

Office of the Mental Health Champion



2021/22

Annual Report

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Mental Health Champion: 2021/22 Annual Report

Contents

Section title	Page
Foreword and introduction	5
Summary of purpose	5
Governance statement	5
Performance and achievements during the reporting period	7
2021/22 Budget summary	11
Forward look to 2022/23	13
Acknowledgements	13
Annex A: Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion's Role	14
<u>Annex B: 2022/23 Business Plan</u>	19

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Mental Health Champion: 2021/22 Annual Report

Foreword and introduction

The position of Mental Health Champion has been filled by Professor Siobhán O'Neill since 8 September 2021 following a period of acting as the Interim Mental Health Champion. The Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion's role dictates that the Champion will provide their Annual Report to the Minister of Health within three months of the end of the reporting year: and the Minister will update the Executive in respect of progress against key performance indicators for the role. This Annual Report covers core business activity during the 2021/22 financial year.

The overarching aim of the Office of the Mental Health Champion is to advise and assist in the promotion of mental health and wellbeing through all policies and services. This role is fully supported by the NI Executive, which is committed to improving the mental health of everyone throughout all aspects of life. There is a desire to weave a mental health promoting ethos into all policies and services, which have been advised and assisted by the Champion. As a signal of the collaborative will for the role to succeed, funding for the role has been secured on a cross-departmental basis.

Summary of purpose

The purpose of the Mental Health Champion is to further the mental health agenda across all platforms and fora; to promote emotional health and wellbeing, access to evidence-based support and services; and to promote recovery. A copy of the Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion's role is available at [Annex A](#).

The Mental Health Champion takes part in the public debate around psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention, and champions these issues to improve the experience of people suffering from mental ill health and those who have experience of mental ill health.

The Mental Health Champion is a public advocate and consensus builder; a government advocate; advisor and challenger; and a network hub for all mental health matters in Northern Ireland.

Throughout her tenure as Mental Health Champion, Professor O'Neill will continue to engage with people with lived experience and other stakeholders and will continue to be a focal point for the discussion around wellbeing, mental health and suicide.

Governance statement

The Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion's role authorises the Champion to retain the freedom to make independent decisions on the strategic direction of their work area as set out in the Annual Business Plan. The Office of the Mental Health Champion follows and utilises the host organisation's governance processes and systems for the purposes of IT, finance, HR, risk management, procurement and estates. As such, the management team within the Office of the Mental Health Champion applies the principles of good practice in Corporate Governance and continues to further strengthen its governance arrangements by undertaking continuous self-assessment of its compliance with Corporate Governance best practice.

Hosting

The Office of the Mental Health Champion was hosted by the Patient Client Council (PCC) under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department of Health (DoH) and PCC for the duration of the reporting period. In late 2021, a review of the hosting arrangements was undertaken, to ensure the most effective and efficient ways of working, and the Minister of Health agreed for the hosing arrangements for the Mental Health Champion to transition from PCC and for Mental Health Champion's office to be established at arm's length within DoH.

Independence

Professor O'Neill is seconded from Ulster University to fulfil the role of Mental Health Champion four days each week. Professor O'Neill's academic standing and her role within Ulster University, along with the Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion role, help ensure the independence of the Mental Health Champion role.

The independence of the Mental Health Champion and supporting office will be underpinned by the designation of a Senior Accountable Officer within the Office of the Mental Health Champion during the 2022/23 reporting period. The Senior Accountable Officer will be formally accountable for all aspects of governance, decision-making and financial management with the Office of the Mental Health Champion. The Senior Accountable Officer will be available to the Department of Health Principal Accounting Officer and the Minister of Health to provide advice, guidance and rationale with regards to the stewardship of the Office of the Mental Health Champion.

Organisational structure and support

In addition to the Champion, the Office of the Mental Health Champion currently comprises:

- 1 x Senior Policy and Research Officer who is Head of Branch (G7);
- 1 x Policy and Research Officer (DP);
- 1 x Communication Officer (DP); and
- 1 x Administrative Officer (currently vacant).

Cost/finances

In April 2020, the NI Executive agreed cross Departmental funding of up to £500k per year for the Office of the Mental Health Champion. All Departments currently contribute £55k per annum which provides a total budget of £495k.

