practices, and provide staff with attractive career development opportunities.

## CMO's welcome to the programme

As the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Blueprint Programme, I am delighted work is now underway to design the future management structure and operating model for HSC pathology services.

The pandemic showed just how important sustainable pathology services are to our health system. In recognition of this, last autumn the Minister announced a [£40m investment in a regional Laboratory information system \(LIMS\)](#) and [published a policy statement](#) setting out the future vision for pathology services, including the establishment of the Blueprint Programme to plan for a new regional pathology management structure. Alongside the important work taking place through the NI Pathology Network, these developments will create a strong foundation for a sustainable world class pathology service for HSC patients well into the future.

The first step in that journey will be the forthcoming series of stakeholder engagement events in May and June being organised by the programme. The Department's Rebuilding Management Board has given its collective support for this work, and I hope you will engage wholeheartedly in the programme as it moves forward. The Department recognises the scale of change in pathology, we will take account of that in our planning, but we must retain the strong focus on delivering our high-quality business as usual during this time of change.

For engagement events click [here](#)



***"...These developments will create a strong foundation for a sustainable world class pathology service for HSC patients well into the future..."***

*Professor Sir Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, DoH*



**Department of Health leadership team for the Blueprint Programme.**

*From right: Finola McGrady, Policy lead; Professor Ian Young, Chief Scientific Advisor; Professor Sir Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer & Blueprint Programme SRO; Ryan Wilson, Director of Secondary Care and Deputy Programme SRO.*

Click on the [web-links](#) in the text for further information

## Network welcomes Blueprint Programme

At Pathology Network Board on 22nd April 2022, the establishment of the Blueprint Programme was welcomed. Network Chair since 2010, Jennifer Welsh described how the Pathology Network has had an important role in driving improvement in pathology services since its inception in 2009: *“we are now striding forward with major developments that will enable us to provide the best possible pathology service for patients, donors and service users into the future”*.

The Network has been and remains a critical enabler for the NI Pathology Information Management Systems (NIPIMS) Programme. In the same way, it will enable the Blueprint Programme to engage effectively with pathology stakeholders and services in the Blueprint design. The Network welcomes its engagement by the Blueprint Programme and looks forward to taking part in the stakeholder engagement events in May and June.

We in the Network will continue with our current workplan, because the new management structure will adopt and use the products that the network is currently developing. These include new career and training opportunities for staff, standardisation and more regional approaches to how we work across the spectrum of pathology service delivery to improve quality. The Network will strive to ensure pathology services are at the heart of shaping their future.

This programme also spells a time of change for the Network, since its functions will become part of the new regional pathology management structure. The opportunity to embed the highly effective multi-disciplinary, multi-professional regional planning and working that has evolved through the Network will greatly enable the speed with which the new management structure, once designed and approved, may become operational.



Jennifer Welsh, Chair,  
NI Pathology Network

## Message from Programme

### Director

We want to make sure that this programme fully engages stakeholders in all of the work, and that you have the opportunity to contribute to the design of the blueprint for the new regional management structure, and the selection of the best option for hosting it.



Karin Jackson  
Blueprint Programme  
Director

Your attendance and participation at the engagement events and workshops that we have planned for May and June is important, and will help us ensure that your views are considered. These events will introduce the programme and begin the blueprint design. This is just the beginning. We will engage with you again in late summer to check that the design will help us to deliver the benefits we hope to achieve from having a regional management structure.

In the Autumn, we will work with the service to identify and weigh up options for hosting the blueprint design. By Christmas we will know the preferred option, and early in 2023 we will work to understand the potential impacts of that option, and develop an outline plan for transitioning to the new structure.

NIBTS is delighted to act as programme host, and to engaging as a stakeholder alongside Trusts, commissioners, public health, service users, staff, patients, donors and others.

The Programme Board is accountable through the SRO, Professor Sir Michael McBride, to the Department of Health.

## KEY FACTS

- ⇒ The programme started on 1st April 2022
- ⇒ In 1 year we will design a blueprint for the future management structure and operating model for HSC Pathology Services, to submit to the Minister
- ⇒ Pathology services and staff roles are not part of design
- ⇒ Design will focus on finding the right structure to enable pathology services to continue to function at their best
- ⇒ Your input to the design is important
- ⇒ No change will take place until the Minister approves it, and funds are available to make the change happen
- ⇒ Until that time, business as usual will continue

# Programme Aim

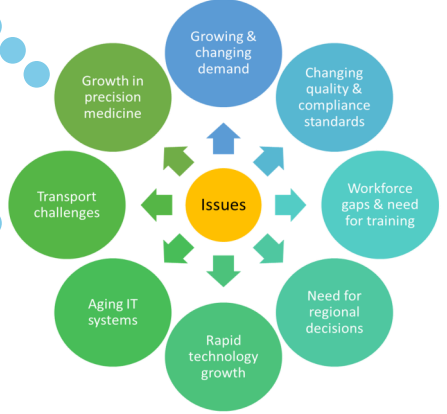
To design with stakeholders a blueprint for the best management structure and operating model for HSC Pathology Services, incorporating the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS) and the functions of the NI Pathology Network.

In line with the DoH policy statement, it is envisaged that the new management structure will operate at arm's length from the department, and be responsible for the planning, management and governance of all HSC Pathology Services.

## How did this programme come about?

Pathology services across NI, the UK & beyond were facing many common challenges ...

NI Health Strategy recognised pathology needed some reform in 2016



The Minister asked for a public consultation on proposals to modernise pathology services. The consultation happened in 2016/17.



