

Independent Neurology Inquiry

Update Bulletin
October 2025



Department of

Health

www.health-ni.gov.uk

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Health and wider Health and Social Care system continues to undertake a wide range of actions following the recall of Neurology patients by Belfast Trust and the subsequent Independent Neurology Inquiry report.

The purpose of this second bulletin is to provide an update on key actions by the Department since June 2025 to progress the implementation of the 76 recommendations of the Independent Neurology Inquiry (INI) report.

INI IMPLEMENTATION

From our last update in June 2025 work has continued to fully implement the remaining INI recommendations.

A further 11 INI recommendations have been passed through the assurance process and have been fully implemented. These recommendations were: INI recommendations 16, 17, 18, 24, 29, 47, 48, 54, 55, 56 and 76.

Information on all INI Recommendations can be found at Section 4 of the [INI Action Plan](#).

Following review by the Independent Neurology Liaison Group (INLG), the Inquiries Implementation Programme Management Board (IIPMB) Assurance Sub-Group met to scrutinise and agree INI Recommendation Assurance Frameworks for all INI Recommendations.

This has now provided the INI Implementation Team with a clear pathway to plan the implementation of the remaining recommendations and as such we have adjusted the summary table format issued in the June update to reflect this.

We now have 3 classifications:-

1. 'Implemented';
2. 'Ongoing and about to be implemented' and;
3. 'Plans in place and work ongoing'. See table below.

Updated Summary Table of INI Recommendation's status'

Classification	Status	INI Recommendations
IMPLEMENTED	57 of the 76 INI Recommendations have been verified as fully implemented by the IIPMB, following an evidence-based assessment provided by the Independent IIPMB Assurance Sub-Group.	<p>Recommendations: 1, 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75 and 76</p> <p>Total: 57</p>
ONGOING AND ABOUT TO BE IMPLEMENTED	8 of the 76 INI Recommendations will be Implemented Imminently	<p>Recommendations: 2, 3, 11, 15, 20, 21, 22, 42</p> <p>Total: 8</p>
PLANS IN PLACE AND WORK ONGOING	11 of the 76 INI Recommendations require further action to be taken before the recommendation can be verified as fully implemented.	<p>Recommendations: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 19, 23, and 68</p> <p>Total:11</p>

Governance Assessment of Compliance for INI Recommendations – HSCNI Trusts

In July 2025 the IIPMB Assurance Subgroup Independent Chair, Dr Patricia Donnelly OBE, held final compliance meetings with all HSCNI Trusts. These meetings were part of governance measures within the INI Implementation programme to track the progress of each Trust against each INI recommendation that were assigned to Healthcare Organisations (INI Recommendations 25- 56).

Based on evidence presented at these final meetings all Trusts were fully compliant with all the recommendations, bar two in which they were partially compliant.

For recommendation 32 (the NIPSO revised guidance, Model Complaints Handling Procedure), was recently launched in July 2025 implementing this recommendation. Trusts are provided with a 6-month period to comply. Full compliance is expected by December 2025.

For recommendation 42 (Lone Working), Trusts are awaiting regional guidance from the Department (Recommendation 15). However, Trusts are actively identifying and mitigating risks at present.

Recommendation 19 - Review Clinical Directors and Clinical Leads Role

The Department has commissioned an Independent Consultant, Dr. John Simpson, to carry out a review of the role of Clinical Directors and Clinical Leads within our HSC Trusts to address issues arising from the INI report. This consultant will work closely with the INI Programme Implementation Team and the Chief Medical Officer Group.

The main aim of this work is to increase patient safety and the associated objectives are to ensure that the learning, issues and recommendations from the INI Report, and similar reports, form the basis for a new regional HSC Trust training and development package.

The focus will be to engage with HSC Trust Medical Directors, HSC Trust HR Directors and other relevant HSC staff to design a training package to support the role of clinical directors and clinical leads, including Clinical Leadership, Team Management and Organisation, and system level Strategic and Operational Responsibilities including Strategic Change Management, Quality Improvement and Service Development.

