

Note on the Independent Review Group established to examine the role of voluntary organisations in publicly funded health services

Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD, announced the establishment of an Independent Review Group in July 2017 to examine the role of voluntary organisations in the operation of health and personal social services in Ireland. Dr Catherine Day will chair the group, while Professor Jane Grimson and Professor Deirdre Madden have been appointed as members of the group (biographies below).

In establishing the Review Group, the Minister acknowledged the enormous contribution made by voluntary providers, including religious and faith-based organisations, to the provision of health and personal social services in Ireland over centuries. He also acknowledged the role played by these organisations, how they are organised and their arrangements with the State have changed over the years and that we can expect further changes to emerge over time. The establishment of this review group will provide the space for an inclusive and respectful process of consideration and inform the development of policy over the medium term.

The Independent Review Group has started its work and is currently conducting an initial fact-finding exercise, which includes individual meetings with a small number of representative organisations and other relevant bodies. A public consultation will be undertaken in 2018 to seek the views of service providers, service users, the public, funders, regulators and other interested parties. It is expected that the Independent Review Group will report to the Minister in autumn 2018.

Terms of Reference

The Review Group shall examine and inquire into the current role and status of voluntary organisations in the operation of health and personal social services in Ireland, including religious and faith-based organisations, the strengths and weaknesses of this mode of service provision, the issues which arise in connection with the provision of services to the public through such organisations, and to make recommendations on how the relationship between the State and voluntary organisations in the arena of health and personal social services should evolve in the future. In particular, the Review Group shall

- Examine and inquire into the role played by voluntary organisations in the provision of health and personal social services in Ireland including the contribution such organisations have made and continue to make to the Irish health service;
- Seek views and consult with service providers, service users, the public, funders, regulators, and other interested parties;
- Provide a factual report with an overview of the different types of legal status and governance structures of health and personal social service providers which are owned, managed or governed by voluntary organisations, with more detailed factual information on the major acute hospitals and such other major providers as the review Group may deem appropriate;

- Outline the issues which, in the view of the Review Group, arise at present from the model of providing services to the public in the area of health and social care through voluntary organisations, and any particular issues arising in connection with providing services through religious or faith-based organisations, having particular regard to the availability of publicly funded health services, equality considerations, patient safety, value-for-money, clinical governance, education and training of healthcare professionals, performance oversight, protection of public capital investment and risk management.
- Outline the issues which, in the view of the review Group are likely to arise in the future from this model, having regard to changing patterns of religious affiliation in the population, changes in the organisations providing such services (including declining vocations to religious life), possible changes in the configuration of services, and possible future requirements for hospital amalgamation or co-location.
- Make recommendations to the Minister for Health on the principles which should inform the future relationship between the state and voluntary service providers; and
- Suggest options to the Minister for actions that would enhance the delivery of services and safeguard public investment, particularly where large capital investments are required or where withdrawal of services is being considered.

Review Group Members

Dr Catherine Day

Dr Catherine Day graduated from UCD with a B.A. Economics and Politics in 1974, followed by a Master's in International Trade and Economic Integration in 1975. She also has Honorary Doctorates from UCD, University of Limerick and Griffith College Dublin. She joined the European Commission in 1979 and held a number of senior positions before her appointment as Secretary General of the European Commission in 2005, in which capacity she served until her retirement in 2015.

Her current activities include:

- Special Adviser to President Jean-Claude Juncker, European Commission
- Chair of the Governing Body, University College Cork

Professor Jane Grimson

Professor Jane Grimson, a former Acting CEO and former Director of Health Information at HIQA, is a Pro-Chancellor of the University of Dublin (Trinity College). Professor Grimson is a graduate in Engineering from Trinity and has an MSc and PhD in Computer Science from the Universities of Toronto and Edinburgh, respectively. She took up the post of Lecturer in Computer Science in Trinity College in 1980 and was appointed to a personal chair in Health Informatics in 2003. She has published widely in the field of database systems and health informatics and has a particular interest in promoting the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in engineering and in research generally. She was awarded an

honorary degree (Doctor of Laws) by NUI Galway in 2017 for services to engineering and gender equality in higher education in Ireland. She chaired the Gender Equality Task Force at the NUI Galway.

Professor Deirdre Madden

Professor Deirdre Madden, School of Law, UCC (Medical Law, Company Law) has research interests and publications primarily in the area of medical law and ethics. She has a Master's degree on surrogate motherhood and a PhD on the law relating to assisted reproduction. She was called to the Bar in 1989. Professor Madden was a member of the Medical Council from 2004 – 2013 and is a current member of the CORU, the Health and Social Care Professionals Council. She has been a member of a number of national expert groups related to medical law, ethics and patient safety, including the National Patient Safety Advisory Group, the National Advisory Committee on Bioethics, HIQA's Research Advisory Group and the Expert Group on the Implementation of the ABC v Ireland judgement.