



Appendix 2 - Template for Information to be Compiled

Information to be compiled by Public Authorities under Section 3(1)(a) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

(To be completed and included in public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report).

Name of Public Authority:

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Reporting Period:

April 20 23 to March 20 24

The following information should be compiled in respect of each policy, strategy and plan which has been developed, adopted, implemented or revised and each public service which has been designed or delivered by the public authority during the reporting period.

- The Trust's Executive Team has been briefed to ensure ownership of these duties at strategic level.
- The Directorate of People and Organisational Development is responsible for central co-ordination of the monitoring report on behalf of the Trust.
- Health and Social Care Trusts have worked collaboratively to ensure the rural needs assessment template is user-friendly and relevant to Health and Social Care business. The key components of the template issued by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs have been used in compliance with the legislative obligations.
- Advice and guidance is provided on the Trust's intranet to raise awareness and support staff when completing rural needs assessments.
- Staff within the Equality Team of the People and Organisational Development Directorate provide advice and guidance to staff regarding the completion of Rural Needs Impact Assessment and also provide support to services, including signposting staff to guidance.
- To ensure effective mainstreaming, the Trust's Policy development teams also signpost staff to requirements relating to the Rural Needs Act.
- This Annual Monitoring Report on Rural Needs is submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in advance of the 21st June 2024 submission date required. Both the Executive Management Team and Trust Board have now approved this report in May 2024. Monitoring information in this report will be included in the Trust's Annual Report.

- The Trust is committed to promoting and upholding its duties in relation to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 and will have due regard to rural needs in the development of all our policy and public service delivery decisions. The Trust is mindful that the level of 'regard' due will depend on the circumstances and, in particular, on the relevance of rural needs to the decision or function in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact for people in rural needs, the greater the regard required by the duty. In the table below, the Trust has provided detail on those policies which were considered as having a bearing on rural needs and therefore subject to a rural needs assessment. In preparing this monitoring template the Trust considered policies in respect of the social and economic needs of persons in rural areas and for the majority, no rural needs were identified. Many of these policies are clinical or technical in nature and have no bearing on rural needs.

<p><i>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016¹.</i></p>	<p><i>The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to².</i></p>	<p><i>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service³.</i></p>
<p>Implementation of the encompass programme: November 2023</p>	<p>Health and Social Care</p>	<p>encompass is a HSCNI initiative established to deliver sustainable, long-term digital transformation for health and social care services. Encompass will introduce an electronic healthcare record for every person in Northern Ireland. Consideration has been given to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including, broadband/internet/mobile communication access.</p> <p>The SET Programme Board, and Delivery and Readiness Assurance Group implements the initiative supported by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust.</p> <p>Mitigation has been built into the proposal in respect of persons in rural areas who may need have challenges</p>

		<p>with regard to access to telecommunications/broadband and Wi-Fi.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service users who may have difficulties can still call or write to the Trust to resolve queries. • All patients will be afforded equality of opportunity and will be treated with dignity and respect. Carers can be granted access to view portions of dependents My Care Record as per HSC Policy. • There is the potential that the implementation of encompass will improve communication for patients and service users with sensory and accessibility needs, as service user information will be available to care teams across HSC organisations. <p>These mitigations apply to both rural and urban areas. The implementation will be kept continually under review.</p> <p>In addition, patient, service users and staff experience satisfaction questionnaires, complaints and compliments will be reviewed and monitored. The Trust will also consider the feedback from SEHSCT Communication and Engagement Plans.</p> <p>Communication on the proposal will be provided in alternate languages as identified or requested and has been provided in alternate formats eg easy read.</p>
<p>The Future Provision of Trust Urgent and Emergency Care Services: Ards and North Down Area (Public Consultation)</p>	<p>Health and Social Care</p>	<p>Access to services in terms of economic cost, availability of public transport, speed of transport in event of an emergency. Consideration has been given to the social and economic needs of people in rural</p>

areas including, broadband/internet/mobile communication access.