An analysis of each component of the Mental Health Champion expenditure for 2021/22 is provided below under the section titled "*2021/22 Budget summary*".

Gifts register

The Office of the Mental Health Champion maintains a Gifts Register detailing any gifts that are received by the Champion and/or MHC staff in the course of business. All gifts with a monetary value of £20 or over were returned to the sender during the reporting period.

Business plan for 2022/23

A summary of the Business Plan for the Mental Health Champion for the 2022/23 financial year is as shown in Annex B.

Risk management

Risk management is an organisation-wide responsibility and internal processes exist to identify, track, mitigate and (where necessary) escalate risks to ensure minimal impact on business activity. A Risk Register for the Office of the Mental Health Champion is

maintained, reviewed and updated regularly throughout the year and is shared annually with the Department of Health for oversight.

Performance and achievements during the reporting period

The reporting requirements for the Mental Health Champion are set out in the Terms of Reference for the role. These include the following outcomes:

- Presence in the public arena with public awareness of the Mental Health Champion and the role;
- Enhanced visibility across Government: presence across the public sector arena with awareness of the Mental Health Champion and the role;
- Influence in decision making and interaction with policy makers;
- A voice for those normally voiceless across the public sector;
- Advocate for awareness of psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide in the public and independent sector;
- The promotion of increased mental resilience across the population of Northern Ireland; and
- Contribution to an improvement in mental health services.

Presence in the public arena with public awareness of the MHC and the role

As the permanent Mental Health Champion position was filled on the 8 September 2021, the following section of report includes the performance and achievements for the interim period along with the period immediately after appointment.

The Interim Mental Health Champion participated in 596 external meetings during the 'Interim' tenure (from 1 April 2021 to 7 September 2021). This included:

Meetings with	Number
People with lived experience	89
Political representatives	69
Government/policy teams	93
Professional groups	115
Community and Voluntary sector groups	103
Communications teams	105
Academics	22
Total	596

Since taking up the position of Mental Health Champion on the 8 September 2021, the Champion has participated in 431 external meetings. This included:

Meetings with	Number
People with lived experience	75
Political representatives	46
Government/policy teams	67
Professional groups	75
Community and Voluntary sector groups	71
Communications teams	81
Academics	16
Total	431

As the Mental Health Champion takes part in public debate about psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide as well as being a champion for those with lived experience of

mental ill health, increasing public awareness about the new role is essential, so the public can understand all aspects of the role and the work being completed by the Mental Health Champion to improve mental health in Northern Ireland.

The Mental Health Champion is actively present in the public arena, through engagements including, visits to charities and schools, regularly speaking at events and participating in television and radio interviews addressing topics relevant to mental health in civic society.

During the reporting period a digital advertising campaign was developed to further raise awareness of the new role of the Mental Health Champion and to outline the many aspects of the position. The campaign consisted of short interview clips where the Mental Health Champion answered questions about the role and work involved. The campaign also collaborated with key stakeholders including a group of young people from Crisis Café, Newry, to record interviews that addressed key issues affecting mental health in NI and how the role of MHC will help to improve mental health. The Champion also participated in a number of media one-to-one interviews which allowed for further in-depth discussion on the role of the Mental Health Champion.

Marking World Suicide Prevention Day 2021 and World Mental Health Day 2021, the Mental Health Champion collaborated with key stakeholders and people of lived experience of suicide/suicide ideation to create a video series highlighting the suicide prevention services available and the work happening to promote mental wellbeing and prevent suicide in Northern Ireland, while also raising public awareness on suicide prevention and mental health policy priorities. This was coupled with a letter to all political party leaders asking them #PlugTheGap by supporting the Mental Health Champion's call to fully fund the Department of Health's Mental Health Strategy, to ensure it is implemented in full. This led to a larger #PlugTheGap advertising campaign in April 2021, where animated videos were created to increase the public's knowledge of the Mental Health Strategy and its importance in improving mental health throughout the province.

In January 2022, the Mental Health Champion created a regional advertising campaign to raise public awareness of the importance of physical activity to mental wellbeing, called 'Small Moves, Big Changes.' This campaign used inspirational stories about people across Northern Ireland who participate in different forms of physical activity to improve their mental health. This was a multimedia campaign which included television, radio and print ads, organic and paid social media posts, editorial pieces and adshells. This campaign ran throughout January incorporating a diverse range of physical abilities as well as stakeholders.

