

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions weeks ending 11 November 2016

Update on timetable for new PfG

<p>AQW 5573/16- 21</p>	<p>Dr Stephen Farry (APNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the timetable for the formulation of the new Programme for Government, including the period for public consultation.</p> <p>The Executive agreed the draft Programme for Government at its meeting on 27 October 2016, and a public consultation on the draft Programme was launched the following day. The consultation will run until 23 December 2016, and our aim is to secure Assembly agreement soon after to a final document. This will be informed by the findings from engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and, of course, by feedback from the Assembly's own scrutiny processes.</p>
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Young people engaging in Together: Building a United Community Summer Camps

<p>AQO 468/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Jennifer McCann (SF - West Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for a constituency breakdown of the numbers of young people engaging in the Together: Building a United Community Summer Camps in 2016.</p> <p>One hundred and three summer camps have been delivered by groups across all 18 constituencies. Over 4000 young people have participated in the camps this year. A detailed breakdown of the numbers of young people by constituency will not become available until the end of the programme in March 2017 when the independent evaluation of the programme for 2016/17 is completed.</p>
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Engagement with United Nations Treaty monitoring bodies in future

<p>AQW 5188/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Stewart Dickson (APNI - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail plans to ensure full and proper engagement before United Nations Treaty monitoring bodies in all future scenarios.</p> <p>As detailed in the response to AQW 3841/16-21, we are committed to engaging actively with the reporting process, to promote the many positive actions here and ensure the good work being taken forward to protect human rights is reported back to the United Nations.</p>
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Homes in severe fuel poverty

<p>AQW 6445/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Andy Allen (UUP - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to outline how many of the 33,000 homes in severe fuel poverty will be removed from this position by April 2017.</p> <p>The Affordable Warmth Scheme targets areas where severe fuel poverty is likely to be most prevalent and delivers measures to improve the energy efficiency of low income households. In 2016/17 an estimated 3,800 homes will benefit from the Affordable Warmth Scheme which includes providing loft and cavity wall insulation as well as new heating systems and replacement windows.</p> <p>Fuel poverty is caused by a combination of three factors: household income; fuel prices; and energy efficiency of the home. The level of fuel poverty is measured in the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey and the next report is due in 2017.</p>
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Welfare supplementary payment to families

<p>AQW 6418/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Naomi Long (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities pursuant to AQW 5767/16-21, to outline how his Department intends to make provision to increase the welfare supplementary payments for affected families, and specifically whether this requires amendment of The Welfare Supplementary Payments Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.</p> <p>The Welfare Supplementary Payment (Benefit Cap) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 come into operation on 7th November 2016 and amend the Welfare Supplementary Payments Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016. Regulation 4A(2) provides for welfare supplementary payments to be increased for families affected by the reduction in the benefit cap from 7th November 2016, which is the date the new lower benefit cap is being introduced. The link to these regulations is provided below. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2016/389/contents/made</p>
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Budgetary pressures in Department for Communities

<p>AQW 6291/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Philip Smith (UUP - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to detail each budgetary pressure in his Department and its arm's-length bodies; and which of these pressures were raised with officials from the Department of Finance in advance of the October monitoring round.</p> <p>In his statement to the Assembly on 25 October, the Minister of Finance drew attention to a new approach taken by the Executive in relation to the monitoring round process which is consistent with arrangements already in place in Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. My Department continues to manage its in-year financial position within the resources that have been allocated to us.</p>
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Establishing an advice network on Welfare Reform

<p>AQW 5983/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Andy Allen (UUP - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities for an update on the establishment of an advice network as recommended by the Welfare Reform Working Group.</p> <p>As part of the Fresh Start Agreement, £8m funding was committed over four years to put additional independent advice services in place for Welfare Reform.</p> <p>On the 27th of September I announced funding of £2.5 million for the Welfare Reform Advice Services Consortium (Citizens Advice, AdviceNI and the Law Centre NI). This money will fund a free phone helpline, resourced with 9 additional advisors and a further 35 advisers to provide face to face assistance. The advisers will be based across all 11 council areas in Northern Ireland located in local Citizens Advice and Advice NI offices. The new additional advice services will also include the provision of specialist legal advice from the Law Centre and access to specialist services where required.</p> <p>The Independent Welfare Change Helpline (0808 802 0020) will go live from 1 November 2016 and provide a contact point for anyone needing help or advice relating to any of the welfare changes. The helpline is free from any device (mobile or landline) within the UK.</p> <p>The Advice Sector is currently recruiting the 35 additional advisers to deliver the face-to-face assistance, which will be in place across NI by mid November.</p> <p>In September I also announced that my Department will be providing £800k of additional funding, inclusive of £600k through local councils to support and prepare existing frontline services in advance of the new services being put in place. This also included funding for a training assistance programme to meet the</p>
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		<p>training and awareness needs of organisations which provide advice.</p> <p>The Department is also working with the third sector to take forward the remaining recommendations contained within the report.</p>
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Evaluating impact of Welfare Reform

