

# Adult Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of Down and Connor



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## Introduction

This is the Adult Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of Down and Connor. It has been written specifically for the parishes of the diocese and those who work for or on behalf of the parishes.

This policy:

- Sets out how the diocese expects those who work in its parishes, whether as clerics, religious, employees or volunteers, to behave in their dealings with those adults they encounter in the course of their work for or on behalf of the parishes of the diocese
- Outlines the adult safeguarding guidelines to be followed to ensure the creation and maintenance of safe environments for all adults
- Describes the procedures to be followed if there is a concern that an adult has been abused, is being abused or is at risk of being abused, or a suspicion that such may be the case

Safeguarding is everyone's business and is an integral part of parish life. This policy is not intended to be a burden but represents the living out of the gospel to love and care for one another.

## Aims of the policy

The Diocese of Down and Connor through this policy aims to:

- Proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk of harm
- Have effective working structures in place to respond to concerns about their welfare
- Provide clear guidance to clergy, staff and volunteers.

## Implementation of this policy

Under the general guidance of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, the Diocesan Safeguarding Office will assist parishes in the

implementation of this policy by: publicising it; providing information and training sessions; and offering advice and support to members of parish teams.

## Policy and legal framework (Northern Ireland)

The Diocese of Down and Connor recognises its legal and moral responsibilities to keep adults safe from harm while they are in our care. We have produced this policy to provide reassurance that the welfare of adults is paramount, and to support all those who work for and on behalf of the parishes of the diocese by providing information and guidance to increase confidence in what they do.

The diocesan policy is underpinned by the requirements of international law, domestic law, statutory policy and procedures (primarily Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership Policy, DHSS&PS, 2015). Embedded in these requirements is the recognition that all clergy, religious and laity have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected from harm.

This policy is in keeping with church teaching. Safeguarding is an integral part of the life and mission of the church. This mission recognises and acknowledges the value of the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of all people.

This policy has been developed in line with the following legislation and good practice guidelines:

### Legislation

- The Criminal Law (NI) Act 1967, Section 5
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998

- The Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75
- The Human Rights Act 1998 – enacted 2000
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, as amended by The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008
- The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015

Further information on adult safeguarding legislation can be accessed at [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)

### Policy, procedures and good practice guidelines

- Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (Department of Health and Department of Justice, 2015) places a requirement on any public service, voluntary, community, independent or faith organisations to safeguard adults who may be at risk, by:
  - Recognising that adult harm is wrong and should not be tolerated
  - Being aware of signs of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect
  - Reducing opportunities for harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect to occur
  - Knowing how and when to report safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities.

The regional policy and operational procedures can be accessed at

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/download/PUBLICATIONS/safeguard-vulnerable-adults/niasp-publications/Adult-Safeguarding-Operational-Procedures.pdf>

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/adult-safeguarding-policy.pdf>

- Keeping Adults Safe: A Shared Responsibility (Volunteer Now, 2017) sets out the eight minimum standards of good practice for adult safeguarding, with supporting guidance.

The Department of Health-endorsed standards can be accessed at [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk)

## Definition of terms

The following terms are used throughout this policy and are defined as follows:

- An **“adult at risk of harm”** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:
  - A** Personal characteristics
  - AND/OR
  - B** Life circumstances.

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

- An **“adult in need of protection”** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:
  - A** Personal characteristics
  - AND/OR
  - B** Life circumstances
  - AND
  - C** Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests
  - AND
  - D** Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an “adult in need of protection” either **A** or **B** must be present, in addition to both elements **C** and **D**.

- The **Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC)** provides strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to adult safeguarding for the Down and Connor Diocese, as well as receiving safeguarding concerns about adults. The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) is set out in Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership Policy (NI) (2015). The diocese is required to appoint an Adult Safeguarding Champion.

- The Adult Safeguarding Champion in the diocese is the Designated Liaison Person.

