



**Western Health  
and Social Care Trust**

**Emergency Planning  
& Business Continuity Policy**

**January 2025**

<b>Title</b>	Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy		
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<b>Ownership:</b>	Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate Services		
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<b>Version No:</b>	Version 2.0	<b>Supersedes</b>	Business Continuity Policy V 0.1 July 2016 and Emergency Planning Policy V 0.2 September 2011
<b>Reference No:</b>	<b>COR/PPCS/010/V2</b>		
<b>Links to other policies, procedures or protocols</b>	Major Incident, Mass Casualty, Service Business Continuity Plans.		

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Comments</b>
November 2024	Version 2.0.	Jacqueline Doherty	Re-draft of existing 2016 policy to combine the Emergency Planning Policy 2011 and update of revised Statutory Legislation (NI Civil Contingency 2023 Framework) and ref. to NIS Regulations 2018.
January 2025	Version 2.0.	Jacqueline Doherty	Policy approved at the Policy Group 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2025. Removal of appendix 1 and section 8.0 amended.

## Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction .....	3
1.1	Responsibilities of the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT) under the NI Civil Contingencies Framework 2023.....	4
1.2	Definitions.....	4
2.0	Purpose and Aims .....	4
3.0	Policy Objective .....	4
4.0	Policy Statement.....	5
5.0	Scope of the Policy .....	5
6.0	Organisational Responsibilities .....	5
7.0	Legislative Compliance, Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance .....	7
8.0	Equality & Human Rights Screening .....	7
9.0	Sources of Advice and Further Information.....	8
10.0	Alternative Formats.....	8
11.0	Policy Review .....	8
Appendix 1	..... Error! Bookmark not defined.	
EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS SCREENING	..... Error! Bookmark not defined.	

### 1.0 Introduction

The Western Health and Social Care Trust's responsibilities in relation to responding to emergencies and disruptions are set out in the Civil Contingencies Framework for Northern Ireland 2023.

The Trust's performance is assessed under the HSC Core Standards for Emergency Planning.

## **1.1 Responsibilities of the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT) under the NI Civil Contingencies Framework 2023.**

WHSCT responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Framework are defined as:

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning;
- Duty to establish and maintain Emergency Response Plans;
- Duty to put in place Business Continuity Management arrangements;
- Duty to communicate with the public
- Duty to share information
- Duty to co-operate with multi-agency emergency response organisations

## **1.2 Definitions**

An emergency is defined as: "An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment, or the security of a place.

Business Continuity is the capability of an organisation to continue delivery of products or services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident.

## **2.0 Purpose and Aims**

- The aim of this policy is to outline the Trust's strategy in response to an emergency event or situation.
- To ensure the Trust is compliant with all Statutory Legislation including the Network and Information Systems Regulations 2018.
- Embed a business continuity management culture to ensure delivery of services during a disruptive incident.
- Establish the general principles and processes for the development of an emergency response and business continuity management system which provides for planning, administrative and operational oversight for all contingency and disaster recovery activities.

## **3.0 Policy Objective**

The main objective of this Policy is to ensure that the Trust has appropriate emergency response and business continuity arrangements in place to enable continued delivery of essential services during a major incident or service disruption.

## **4.0 Policy Statement**

### **4.1**

- The Trust will improve and maintain its resilience against service disruptions by completing and reviewing of service business impact assessments to maintain accurate identification of critical and urgent services.
- The Trust will ensure appropriate contingency measures are in place to boost the level of cyber and physical resilience of network information systems for the provision of essential services and digital services.
- The Trust will ensure that appropriate contingency arrangements are in place in preparation for encompass.
- Ongoing assessment of threats and risks to critical services, i.e. pandemic planning, cyber etc.
- Ongoing maintenance, review and exercising of Emergency Response and Business Continuity Plans for critical services, thereby, providing a rehearsed method of restoring its key services to an agreed level within an agreed timeframe following a disruption.
- Maintaining an appropriately trained workforce with the knowledge and skills to respond to and manage service disruptions, ensuring that patient safety and wellbeing is paramount.
- Minimise potential Trust reputational risk.

**4.2** This policy has been developed in line with the key principals for policy development and incorporates the current HSC Statutory and Legal requirements including best practice and guidance on emergency response and business continuity management.

