**CONSULTATION RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**CONSULTATION ON TRANSITIONAL ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Background**

The aim of the consultation is to seek views on the policy proposals that will underpin the provisions to be included in the Adoption Support Services (Transitional Arrangements) Regulations that the Department intend to make in 2023. These Regulations, once made, will provide for a transitional framework for Adoption Support Services, under the existing legislation – the Adoption (Northern Ireland) Order 1987. The policy intention is, as part of these initial transitional arrangements, to ensure that resources and support services are priorities for adoptive families.

**Questionnaire**

The questionnaire can be completed by a member of the public or it can be completed on behalf of a group or organisation.

Please indicate your answer to the questions by placing an **X** by your selection. You can also provide further comments in the free text field.

**The deadline for consultation responses is 5pm on 19th January 2023.**

**Respondents’ details**

I am responding: as an individual

on behalf of an organisation (please tick box)

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Tel: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**RESPONSES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 5pm on 19 January 2023.**

**In writing to: Family and Children’s Policy Directorate**

**Department of Health**

**Room A3.3, Castle Buildings**

**BELFAST**

**BT4 3SQ**

**Tel: (028) 90522169**

**Or by email to**: [**adoption@health-ni.gov.uk**](mailto:adoption@health-ni.gov.uk)

**CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Adoption Support Services to be made available (pages 10 - 11)**

Q1. Do you agree with the proposed support services to be prescribed as a part of the transitional arrangements?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain why.

**Comments:**

**4.** **Categories of Persons Eligible for Adoption Support Services (pages 12 - 13)**

Q2. Do you agree with the categories of persons to whom specific support services should be made available?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain why.

**Comments:**

**5. Assessment (pages 14 – 16)**

Q3**.** Do you consider that the Department has included all the prescribed persons in relation to the right to request an assessment of needs?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

Q4. Do you agree with the corresponding circumstances under which a Trust must undertake an assessment of need?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

**6. Notification of proposal and final decision to provide adoption support services (pages 17 - 18)**

Q5. Do you consider that the procedure for processing assessments for adoption support services are adequate?

* Proposal outlining support
* Communicating the decision
* Providing notice

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain why.

**Comments:**

**7. Preparation of plan and review of provision of adoption support services (page 19)**

Q6. Do you consider that the requirements for preparing the adoption support plan and undertaking reviews of provision are adequate?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

**8. Notices (page 20)**

Q7. Do you consider that the requirements for providing notice are adequate?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

**9. Urgent Cases (page 21)**

Q8. Do you agree that provision should be included in the Regulations to enable the requirements to be set aside in urgent cases?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

**10. Financial Support (pages 22 – 24)**

Q9. Do you agree that the Department has covered all the relevant circumstances to consider when assessing the need for financial support?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

Q10. Do you consider that the procedures for review are adequate in relation to the provision of financial support?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain.

**Comments:**

**11. Recovery of expenses between HSC Trusts (page 25)**

Q11. Do you agree that Trusts should be able to recover expenses, where they provide support services on behalf of another Trust?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

If not, please explain why.

**Comments:**

**12. Services for persons outside the area (pages 26 - 28)**

Q12. Do you agree that we should include provision in the Regulations, as outlined in paragraphs 12.7 to 12.9, to require Trusts to provide services to persons outside of their area in specific circumstances?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |  | Undecided |  |

**Comments:**

**Equality Implications**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Department to “have due regard” to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without.  The Department is also required to “have regard” to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of a different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group.

The Department has also embarked on an equality screening exercise to determine if any of these recommendations are likely to have a differential impact on equality of opportunity for any of the section 75 groups. We invite you to consider the recommendations from a section 75 perspective by considering and answering the questions below. Answering these questions will contribute to the completion of the Department's Screening template and the screening outcome.

**Q13. Are there any considerations and evidence that you think the Department should take into account when assessing the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 or The Human Rights Act 1998 arising as a result of the proposed changes?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |

**Comments:**

**Rural Impact**

The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 became operational on the 01 June 2017 and places a duty on public authorities, including government departments, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services.

**Q14. Are the proposed changes likely to have an adverse impact on rural areas? If yes, please provide comment on how these adverse impacts could be reduced or alleviated.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  |  | No |  |

**Comments:**