- **“Regulated activity” with adults (post 2012) includes:**

- Providing health care – the provision of health care to an adult by or under the supervision of a health care professional
- Providing personal care – providing physical assistance, prompting and supervision, training, guidance or instructions to an adult eating, drinking, toileting, washing, bathing, dressing, oral care or care of the skin, hair or nails because of the adult’s age, illness or disability
- Providing social care – the provision by a social care worker of relevant social work to an adult who is a client or potential client
- Assistance with general household matters – providing day-to-day assistance to an adult because of their age, illness or disability, where that assistance includes managing the person’s cash, paying bills and/or shopping on their behalf
- Assistance in the conduct of a person’s own affairs by virtue of a court order, legislative or other regulative power
- Conveying – transporting an adult, who requires it because of their age, illness or disability, to or from a place where they have received or will receive health care, personal care or social care (healthcare, personal care or social care are outlined above).

(Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).

- **Former regulated activity with adults (definition pre 2012) also included:**

- Undertaking activity which is of a specified nature, which includes teaching, training, instructing, caring for, supervising, assistance, providing advice or guidance, providing treatment or therapy not related to health, personal or social care, transport to or from a location for health, social or personal care
- Regulated activity includes an activity which takes place in a specified establishment, eg Adult Residential Care Home and there is the opportunity for contact with a vulnerable person
- Certain defined positions of responsibility, for example a director of social services or trustees of certain charities
- Manager/supervisor of a worker in a regulated activity.

In addition, the activity must also take place on a frequent or intensive basis (i.e. once per week or more than three days in any period of 30 days or overnight (2am to 6am).

## Underpinning principles

The Diocese of Down and Connor acknowledges that all adults are entitled to live a life free from abuse and exploitation, and our safeguarding policy is underpinned and guided by a number of values and principles.

All adults will be treated with **dignity and respect** and in a way that promotes **equality and diversity**.

With respect to safeguarding adults we recognise the following principles, which underpin Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (DoH and DoJ, July 2015).

**A Rights-Based Approach:** To promote and respect an adult's right to be safe and secure; to freedom from harm and coercion; to equality of treatment; to the protection of the law; to privacy; to confidentiality; and to freedom from discrimination.

**An Empowering Approach:** To empower adults to make informed choices about their lives, to maximise their opportunities to participate in wider society, to keep themselves safe and free from harm and enabled to manage their own decisions in respect of exposure to risk.

**A Person-Centred Approach:** To promote and facilitate full participation of adults in all decisions affecting their lives, taking full account of their views, wishes and feelings and, where appropriate, the views of others who have an interest in their safety and well-being.

**A Consent-Driven Approach:** To make a presumption that the adult has the ability to give or withhold consent; to make informed choices; to help inform choice through the provision of information, and the identification of options and alternatives; to have particular regard to the needs of individuals who require support with communication, advocacy or who lack the capacity to consent; and intervening in the life of an adult against his or her wishes only in particular circumstances, for very specific purposes and always in accordance with the law.

**A Collaborative Approach:** To acknowledge that adult safeguarding will be most effective when it has the full support of the wider public and of safeguarding partners across the statutory, voluntary, community, independent and faith sectors working together, and is delivered in a way where roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability are clearly defined and understood. Working in partnership and a person-centred approach will work hand in hand.

### **These principles will inform safeguarding practice within Down and Connor by:**

- Ensuring our practice is based on and informed by the best available evidence and implemented in a way that upholds the rights of individuals
- Fully embracing the Diocesan role to support all clergy, religious and laity to engage with the church in a range of formal and informal forums and in a variety of roles, in an environment where they are protected from exploitation, abuse and maltreatment
- Ensuring those with responsibility within the church, clergy, staff and volunteers are safely recruited and are aware of and accept their responsibility to take action when it appears that adults need to be made safe from harm
- Training and supporting all those engaging with the faithful in church activities in recognised best practice in safeguarding
- Adopting a partnership and collaborative approach based on openness and transparency in working with statutory bodies – the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts and the PSNI to safeguard adults
- Ensuring that anyone who brings concerns or allegations to the notice of the diocese will be responded to sensitively, respectfully and seriously
- Challenging any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust
- Ensuring pastoral care, counselling and other supports, including referrals to statutory services, that may be required are available and provided to those who have suffered abuse
- Ensuring mandatory reporting of all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse to statutory authorities and ensuring supervision of any member of our diocesan community known to have offended
- Ensuring that the monitoring of our practice and external review are part of good governance and accountability.

