

---

**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation**

Richard Pengelly  
Permanent Secretary  
Department of Health, Northern Ireland  
(by email)

7 September 2021

Dear Mr Pengelly

**OSR review of mental health statistics in Northern Ireland**

In June 2021, a new [Mental Health Strategy \(2021-2031\)](#) was published by the Department of Health (NI), setting the strategic direction of mental health services in Northern Ireland for the next decade. At a time of major transformation and change, statistics and data are vital to support decision making and should be viewed as a key component in measuring the effectiveness of the new strategy.

Today, we have published our review of mental health statistics in Northern Ireland. We found that statistics users have a strong vision of what mental health statistics should be delivering, but that there are currently significant issues hindering their development. While there is large gap between this vision and what currently exists, we are encouraged by the strong appetite in Northern Ireland to make improvements.

We hope that our review will support and complement the aims set out in 'Theme 3: New ways of working' of the new mental health strategy, and look forward to continued engagement with you and other organisations in Northern Ireland over the coming months.

I am copying this letter to Siobhan Carey, Chief Statistician for Northern Ireland, Eugene Mooney, Senior Statistician at the Department of Health, Sean Holland, Chief Social Work Officer of Social Services at the Department of Health and Peter Toogood, Director of Mental Health at the Department of Health.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation