



22 September 2020

FAO Mr John Goudy  
Corporate Business Planning & Performance  
5th Floor Housing Centre  
2 Adelaide Street  
Belfast BT1 8PB

*Letter sent Via Email only to:- [business.performance@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:business.performance@nihe.gov.uk)*

**Re: Royal College of Psychiatrists Northern Ireland Response to:  
Housing Executive Draft Older People's Housing Strategy 2020/21-  
2025/26**

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is the statutory body responsible for the supervision of the training and accreditation of psychiatrists in the UK and for providing guidelines and advice regarding the treatment, care and prevention of mental and behavioural disorders. Among its principal aims are to improve the outcomes for those with mental illness and to improve the mental health of individuals, families and communities.

The College has approximately 400 members in Northern Ireland, including Doctors in training. These Doctors provide the backbone of the local psychiatric service, offering inpatient, day patient and outpatient treatment, as well as specialist care and consultation across a large range of settings.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists Northern Ireland is very grateful to have been given the opportunity to comment on this excellent document.

The Strategy substantially addresses most major areas of concern and incorporates much innovative thinking on how to meet the challenges of an ageing population. It is particularly good to see the needs of those with dementia and mental health problems addressed so clearly and

compassionately. The use of approaches such as "HAPPI" and "lifetime homes" is particularly innovative and very welcome.

The Strategy is well-placed for the new era heralded by the Mental Capacity Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. The emphasis on flexibility, support and co-production is absolutely what will be needed. The coverage of areas such as supported and extra care is important and the vision of a society with older people with needs being accepted as an integral part of communities is bold and very warmly welcomed.

As experts in the field of older people's mental health and dementia it is extremely encouraging to see such a well thought through and insightful Strategy that promises to address the needs of older people and maintain a place for them in communities across Northern Ireland. This appears to be a model for other public policy to follow and the Royal College of Psychiatrists Northern Ireland fully supports the document.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Dr C Barton, Consultant Psychiatrist  
Chair, Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age RCPsych NI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Wilson', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Dr Richard Wilson, Consultant Psychiatrist  
Chair of RCPsych in NI & Vice President RCPsych