Campaign posters were displayed on 19 public sites across Northern Ireland and television and radio adverts ran nationally for two weeks. The campaign's social media advertising had a reach of over 99,000 users and generated over 15,000 visits to the campaign website.

Enhanced visibility across Government

During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion has sought to enhance awareness of mental health issues throughout the public sector, with a focus on five key themes:

1. Prevention and early intervention
2. Suicide prevention
3. Children and young people
4. Alcohol and drugs
5. Service improvement.

The Mental Health Champion has provided guidance and expertise to government Departments and organisations regarding each of the key themes when required, or when

specifically requested. During the reporting period, the Champion met with the Ministers of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs; Economy; Education; Finance; Justice; Communities; and Infrastructure, briefing them about the MHC role and remit and to enable consideration of how best each individual Minister could be supported.

In addition, the Champion is a member of, or has contributed to the following government advisory groups in order to meet senior departmental officials and to influence policy:

- Executive Working Group on Mental Wellbeing, Resilience and Suicide Prevention;
- Mental Health Strategic Advisory Panel;
- Mental Health Strategic Reform Board;
- Regional Mental Health Framework Steering Group;
- Towards Zero Suicide Board;
- Project Life 2 Steering Group;
- Criminal Justice Healthcare Oversight Group;
- The Inter-Departmental Working Group: NICCY 'Still Waiting';
- DE Summer Scheme Steering Group;
- Education Framework Project Board;
- DE Reference Group for the Review of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings; and
- DfE Advisory Group to Oversee the FE Policy Review of Student Support.

Professor O'Neill chairs the Protect Life 2 Achieving Evidence and Best Practice Steering Group which has been established to provide expertise advice and support to the Regional Protect Life Steering Group in respect of research, evidence, best practice/guidance and evaluation methodology relevant to the successful implementation of Protect Life 2. The Mental Health Champion has provided detailed feedback regarding Project Life 2 actions during the reporting period.

Influence in decision making and interaction with policy makers

The Mental Health Champion is available to provide advice and guidance to the NI Executive and political representatives and to participate in discussion with all NICS Departments and Ministers in order to raise the profile of Mental Health and Wellbeing in Northern Ireland. During the reporting period, the Champion promoted the consultation and publication of the new Mental Health Strategy with all stakeholder groups; and liaised with groups and individuals to help shape and facilitate their responses to the consultation. During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion also provided written and verbal evidence to the Health Committee (focusing on the response to the response to the mental health strategy) on 13 May 2021; and the Education Committee (focusing on mental health impact of the pandemic and the current situation in relation to young people's mental health; the importance of early intervention and prevention in the school setting; and mental health as a priority for the Independent Review of Education) on 23 March 2022.

In addition, the Mental Health Champion met with a number of organisations with a view to influencing policies in relation to mental health issues. The Champion provided written input to:

- The Independent Review of Education;
- The Department of Health's consultation on the Cancer Strategy;
- The Department of Health's consultation on the Duty of Candour;
- The Department of Health's consultation on the Preventing Harm, Empowering Recovery - Substance Use Strategy;
- The Department of Justice's consultation on the Victims and Witness strategy and establishment of Victims Commissioner for Northern Ireland

- The Department of Justice's consultation on 'Empowering Change in Women's Lives' the strategy for supporting and challenging women and girls in contact with the justice system; and
- The Call for Views on the Domestic and Sexual Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategies, issued jointly by the Departments of Health and Justice and The Executive Office.

The Mental Health Champion has also advised The Executive Office and the Department of Health on the mental health impact of the pandemic through preparing and submitting multiple pieces of written evidence to the Health and Education Committees and providing letters supporting policy initiatives.

A voice for those normally voiceless across the public sector

During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion met with a number charity and voluntary organisations and individuals regarding a wide range of issues. This included discussions on specific Serious Adverse Incidents where learning from individual cases could be implemented in order to improve mental health services throughout the province. In addition, the Champion met with a number of individuals who have been bereaved by suicide and/or homicide by patients with mental ill health in order to ensure learning is derived from these tragic incidents and avoidable deaths.

It should be noted that the Mental Health Champion is unable to provide medical advice, and is unable to support individuals who are seeking access to services, or have complaints about services. Where a member of the public contacts the Office of the Mental Health Champion regarding a personal issue, advice and signposting is offered with due regard to the specific circumstances that have been raised by the individual.