The Trust is cognisant of the need to consider and mitigate any potential adverse impact. The Trust's proposal will be kept continually under review. This approach has been assessed as an on-going assessment to monitor the impact of proposed option on an on-going basis to ensure that the impact is not more significant than initially anticipated. See consideration and mitigating measures for potential impact on people in rural areas below:

The Trust will engage with frontline staff as well as key partners, service users and carers to ensure that the proposal is representative of and includes the valuable input of those who use its services as part of its communication strategy.

The proposal provides an integrated and emergency care model that is in line with strategic direction.

The proposal will create an Urgent Care Centre on the Ulster Hospital site, co-located with the Emergency Department

As a consolidated service, the service would have extended opening hours and be more sustainable.

The Urgent Care Centre would be staff by highly skilled clinicians from a Multi-Disciplinary team, including Emergency Nurse Practitioners, Autonomous Nurse Practitioners, First Contact Physiotherapists, and Senior Medical staff.

Consolidation of all three services on one site would

enable the service to meet demand for minor injuries due to enhanced capacity.

Enhanced diagnostic and imaging capabilities enable no restrictions on criteria by age for example more complex cases and very young children will not be required to attend another site to access or complete their care

Model would provide an alternative pathway for service users with urgent but non-life threatening conditions.

The Trust continues to develop its Travel Plan to try to meet the challenges of vehicle flow, access and car parking. This includes consideration of the provision of additional car parking spaces.

The Trust recognises that this service proposal may impact on staff in terms of relocation to a new work site.

The Trust will put robust mitigating measures in place, adopting the principles of the Trust's Management of Change Human Resource Framework. Staff's individual and specific circumstances will be considered and, where adverse impact is identified, the Trust will take steps to mitigate its effects, such as the availability of retraining opportunities and eligibility for excess travel allowance payments.

The Trust's proposal will be kept continually under review following potential implementation. Monitoring will be via monitoring of Urgent and Emergency Care Centre/Minor Injuries Service and Emergency Department activity for example the number of patients accessing the service, referral pathways utilized from service, ongoing recruitment, ongoing

		<p>discussions with staff regarding career progression opportunities, expansion of current scope of practice for specialist nurses and work life balance considerations.</p> <p>Patient and staff experience satisfaction questionnaires, complaints and compliments will be reviewed and monitored. The Trust will also consider the feedback from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Communication and Engagement Plans around the proposal, including potential service user /public engagement and consultation events.</p> <p>Mitigation, as detailed above, has been built into the proposal in respect of persons in rural areas who need to use our services.</p>
<p>Implementation of The Hospital Parking Charges Act 2022</p>	<p>Health and Social Care</p>	<p>Due to the rural public transport infrastructure, the rural population is more likely to need to drive a private vehicle to access healthcare services than take public transport.</p> <p>There are a number of social and economic needs of rural people in Northern Ireland, including for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport can present an issue for people living in rural areas due to geographical isolation. e.g. people living in rural areas may have to travel further to access public transport, there can sometimes be a lack of public transport, and timing of public transport may be an issue • Poverty/income – there are often additional costs of living in a rural area such higher

fuel/transport costs. Earnings and household incomes are often lower in rural areas which can result in a higher risk of poverty.

- Lack of information/communication of information – internet availability/quality can be an issue in rural areas. This can create issues surrounding connectedness, information and knowledge. Statistics published on DEARA website show that 67% and 98% of rural and urban areas respectively had coverage of superfast broadband in 2018. In addition, the OFCOM Connected Nations report (2019) acknowledges that more work is needed to improve services in rural areas where some customers who do have access to broadband experience slower speeds than in towns or cities.
- Certain groups e.g. elderly/young people/disabled may experience increased difficulties accessing public transport or telecommunications
- Greater risk of social isolation and loneliness due to the above issues e.g. transport, telecommunications

Access to services in terms of economic cost, availability of public transport, speed of transport in event of an emergency. Consideration has been given to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including, broadband/internet/mobile

communication access.

The Trust is cognisant of the need to consider and mitigate any potential adverse impact. The Trust's proposal will be kept continually under review. This approach has been assessed as an on-going assessment to monitor the impact