<p>AQW 5938/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Fra McCann (SF - West Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to outline the measures he will put in place to ensure data is captured for all nine Section 75 categories as part of the Equality Impact Assessment when evaluating the impact of Welfare Reform.</p> <p>A composite evaluation strategy has been developed to assess the overall impact of Welfare Reform. This strategy has been designed to specifically evaluate each of the key reforms as well as the associated mitigations. It will be central in assessing and monitoring the impacts of Welfare Reform in Northern Ireland and will help to inform implementation and future strategy.</p> <p>Each of the major Welfare Reforms and associated mitigations will be extensively evaluated and the findings will feed into the composite evaluation strategy. The evaluations will include the analysis of management information (M.I.) systems alongside a bespoke programme of research for each reform. All available section 75 information from the M.I. systems will be utilised as part of the evaluation process. Furthermore, information on all section 75 categories will be collected as a matter of course for any commissioned research.</p> <p>The Department has also committed to collect section 75 data from those with eligibility for a Welfare Supplementary payment. This information will be collected on a voluntary basis and will be utilised in the evaluation of the mitigation schemes.</p>
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Post Special Educational Need Provision

<p>AQW 5937/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Fra McCann (SF - West Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to detail any progress made on Recommendation 13 of the Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in (i) education; and (ii) training for people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>The previous Committee for Employment and Learning conducted a comprehensive inquiry into post Special Educational Need (SEN) provision in education, employment and training for people with learning disabilities throughout Northern Ireland.</p> <p>A subsequent report was published, which included 44 Recommendations, covering a broad range of topics, to reflect the many challenges and issues that people with a learning disability and their families encounter, when they complete full-time education.</p> <p>The Committee recognised the fact that this is a complex area of policy, involving an array of integrated service provision across a number of government departments. The Committee stressed the need for better co-ordination and collaboration with regard policy development, as well as service provision.</p> <p>The Committee categorised the evidence into a number of distinct areas, with subsequent recommendations, and then allocated responsibility for each of the 44 recommendation to one or more of the then Executive departments, including Education, Health and Social Services and Public Safety, Regional Development, and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).</p> <p>The majority of recommendations were allocated to DEL, due to the fact that the previous department had responsibility for a number of relevant areas, including careers advice, further</p>
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education, training programmes, including specialist disability training projects, and employment services.

With the exception of the latter, all of these key services now reside with the new Department for Economy (DfE). Therefore, with regard to the specific question, on the issue of post SEN provision in (i) education and (ii) training, the Minister for Economy will be able to provide a more detailed response. Officials from my department's Disability Employment Service continue to work with colleagues from DfE to ascertain the nature and extent of the opportunities and services that are available for people with learning disabilities, specifically to help them progress towards employment.

With regard to the wording of Recommendation 13, lead responsibility for the Ministerial Sub Group Action Plan, as well as the implementation of the Committee for Employment and Learning's Inquiry Report have yet to be agreed in this new mandate.

In the draft Programme for Government Framework, now out for public consultation, my department has accepted lead responsibility for a number of key Indicators, most notably Indicator 42, 'Improving the Quality of Life for People with Disabilities and their Families'.

In addition to the broader consultation process, we will consult specifically with the disability sector and people with disabilities on Indicator 42.

The Department will use co-design, co-implementation and co-delivery to take forward this key Indicator, and will work with other Departments to ensure a co-ordinated and integrated approach to address some of the emerging themes that are directly relevant to the Post SEN group, such as:

		<p>Raising awareness and changing attitudes towards disability. Addressing the needs of children and young people including improving transition.</p> <p>Enhancing opportunities for employment and/or lifelong learning. Improving independent living and the provision of suitable homes.</p> <p>Improving participation in public and community life. Improving access to information and better data collection.</p>
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Support for people affected by the bedroom tax after 2020

AQW 5655/16- 21	Mr Eamonn McCann (PBPA - Foyle)	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to outline the steps his Department is taking to support people affected by the bedroom tax when the mitigation fund is exhausted in 2020.</p> <p>The Northern Ireland Executive confirmed in, “A Fresh Start: the Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan” that the Social Sector Size Criteria would not apply in Northern Ireland. In accordance with recommendations from the Welfare Reform Mitigations Working Group the Executive agreed a four year fund to “top-up” UK welfare arrangements in Northern Ireland to March 2020.</p> <p>The Department’s priority has been implementation of the mitigation schemes to ensure people get the support they need. The Executive committed as part of the Fresh Start Agreement to a review of all the mitigation arrangements in 2018/19. This will provide the Executive with the opportunity to decide if it wishes to extend the mitigation scheme beyond the current planned end date of March 2020.</p> <p>Department for Communities officials have developed a composite Welfare Reform evaluation strategy. This strategy has</p>
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		<p>been designed to specifically evaluate each of the key reforms as well as the associated mitigations. It will be central in assessing and monitoring the impacts of Welfare Reform in Northern Ireland and will help to inform future decisions on Social Sector Size Criteria.</p>
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Support for families once mitigation fund is exhausted in 2020