## The diocese will endeavour to safeguard adults at risk by:

- Adhering to our safeguarding policy and ensuring that it is supported by robust procedures and guidelines
- Carefully following the procedures laid down for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training appropriate to their role
- Implementing clear procedures for raising awareness of, responding to, recording and reporting concerns about actual or suspected incidents of abuse
- Having effective procedures for assessing and managing risks with regard to safeguarding adults
- Having procedures for receiving comments and suggestions and for dealing with concerns and complaints about the organisation
- Having a clear policy on the management of records, confidentiality and sharing of information
- Having a Code of Behaviour which outlines the behaviour expected of all involved in the organisation.

This safeguarding policy is supported by other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy work practices, including Recruitment and Selection, Grievance and Disciplinary/Problem solving, Code of Behaviour, Equal Opportunities, and Health and Safety.

The diocese is committed to reviewing this policy every three years. The next review will take place in March 2022, unless there is a significant change to legislation, policy or practice in the interim.

## Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

The Diocese of Down and Connor acknowledges that safe care starts with the recruitment of suitably qualified, skilled and vetted volunteers and staff to work in regulated positions, who have the desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient and safe manner. Whoever is employed by the diocese, in either a pastoral or voluntary role, must be recruited safely and deemed suitable for the role that they are being asked to undertake.

To support this aim the diocese must have robust selection and recruitment processes in place, in line with legislative requirements and best practice.

The recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with adults across the diocese who are at risk of harm follows the same process and procedures as for staff and volunteers wishing to work with children and young people.

For further information on recruitment and selection of volunteers go to

<http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/parish-resource-pack-2/>

All staff and volunteers must be subject to the appropriate recruitment procedures regardless of their position as a volunteer or employee, including clergy or religious.

The recruitment and selection procedures include the following:

- Defining the post through clear job descriptions and personnel specifications for staff and clear role descriptions for volunteers. These should identify the key skills, qualities, abilities and experience required to fill the post. The job/role description will indicate whether the post constitutes regulated activity under the SVG (NI) Order 2007 or as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- An open recruitment process
- Completion of an application form providing information on past work/volunteering experience

- Completion of a declaration and consent form. The applicant must declare any past criminal convictions, cautions or binding-overs which are unspent, as per Rehabilitation of Offenders Order (NI) 1978, and any cases pending against them other than minor road traffic offences. The applicant must provide information on any criminal investigation that has been carried out in relation to adult abuse in which they have been the alleged perpetrator. If they are considered the preferred candidate for a post the relevant level of AccessNI Disclosure Check will be carried out and any offer of the job/role will be on condition and subject to the results of this check
- Undergo an interview (or meeting, in the case of a volunteer) appropriate to the job/role, with at least two representatives of the diocese. Photographic identification and, where required, documentary evidence of qualifications and any accredited training should be produced by the candidate at the interview or meeting

Following a conditional offer of employment/volunteering the following procedures apply:

- Request for two written references, which may be followed up orally as necessary
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken when required. An AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List Check will be requested on the preferred candidate if the job/role constitutes a regulated activity. Where the post meets the former definition of regulated activity (pre-September 2012) an Enhanced Disclosure without Barred List Check will be requested\*
- All posts are approved by management

\* *This process involves the applicant submitting an online AccessNI application form and a confidential declaration form and identity verification form, which are forwarded to the Northern Vetting Office.*

There are many parish volunteer roles within the diocese working with adults that require an Enhanced Disclosure Check to be carried out. This

would include, for example:

- A volunteer identified to provide assistance with health, social or personal care (new definition)
- Eucharistic Minister to the Sick & Housebound (old definition)
- Eucharistic Minister to Nursing/Residential Homes (old definition)
- Leader of any club or parish group mainly for adults with a disability or impairment (old definition).

