

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

The Health and Personal Social Services (Superannuation), Health and Social Care (Pension Schemes) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

S.R. 2016 No.384

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department of Health (DoH) to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2. The Statutory Rule is made under Articles 12(1) and (2), 14(1), (2) and (3) of, and Schedule 3 to, the Superannuation (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 and sections 1, and 3 of, and paragraph 5 of Schedules 1 and 2 and Schedule 3 to, the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and is subject to the negative resolution procedures.

2. Purpose

The key purpose of this rule is to provide access to the HSC Pension Scheme for employees of GP Federations.

3. Policy Background – What is being done and why

- 3.1. The Northern Ireland General Practice Committee (NIGPC) has recently established GP Federations to provide resource for services such as pharmacy and phlebotomy and to increase the skills mix in surgeries to alleviate some of the pressure within General Practice. Currently the NIGPC has grouped all the GP Practices in Northern Ireland into 17 Federations mapping the Integrated Care Partnership boundaries.
- 3.2. The HSC Pension Scheme regulations do not currently provide access to the pension scheme for employees of GP Federations. In order to provide access GP Federations will need to be treated as an HSC employing authority for the purposes of the HSC Pension Scheme, similar to that of GP Practices and Out of Hours Providers. The purpose of this statutory rule is therefore to provide access to the HSC Pension Scheme for employees of GP Federations.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. The changes introduced by this statutory rule have been subject to statutory consultation which commenced on the 3 February 2016 and ended on the 26 April 2016. Among those consulted were HSC Trade Unions representatives; HSC Employers; HSC Pension Service (Scheme Administrators); DFP; the Government Actuary Department and HM Treasury.
- 4.2. 3 responses were received. All three respondents, the British Medical Association (BMA), the Pharmacist Defence Association (PDA) and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) were supportive of the proposals to provide GP Federation employees with access to the HSC Pension Scheme.

4.3. The RCN raised a number of other wider concerns which were not within the scope of this consultation.

5. Equality Impact

5.1. The Department concluded that the new arrangements were not likely to have a significant impact on equality of opportunity for any group referred to in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and therefore a full EQIA was not recommended.

6. Regulatory Impact

6.1. A regulatory impact assessment has not been produced for this rule as it has no impact on the costs of business, charities or the voluntary sector.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. None.

8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

8.1. Legal advice confirms that the provisions of this rule comply with section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

9. EU Implications

9.1. Not appropriate

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

10.1. Pension provision for GP Federation staff has not yet been provided in England, Wales or Scotland.

11. Additional Information

11.1. Not applicable.