

PRE-SCREENING NOTIFICATION

SEA PRE-SCREENING DOCUMENT

Responsible Authority:

Scottish Government

Title of the plan:

The Functions of Health Boards (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017

What prompted the plan:

(e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)

Scottish Ministers wish to empower Health Boards in Scotland to provide abortion services to women from Northern Ireland without charging them. This requires the Functions of Health Boards (Scotland) Order 1991 to be amended.

Plan subject:

(e.g. transport)

Health

Brief summary of the plan:

(including the area or location to which the plan related)

This statutory instrument will allow women from Northern Ireland, in Scotland, to access abortion services for free.

Brief summary of the likely environmental consequences:

(including whether it has been determined that the plan is likely to have no or minimum effects, either directly or indirectly)

Abortion is only permitted under Northern Irish law in very limited circumstances, and consequently every year hundreds of women travel to Great Britain in order to seek an abortion. In previous years, the overwhelming majority of these women have travelled to England and Wales, rather than Scotland, for example in 2016 724 women travelled to England and Wales and gave a Northern Irish address, whereas no women travelled to Scotland. A change in policy in England now means that women who travel there are no longer charged for treatment there. When the Scottish statutory instrument comes into force, we expect to see an increase in the number of Northern Irish women travelling to Scotland for abortion treatment each year. However, we anticipate that the numbers will be very small (estimated as being between 20 and 150 women each year). As a result, while we recognise that these women will need to travel to Scotland, we do not anticipate that any additional public transport provision will need to be put in place, and therefore we do not anticipate that there will be any substantive environmental consequences arising from this policy change. Therefore a SEA is not required.

Date of opinion:

21/8/17



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