This is not an exhaustive list and there are many other roles which require vetting.

The vetting of staff and volunteers is completed centrally through the Northern Vetting Office, 028 9049 2783, who will provide advice and guidance if necessary.

## Effective management of staff and volunteers

Effective management of staff and volunteers ensures that everyone within the Diocese of Down and Connor is clear about what we are trying to achieve and what their particular job/role is. The provision of appropriate training and support and the supervision of staff and volunteers help us to prevent harm to the adults we support. The management procedures for staff and volunteers include the following:

- **Induction** which includes the job/role and the staff member/volunteer's area of responsibility; what is expected of staff and volunteers and the boundaries within which they may operate; support available to the staff member/volunteer; and meeting fellow colleagues and volunteers
- **Probationary period** for staff and trial period for volunteers. All appointments are conditional on a satisfactory period of employment or volunteering, the timeframe for which will be agreed. Following an agreed probationary/trial period, the post will be confirmed in writing



- **Training** – in addition to induction, all clergy, staff and volunteers must attend adult safeguarding training relevant to their role. This training is organised through the Safeguarding Office and is delivered within the Diocesan Pastoral Communities. Based on the principles of good practice in safeguarding adults at risk as outlined in Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership (DoH & DoJ, 2015), these sessions will cover:
  - Legal and policy context of adult safeguarding
  - Diocesan safeguarding structures
  - Awareness of abuse issues
  - Procedures for reporting concerns
  - Code of behaviour for clergy, staff and volunteers.

The training is interactive and participative, where participants learn through presentation, group work and discussion. It is a requirement that all clergy, staff and volunteers who work in a regulated activity with adults attend an adult safeguarding training session. Written records are kept of all training completed by clergy, staff and volunteers. Any additional training needs will be identified with their line manager/coordinator/leader or Parish Safeguarding Committee (PSC) chair:

- **Support and supervision**, if required is provided for staff and volunteers through regular one-to-one meetings and team meetings
- Annual appraisal for staff and annual volunteer meetings are completed.

## Recognising, responding and reporting concerns

Clergy, staff and volunteers need to be aware of what is meant by adult abuse and the different categories of abuse that exist.

**Abuse** is “a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to another individual or violates their human or civil rights”<sup>1</sup>

Abuse is the misuse of power and control that one person has over another. It can involve direct and indirect contact and can include online abuse. Categories of abuse are outlined in Appendix 1

Abuse can happen anywhere and an abuser can be anyone who has contact with the adult. Factors that increase vulnerability can include situations where a pattern of violence exists or has existed, social or emotional isolation, drug/alcohol misuse, and disability.

If a staff member or volunteer has concerns about an adult they are working with, it is not their responsibility to investigate nor to try to decide if abuse has occurred. It is their responsibility to pass on their concerns through the diocesan reporting procedures. ***Under no circumstances should a staff member or volunteer attempt to investigate or deal with the situation alone.***

**Harm** is the impact on the victim of abuse, exploitation or neglect and violates the basic human rights of the person.

It is the result of any action whether by commission or omission, deliberate, or as the result of a lack of knowledge or awareness which may result in the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, or mental health or well-being.

The full impact of harm is not always clear from the outset, or even at the time it is first reported. It

can have a devastating and long-lasting impact on victims, their families and their carers.

Harmful conduct may constitute a criminal offence or professional misconduct on the part of an employee.

