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ANTI POVERTY

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File Ref: 102/67

7 September 2005

Dear Dr Mulligan

***NEW TSN – THE WAY FORWARD – TOWARDS AN ANTI-
POVERTY STRATEGY***

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above consultation document.

The Northern Health and Social Services Board welcomes the proposed framework outlined in the document for tackling poverty and, in particular, the new focus that will be placed on outcomes and the development of regionally agreed targets and indicators against which future progress can be measured.

Whilst the Board acknowledges that a more detailed action plan will be produced setting out specific targets and priorities to be progressed, it would wish to highlight the following:

- It is important that, in taking this work forward, clear links are established between the proposed Ministerially-led Anti-Poverty Forum and other key groupings such as the Ministerial Group for Public Health, which has responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the cross-Departmental Investing for Health Strategy. In particular, it is important to ensure that there is consistency in areas such as the targets set and the performance indicators agreed to monitor progress.

- Given the particular issues that exist regarding child poverty, the Board would support a stronger emphasis being placed on this area and high priority given in any future action plan produced.
- Whilst the Board would support the continuing policy of “skewing” resources as the most effective way of mainstreaming Departmental measures towards tackling poverty and social exclusion, it would also be helpful, given the tight constraints within which public sector spending is operating, for dedicated funding to be made available to support innovative schemes, or where bridging funding may be required to support the realignment of existing service provision.

I trust that you will find these comments to be helpful.

Yours sincerely



 Stuart MacDonnell
Chief Executive