<p>AQW 5654/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Eamonn McCann (PBPA - Foyle)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to outline the steps his Department is taking to support families with more than two children that, as a result of the benefit cap, will see their benefits reduced when the mitigation fund is exhausted in 2020.</p> <p>At present my Department's focus is on implementation of the mitigation schemes to ensure people receive the financial support they need. As part of the Fresh Start Agreement, the Executive committed to review the arrangements for mitigation in 2018-19.</p> <p>To inform that review, officials have developed an evaluation strategy aimed at evaluating the various components of the welfare reform programme including the mitigation measures. The evaluation strategy will assist the Executive in carrying out its review, including whether it wishes to provide financial support for families with two children once the mitigation fund comes to an end in 2020.</p>
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Support for Looked After Children in West Tyrone

<p>AQW 6411/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Barry McElduff (SF - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline (i) how his Department delivers education to Looked After Children in West Tyrone; and (ii) his Department's strategy for improving the attainment levels of Looked After Children in general.</p> <p>(i) Looked After Children (LAC), as with all children of compulsory school age, should be registered at a mainstream school and their education will be delivered through this mechanism. Each looked after child will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). This is a living document aimed at improving the attainment of LAC by setting realistic targets to improve all aspects of the child's educational experience in partnership with other professionals, parents/carers and the child or young person.</p> <p>If a looked after child is experiencing difficulties engaging with education, the EA Education Welfare Service can provide support. If there are specific special or additional needs then other EA services may support the child, the carer or the school, for example, the Behaviour Support Team and Educational Psychology. In addition, schools have also received capacity building training in relation to meeting the needs of LAC in a mainstream setting. Furthermore there are strong working relationships between the EA and the Western Health and Social Care Trust. This partnership has a clear focus on improving educational outcomes for LAC.</p> <p>The EA will also provide alternative education through its Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) programme where a mainstream school placement cannot be sustained and it is deemed to be in the best interests of the child.</p> <p>(ii) My officials are currently developing a LAC strategy alongside a number of other LAC related work areas with an</p>
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		<p>overall view of improving the attainment levels of LAC. We have secured funding through the Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) for a 3 year project which will provide additional support for LAC through the appointment of a LAC Champion, in a similar role to the Virtual Head in England. This will focus early intervention specifically to:</p> <p>identify effective interventions to raise educational outcomes for children at Key stage 2;</p> <p>challenge current provision for LAC at key stage 2 and establish structures and systems to enhance multiagency collaboration in respect of LAC education. This is a pilot project, the outcomes of which will inform future service delivery models for LAC.</p> <p>My officials are also currently reviewing the Personal Education Plan guidance and it is intended to pilot the new guidance in the coming months.</p>
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Number of pupils participating in shared education programmes

<p>AQW 6352/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for a breakdown of the number of pupils participating in shared education programmes in the last four years; and how this compares to the targets set in his Department's business plan.</p> <p>Due to industrial action by teaching unions, implementation of the Shared Signature Project commenced in 2015/16. In this period, 22,036 individual pupils participated in shared classes, of which 12,406 participated in more than one shared activity. Figures for 2016/17 will be available at the end of the academic year but the number of pupils is set to increase as schools progress their action plans.</p>
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		<p>Targets set in the business case in respect of increasing the number of young people participating in shared education are based on "maintaining the percentage of schools engaged in shared education on a whole school basis at 15% rising to 20% by 2018/19 and maintaining the percentage of schools involving more than one class at 13% increasing to 80% by 2018/19 rather than on individual numbers of pupils." This is measured through the school omnibus survey. Results of the 2016 survey are not yet available, but the 2015 survey showed that the percentage of schools engaged on a whole school basis being maintained with the percentage of schools involving more than one class rising to 67.6%. Given the impact of industrial action during this period these are encouraging results.</p>
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Interfaces and co-operation in special educational needs framework

