

**Draft Equality Impact Assessment on the Regeneration of Crumlin Road  
Gaol and Girdwood Barracks**

**HEALTH**

**Submission by Bridge of Hope, Ashton Community Trust**

**Bridge of Hope is a Stress Reduction & Management Centre based at Ashton Community Trust, 5 Churchill Street, Belfast. BT15 2BP.**

**We have been operating from 2001 and have secured two governance standards in 2008 – Investors in People and ISO9001:2000**

Bridge of Hope is a community based project working with individuals, families and communities across North Belfast and beyond, who have been affected by the political conflict through a diverse portfolio of training programmes, complementary therapies, advocacy and research. Project seeks to help people cope with the stress and trauma of living in an area dealing with political conflict and endemic social & economic deprivation. Key objectives focus on: developing awareness of conflict related stress - how to work with stress related problems such as addiction, suicide and self-harm, abuse or depression; developing strategies for improved mental health; promote benefits of complementary therapies; increase people's employment opportunities through mentoring, training, personal development; act as support mechanism raising awareness of the legacy of the conflict.

Reaching out to victims & survivors, families and a community which has seen 635 people killed and over 2,500 injured has given us first hand insight to their feelings of social exclusion, grief, fear and an inability to engage. Many do not have any support structures outside their home which has led to isolation and fear. Many families are experiencing intergenerational trauma as evidenced by research we carried out "Too Much Hurt"

- **Include interest in the Girdwood site and any involvement**

It is our firm hope that constituents and our service users will benefit from any community based health services being delivered as part of the regeneration of Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Barracks.

Indeed our organisation has been involved in a number of community consultations and we would envisage that we could be considered to be a service provider within these locations. We have excellent experience in terms of providing complementary therapy through Service Level Agreements with the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust (through Mental Health Budgets & Protect Life).

Our understanding that the purpose of an EQIA is to see how equality of opportunity can be best promoted.

To address the health inequalities in North Belfast, a comprehensive analysis is needed. We find that the draft EQIA does not give a proper understanding

of health in North Belfast. It also does not analyse the inequalities between s75 groups.

The EQIA looks at the following info;

- GP registration
- Life expectancy
- Hospital inpatient episodes
- Disability Living Allowance

The only statistics presented which relate to a s75 group are about gender (life expectancy). Inequalities in health which relate to age, disability, dependent status, marital status, religion, political opinion, race, sexual orientation are completely unexamined.

Brief reference is made to 'serious drug, alcohol and suicide problems' (p44) but there are no statistics to show the extent of the problems on different groups especially young people.

Much more information on health inequalities than this is available on victims, suicide, mental health, children's health and much of it is easily accessed from NISRA or even the Health Trust. In the wards surrounding Girdwood health indicators are among the worst in the region and there is no clear contribution to alleviate this suggested by the EQUIA.

This Draft EQIA fails to state how the inequalities in our community will be addressed. This must be done before the regeneration moves to the next stages.

In conclusion, we would also like to mention that we feel there needs to be more analysis on the health needs within the constituent area.

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Irene Sherry  
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