A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities

*(Revised) April 2018*

Appendix 1 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)

Template

The Departmental resource budget for 2024-25 aims at a strategic level to allocate funding across the Department and ALBs in order to protect services delivered directly to citizens and maintain service provision as much as possible, and, through this minimise the impact on service delivery, patients and clients.

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

Department of Health Resource Budget 2024-25

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.

Developing a Policy Strategy Plan

Adopting a Policy Strategy Plan

Implementing a Policy Strategy Plan

Revising a Policy Strategy Plan Designing a Public Service

Delivering a Public Service

X

X

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

Consideration of the Department of Health Resource Budget 2024-25

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.

Department of Health

1A. Name of Public Authority. Department of Health

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

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N/A

*Reasons why a definition of ‘rural’ is not applicable.*

N/A

*Rationale for using alternative definition of ‘rural’.*

N/A

*Details of alternative definition of ‘rural’ used.*

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition). Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of ‘rural’ is not applicable.

X

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

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Our initial assessment is that the cost reductions which need to be applied will not impact differently on people in rural areas from people in urban areas.

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.

As the Department’s funding requirement is significantly higher than the budget allocation for 2024-25, cost reductions will need to be applied and while these may impact on people in rural areas, they will equally impact the population as a whole.

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

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

X

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

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

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

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

Rural Businesses Rural Tourism Rural Housing

Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas Education or Training in Rural Areas

Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas

Poverty in Rural Areas Deprivation in Rural Areas

Rural Crime or Community Safety Rural Development

Agri-Environment

Other (Please state)

X

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

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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.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders Published Statistics Consultation with Other Organisations Research Papers Surveys or Questionnaires Other Publications

Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).

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.

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

X

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?

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

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The allocation of the 2024-25 resource budget does not, in itself, represent any material change to departmental policy but, rather, aims at strategic level to allocate the available funding in order to protect services delivered directly to citizens and maintain service provision as much as possible, and, through this minimise the impact on service delivery, patients and clients.

Where cost reductions need to be applied it is expected that these will impact both on people in rural and urban areas

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

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

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

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In certain circumstances people in rural areas may experience more difficulties in accessing healthcare services. This is usually due to living in more remote locations where travel distances to GPs, dentists, pharmacies and other healthcare services are greater than in urban areas. However the impact of these factors can be mitigated by appropriate scheduling of appointments, online consultations where possible, home visits, patient transport provision, outreach services and prescription deliveries.

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

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

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

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.

Yes No If the response is NO GO TO Section 5C.

X

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?

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

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Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:

**David Keenan**

Position/Grade:

 **7**

Division/Branch

**Financial Planning Unit**

Signature:

**D Keenan**

Date:

**15/5/24**

Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:

**Brigitte Worth**

Position/Grade:

**Finance Director**

Division/Branch:

**Finance Division**

Signature:

Brigitte Worth

Date:

**15/5/24**

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

X

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.

**SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording**

The allocation of the 2024-25 resource budget does not, in itself, represent any material change to departmental policy but, rather, aims at strategic level to allocate the available funding in order to protect services delivered directly to citizens and maintain service provision as much as possible, and, through this minimise the impact on service delivery, patients and clients.

Where cost reductions need to be applied it is expected that these will impact both on people in rural and urban areas.

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.