<p>AQW 6310/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the work undertaken to date by the Health and Education Interface Project Board to improve the interfaces and co-operation in the special educational needs framework.</p> <p>The Education and Health Interfaces Project Board was established in June 2016 in order to consider, over time, the education and health interfaces within the special educational needs (SEN) framework.</p> <p>The Board's first project, the "Notification, Referral and Statutory Assessment" Project, was also initiated at this time and is expected to be completed by April 2017. This first project will build on and complement the work commenced by an Education/Health working group in June 2015.</p> <p>This working group was established to facilitate engagement between the education and health sectors to understand and</p>
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		<p>address delays in the provision of Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust advice to the Education Authority (EA) within the statutory special educational needs (SEN) assessment process.</p> <p>The working group met on four occasions from June 2015 to June 2016 and identified actions to be taken forward by the EA and HSC Trusts to help reduce the timeframe for the provision of medical advice.</p> <p>Outputs from this work have included the development of a proposed new HSC Trust common pathway for dealing with requests for medical advice; greater sharing of EA information to assist the Trusts in their advice giving role; work to develop common documentation for medical advice; and use of electronic transfer of information.</p> <p>It is anticipated that further time-bound education and health interface projects within the SEN framework will be considered by the Project Board, including Annual Review and Reassessment; and Transition Planning, and that further project teams would be established to take forward each piece of work.</p>
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Health and Education Interface Project Board

<p>AQW 6308/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail how many times the Health and Education Interface Project Board has met since the implementation of the Autism Act (NI) 2011.</p> <p>The Education and Health Interfaces Project Board was established in June 2016 and is expected to have its first meeting late November/early December.</p> <p>The Project Board will oversee and provide strategic input and direction to a number of time-bound projects to improve the</p>
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		<p>interfaces and co-operation by education (Education Authority) and health (the five Health and Social Care Trusts) within the special educational needs (SEN) framework, taking into account the new duties provided for under the Children's Services Co-operation Act 2015 and the SEN and Disability Act 2016.</p>
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Baseline funding for childcare in 2017-18

<p>AQW 6223/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education , given that no baseline funding exists for 2016-17 and since childcare funding relies on bids in the Monitoring Rounds, to outline what plans he has to ensure baseline funding for childcare in 2017-18.</p> <p>Funding for childcare to date has been allocated during Monitoring Rounds from funds set aside by the Executive as part of the Budget process.</p> <p>I hope to bring forward the full version of the Childcare Strategy to my Executive colleagues in the coming months, having taken account of the many consultation responses received, the Programme for Government and the new opportunities that now exist to align childcare and Early Years initiatives.</p> <p>The budget for the final Childcare Strategy will be determined in the context of this process, along with the Executive's agreement of the overall 2017-18 Budget.</p>
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Intervention to address increase in suicide

<p>AQW 6202/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what intervention is being made at (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary level to address the increase in suicide.</p> <p>The Department of Education is very aware of the pressures facing young people today and works closely with schools to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of pupils and has provided a range of support. This includes: Suicide prevention guidance for schools was published in March 2016 which focuses on supporting schools in reducing the incidence of suicide and self-harm. Additional resources on suicide and self harm have also been developed and issued to schools in September 2016.</p> <p>A “Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools” along with a supporting DVD was published on 10 February 2014 to help schools be prepared for a critical incident and to ensure effective management and support before, during and after the event.</p> <p>The Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) offers support for pupils of post primary age and provides in excess of 39,000 counselling sessions annually.</p> <p>The Revised Curriculum for primary and post-primary schools has elements designed to develop the young person as an individual and to make them aware of the stressors in their lives and help build their capacity to deal with them.</p> <p>The “iMatter” Programme includes resources intended to support the entire school community to be engaged in promoting resilient emotional health for all pupils. The resources are designed for young people in post-primary school and provide hints and tips on coping with emotional issues, including useful</p>
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		<p>telephone numbers, websites and details of organisations that can provide assistance for particular problems.</p> <p>The Department of Education is a member of and funds the local Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) which brings together local statutory and voluntary organisations to help schools and organisations working with young people to develop appropriate strategies to prevent and deal with bullying behaviours.</p>
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Special Educational Needs provision post school

<p>AQW 6250/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Oliver McMullan (SF - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education, pursuant of AQW 4978/16-21, who has responsibility of Special Educational Needs provision in education, employment and training for people with learning disabilities post-school.</p> <p>It is my understanding that responsibility for special educational needs provision in education, employment and training for people with learning disabilities once they leave school would fall to two Departments.</p> <p>The Department for the Economy has responsibility for Further and Higher Education, Employment and Skills Programmes, European Social Fund projects and Careers Service.</p> <p>The Department for Communities has responsibility for the Disability Employment Service.</p>
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Addressing the increase in suicide

