

## **Main Glossary Terms (A-Z)**

### **Departments/Organisations/Roles**

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#### **A&E (Accident & Emergency)**

Another term for Emergency Department. A&E departments provide urgent care for patients with serious injuries or sudden illnesses. They assess, stabilise, and treat patients 24/7.

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#### **Acute Care**

Acute care refers to short-term medical treatment for severe or urgent health conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, trauma, or infections. It typically takes place in hospital settings like Emergency Departments (EDs), Intensive Care Units (ICUs), or surgical wards. The goal of acute care is to stabilise patients and manage serious health events that require immediate attention.

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#### **Advocate**

An advocate is someone who helps patients or service users understand their healthcare rights, make informed decisions, and access services. Advocates may be professional or voluntary and play an essential role in supporting vulnerable individuals, particularly when navigating complex health or social care systems.

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#### **AHP (Allied Health Professional)**

AHPs are a group of health professionals who provide specialist services alongside doctors and nurses. They include physiotherapists, occupational therapists, radiographers, speech and language therapists, dietitians, podiatrists, and others. AHPs support diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation across many areas of healthcare.

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#### **AIPB (Area Integrated Partnership Board)**

In line with our aim to embed a population health approach to planning of health and social care, AIPBs will provide the vehicle to work with other stakeholders at a local geography to focus in on community health and well-being, proactively take action to keep people well in the first place and supporting them to self-care and where this is not possible, enabling intervention at the earliest possible point.

There will be five AIPBs established across the region. These will mirror the geographical boundaries of our existing Health and Social Care Trusts.

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## **ALB (Arms Length Bodies)**

Arms Length Bodies are public organisations that operate independently but are accountable to government departments. In Northern Ireland health and social care, ALBs include the HSC Board, Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, and Business Services Organisation. They perform specialist roles in delivering and supporting health services.

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## **BHSCT (Belfast Health and Social Care Trust)**

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust provides hospital, community health, and social care services to people living in the Belfast area. It is one of five Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland.

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## **BSO (Business Services Organisation)**

The BSO provides essential business support services across Northern Ireland's HSC system, including human resources, finance, ICT, legal services, procurement, and payroll. It allows clinical services to focus on patient care while ensuring operational efficiency.

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## **BSO ITS**

This is the Information Technology Services directorate within BSO. It manages ICT infrastructure, digital health projects, and IT services for HSC organisations across Northern Ireland.

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## **Carer**

A carer is someone who looks after or supports a relative, friend, or neighbour with an illness, disability, mental health issue, or age-related need. Carers may provide help with personal care, daily living tasks, emotional support, and advocacy. Many carers provide support on an unpaid basis.

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## **CMO (Chief Medical Officer)**

The Chief Medical Officer is the most senior medical adviser to the Department of Health. The CMO provides leadership on public health, clinical standards, and healthcare quality. The CMO also advises on healthcare policy and responds to public health emergencies.

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## **CNO (Chief Nursing Officer)**

The Chief Nursing Officer is the most senior nurse in Northern Ireland. The CNO provides professional leadership to the nursing and midwifery workforce, shapes nursing policy, and works to improve quality and patient safety across HSC services.

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## **Community Care**

Community care includes a wide range of services delivered outside hospital settings. It supports people in their own homes or community environments, helping

them maintain independence, manage long-term conditions, and avoid unnecessary hospital stays. Community care is vital for older people, people with disabilities, and those with mental health needs.

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### **Regional mental Health Service Collaborative Board**

The Collaborative Board provides strategic leadership for the development of mental health services in Northern Ireland. It brings together key stakeholders including service users, carers, clinicians, and commissioners to drive improvements in service quality, access, and outcomes.

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### **CQC (Care Quality Commission)**

The independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. While not a regulator in NI, CQC standards are often referenced in benchmarking and learning.

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### **CSG (Community Support Group)**

Community Support Groups bring together individuals and organisations to provide practical and emotional support to people in local communities. They often support wellbeing, social inclusion, and resilience.

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### **DfC (Department for Communities)**

The NI Executive department responsible for supporting social development, housing, welfare, and community engagement. DfC's work is closely linked with addressing social determinants of health.

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### **DoH (Department of Health)**

The Department of Health is the government department responsible for setting health policy, funding health services, and overseeing the delivery of health and social care in Northern Ireland. It works closely with Trusts, the Public Health Agency, and other bodies.

