



# Amnesty International UK and Informing Choices NI PRESS RELEASE

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## **NORTHERN IRELAND ABORTION: FAILURE TO COMMISSION SERVICES HEADS TO COURT**

**Amnesty International and Informing Choices NI join the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission challenge on the lack of commissioning abortion services in the region**

**'We should not be back in court fighting for healthcare. Both the Health Minister and Secretary of State have the power to deliver access to services. We urge them to use it' – Grainne Teggart**

**'Without the formal commissioning process, it is clear that various trusts will continue to discontinue their services, and women will be denied access to healthcare to which they are legally entitled' Ruairi Rowan**

Amnesty International and Informing Choices NI today (26 May) join the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission challenge to address the Northern Ireland Department of Health, Secretary of State and Northern Ireland Executive their failure to commission abortion services in line with the region's new abortion law and regulations. The organisations are intervenors in the proceedings.

Grainne Teggart, Amnesty International's Northern Ireland Campaigns Manager, said:

*"We should not be back in court fighting for healthcare. Both the Health Minister and the Secretary of State have the power to deliver access to services. We urge them to use it.*

*"Our law protects and respects choice. It's time they do too by commissioning the services and ensuring that anyone who needs an abortion can access it.*

*"We fought through the courts to help change the law, now we're back to ensure it is applied. We call on the Health Minister and Secretary of State to act now. Those in need of abortion healthcare have waited long enough".*

Ruairi Rowan, Director of Advocacy and Policy, Informing Choices NI, said:

*"As the central access point into early medical abortion services we see the impact that the failure to commission services has on women across Northern Ireland. This ongoing failure has led to three Trusts suspending their early medical abortion services within the past six months with almost 140 women denied access to local healthcare.*



*“Without the formal commissioning process, it is clear that various trusts will continue to discontinue their services, and women will be denied access to healthcare to which they are legally entitled.”*

**ENDS**