<p>AQW 6202/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what intervention is being made at (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary level to address the increase in suicide.</p> <p>The Department of Education is very aware of the pressures facing young people today and works closely with schools to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of pupils and has provided a range of support. This includes: Suicide prevention guidance for schools was published in March 2016 which focuses on supporting schools in reducing the incidence of suicide and self-harm. Additional resources on suicide and self harm have also been developed and issued to schools in September 2016.</p> <p>A “Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools” along with a supporting DVD was published on 10 February 2014 to help schools be prepared for a critical incident and to ensure effective management and support before, during and after the event.</p> <p>The Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) offers support for pupils of post primary age and provides in excess of 39,000 counselling sessions annually.</p> <p>The Revised Curriculum for primary and post-primary schools has elements designed to develop the young person as an individual and to make them aware of the stressors in their lives and help build their capacity to deal with them.</p> <p>The “iMatter” Programme includes resources intended to support the entire school community to be engaged in promoting resilient emotional health for all pupils. The resources are designed for young people in post-primary school and provide hints and tips on coping with emotional issues, including useful</p>
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Measures to inform school children of the dangers of sexting

<p>AQW 6178/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Roy Beggs (UUP - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline what measures are in place to inform school children of the dangers relating to sexting.</p> <p>In September 2015, my Department issued a leaflet produced by the Safeguarding Board NI on 'Sexting and the Law' to all schools and education partners.</p> <p>There is also a range of help and information available from the websites of voluntary and charity agencies such as Barnardos and NSPCC. The Safety Centre on the National Crime Agency Children Exploitation and Online Protection (NCA CEOP) site, has a section entitled 'ThinkUKnow' which contains information aimed specifically at different age groups as well as parents and carers such as an animated short film entitled 'NudeSelfies: What Parents and Carers Need to Know'. My Department has links to all these organisations on its webpage.</p>
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Update on paediatric cardiac services

<p>AQO 622/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Robin Swann (UUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health for an update on paediatric cardiac services.</p> <p>In July I visited Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital in Crumlin to announce, along with Minister Simon Harris, our joint commitment and investment of up to £42m in the development of the all-island Congenital Heart Disease Network. This will allow the all-island Network Board to implement its plan for a world class CHD network over the next 5 years.</p> <p>The plan envisages completing the phased implementation of the transfer of all urgent surgical cases from the north to OLGHC between now and the end of 2017 and all elective surgical cases by the end of 2018. Ensuring that the plan remains on course will remain high on my agenda for future discussions with Minister Harris.</p> <p>It is important to emphasise the place of the Belfast Trust within that plan – I want to see children getting the diagnostic and post-surgical care they need as close to home as possible, and that is why part of the funding commitment included £1m to further develop the specialist Children’s Heart Centre at the Clark Clinic. The purpose of this network is to deliver benefits for children throughout Ireland through mutual collaboration and I am pleased to report that Our Lady’s has now received the committed funding from the Health Department in the South to begin moving towards a single all-island waiting list for catheterisations by Spring 2017. To me this will be a sign of real progress for the two systems working together to benefit patients and families. Children from the North and South will have their procedures carried out in the new state of the art hybrid lab in Our Lady’s which I had the pleasure of formally opening with Minister Harris.</p>
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		<p>Whilst good progress is being made, I am conscious that we remain reliant on the majority of urgent and elective procedures for local children still being carried out by specialist heart centres in England, until sufficient capacity can be developed in Dublin. In the interim the Belfast Trust will continue to operate a service level agreement with OLCHC to provide emergency surgical treatment in OLCHC for patients from the North.</p> <p>It is of central importance for the families to be able to have world class surgery here on the island of Ireland without the upheaval of additional travel. The Network implementation plan and the funding is now in place to deliver this so I want to see concerted action by the Network on increasing the surgical capacity in Our Lady's in line with its plan, whilst acknowledging that there will be constraints outside the direct control of the Network to be overcome.</p>
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Ensuring patients' views are taken into account during changes of health and social care

<p>AQO 612/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Philip McGuigan (SF - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health how she will ensure that patients' views are taken into account during the transformation of health and social care.</p> <p>Securing better health and well being outcomes for patients and other people who use health and social care services will be at the centre of the transformation programme that I have announced.</p> <p>The experiences and needs of service users and their families will therefore be at the forefront of shaping our new service model. I am therefore committed to ensuring that the HSC works in partnership with service users to design and implement the lasting and meaningful changes we need to improve the health outcomes for our population. This is what I mean by delivering together.</p>
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		<p>This new way of engaging patients is built on the principle of co-production. Co-production will underpin how we engage service users in the future in designing new services, new treatment pathways, or at the point of care.</p> <p>Patients and service users have a vital contribution to make to transformation. I have already embarked on a period of engagement with those who use services, and staff across our HSC to listen to their views on the future of health and social care services.</p>
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Early intervention in speech and language difficulties