### Recognising harm

There are a number of ways you could be alerted that an adult is suffering harm:

- The adult may disclose to you
- Someone else may tell you of their concerns
- You may see something that causes you concern
- The adult may show some signs of physical injury for which there does not appear to be a satisfactory or credible explanation
- Their demeanour/behaviour may lead you to suspect abuse or neglect
- The behaviour of a person close to them makes you feel uncomfortable (this may include another volunteer, a member of the parish, friend or family, or through general good neighbourliness and citizenship).

Being alert to abuse plays a major role in ensuring that adults are safeguarded, and it is important that all concerns about possible abuse are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.

### Responding to disclosure

Where a disclosure is made this can raise anxiety for those who receive the information. However, it is very important that you know how to respond appropriately. Such information is sensitive, and it may have taken a lot of courage for the person to reach the stage of telling someone.

<sup>1</sup> Action on Elder Abuse: definition of abuse 1993 which can be accessed at: <http://www.elderabuse.org.uk/Mainpages/Abuse/abuse.html>. This was later adopted by the World Health Organisation - [http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/elder\\_abuse/en](http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/elder_abuse/en)

The following are guidelines for dealing with disclosure, which all clergy, staff and volunteers should follow:

### DO:

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the adult is telling you
- Express concern and sympathy about what has happened
- Reassure the adult that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Record – ensure you write down for yourself a clear and accurate note of what you have been told as soon as possible using the person's own words so that you can accurately relay the information to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion). This should include the date and time that you became aware of the concerns, the parties who were involved, and any action taken. Any questions asked in “checking out” the concerns should also be recorded.

***It is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has occurred. Your role is clear – pass it on. The Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) will make a report to police or social services if appropriate. You always have the right to contact the statutory authorities yourself directly. If at any time an adult at risk is in danger, Social Services or the Police Service should be contacted without delay.***

- Report to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) without delay. It is essential that clergy, staff and volunteers are clear about what to do if they receive a disclosure – always pass on your concern

### DON'T:

- Panic
- Stop someone from disclosing to you
- Ignore – it is important that abuse is never ignored. If you are not sure and something is concerning you, it is best to report it

- Press for information – you must not ask the person leading questions or press for more details. You should allow the person to freely recall events
- Investigate – you must never try to investigate incidents of abuse yourself or try to confront the person you think is responsible for the abuse
- Promise to keep secrets – although you should reassure the person that any issue will be dealt with sensitively, do not promise to keep anything a secret.

## Consent

Consideration of consent is central to adult safeguarding. Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service, including a protection service. It may be signalled verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing. No one can give, or withhold, consent on behalf of another adult unless special legal provision for particular purposes has been made for this.

For consent to be valid, it must be given voluntarily by an appropriately informed person who is able to consent to the intervention being proposed. All parish volunteers have a responsibility to share their concerns with the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion). It is at this stage that assessment of consent and capacity will be considered.

Where there is a concern that an adult may be at risk of, or experiencing, harm, and there are concerns about coercion or undue influence, the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) should refer this to the HSC Trust in accordance with section 11 of Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (Doh & DoJ, 2015).

## Confidentiality

It is important that clergy, staff and volunteers understand the importance of confidentiality.

All information relating to safeguarding concerns/ suspicions/disclosures/allegations needs to be shared with the relevant person who in turn shares it on a “need to know” basis with the relevant statutory authorities and relevant professionals.

This information should NOT be shared with anyone, inside or outside the diocese, unless they are involved in the case. Only the relevant personnel need to be involved. The Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) will advise on “who needs to know” and who should have access to records.

No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with adults should make this clear to all parties involved. However, it is important to respect the wishes of the adult as much as is reasonably practical.

Information may be disclosed to external agencies to ensure the care and safety of an individual or others or where a crime is suspected. Information shared is not only in relation to a suspected crime but also and more usually in parallel with a need to safeguard a person at risk of abuse.

All adults at risk of harm or in need of protection and, where appropriate, their carers or advocates need to be made aware that the operation of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency procedures will, on occasion, require the sharing of information in order to protect or to investigate an alleged suspected criminal offence.

