



**Northern Ireland  
Confederation**  
for Health and Social Care

**2024**

**Conference  
& Exhibition**

# **NICON24**

## **Grasping the Nettle**




# Introduction

Health Minister, Mike Nesbitt, has now set out a clear direction for health and social care (HSC).

At NICON24, our ambition is to challenge ourselves and our system to relentlessly focus on the required change. We know the HSC system is under severe pressure, in an extremely constrained financial environment – yet there is scope to collectively work together to drive improvement.

In the lead up to conference, we asked our members what nettles need to be grasped. The seven issues set out below summarise what they told us – we will revisit these throughout conference.





## **1. Promote honest dialogue with the public – as partners**

- Help the public stay healthy and manage their own care – with support and technology.
- Explore changing access to care with the public.
- Support the system to deliver for patients – managing our scarce resource.



## **2. Cultivate a valued and supported health and care workforce**

- Take a strategic approach to workforce planning – funding, training, and modernisation.
- Improve flexibility – cross disciplinary and cross boundary working.
- Make HSC NI a 'go-to' place to work.



### **3. Build the capacity in communities to manage care**

- Shift services and budgets from hospital to community.
- Avoid admissions and speed up discharge by investing in social care.
- Capitalise on digital innovations and remote care.



### **4. Make primary care fit for the future**

- Work with primary care partners to secure investment and innovation.
- Refocus upstream - invest in prevention and population health with partners.
- Build seamless pathways between primary and secondary care.



## **5. Reduce elective waiting times**

- Utilise emerging best practice to innovate and drive improvement.
- Work with partners to creatively manage lists – people waiting well.
- Secure additional investment to address the longest waiters.



## **6. Realise the ambition for a joined-up government approach**

- Harness the intent of the Programme for Government – working together for a healthy population, tackling inequalities and protecting our planet.
- Focus on children, mental health, and ageing well – working across sectors and with communities.
- Rethink research, innovation, and keeping people well – driving our economy.



## **7. Support Team HSC – building collaborative capacity to deliver**

- Invest in system working to optimise our assets – driving productivity.
- Seek agreement on clear and sequenced actions, which are deliverable.
- Be open and compassionate – enhancing public confidence.



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