



4 March 2021

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **First meeting of IMNI Disability Forum to work on UNCRPD implementation**

Today, Thursday 4 March, sees the first meeting of the IMNI Disability Forum, a new body which will work toward implementation in Northern Ireland of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The Forum at present involves 11 people from representative organisations and individuals with disabilities, alongside the Equality Commission for NI and the NI Human Rights Commission, acting together as IMNI, the Independent Mechanism in Northern Ireland. IMNI exists to promote, protect and monitor implementation here of the UNCRPD.

The interests of people with a wide range of disabilities, including children and older people, are represented on the new Forum.

NIHRC Chief Executive David Russell commented: "We welcome that the Forum has been built using the "Nothing about us without us" concept and has involved direct engagement with disabled people from the start. This also reflects the good practice set out by the United Nations Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities Committee to formally involve persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention."

Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission, continued: "We are looking forward to our work with the Forum, but it is not a replacement for the direct involvement of disabled people in the work of Northern Ireland's Executive in implementing the UNCRPD and making real the rights contained within it. To that end, we are still calling for the creation of a regional disability forum by the Department for Communities, as was committed to in the 2016 Programme for Government".

"We welcome all the new members of the Forum and thank them for their time and their contributions. We are looking forward to working together towards full implementation of the UNCRPD in Northern Ireland."

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## Notes to editors

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([UNCRPD](#)) is an international treaty which identifies the rights of disabled people as well as the obligations on Parliament and the NI Assembly to promote, protect and ensure those rights. It aims to ensure that disabled people enjoy the same human rights as everyone else and that they can participate fully in society by receiving the same opportunities as others.

By ratifying the UN Convention in 2009, the UK is committed to promoting and protecting the full enjoyment of human rights by disabled people and ensuring they have full equality under the law. The Convention covers a wide range of areas including:

- health
- education
- employment
- access to justice
- personal security
- independent living and
- access to information.