<p>AQW 6387/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Mike Nesbitt (UUP - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health how her Department has identified and responded to the importance of early identification and intervention in speech and language difficulties.</p> <p>There are a number of initiatives in place which will enhance early identification and intervention of speech and language difficulties.</p> <p>Speech and Language Therapy clinical pathways have been developed across the region ensuring standardisation of provision based on clinical need.</p> <p>Funding has been secured to appoint Allied Health Professional staff in neonatal wards in each Health Trust area, including Speech and Language Therapists; this will help ensure children's needs are assessed at an early stage.</p> <p>As part of the Early Intervention Transformation Programme there is now a named Health Visitor aligned to every</p>
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		<p>Department of Education funded education setting in the region. Their role is to support the need of children and signpost them to services including Speech and Language Therapists as necessary.</p> <p>A regional review of Speech and Language Therapy support in Sure Starts has been completed and an evidence based model developed and is currently being implemented. In addition there is now standardised Speech and Language Therapy provision in each Sure Start project across the region. This will enable children in their pre-school years to gain access to early identification and intervention.</p>
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Speech and language therapy provision at Tor Bank Special School

<p>AQW 6307/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health why Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's speech and language therapy provision has been reduced for Tor Bank Special School.</p> <p>A part-time speech and language therapy assistant at Tor Bank School has recently resigned, unfortunately this has caused a reduction in capacity. However, action is being taken to address the situation. The recruitment process to fill this position is underway and until this process is completed, this temporary gap is being partially filled by existing staff.</p>
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Young people with epilepsy and their treatment

<p>AQW 5966/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Ross Hussey (UUP - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health (i) how many people under 18 years old are diagnosed with epilepsy in each Health and Social Care Trust area; (ii) how many are being prescribed medication; (iii) what medication is used to treat these young people; and (iv) to list the alternative treatments being used.</p> <p>Information about the prevalence of people under 18 years old being diagnosed with epilepsy, or being prescribed epilepsy medication, in each Health and Social Care Trust area is not routinely collected by the Department.</p> <p>Medication is prescribed in line with NICE guidelines, which dictate that an anti-epileptic drug treatment strategy should be individualised according to the seizure type, epilepsy syndrome, co-medication and co-morbidity, the child, young person or adult's lifestyle, and the preferences of the person and their family and/or carers as appropriate. As the combinations of drugs that can be prescribed are so numerous it is not possible to give a definitive list.</p> <p>Epilepsy patients can avail of a range of alternative treatments including vagus nerve stimulation, use of ketogenic diets, psychology services, specialist nursing and, if necessary, surgery.</p> <p>During the Assembly debate on epilepsy on 3 October 2016 I gave an undertaking that officials would look at what information is currently held and whether there would be merit in creating a distinct database for epilepsy patients.</p>
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Paediatric intensive care beds

<p>AQW 5235/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Robbie Butler (UUP - Lagan Valley)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health to detail the number of available and occupied paediatric intensive care beds in each hospital as of 10 October 2016; and for the same period in each of the last five years.</p> <p>Paediatric intensive care beds are only provided within the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children (RBHSC). As such the number of available and occupied beds as at 10th October within the RBHSC is shown in the table below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="580 846 1410 1187"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="580 846 772 931">Beds</th> <th colspan="5" data-bbox="772 846 1410 931">10th October</th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="580 931 772 1016"></td> <th data-bbox="772 931 900 1016">2012</th> <th data-bbox="900 931 1027 1016">2013</th> <th data-bbox="1027 931 1155 1016">2014</th> <th data-bbox="1155 931 1283 1016">2015</th> <th data-bbox="1283 931 1410 1016">2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="580 1016 772 1102">Available</td> <td data-bbox="772 1016 900 1102">8</td> <td data-bbox="900 1016 1027 1102">8</td> <td data-bbox="1027 1016 1155 1102">12</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1016 1283 1102">12</td> <td data-bbox="1283 1016 1410 1102">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="580 1102 772 1187">Occupied</td> <td data-bbox="772 1102 900 1187">6</td> <td data-bbox="900 1102 1027 1187">7</td> <td data-bbox="1027 1102 1155 1187">4</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1102 1283 1187">8</td> <td data-bbox="1283 1102 1410 1187">7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Beds	10th October						2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Available	8	8	12	12	12	Occupied	6	7	4	8	7
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Update on urgent heart surgery for children