**Modernising HSC Pathology Services**  
Proposals for Change

The Department of Health reviewed the evidence, including emerging evidence published by professional bodies



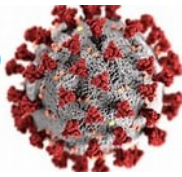
Things were changing quickly across the UK and there were different views on the best way forward to transform pathology

Reports of the Public Consultation were produced in 2017

**\*\* [click here to view](#) \*\***

In 2018, the DoH 'TIG' agreed 3 policy principles to allow important and necessary work to go ahead including replacing the Lab Information Systems, standardisation, workforce and training developments. One principle was to plan for a new regional pathology management structure. The DoH wrote to staff in October 2018 to let them know this.

After an unavoidable delay due to the pandemic, the Minister published a pathology policy statement which included setting up the 'Blueprint Programme'



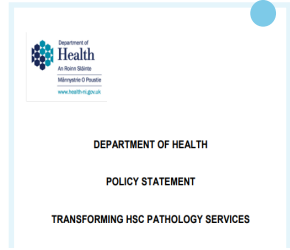
In 2019, the NI Pathology Network engaged with stakeholders to start to plan for pathology transformation



## How might the programme impact me?

The programme will design a structure to support optimal pathology service delivery into the future, and will plan to ensure minimal disruption to pathology business as usual.

- Patients and Donors – no change
- Those requesting pathology tests - little or no change
- Public Health staff – interface with a single provider
- Academia will have one point of contact with pathology services
- Commissioners – will interface with a single provider
- Pathology staff will continue in the same jobs, locations and services
- Pathology management will look different at Asst Director level and above
- New structure will be responsible for pathology planning, governance, finance, estates, infrastructure & workforce management



**\*\* [click here for policy](#) \*\***

The policy recognises the importance of pathology services to rebuilding the HSC

Questions or comments? Get in touch: [Blueprint@nibts.hscni.net](mailto:Blueprint@nibts.hscni.net)



## Virtual Engagement Events & Workshops May & June 2022

Rebuilding Management Board	06 Apr 22	Complete
Pathology Network Board	22 Apr 22	Complete
BSO, PHA & the SPP Group, DoH	17 May 22	12:00-13:00
Trust Senior Teams	10 May 22	14:00-14:30
	17 May 22	11:15-11:45
Professional Bodies	17 May 22	10:00-11:00
Trade Unions	17 May 22	16:00-17:00
All Pathology Network Fora	09 Jun 22	14:00-15:00
'Town' Hall events for all staff	09 Jun 22	14:00-15:00
	10 Jun 22	15:00-16:00
	20 Jun 22	12:00-13:00
	27 Jun 22	11:00-12:00

You are invited to attend!

Details including how to register can be found online at:

[This Link](#)

**Patients, Donors, their representatives** TBC Late June '22

**Workshops:** Nominations will be sought from Trusts & NIBTS to take part in 5 design workshops between 15-24 June focusing on the needs of Pathology services, Corporate Functions, Governance, Assets & Facilities, and Planning and Performance Management.

## Programme Board

Programme Board includes representation across the stakeholder groups, and ensures there is strategic leadership for all areas of the Blueprint Design.



### Department of Health

(DoH pictures, anti-clockwise from top left)

**SRO:** Professor Sir Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer

**Deputy SRO:** Ryan Wilson, Director of Secondary Care

**Pathology Policy:** Finola McGrady, Policy Lead

**Healthcare Science:** Professor Ian Young, Chief Scientific Advisor

### Programme Director

Karin Jackson, Chief Executive NIBTS

### Commissioning Lead

Brian McAleer, Assistant Director of Commissioning, SPPG

### Public Health Agency

Dr Sinead McGuinness, Consultant in Public Health Medicine

### Business Services Organisation

Mark Bradley, Interim Dir. of Customer Care & Performance

### NI Pathology Network

Jennifer Welsh, Network Chair  
Ronan Strain, Network Manager  
Dr Michael McKenna, Clinical Director, Blueprint Programme (not pictured)

### NI Blood Transfusion Service

David Small, Non-Executive Member

### Belfast Trust & Regional Labs and Operational Services

Caroline Leonard, Director, Cancer & Specialist Services

### Northern Trust & Regional Planning & Performance Management and IT

Neil Martin, Director of Planning, Performance & Informatics

### South Eastern Trust & Regional HR, OD, Domestic, Transport, Support, Corporate Communications, Legal & Corporate Services

Claire Smyth, Director of HR, OD & Corporate Services

### Southern Trust & Regional Finance, Procurement, and Estates

Catherine Teggart, Director of Finance, Procurement & Estates

### Western Trust & Regional Clinical Governance

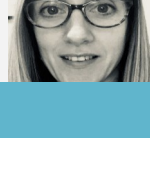
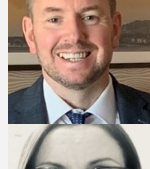
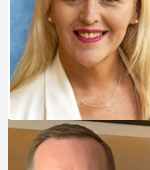
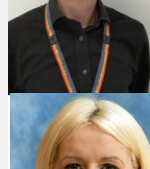
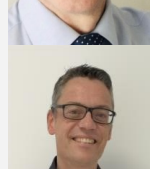
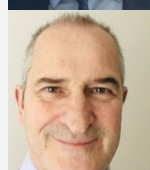
Dr Catherine McDonnell, Medical Director & Dr Michael McKenna, Associate Medical Director (not pictured)

### NIPIMS Programme

Patrick Breen, NIPIMS Programme Manager

### Blueprint Programme

Sarah Buckley, Senior Programme Manager



Questions or comments? Get in touch: [Blueprint@nibts.hscni.net](mailto:Blueprint@nibts.hscni.net)