It is expected that completion of this work will be in March 2026.

THE INDEPENDENT NEUROLOGY LIAISON GROUP (INLG)

To support implementation of the INI recommendations, a co-production model was developed that placed the lived experience of patients, families, and carers at the heart of scrutiny and decision-making. The Independent Neurology Inquiry Liaison Group—formed specifically for this purpose—comprised individuals directly harmed by the clinical failings that prompted the Inquiry. They worked alongside independent experts from the IIPMB Assurance Subgroup and with representatives responsible for delivering each of the Inquiry's recommendations.

Having assured and scrutinised Assurance Frameworks for every INI recommendation the INLG had fulfilled the Terms of Reference set for the group. The INLG had their final meeting on 20 May 2025 and has now been stood down. Their commitment to an unfamiliar and challenging process was crucial in shaping realistic plans for improvement following the Independent Neurology Inquiry. Their generosity, rigour, and pragmatism were exemplary.

The group's contributions were not limited to individual frameworks; they also helped shape the Departmental strategic approach to assurance and the cultural context in which other patient safety reforms would take place.

A [Final Involvement Report](#) was produced by one of the groups Co-Chairs which highlights the work of the group and the benefits of having them as integral part of the programme.

PICKER EXPERIENCE NETWORK AWARDS 2025

The INLG won this year's 'Individual Patient Experience' Picker Experience Network Awards (PENA). The PENA recognise outstanding excellence in patient experience. They celebrate projects, teams, individuals, and initiatives that have made exceptional contributions to care, engagement, service delivery, and wellbeing from the perspective of patients, carers, families, and staff. This is a remarkable achievement and testament to the resolve of the INLG membership.



HEALTH COMMITTEE

In our June bulletin we informed you that a Health Committee update had been requested for 19 June 2025 to provide an updated position on the INI, IHRD and USI inquiries, and to also include a briefing on the implementation of the Infected Blood Inquiry recommendations. This appearance was rescheduled to the 18 September 2025.

Live streams of the Health Committee can be viewed online at Home - [Home - Northern Ireland Assembly TV](#)

Alternatively, you may view previous sessions, including the session of 18 September, at [Committee for Health - Northern Ireland Assembly TV](#)

NEUROLOGY RECALL COMPENSATION

As a reminder, issued within the previous Neurology Update in June 2025, the Belfast Trust has extended the timeframe for individuals wishing to pursue legal action against them until 21 June 2026.

The Department has received assurances that all neurology recall cases are progressing as quickly as possible by dedicated Neurology Recall Legal Team is in place within DLS.

Monthly update reports are provided to the Department on the progress of Neurology Compensation cases.

As at the end of August 2025, of the 531 cases lodged, 265 (49%) have been resolved. 265 Live cases remain.

A list of [Neurology Recall Compensation FAQs](#) in relation to Neurology Recall Compensation can be found on the Department's website.

RQIA DECEASED PATIENTS REVIEW

In July 2025 Minister Nesbitt issued a written statement to the Assembly [written statement to the Assembly](#) providing an update on the Neurology Deceased Patients Review (DPR).

Phase Three Group One

RQIA have received the Royal College of Physician's (RCP) final overall report along with individual case summary reports for Phase Three Group One. RQIA are considering next steps regarding sharing the findings of the overall report with families and with key stakeholders.

Phase Three Group Two

The RCP will commence work on the final DPR Phase Three Group Two reviewing the clinical records of seven deceased patients. As outlined in Minister's statement in July 2025 a total of eight families were originally identified for this group. However, following RQIA's quality assurance check of the deceased patients digitised clinical records, one of the cases will not be included in this final phase of the review.

For both Phase Three groups the RQIA's Family Liaison Team (FLT) will continue to offer support to the families and keep them updated on progress.

CONTACT

For more information about the Independent Neurology Inquiry, other useful links and recent publications including the previous bulletin visit [Independent Neurology Inquiry \(INI\) | Department of Health](#)

You can contact the INI Implementation Team by email at: neurologydoh@healthni.gov.uk