

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Department of Health Northern Ireland

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Safe and Effective Staffing Legislation

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

The Safe and Effective Staffing Legislation is intended to underpin existing strategies such as Delivering Care and The Workforce Strategy.

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The Legislation aims to put a statutory requirement on Health and Social Care Trusts in NI to commit to partaking in tasks designed to ensure that they are operating in the most effective way in relation to staffing.

This will be achieved by having duties placed on relevant bodies to

- workforce plan;
- have guidance on how staffing requirements are calculated; and
- produce reports in line with the agreed timetable to the applicable authorities.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

NA

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

NA

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

NA

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The proposed legislation will benefit both rural and urban areas.

Greater emphasis on workforce planning and the measuring and recording of staffing levels may draw attention to shortages in geographical or occupational areas and allow for bespoke remedies. This in turn will result in improved working conditions and clinical outcomes.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

It is not anticipated that the legislation will impact rural areas differently. However, as stated above, greater emphasis on workforce planning and the measuring and recording of staffing levels may draw attention to shortages in geographical or occupational areas and allow for bespoke remedies.

The Department has held a series of evidence gathering meetings with the regional HR Directors. These have been followed up with requests for written evidence. To date, no specific regional issues have arisen.

As key stakeholders regional HR Directors are involved in all stages of policy development. Any issues or needs will be identified easily and early.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text"/>

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

NA

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

The Safe and Effective Staffing Bill Team have held pre-consultation meetings with all relevant stakeholders. These include the regional Health and Social Care Trusts. The Department is about to launch a full consultation on the elements of the legislation. The consultation will be sent to all MLAs and the regional HSC Trusts.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

The Department has not identified any distinct social or economic needs of people in rural areas. It is anticipated that the legislation will serve the needs of rural and urban people equality.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

NA

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

In considering the social and economic needs of people in rural areas we have considered the examples given in paragraph 5.22 of *A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised)*.

Pending the full consultation, we did not identify any elements of the proposed legislation in relation to;

- Rural Infrastructure;
- Rural access to the Health and Social Care Trusts;
- Public transport;
- Access to high quality broadband;
- Mobile communications;
- Lower population densities;
- Operating businesses in rural areas;
- People travelling to rural areas for tourism or recreation purposes;
- Travelling longer distances to avail of employment opportunities;
- Access to childcare facilities;
- Disproportionally effects on seasonal workers, farmers and farm families or older people, younger people, or people with disabilities.
- Pockets of hidden poverty or deprivation within rural areas.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes

No

If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **5C**.

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

NA

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES** GO TO Section **6A**.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

In considering the social and economic needs of people in rural areas we have considered the examples given in paragraph 5.22 of A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised).

The legislation is designed to underpin and expand existing policies and procedures. These have not been influenced in by rural needs in practice. The pre-consultation stage of the legislation has not identified any rural needs. We will pay close attention to the formal consultation and reappraise this position if necessary.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Dermot McGrath/ Andrea Owens
Position/Grade:	Staff Officer/ DP
Division/Branch	Safe and Effective Staffing Bill Team
Signature:	
Date:	04/03/24
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Michael Blower
Position/Grade:	G7
Division/Branch:	Safe and Effective Staffing Bill Team
Signature:	
Date:	12/04/24