Advocate for awareness of psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide in the public and independent sector

During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion funded and prepared questions for the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey for 2021 to examine attitudes to mental health and suicide in Northern Ireland in order to inform specific actions in the Mental Health and Protect Life 2 Strategies, and shape policy development. The NILT survey considered:

- Mental health stigma;
- Myths about suicide;
- Early intervention, helpseeking and emotional literacy;
- Public mental health policy; and
- Attitudes to mental illness.

The results of the 2021 NILT survey are available on the NILT website¹ and an associated research paper² prepared by the Mental Health Champion and published in May 2022 is available [here](#).

In addition, the Mental Health Champion participated in regional, national and international discussions and surveys regarding psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide including the initiation of a rapid evidence review and papers on summer programmes and the [International Covid 19 Suicide Prevention Research Collaboration](#). This resulted in a COVID-19 suicide research study register.

¹ <https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/>

² <https://www.ark.ac.uk/ARK/sites/default/files/2022-05/update145.pdf>

The promotion of increased mental resilience across the population of Northern Ireland

In order to increase the mental resilience in the population of Northern Ireland, the Mental Health Champion promoted the consultation and publication of the new Mental Health Strategy during the reporting period. In particular the Mental Health Champion is a member of the Mental Health Strategic Reform Board and the Regional Mental Health Framework Steering Group and provides advice and guidance to those within DoH and the wider Health and Social Care (HSC) network with responsibility for designing and delivering mental health services.

The Mental Health Champion also recognises the importance in full funding being provided for the 10-year Mental Health strategy. During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion lobbied for funding to be made available. This included, but was not limited to, sending an open letter to all NI political parties to request that commitment for full funding would be included within their respective manifestoes.

The Mental Health Champion uses the evidence based, “*Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing*” approach to promote wellbeing and resilience across the population. These form the framework for her media work, podcasts and webinars on this topic. During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion led a prominent multimedia campaign promoting Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This campaign generated 25,488 website visits from 20,960 unique users. A follow up campaign included TV hub ads, Digital Audio ads (streaming sites) Retail ads and transit ads across Northern Ireland.

Contribution to an improvement in mental health services

During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion supported specific service improvements within HSC Trusts. The Mental Health Champion also visited facilities delivering mental health services in order to hear the views of service providers and to establish how services are currently being delivered in practice. In addition, the Mental Health Champion continued to meet with Service User Consultants through meetings facilitated by PCC. The Mental Health Champion also has regular meetings with the NI Mental Health Policy group, and the Royal College of Psychiatrists (including sub-faculties), and the NI Branch of the British Psychological Society, to discuss policy priorities.

2021/22 Budget summary

The Mental Health Champion budget for the reporting period included three components: salaries; hosting costs and operational expenditure. At the start of the reporting period the Mental Health Champion budget was forecasted to consist of the following key components:

Components	Forecasted (£'000)
Salaries	250
Hosting costs	150
Operational expenditure	95
Total	495

Actual spend for the reporting period was as follows:

Components	Actual (£'000)
Salaries	251
Hosting costs	121
Operational expenditure	79
Total	451

An analysis of each component is provided below.

Salaries

The Office of the Mental Health Champion was staffed by five personnel during the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion; a Senior Policy and Research Officer; a Policy and Research Officer; a Communication Officer; and an Administrative Officer. The Mental Health Champion is seconded from the Ulster University which invoices the Department of Health on a regular basis under the terms of a Secondment Agreement.

Hosting costs

During the reporting period, the Mental Health Champion and the associated office were hosted within the Patient and Client Council for the purposes of financial, HR and other administrative support. Hosting costs totalling £120,623 primarily comprised rent, rates and insurance for the MHC's office accommodation and business support fees. For 2022/23, these support functions will be provided by the Department of Health

Operational expenditure

The operational expenditure was allocated during business planning and was spent as demonstrated in the respective columns below:

	£
Participation in NI Life and Times Survey	15,149
Word Suicide Prevention Day videos	3,675
Staff conferences	243
Quarter 3&4 Comms Campaigns *	60,000
Totals	79,067

** The Office of the Mental Health Champion ran three campaigns during the reporting period: Meet the Mental Health Champion; Small Moves, Big Changes; and Plug the Gap. Details about each campaign has been provided above.*

Underspend

During the reporting period, there was an underspend of £44,444 on the budget allocated to the Mental Health Champion. At the commencement of the 2021/22 financial year, the management team in the Office of the Mental Health Champion decided to business plan on a two-quarterly basis, as it was not immediately clear when the successful candidate would be available to take up post. To be prudent, spend for the first two quarters of the reporting period was kept to a minimum in order to ensure that any permanent Mental Health Champion, when in post, would not be committed to financial obligations made by the Interim Mental Health Champion.

