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Insurance now mandatory for childminders

NICMA welcomes move by Northern Trust

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For immediate use

Photo caption: All registered childminders must now be insured.

NICMA – the Childminding Association has welcomed the news that all registered childminders in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area must be insured.

The Northern Trust had been the only health and social care trust in Northern Ireland which did not require registered childminders to have public liability insurance.

However, in a recent letter to NICMA, the Trust's Director of Children's Services, Cecil Worthington, said that public liability insurance would become a requirement for all new and existing registered childminders with immediate effect.

Reacting to the news, NICMA's Director, Bridget Nodder, says the charity is delighted:

"We have lobbied for some time on this issue and we are very pleased that the Northern Trust has listened sympathetically to our case, and has decided to make this change.

"Northern Ireland now joins England, Scotland and Wales in having a mandatory requirement that all registered childminders are insured.

"When a childminder isn't insured, families run the risk of being unable to obtain fair compensation in the event of an accident, and the childminder is putting his or her own family and business at risk.

"This move by the Northern Trust will ensure that all families using a registered childminder will soon have the reassurance of knowing that he or she is insured."

The issue of insurance is being raised by the Trust with registered childminders at their individual annual inspections which will take place over the coming year.

However, Ms Nodder urges all registered childminders to act straightway if they don't yet have insurance:

“Childminders can obtain insurance by joining NICMA and taking advantage of the great membership package we offer, which includes insurance, an information and advice service, subsidised training and help with filling vacancies.

“While three-quarters of all registered childminders in Northern Ireland are NICMA members, a much lower proportion currently belong to NICMA in the Northern Trust area.

“This is undoubtedly because, until now, local childminders have not had to take out insurance.

“We urge all childminders who don't have insurance to join us now – to protect themselves and to take advantage of all the professional support we offer.”

Childminders and parents can get advice and information on childminding by visiting the NICMA website at: www.nicma.org or contacting NICMA on: 028 9181 1015.

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Editor's notes:

1. NICMA – the Childminding Association is a charity, and is the sole organisation representing childminders in Northern Ireland. 74% of registered childminders here are members. For more details about NICMA, please go to: www.nicma.org