



**NORTHERN IRELAND PRACTICE AND EDUCATION
COUNCIL FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY**

Performance Management Framework

September 2024

Any request for the document in another format or language will be considered

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1. Introduction and Context

In general terms, Performance **Measurement** is seen as a process of evaluation against specific objectives, standards or historical data enabling judgement to be made on the relative position or progress towards priorities, services and responsibilities. Performance **Management** is the process of learning from the measurement and driving change and improvement.

Performance measurement is the essential foundation on which performance is built. But, although performance indicators are important they are not the only way of assessing performance. The emphasis on performance measurement carries with it the risk that the process becomes an end in itself. Therefore, it is important that sight is not lost of the fundamental objectives of performance measurement:

- **Improved service** - performance measurement is one essential element in performance management to secure continuous improvement in services;
- **Improved accountability** - clarifying the outputs and outcomes that are achieved for the resources used makes it easier to hold organisations accountable.

Performance measurement can contribute to effective services; can help improve performance by identifying good practice and opportunities to learn from others. It can also ensure that the organisation is focused on its key priorities, and that areas of poor performance are investigated.

The HSC Framework Document (DoH, 2011) describes Performance Management and Service Improvement within the context of the HSC as follows:

“This is a process of developing a culture of continuous improvement in the interests of patients, clients and carers by monitoring health and social care performance against relevant objectives, targets and standards, promptly and effectively addressing poor performance through appropriate interventions, service development and, where necessary, the application of sanctions and identifying and promulgating best practice.”

The current Partnership Agreement agreed between NIPEC and the Department of Health (DoH) sets out the overall aim for NIPEC within the founding legislation as being *“to improve the quality of health and care by supporting the practice, education and performance of nurses and midwives”* (para 2.6).

In addition, the Partnership Agreement states that *“The DoH determines NIPEC’s performance framework in the light of the Programme for Government (PfG), the Department’s wider aims, and current PfG objectives and targets. The key targets, standards and actions to be delivered by NIPEC are set out in NIPEC’s Annual Business Plan, supported by its four-year Corporate Plan, work on which is ongoing.”* (para 2.6).

NIPEC is funded directly by the DoH on the basis of priorities and objectives set out in its

annual corporate business plan, which is approved by the DoH (para 3.1 HSC Framework Document, DoH, 2011).

The Minister for DoH is answerable to the Assembly for the overall performance and delivery of the DoH and NIPEC. The Executive's outcome-based approach to delivery recognises the importance of arm's length bodies and departments working collaboratively and together in a joined-up approach to improve overall outcomes and results. To that end there is strategic alignment between the aims, objectives and expected outcomes and results of NIPEC and DoH (Partnership Agreement, paras 2.3 – 2.5).

This Performance Management Framework has therefore been designed to support NIPEC Council's oversight of organisational performance management and to assist NIPEC staff in ensuring that the organisation:

- responds to the needs of its stakeholders and partners;
- prioritises what gets done and ensures there are adequate resources to deliver it;
- improves accountability for delivery;
- ensures NIPEC provides value for money;
- motivates and manages staff by recognising achievements.

In developing this Performance Management Framework, NIPEC has based it on the following properties:

- **Aligned and Effective** - the Performance Management Framework accurately reflects business strategy and objectives;
- **Measurable** - the Performance Management Framework measures the key drivers of business value;
- **Trusted** - data is accurate, credible, and believed to be so by staff;
- **Trackable** - metrics are trackable and comparable over time;
- **Adaptable** - the Framework feeds into strategic planning and can evolve to meet business needs;
- **Efficient** - information is presented in a consistent and easy to understand manner and data is gathered at with a reasonable level of effort.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

NIPEC's **Performance Management Framework** sets out the reporting arrangements on various elements of performance for the organisation. For the reasons indicated above, **reporting against Business Plan performance is the chief expression of NIPEC's Performance Management Framework**. To date, it has been the practice for

the DoH to use NIPEC's Annual Business Plan as a basis for Accountability Reviews and check progress periodically throughout the year. NIPEC also uses its Annual Business Plan internally to guide action and update performance metrics and risk registers.

The Chief Executive is accountable to the Council for NIPEC's performance and delivery of outcomes and targets. Council is responsible for holding the Chief Executive to account for the management of the organisation and the delivery of agreed plans and outcomes while also supporting the Chief Executive, as appropriate, in the exercise of their duties.

In 2023, NIPEC Council established a non-executive Committee of the Council, the Professional & Business Committee, specifically to report to Council on the setting and measurement of corporate objectives, development of the annual business plan and professional work programme and strategy.

The remit of the Committee is to make recommendations to the Council on all aspects of approving and providing assurance on the setting of objectives and measuring performance of the organisation against:

- NIPEC's Corporate Strategic Objectives;
- NIPEC's Annual Business Plan;
- NIPEC's Professional Work Programme;
- NIPEC'S Professional Strategy.

The Committee meets up to four times a year to hold the CEX to account on performance targets and outcomes and to monitor progress against these. Recommendations of the Committee to the Council are made taking account of advice from the Chief Executive as appropriate. Minutes of the Committee are taken and included on the agenda of Council meetings.