The underspend was also exacerbated by virtue of the Office of the Mental Health Champion having to use agency workers to fill the Administrative Officer (AO) position. During the reporting period, one AO was successful in securing permanent employment and there was a delay in filling the vacancy that was created. Similarly there was a period at the end of the

reporting period where the incumbent AO was offered an alternative position and left the post vacant for around six weeks. Moving forward, the AO position will be filled on a permanent basis using existing NICS processes, which should result in enhanced budgetary predictability for forecasting purposes.

Forward look to 2022/23

Business planning is an ongoing activity within the Office of the Mental Health Champion and business planning will include the requirements as set out in the Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion role. The following are some of the additional planned activities that have been identified at the start of the 2022/23 financial year:

- Recruitment of a dedicated resource to conduct independent in house research;
- Promotion and involvement in awareness days;
- 2022/23 Communications Campaigns;
- Procurement and development of a dedicated MHC website; and
- Site visits to statutory and voluntary & community service providers.

The Mental Health Champion will continue to be available to the NI Executive, individual Ministers, departmental officials, the community and voluntary sector and individual members of the public in order to fulfil the obligations within the Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion role.

Within the 2022/23 business plan, the Office of the Mental Health Champion has made a commitment to remain agile and take steps to address social determinants of poor mental health as and when these are identified.

The Business Plan for the Mental Health Champion for the 2022/23 financial year is as shown in [Annex B](#).

Acknowledgements

Professor O'Neill would like to acknowledge the role of the NI Executive in the creation of the Mental Health Champion role and thank them for their continued support and the funding commitments from their respective Departments.

In addition, the Mental Health Champion acknowledges and appreciates the help, guidance and assistance that the Patient Client Council provided while hosting the Office of the Mental Health Champion. In particular we would like to thank Vivian McConvey (PCC Chief Executive) and PCC's Business Support Team; Carol Collins and Briege McAlister (and previously Clora Gallagher, Chris Carton and Kathryn O'Dea) who supported the Office and the role of Mental Health Champion on a daily basis from its commencement.

Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Champion's Role

Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland

Terms of Reference

1. Background

1.1 *In April 2020, the Minister of Health, Robin Swann MLA, secured cross-departmental support through the NI Executive to formally establish the role of a Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland (the Champion).*

1.2 *Mental ill health affects a large number of people every year and is an issue that is key to all Departments. It therefore requires coherent and co-ordinated working to ensure mental ill health effects are addressed.*

1.3 *The Champion's role is fully supported by the NI Executive, which is committed to improving the mental health of everyone throughout all aspects of life. There is a desire to weave a mental health friendly ethos into all policies and services, which have been advised and assisted by the Champion. As a signal of the collaborative will for the role to succeed, funding for the role has been secured on a cross-departmental basis.*

2. Statement of Purpose

2.1 *The overall purpose of the Mental Health Champion is to:*

- *Further the mental health agenda across Northern Ireland;*
- *Promote emotional health and wellbeing;*
- *Access evidence based support and services; and*
- *Promote recovery.*

2.2 *To deliver against this purpose, the Mental Health Champion will:*

- (a) *Take part in the public debate around psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide and will champion these issues to improve the experience of people experiencing mental ill health or who have experience of mental ill health;*
- (b) *Have a person-centred focus, understand the experience of people with lived experience and be a voice for those otherwise voiceless;*
- (c) *Take part in policy development across the whole of Government in areas around psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide. The Champion will also challenge decisions where it is appropriate to do so; and*
- (d) *Engage with people with lived experience and others, acting as a focal point for the discussion around wellbeing, mental health and suicide.*

