

Where do we fit into health and social care?

NIGALA's Role within Northern Ireland Health and Social Care

As part of the Health and Social Care Framework for Northern Ireland, NIGALA seeks to support the Department of Health's (Department) overall plan to promote an integrated system of health and social care designed to improve the health and social well-being of the people of Northern Ireland. NIGALA seeks to do this by representing the interests of children and young people in legal proceedings and Family Courts and promoting their participation in decisions which impact on their lives.¹

NIGALA's performance framework is determined by the Department in the light of its wider strategic aims and objectives and targets. The priorities and objectives for NIGALA are set out in its annual business plan, the key objectives of which are subject to approval by its Sponsor Branch in the Department. In common with all Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs), on issues of governance and assurance, NIGALA is directly accountable to the Department.

NIGALA's relationship with other health and social care bodies is characterized by, on the one hand, its independence from health and social care bodies in representing the interests of children and young people in court and, on the other, the need to engage with the wider health and social care in a positive and constructive manner to ensure that it is able to efficiently and effectively discharge its statutory function on behalf of children and young people.

¹ Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.