<p>AQW 5075/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Jo- Anne Dobson (UUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health what process is in place to enable all urgent heart surgery for children to take place by the end of 2017 in Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin in the Republic of Ireland.</p> <p>I refer the Member to my response to AQW 4742/16-21. The £42m investment that I and Minister Simon Harris announced in July 2016 will allow the all-island Congenital Heart Disease Network Board to implement its vision of a world class Network. This includes the phased transfer of all urgent surgical cases from the north to Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin (OLCHC) by the end of 2017, and all elective surgical cases by the end of 2018. This process, which includes a number of essential developments, including the expansion of Intensive</p>
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		<p>Care capacity in OLCHC and the associated requirement for additional medical and nursing staff to facilitate the transfer of surgery, is being overseen by the Network Board.</p> <p>In the meantime patients from the north who require urgent and elective heart surgery are referred by their clinicians to heart centres in England, with whom clinically appropriate and safe interim arrangements continue to operate.</p>
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CAMHS across Mid Ulster

<p>AQW 3889/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Keith Buchanan (DUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health what are the current hours of provision for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services across Mid Ulster.</p> <p>Current hours of provision for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are not available on a constituency basis. However, the current hours of provision for CAMHS across the Northern and Southern Trusts, which cover the Mid Ulster area are outlined below:</p> <p>Northern Health and Social Care Trust CAMHS in the Northern Trust operates from 9am to 5pm service, Monday to Friday and the CRISIS Resolution Home Service Team operate from 9am to 9pm Monday – Friday and 10am - 2pm Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays. There are plans for this service to be extended. A protocol between CAMHS and Emergency departments is in operation and any young person presenting with mental health needs should be seen within 2 hours. Young people requiring further CAMHS involvement are seen by CAMHS on the day or those attending after 9pm are given an appointment for the following morning.</p> <p>Southern Health and Social Care Trust CAMHS in the Southern Trust provide a 365 day service 9.00</p>
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		<p>am – 7.00 pm Monday to Friday and 9.00 – 5.00 pm Weekends and Bank Holidays.</p> <p>CAMHS emergency provision is available to all children and young people, who present to either Emergency Departments within Craigavon Area hospital or Daisy Hill Hospital. A protocol between CAMHS and Emergency departments is in operation and any young person presenting with mental health needs should be seen within 2 hours.</p>
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Access to UNOCINI autism assessments

<p>QW 3869/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health how parents of children with autism access UNOCINI assessments.</p> <p>Referrals for Autism Services are normally made by a GP or other health professional following a medical assessment of the child /young person. Referrals are triaged by a Multi-Disciplinary Panel to determine the appropriate service(s) required.</p> <p>Should a Social Work service be required a UNOCINI referral is completed by Autistic Spectrum Disorder practitioners in partnership with families and forwarded to the appropriate Social Work Service.</p> <p>It is expected that the UNOCINI assessment is done in partnership with the child / young person and parents and their agreement sought.</p>
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Update on Paediatric Review

<p>AQW 2499/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health for an update on the Paediatric Review.</p> <p>My Department has developed a 'Paediatric Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy' and complementary 'Paediatric Hospital and Community Care Strategy' for 2016-2026. The Strategies are designed to modernise and further improve the standard of treatment and care provided in hospital and community settings, as well as palliative and end of life care for children and their families.</p> <p>As outlined in my vision "Health and Wellbeing 2026 -Delivering Together", I am pleased to confirm that the two strategies will be shortly be published.</p>
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Action to address cyber bullying and cyber criminality

<p>AQW 6316/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Roy Beggs (UUP - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to outline what action she is taking to address cyber bullying and cyber criminality.</p> <p>Whilst technological change and widening choice of digital media presents extensive educational benefits, it also poses considerable challenges in terms of keeping the wider public and vulnerable groups safe from the associated dangers of cyber criminality and of bullying, exploitation and grooming. This is an area where there is a wide range of ongoing work across the Executive.</p> <p>In respect of cyber bullying, my Department, through the local Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs), has done much to develop internet safety and tackle the growing prevalence of cyber bullying and some of its very harmful consequences. PCSPs, in partnership with Health Trusts, the PSNI, Youth Justice Agency and Probation Board, Northern</p>
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Ireland, have developed and are delivering a range of e-safety resources endorsed by the Safeguarding Board NI for children, parents and practitioners on internet and on-line safety, sexting, cyberbullying and reporting abuse.

During November 2016 Mid and East Antrim PCSP is delivering the play “Control-Alt-Delete”, which addresses cyber bullying and internet safety at venues in Larne, Ballymena and Carrickfergus. This work is directed at safeguarding young people and the vulnerable, raising awareness and educating them so they feel safe when accessing the internet. It will be followed up by bespoke workshops with key partner organisations in each school with the development of training toolkits and sustainable training packages for future delivery. All 14-17 year olds in the Borough have been invited to attend through their schools.