3. Role

3.1 *The role of the Mental Health Champion is to:*

- (a) *Help to integrate a mental health friendly ethos across all policies and services developed and delivered by the NI Executive. This includes enhancing the level of collaborative working across Government in relation to psychological wellbeing, mental health, suicide and recovery. The role is also to be a voice for people with lived experience; those who are often not heard in the public debate.*
- (b) *Champion and enhance mental health in all aspects of public life. This includes proactively seeking to increase the visibility of the role across Government Departments in this work.*

3.2 In particular, the Mental Health Champion will be:

- **A public advocate for mental health**
The Champion will be a public advocate for mental health, communicating the collective voices of people with lived experience, their families and carers, and communities impacted by mental health inequalities.
- **A Government advocate to help and support government Departments and officials**
The Champion will support the day-to-day functions of Government and act as a positive conduit between Government and service delivery.
- **A consensus builder to integrate mental health and wellbeing across Government**
The Champion will work across Government and the independent sector, to help the integration of mental health considerations into all policies.
- **An adviser to senior stakeholders and a constructive challenger of decisions and policies**
The Champion will work together with Government and others to further mental health and to be a positive voice. The Champion will also provide constructive challenge and a critical voice in the public debate.
- **A network hub for the development of positive mental health across Northern Ireland**
The Champion will promote, through a network hub, meaningful contact between people with a role in progressing mental health in Northern Ireland. This will include accessing leaders across the UK and internationally in wider strategic developments.

3.3 *While the Champion is not a decision maker with respect to government policy, they will endeavour to influence policy direction, where practicable. In order to be able to influence the policy direction, the Champion will be included in policy drafts for mental health related issues and will have early access to policy documents. This is on the understanding that such documents are still policy in development, should not be shared, commented on in public or used in any research where there is a possibility it will be published ahead of any policy papers.*

3.4 *The Champion will have a key role in influencing and enhancing the implementation of the Department of Health's Mental Health Strategy 2021-31.*

4. Co-Production

4.1 Co-production is essential in the development of mental health policy.

4.2 Co-production means:

- *Involving those who need to be involved in the process, and ensuring that all have an equal voice. It also means recognising that different people have different strengths and ensuring that the outcome is what is best for those who are directly impacted.*
- *Considering the reality of difficulties for those who suffer from mental ill health or have been affected directly or indirectly by mental ill health and deaths related to mental health. Importantly, it is about ensuring the focus is on bringing the best out of people and focusing on positive messages such as recovery.*

4.3 *The Champion will therefore have regular contact with all who have an interest in mental health. This includes persons with lived experience, professionals, Government Departments and agencies, academics and others. The Champion will also engage widely across the public and private sector stakeholder groups.*

5. Key Objectives and Reporting Requirements

5.1 *Key objectives of the Mental Health Champion are:*

- To participate in the public debate around mental resilience, suicide, mental health and recovery.*
- To participate in policy development across Government, helping Departments and officials when developing mental health policy and policies that can help to promote psychological wellbeing, resilience and good mental health*
- To promote mental health across all society.*
- To encourage Government to think about mental wellbeing, resilience, mental health and recovery and to help integrate the ideas of mental resilience and mental health in all public policy making.*
- To create a focal point for mental wellbeing and mental health discussions and to speak out for those who have lived experience.*
- To challenge decisions where mental wellbeing, suicide prevention, good mental health and recovery are not considered, and where such consideration would be beneficial for society as a whole.*
- To build an evidence base to aid decision making and influence policy, by conducting or procuring bespoke regional research on issues relevant to mental health policy.*

5.2 *The Champion will prepare an Annual Business Plan, which will set out their key objectives and outcomes to be delivered during the year. The Champion will also*

produce an Annual Report for the Minister of Health and the Executive, which will outline their work in the previous year and outcomes achieved against the Business Plan.

5.3 Outcomes on which the Mental Health Champion is expected to report, include:

- Presence in the public arena with public awareness of the Mental Health Champion and the role;
- Enhanced visibility across Government: presence across the public sector arena with awareness of the Mental Health Champion and the role;
- Influence in decision making and interaction with policy makers;
- A voice for those normally voiceless across the public sector;
- Advocate for awareness of psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide in the public and independent sector.
- The promotion of increased mental resilience across the population of Northern Ireland; and
- Contribution to an improvement in mental health services.

