

# News release



**21 April 2008**

## **Health Council Elects New Chairman**

At its recent monthly meeting the Southern Health and Social Council elected Mrs Eileen Wright to serve as its Chairman for the period ending 31 March 2009. As Chairman she takes on responsibility for leading the Council in its task of representing the interests of patients and users of health and social care services in the Southern Board's area during the transition to the new post-RPA Body. Mrs Wright has served as a member of the Council since September 2003 and has represented the Council on number of committees and sub groups.

A native of Banbridge she has spent much of her professional career in Finance and Education. She has been a company director for 25 years, and is also a member of the SELB and Vice Chairman of its Finance Committee. Other committees in which she is involved include, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Banbridge Academy, Board of Governors for both Ballydown and Edenderry Primary Schools, and is a member of the Governing Body of Southern Regional College. More recently she has been appointed as a Lay Reviewer with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority.

Speaking after her election Mrs Wright referred to the challenges facing the Southern Health and Social Services Council.

"The need to ensure that the voice of the users of the services is heard has never been greater. We are facing major changes due to the Review of Public Administration and to the ways in which both health services and social care services are provided. Our task is to ensure that there are genuine improvements to services as a result."

Reflecting on the task ahead of her in the next year Mrs Wright paid tribute to her predecessor Lynne Cairns who chaired the Southern Health and Social Services Council for past 4 years.

"It was a privilege to have had the opportunity to serve as a Council member during Mrs Cairns' term of office. She set exceptionally high standards for leadership of the Council which I will do my best to maintain. "

Ends

#### **Notes to Editors:**

- **The Southern Health and Social Services Council is one of 4 Health and Social Services Councils set up in 1991 to represent the views of patients and users of the health and social services. The Council has a total of 24 members, 40% of whom are nominated by District Councils in the Southern Area. The remainder are appointed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – 30%**

**voluntary/community representatives and 30% are nominees with an interest in health and social care.**

- **Health and Social Services Councils have a right to be consulted by Health and Social Services Boards about and plans for development of services, or where significant changes are being considered. Councils play an important part in representing the views of consumers of services to the decision makers, and provide advice and support to patients and service users in relation to complaints procedures.**

**If you require any further information please contact**

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