In addition, to coincide with Anti Bullying Week which commences on 14 November 2016, a number of PCSPs are funding the placement of a full page Cyber Safety advertisement in the following publications; Coleraine Chronicle series, Ballymena Guardian, Tyrone Courier, Tyrone Constitution, Strabane Weekly News, Ulster Gazette, Newry Democrat and Co. Down Outlook. These responses from within the justice sector are further reinforced by a range of other initiatives that are being taken forward across the wider Executive. The previous Executive agreed to the commissioning of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) to develop an E-Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland to enable the safe use of digital and internet technology by children and young people. This work is being overseen by the Department of Health through an E-safety Project Board composed of officials from a range of Departments and agencies. My Department is represented on the Project Board which is developing the draft Strategy in advance of public consultation.

In addition, the Addressing Bullying in Schools' Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 , which was brought by the Minister for Education, received Royal Assent earlier this year. The Act provides a clear legal basis for schools to address cyber bullying by taking whatever action they deem reasonable in each case. If less serious incidents can be resolved at school level before they escalate into criminal action that can only be to the benefit of everyone involved.

On cyber criminality more generally, it is estimated that more than 50% of all crimes committed nowadays utilise the cyber environment to some degree. Cybercrime is a priority for the PSNI, which has established a dedicated Cybercrime Unit and which works closely with the National Cyber Security Centre and other stakeholders in response to the threat.

In addition, the Organised Crime Task Force, which I chair, working with PSNI, has a wide reaching engagement process which utilises business briefings, local media and other engagement events to highlight the issue and educate people and businesses. One example is this October's Get Safe Online Day, which was marked by a series of events at shopping centres in Belfast, Londonderry and Lisburn on 20-22 October. The PSNI, working with Action Fraud, has introduced a dedicated reporting portal for businesses affected by cyber crime and proactive engagement by PSNI has also led many local companies to sign up to the national Cyber Information Sharing Partnership. This joint industry and government initiative has been established to exchange cyber threat information in real time, in a secure, confidential and dynamic environment.

People in the criminal justice system with mental health and substance abuse issues

AQW 6165/16- 21	Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to outline how many people within the criminal justice system have (i) mental health problems; (ii) substance abuse issues; and (iii) both.</p> <p>Data is not routinely collected on the number of people who have mental health and or substance misuse problems across my Department as a whole.</p> <p>The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Youth Justice Agency (YJA) collate data and that information is presented below. The data available from NIPS and YJA is based on information available on the 27 October 2016. PBNI information covers the number of people assessed during the 2013/14 business year.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="687 1160 1310 1939"> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="687 1160 1310 1245">Northern Ireland Prison Service</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="687 1245 1310 1420">Information held on the PRISM computer system for the prison population as a whole</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="687 1420 948 1505">Mental illness</td> <td data-bbox="948 1420 1187 1505">Addictions</td> <td data-bbox="1187 1420 1310 1505">Both</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="687 1505 948 1590">388</td> <td data-bbox="948 1505 1187 1590">713</td> <td data-bbox="1187 1505 1310 1590">254</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="687 1590 1310 1675">Probation Board for Northern Ireland</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="687 1675 1310 1939">Information based on the number of people who started an order or license and an ACE (Assessment, Case Management & Evaluation System) risk assessment</td> </tr> </table>	Northern Ireland Prison Service			Information held on the PRISM computer system for the prison population as a whole			Mental illness	Addictions	Both	388	713	254	Probation Board for Northern Ireland			Information based on the number of people who started an order or license and an ACE (Assessment, Case Management & Evaluation System) risk assessment		
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New bail legislation

<p>AQW 6022/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Michaela Boyle (SF - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice whether her Department plans to introduce new bail legislation, including a requirement in relation to children that bail must not be refused on the sole ground that a child does not have any or any adequate accommodation.</p> <p>I have no plans to introduce new bail legislation at this time. However, bail in relation to children was considered as part of the Department's Scoping Study into children in the justice system, which included the issue of accommodation. I am currently considering the high-level proposals which emerged from that Study, and will engage with my Ministerial colleagues in taking the proposals forward, including those in relation to bail and accommodation.</p>
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Detention of children alongside adults in custody

<p>AQW 6021/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Michaela Boyle (SF - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice whether her Department plans to introduce legislation prohibiting the detention of children alongside adults in custody.</p> <p>There have been no children held in Hydebank Wood College since November 2012, when administrative arrangements were put in place to locate all children in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre.</p> <p>Unfortunately, there is no simple legislative fix which can be inserted into the current legal framework to underpin this arrangement.</p> <p>One of the aims of the Scoping Study into children in the justice system is to review the current cumbersome and complicated youth justice legislation with a view to introducing new legislation which is more effective and easier to understand. This work is at</p>
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		<p>an early stage, and full and careful consideration, including consultation, is necessary before any legislation can be introduced.</p> <p>Such legislation will place the current administrative arrangement, which ensures that no children are detained in an adult setting, onto a statutory footing.</p> <p>I shall ensure the current arrangement continues in the meantime.</p>
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