5.4 These outcomes are considered to be key performance indicators for the role. This list is not exhaustive but it gives an indication of key work areas.

5.5 Progress will also be considered at regular governance meetings during the year with Department of Health officials. This will provide an opportunity to identify issues and solutions to enable progress against key outcomes.

6. Appointment Arrangements

6.1 The Mental Health Champion's tenure is for three years, with the potential for one extension of up to three years. The appointment process follows the principles of the Public Appointments process and the appointment decision is made by the Minister for Health.

6.2 The Terms and Conditions of appointment for the Mental Health Champion are contained in a separate Secondment Agreement between the Department of Health and Ulster University.

7. Hosting and Organisational Structure

7.1 For the 2022/23 financial year, the Mental Health Champion and her office will be hosted, at arm's length, by the Department making use of and in compliance with all departmental IT, Finance, HR and office services.

7.2 This arrangement will be reviewed on an annual basis.

7.3 The Champion will be supported by the following staff:

- 1 x Senior Research / Policy Support Officer (Grade 7);
- 1 x Research / Policy Support Officer (Deputy Principal);
- 1 x Communications / Media Support Officer (Deputy Principal); and
- 1 x Administrative Support Officer (AO).

8. Finance

8.1 The annual budget for the Champion's office has been agreed as up to £500k, which is to cover staffing costs, office overheads and other programme expenditure.

8.2 The Champion will develop an annual budget plan for the office to accompany the Annual Business Plan. Expenditure should be authorised and incurred within the NICS delegated budgetary limits, and must adhere to general accounting rules and public procurement principles. The Champion will monitor expenditure against the budget profile and will provide monthly returns to the Sponsor Branch in the Department of Health.

9. Governance and Reporting

9.1 The Mental Health Champion will work within the strategic scope of their role as detailed in these Terms of Reference and any subsequent amendments approved by the NI Executive.

9.2 The Champion retains the freedom to make independent decisions on the strategic direction of their work area as set out in the Annual Business Plan.

9.3 The Champion's office will follow and utilise the hosting organisation's governance processes and systems for the purposes of IT, finance, HR, risk management, procurement and estates. These areas will be covered in regular accountability meetings with the Department in a similar manner to those conducted for other Departmental ALBs.

9.4 The Champion will share their Annual Business Plan with the Sponsor Branch in the Department of Health no later than the start of the financial year to which it relates. The Champion will provide their Annual Report to the Minister of Health within three months of the end of the reporting year, who will update the Executive in respect of progress against key performance indicators for the role.

9.5 With regards to the wider governance and accountability arrangements associated with managing public resources and safeguarding public funding, including HR, finance, information governance and risk management, the Champion will report to the Deputy Secretary, Social Services Policy Group in the Department of Health.

2022/23 Business Plan (summarised)