A key element of using data from the annual Business Plan for performance management purposes is to ensure that organisational objectives are linked directly to individual staff objectives. Within NIPEC there is a staff appraisal system which links personal objectives to corporate objectives and therefore ensures that all staff are responsible for and contribute to the achievement of organisational goals.

NIPEC will continue to develop its performance management reporting mechanisms to ensure that the process is relevant and leads to improved service delivery.

3. Monitoring of Performance

The reporting arrangements on various elements of performance for the organisation involve progress monitoring on the statutory responsibilities of NIPEC, including the **key corporate and professional priorities and actions of the organisation which are**

contained within NIPEC's Business Plan. These reports set out the actions being taken to achieve targets against organisational objectives set out in the Business Plan.

Like other HSC organisations, **DoH requires NIPEC** to achieve several key performance indicators (KPIs), as an important component of the information needed to explain an organisation's progress towards its organisational goals. These include Financial targets of achieving a breakeven position (0.25% of Revenue Resource Allocation or £20,000) and payment of invoices within 10 days (target 70%) and 30 days (target 95%). There are also HR related KPIs including completion of appraisals for 90% of staff by 30th June and maintaining absence within a target set annually. These KPIs are reported and audited as part of NIPEC's Annual Report & Accounts process.

In addition to the above, NIPEC has a number of corporate activity measurements which are reported to various meetings and Committees. Details of these are contained in NIPEC's Quality Strategy 2024-28 and Corporate Plan 2024-28.

Achievement of objectives and KPIs/activity measurements is reported to the following:

- **NIPEC Council:**

The Council has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that NIPEC fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Department and for constructively challenging NIPEC's senior team in their planning, target setting and delivery of performance.

At each Council meeting, written reports and/or verbal feedback are presented, in either narrative and/or quantitative formats as appropriate, to update members on current progress, inform them of new work initiatives and advise of any changes which are likely to impact the delivery of objectives.

The standing agenda for Council includes an **Operational Performance & Service Improvement** section (Chief Executive's Report and Professional work plan outlining progress against professional objectives set out in annual Business Plans), and a **Corporate Control & Finance** section under which financial reporting, Business Plans, KPIs/activity measurements and the Corporate Risk Register are reported.

- **Professional & Business Committee:**

The Committee was established to provide a more in-depth focus on performance management and to report to NIPEC Council on the setting and measurement of objectives, development of the annual business plan and professional work programme and strategy.

The agenda for the Committee includes a comprehensive update on the Professional Workplan (based on the annual Business Plan) which is RAG rated and where objectives are denoted Amber or Red, information is included describing mitigating actions. The agenda also includes an initial review of drafts of the Business and

Corporate Plans, the Quality Strategy, Professional Strategy and there is a Lessons' Learned agenda item at each meeting.

- **Audit & Risk Committee:**

The Audit & Risk Committee supports the Council and Accounting Officer with regard to their responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance.

The Committee is responsible for reviewing the maintenance of an effective system of integrated governance, risk management and internal control, ensuring there is an adequate audit system and that the systems used for financial reporting and budgetary control to Council are subject to review as to completeness and accuracy of information presented to Council.

The agenda for the Committee includes review of the annual Governance Statement, Annual Report & Accounts, Mid-Year Assurance Statement, Report to Those Charged with Governance, Financial breakeven projections, the Risk Assurance Framework and Operational Risk Register, Internal Audit reports and progress on implementation of recommendations, corporate KPIs/activity measurements.

- **Business and Professional Teams:**

For the operational management and decision making of the organisation, NIPEC has **Business Team** and **Professional Team** meetings. These are comprised of the Senior Management Team (SMT) which includes Chief Executive, seven Senior Professional Officers and the Head of Corporate Services (Business Team only). Both meet on a 6-8 weekly basis and are also attended by the Business Manager and Senior Communications Officer where appropriate.

The Business Team focuses largely on the corporate performance elements of the organisation while the Professional Team manages the professional elements of NIPEC's business and performance against the professional workplan. Minutes are taken at both meetings detailing how NIPEC is progressing against its objectives.

Reports which are being presented to Council should be approved in advance by one of these meetings.

- **Staff Performance and Development Process:** each member of staff participates in the staff appraisal system which links the appropriate organisational objectives to individual staff objectives and is aligned to staff development objectives. Performance against individual objectives is monitored by the line manager both at mid-year and on an ongoing basis at 1:1 meetings.
- **Council Members' Performance and Development Process:** there is a separate performance assessment process for NIPEC Council members (including Chair) which is set down by the Department of Health Public Appointments' Unit.

Assessments take place on an annual basis and the information gathered from these assessments is used when considering re-appointments.

- The Council performance appraisal process encourages critical reflection and provides an evidence base upon which non-executives can build for future development.
- The Department's Public Appointments Unit issue templates and guidance to each public body for completion and return on an annual basis for each non-executive member. On receipt of the completed templates, the Public Appointment Unit review the content, it is signed off by a Department official and returned to Chair.

Performance Management: NIPEC's Committee Structure

