Department of Health Business Priorities 2018

Support people to lead healthy and independent lives

Promote a Healthy Ireland including:

- Support for cross-sectoral initiatives through the Healthy Ireland Fund
- Publish the Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework
- Support the introduction of a Sugar Sweetened Drinks Tax and put in place an evaluation framework under the Obesity Policy
- Enact and commence the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill
- Implementation of Codes of Practice for Marketing of Food to assist in addressing childhood obesity
- Implement Get Ireland Active - The National Physical Activity Plan.

Develop the successor mental health policy to A Vision for Change.

Strengthen telephone helpline and digital access to mental health supports and early intervention/counselling services for young people.

Publish the Final Report of the Task Force on Personalised Budgets.

Publish a new Health (Transport Support) Payment Scheme Bill.

Support housing conference/Joint policy statement with Dept of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Ensure the delivery of high quality and safe health and social care

Develop a new National Patient Safety Advocacy and Complaints Policy.

Publish the General Scheme of the Patient Safety Licensing Bill.

Develop and publish a Patient Safety Bill to legislate for mandatory open disclosure of serious patient safety incidents and further strengthen patient safety.

Implement the National Antimicrobial Resistance Action Plan and lead the National Public Health Emergency Team response to Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE).

Introduce new legislative provisions governing Deprivation of Liberty.

Commence the development of a national health sector adult safeguarding policy and legislation.

Develop a Medicinal Cannabis Access Programme.
Publish the Assisted Human Reproduction Bill.

Publish the General Scheme of the Human Tissue Bill and progress drafting.

Commence the National Review of Specialised Cardiac Services.

**Create a more responsive, integrated and people-centred health and social care service**

Finalise the Government’s Implementation Plan for the Sláintecare Report and establish the Programme Office to lead implementation.

Implement the national drugs strategy, *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery*, including:
- oversee the establishment of a supervised injecting facility
- finalise the report of working group considering approaches to the possession of small quantities of drugs for personal use.

Provide people-centred health supports for homeless people, as set out in *Rebuilding Ireland*, the action plan for housing and homelessness.

Publish the Health Service Capacity Review 2017-2031.

Negotiate and oversee a 10 year capital investment in the health service under the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

Consult on the geographic alignment of Hospital Groups and Community Health Organisations and finalise proposals.

Progress development of a policy for the Financing and Regulation of Homecare and support the enhancement of community supports for older people.

Reform the GP contract including through a stronger role in chronic disease management.


Publish and oversee the implementation of the Trauma Policy for Ireland.

Introduce legislation to give effect to the 2018 Budget including GP visit cards for carers.

Commence development of policy on future role and services of acute hospitals within the wider context of an integrated model of care.
Oversee the improvement of Emergency Department and elective waiting times.

Oversee plans to increase respite care for those with disabilities and their families.

Oversee implementation of the:
- Neuro Rehabilitation Strategy
- New Children’s Hospital Capital Project and Programme
- National Cancer Strategy
- National Maternity Strategy
- National Ambulance Service reform programme, including agreement for the provision of ambulance services in Dublin
- The National Forensic Mental Health Service Hospital capital project and preparation for the move from the Central Mental Hospital to this new facility.

**Promote effective and efficient management of the health services**

Strengthen the performance oversight of the HSE in ensuring delivery and communication of HSE National Service Plan 2018 and effective input into HSE National Service Plan 2019.

Oversee the implementation of the HSE’s Value Improvement Programme.

Support the HSE in the strengthening of the compliance framework for the consultant contract.

Enactment of the Children’s Health Bill.

Introduce legislation to improve the governance of the HSE.

Lead the review of legislative provisions in relation to hospital charges.

Implement Government Pay Policy in the Health Sector and input to the work of the Public Sector Pay Commission.


Publish the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Pricing Review.

Complete the examination of treatment of farm and business assets under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme, publish Heads of Bill and implement changes identified.
Support the effective pricing and reimbursement of medicines including biosimilars.

Implement the recommendations of the National Strategic Framework for Health and Social Care Workforce Planning.

Oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Taskforce on Staffing and Skillmix for Nursing and introduce a minimum data set for the nursing and midwifery workforce.

Introduce provisions for the regulation of health information and health research in the context of EU GDPR and a new Health Information Policy.

Oversee the approval process for the Electronic Health Record, starting with the EHR for the new Children’s Hospital.

**Develop a high-performing Department**

Evaluate the Working Better Together change programme and the findings of the Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey and implement a new Organisation Development Action Plan.

Manage the Department’s relocation to Miesian Plaza.

Implement a programme of compliance assurance with the Governance Framework for the Department.

Lead the health sector’s preparations for Brexit.

Support the Government in its consideration of a Constitutional Amendment Bill in respect of Article 40.3.3 and associated legislative proposals.

Manage the response to Private Member’s legislation and Parliamentary Questions (over 11,000 in 2017).

May 2018