



Title of Paper: <u>DoH Circular: Change or Withdrawal of Services</u> <u>Revised Guidance on Roles and Responsibilities</u>		
For Decision Requires majority decision prior to implementation or action.	For Discussion Requires consideration and debate.	For Noting Contains information Members should be made aware.

1.0 Background

The Department of Health issued revised guidance on 9 September 2025 in relation to roles and responsibilities associated with the change or withdrawal of services.

The revised policy guidance replaces the previous version issued on 30 August 2023 and should be implemented with immediate effect.

2.0 Key Issues

The sections within the new guidance are outlined below:

- Introduction
- Role of Department and HSC bodies
- Involvement with the public including statutory responsibility to involve and consult
- Permanent change or withdrawal of service: decision-making and Departmental approval
- Temporary change or withdrawal of service: process and decision-making
- Best practice principles at a time of service change.

A copy of the revised guidance is attached at Appendix 1.

3.0 Resources Implications (inc Organisational, Financial, Human Resources)

The delivery of public consultations and stakeholder engagement have staffing and financial implications for the Trust.

4.0 Impact on Safety, Quality and Experience (SQE)

Safety, quality and patient experience are important factors in the decision making process throughout the change or withdrawal of services.

5.0 Key Risks and Proposals to Mitigate

Consideration of legislative and statutory responsibilities is important to mitigate any associated risks. The impact of any change / withdrawal of services on patient safety, quality, patient experience and workforce must also be considered to minimise any potential risks.

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