Objectives/Goals	Tasks	Activities
<p>1. Presence in the public arena with public awareness of the Mental Health Champion and the role</p>	<p>1.1 Continue to develop and work through comms strategy</p> <p>1.2 Targeted stakeholder engagement aligned to highlight, promote and implement elements of the MH strategy</p> <p>1.3 Ad hoc involvement in relevant media messaging</p>	<p>1.1.1 To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion and involvement in awareness days (World Mental Health Day and Suicide Prevention Day etc); • Christmas/January Comms Campaign; • Procurement and development of a dedicated MHC website; • Preparation and submission of media pieces; • Procurement of branded goods; • Christmas Cards and business cards. <p>1.2.1 Strategic meetings with key stakeholders</p> <p>1.2.2 Conduct site visits with statutory service providers</p> <p>1.3.1 Social media and public messaging around mental health, wellbeing and covid recovery</p>
<p>2. Enhanced visibility across Government: presence across the public sector arena with awareness of the Mental Health Champion and the role</p>	<p>2.1 Publication of an Annual report for 2021/22</p> <p>2.2 Prevention and early intervention</p> <p>2.3 Suicide prevention</p> <p>2.4 Children and young people</p> <p>2.5 Alcohol and drugs</p>	<p>2.1.1 Submit an Annual Report on the 2021/22 performance of the MH Champion's office</p> <p>2.2.1 Provide guidance and expertise to government Departments and organisations regarding prevention and early intervention when required</p> <p>2.2.2 Continued membership and participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Criminal Justice Healthcare Oversight Group - Mental Health Strategic Reform Board <p>2.3.1 Provide guidance and expertise to government Departments and organisations regarding suicide prevention when required</p> <p>2.3.2 Continued membership and participation in:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protect Life 2 steering group - Protect Life 2 Research and Development Subgroup - Towards Zero Suicide <p>2.4.1 Provide guidance and expertise to government Departments and organisations regarding children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing when required</p> <p>2.4.2 Continued membership and participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DE Reference Group for the Review of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings - The independent review of education - DfE Advisory Group to Oversee the FE Policy Review of Student Support. <p>2.4.3 Continue to engage with relevant key stakeholders</p> <p>2.5.1 Provide guidance and expertise to government Departments and organisations regarding alcohol and drugs when required</p>
<p>3. Influence in decision making and interaction with policy makers</p>	<p>3.1 Participate in discussion with all NICS Departments and Ministers</p> <p>3.2 Provide advice and guidance to the NI Executive and political representatives</p> <p>3.3 Raise the profile of Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>3.1.1 Respond to relevant consultations for all NICS Departments that require MHC input</p> <p>3.1.2 Meet with Ministers as required</p> <p>3.1.3 Attend NI Assembly Committees as and when invited</p> <p>3.1.4 Meet with NICS Officials as required</p> <p>3.1.5 Support the implementation of strategies and policies that will impact on Mental Health</p> <p>3.1.6 Conduct/procure policy and research work</p> <p>3.2.1 Participate in relevant Executive Groups</p> <p>3.2.2 Continued participation in All Party Group meetings</p> <p>3.2.3 Meet with political representatives as required</p> <p>3.3.1 Meet with the Mental Health Foundation to consider</p>

		<p>areas of mutual interest and benefit.</p> <p>3.3.2 Meet with relevant stakeholder groups</p>
<p>4. A voice for those normally voiceless across the public sector</p>	<p>4.1 Identify and meet with individuals and groups who are underrepresented in public debates</p> <p>4.2 Meet with individual members of the public and Mental Health charities and organisations</p> <p>4.3 Identify and take steps to raise awareness of social isolation and other social determinants that lead to poor mental health</p>	<p>4.1.1 Engage with those who are underrepresented to ensure their views are considered/included</p> <p>4.2.1 Meet with members of the public as required</p> <p>4.2.2 Meet with Mental Health charities and organisations as required</p> <p>4.2.3 Conduct site visits with community and voluntary MH organisations</p> <p>4.3.1 Remain agile and take steps to address social determinants of poor mental health as and when these are identified</p>
<p>5. Advocate for awareness of psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide in the public and independent sector</p>	<p>5.1 Participate in regional discussions and surveys regarding psychological wellbeing, mental health and suicide</p>	<p>5.1.1 Recruit a dedicated resource to conduct independent research on a fixed term contract</p> <p>5.1.2 Participate in all island research projects relevant to the MHC Key Themes</p>
<p>6. The promotion of increased mental resilience across the population of Northern Ireland</p>	<p>6.1 Support the implementation of Mental Health Strategy, and Framework and the aligned funding requirements</p> <p>6.2 Participate in regional discussions that present opportunities to influence practices which may impact on resilience</p>	<p>6.1.1 Support the implementation of the Mental Health Strategy</p> <p>6.1.2 Support and assist the development of a Regional Mental Health Service</p> <p>6.2.1 Involvement in discussions with a MH impact</p> <p>6.2.2 Participate in regional discussions regarding resilience in our children and young people</p>
<p>7. Contribution to an improvement in mental health services</p>	<p>7.1 Support and provide guidance with the implementation plan for the MH strategy</p> <p>7.2 Participate in regional discussions regarding current and</p>	<p>7.1.1 Continued membership of Mental Health Strategic Advisory Panel</p> <p>7.1.2 Continued membership of MH Strategic Reform Board</p>

	<p>future mental health services</p>	<p>7.2.1 Continued membership and participation in the Executive Working Group on Mental Wellbeing, Resilience and Suicide Prevention</p> <p>7.2.2 Continue working with Service User Consultants</p> <p>7.2.3 Work with HSC Trusts to promote and improve MH services and advocate to Trusts for Services for particular high risk groups</p> <p>7.2.4 Promote awareness and access to available sources of funding for MH services</p>
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