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### **ED (Emergency Department)**

An Emergency Department (also known as A&E) provides urgent care for severe injuries and illnesses. It is designed to assess, stabilise, and treat patients with acute medical needs. EDs operate 24/7 and are a key part of acute care services.

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### **ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat)**

A clinical specialty that diagnoses and treats conditions affecting the ears, nose, throat, head, and neck. ENT services include both surgical and medical treatments.

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### **GP (General Practitioner)**

A GP is a family doctor who provides primary care — the first point of contact for

most health needs. GPs diagnose illnesses, provide treatment, manage long-term conditions, and refer patients to specialist services where necessary.

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### **GMC (General Medical Council)**

The regulatory body for doctors in the UK. The GMC sets professional standards, oversees medical education, and manages the medical register.

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### **HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council)**

The regulatory body for many allied health professionals, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and paramedics. The HCPC sets standards and approves training programmes.

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### **HSC (Health and Social Care)**

Northern Ireland's unique integrated system that combines health services and social care under one organisational framework. The HSC system aims to provide person-centred care and support across the lifespan.

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### **HSCT (Health and Social Care Trusts)**

Five Trusts deliver HSC services across different regions of Northern Ireland: Belfast, Northern, South Eastern, Southern, and Western. They provide hospital services, community care, social care, and specialist services.

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### **JCF (Joint Consultative Forum)**

A forum where management and staff representatives, including trade unions, meet to discuss workplace matters, service change, and staff welfare.

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### **MDT (Multidisciplinary Team)**

An MDT is a team of professionals from different disciplines who work together to plan and provide care for patients. MDTs promote holistic, coordinated care — particularly for people with complex needs.

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### **NHSCT (Northern Health and Social Care Trust)**

The NHSCT delivers health and social care services to people living in the Northern region of Northern Ireland. It operates hospitals, community services, and social care.

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### **NIAS (Northern Ireland Ambulance Service)**

NIAS provides emergency ambulance services, patient transport, and clinical care at the scene of emergencies. It plays a key role in the urgent and emergency care system.

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## **NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council)**

The regulatory body for nurses and midwives across the UK. It maintains a register of qualified practitioners and ensures safe and effective nursing and midwifery care.

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## **Patient Client Council**

The Patient and Client Council (PCC) was created on 1st April 2009 as part of the reform of Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland.

With respect to health and social care services, the PCC:

- represents the interests of the public;
  - promotes the involvement of the public;
  - assists people making or intending to make a complaint;
  - promotes the provision by HSC bodies of advice and information to the public about the design, commissioning and delivery of services;
  - undertakes research into the best methods and practices for consulting and engaging the public.
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## **PCNs (Primary Care Networks)**

PCNs are networks of GP practices and other primary care providers working together to deliver coordinated services to defined populations. While PCNs originated in England, similar network-based models are being developed within ICS NI to enhance collaboration in primary care and ensure a more proactive, preventative approach to health.

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## **PHA (Public Health Agency)**

The PHA is responsible for protecting and improving the public's health in Northern Ireland. It delivers health promotion programmes, coordinates public health surveillance, and supports prevention and early intervention.

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## **PMO (Programme Management Office)**

A team or function that supports the management and delivery of large projects and transformation programmes. The PMO provides governance, reporting, risk management, and coordination.

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## **POC (Point of Care)**

Diagnostic testing or treatment that takes place at the time and location of patient care, such as in clinics, GP surgeries, or at home. Point-of-care testing improves speed and accessibility of results.

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## **RQIA (Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority)**

RQIA is Northern Ireland's independent regulator of health and social care services. It monitors compliance with standards, inspects services, and promotes improvement to ensure safe and effective care.

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## **SPPG**

The Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) plans and oversees the delivery of health and social care services for the population of Northern Ireland. The Group is part of the Department of Health and is accountable to the Minister for Health.

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## **SRO (Senior Responsible Owner)**

An SRO is the named individual accountable for the success of a programme or project. In ICS NI, SROs lead key transformation programmes and ensure delivery of agreed outcomes. They provide strategic direction and leadership.

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## **VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector)**

A broad term referring to voluntary, community-based organisations providing services that promote health, wellbeing, and social inclusion.

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## **VCSE (Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise sector)**

A diverse sector of non-profit organisations delivering a wide range of community-based services and supports, often in partnership with statutory health and social care services.

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## **WHST (Western Health and Social Care Trust)**

WHST delivers health and social care services to people living in the Western region of Northern Ireland. It operates hospitals, community services, and social care.