## **5.0 Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all critical and urgent services as identified in the Corporate Major Incident Plan and to all Trust staff who have responsibility for incident response.

## **6.0 Organisational Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring the adequacy of emergency and contingency planning in the Trust and for ensuring that Plans are built on the principles of risk assessment, co-operation with partners, communicating with the public and information sharing. This will include the provision of adequate resources to facilitate effective emergency planning and business continuity management systems.

### **6.2 Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate Services**

The Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate Services has responsibility for the successful implementation of emergency and business continuity planning management arrangements within the organisation.

### **6.3 Directors**

Directors are responsible for ensuring that:

- Staff awareness of all relevant emergency response plans, within service groups
- Business Continuity Plans are completed for each identified Trust time critical and core essential services
- Business continuity plans are cascaded to appropriate staff within the directorate who are given appropriate training;
- Plans are reviewed annually or sooner as appropriate;
- Ensuring that any sub-contracted suppliers or services have up to date business continuity plans in line with the Trust's policy and procedures.
- There are linkages to the Corporate Risk Register and Assurance Framework;
- Training is provided for relevant personnel.
- Assessing the impact to critical and urgent services of interruption to include cyber related incidents.
- Nominating Directorate representation for attendance at the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Strategic Forum

### **6.4 The Emergency Planner**

The Emergency Planner will develop Major Incident and Business Continuity Management across the Trust by:

- Continually improve the Major Incident and Business Continuity Management System through collaboration with identified stakeholders to increase the resilience of the Trust to disruptive events and incidents.
- Use Business Impact Analysis and Process Mapping to adequately understand critical business processes, their dependencies and recovery requirements.
- Identify activities and dependencies that require additional risk mitigations and work with key stakeholders to implement protection and prioritised response and recovery solutions.
- Develop, implement and maintain Major Incident and Business Continuity Plans to ensure preparedness for business continuity disruptions and to provide continuing assurance over the robustness of Business Continuity Plans through a programme of exercises, including communication, regular maintenance and internal and independent reviews.
- Identify activities and dependencies that require additional risk mitigations and work with our stakeholders to implement protection and prioritised response and recovery solutions.
- Actively embed awareness of the Trust's Major Incident and Business Continuity requirements including provision of appropriate training, allowing for all staff to understand their role before, during and after a service disruption.

- Align good practice with the HSC Core Standards for Emergency Planning, NIS Regulations, the Business Continuity Institute Good Practice Guidelines and the BS EN ISO 22301

## 6.5 The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Strategic Forum

The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Strategic Forum is responsible for:

- Facilitating and monitoring the implementation and continual improvement of the Trust's Major Incident and Business Continuity Planning arrangements.
- Sharing information on any new or emergent threats or risks to services.
- Disseminating information and advice shared at the NI Civil Contingency and DoH Emergency Planning regional meetings with directorate colleagues.
- Lead on the implementation of the Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Policy.
- Ensure that Trust emergency preparedness plans build upon existing services and expertise and comply with HSC Core Standards for Emergency Planning, the NI Civil Contingencies Framework 2023 and the NIS Regulations 2018.

## 7.0 Legislative Compliance, Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following list of guidance and standards;

- NI Civil Contingencies Framework (revised November 2023)
- International Standard for Business Continuity ISO22301
- HSC Core Standards for Emergency Planning
- Network and Information Systems (NIS Regulations 2018)
- Major Incident Plan (incorporating major incident and business continuity)

## 8.0 Equality Statement

In line with duties under the equality legislation (Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998), Targeting Social Need Initiative, Disability discrimination and the Human Rights Act 1998, an initial screening exercise to ascertain if this policy should be subject to a full impact assessment has been carried out. The outcome of the equality screening for this policy, procedure, guideline or protocol is:

**Major impact**

**Minor impact**

**No impact.** ✓

## **9.0 Sources of Advice and Further Information**

- Further advice and information regarding this policy document can be obtained from the Trust's Emergency Planner.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with related policies and procedures.

## **10.0 Alternative Formats**

This document can be made available on request in alternative formats, e.g. Braille, disc, Easy-Read and in different languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.

## **11.0 Policy Review**

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all policies are kept under review to ensure that they remain compliant with relevant legislation. The Trust will review this policy on an annual basis until further notice from the policy review group.