



Title of Paper: SEHSCT Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24		
For Decision	For Discussion	For Noting
Requires majority decision prior to implementation or action.	Requires consideration and debate.	Contains information Members should be made aware.

1.0 Background

The Trust is required to produce an annual Monitoring Return to ensure compliance with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

2.0 Key Issues

The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 placed a legal duty on SET to ensure due regard is paid to the consideration of the social and economic needs of service users in rural areas when developing, adopting, implementing and revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and implementing public services. The Report outlines Rural Needs screening completed by Trust Leads for 2023/24 where an impact on Rural Needs has been identified. The Report highlights how SET has had due regard when developing, adopting, implementing or revising relevant policy, strategy or plans or when designing or delivering services.

The Annual Monitoring Report for 2023/24 has been requested for return to DEARA by 20 June 2024 and is now presented to Trust Board for approval.

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

Significant work is ongoing to support Directorates to comply with statutory obligations and to raise overall awareness of best practice.

4.0 Impact on Safety, Quality and Experience (SQE)

The team’s efforts to promote inclusion and participation for those from rural areas assist in supporting patients, service users and staff and aids better communication helping to improve service delivery.

5.0 Key Risks and Proposals to Mitigate

A key risk is a failure to comply with statutory obligations as laid down by the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. SET will continue to work collaboratively with other HSC Trusts, DEARA, DoH, BSO, the Equality Commission, NIHRC and other key stakeholders to ensure as best as possible such risks are mitigated.

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Date: 29 May 2024