## Reporting procedures

There may be emergency situations where it is appropriate to contact the police immediately. But whatever the circumstances of the concern, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, it is vital that you record the details and report these without delay. Sharing information, no matter how insignificant it may seem, is one of the most important ways of safeguarding adults. The Diocese of Down and Connor has implemented a reporting procedure that will be communicated to clergy, staff and volunteers, at induction and through support and supervision meetings, as well as safeguarding training.

## Record and report

Clergy, staff and volunteers should record any concerns, disclosures, allegations and/or suspicions of abuse. This should include the date and time that the staff member or volunteer became aware of the concerns, the parties who were involved, and any action taken. Any questions asked in “checking out” the concerns should also be recorded. This information must be kept in a secure place and passed to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion). See contact details in Appendix 2.

### Chart 1

## DIOCESE OF DOWN AND CONNOR REPORTING FLOWCHART FOR ADULT SAFEGUARDING

A PERSON HAS A SUSPICION, CONCERN, KNOWLEDGE OR ALLEGATION, RELATING TO AN ADULT SAFEGUARDING MATTER, EITHER LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY, NURSING OR RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME OR PATIENT IN HOSPITAL.

### OPTION 1

The person who has a Suspicion, Concern, knowledge or Allegation contacts the Statutory Authorities directly



PSNI/HSC Trust (Adult Protection Gateway Service)  
If the matter relates to an adult in a hospital or care home, report to the Manager on site.

If referral made direct to Statutory Authorities or onsite manager, advise the DLP

### OPTION 2

Record and report immediately or within 24 hours to the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP). If the concern relates to ministry in a hospital, care home, or institutional setting, report to the manager of the relevant institution and the DLP. If the matter relates to one of the categories below, the DLP will process and/or refer as outlined.



If an allegation of harm or abuse has been made against a member of the Clergy, staff or volunteer, the DLP informs the Bishop and opens a case record file.



Referral completed by DLP to Statutory Authorities PSNI/HSCT

In Down and Connor in relation to Adult Safeguarding, the role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion is undertaken by the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). If you have any query about the referral process, please contact the Diocesan DLP who is a qualified social worker and will explain the process in full.

\* Should the matter involve a cleric or member of church personnel the church’s internal policies and procedures may also apply. Any action will be taken in conjunction with Statutory Authorities.

## **The Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) – role and responsibilities**

When the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) is alerted to concerns about an adult at risk, s/he should act promptly and in accordance with the reporting procedure of the diocese, including the need to:

- ensure that the adult at risk is in no immediate danger and that any necessary medical or police assistance has been sought;
- consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or not. This may involve some “checking out” or clarifying of information provided, taking care not to investigate. See Appendix 3 for guidance on the key considerations and courses of action;
- consult with statutory agencies where there is any doubt or uncertainty. See Appendix 7 for contact details for the key statutory agencies for adult safeguarding.
- make a formal referral if the concern is considered to be a safeguarding issue.

If the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) decides that the concern is not considered a safeguarding issue, or a discussion has taken place with the local HSC Trust and it is decided that there should be no referral made to a statutory authority, a record should be made of the concern. The details should be kept on file, including any action taken, the reasons for not referring, and the situation monitored on an ongoing basis. This is important in case further concerns are raised which, when taken together, indicate that the adult is being harmed and protective action is required.

### **What if the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) cannot be contacted?**

If the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) cannot be contacted you should report concerns to the local HSC Trust or PSNI (contact details are in Appendix 7). In

these circumstances you must record the name of the person in the statutory agency to whom you reported, and the date and time of the report. You must inform the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) as soon as possible after you have made the report.

## **Allegations against clergy, staff and volunteers**

An allegation against a member of clergy, staff or volunteer is a challenging situation for an organisation to deal with, as the individual who is the subject of the allegation may be a close colleague or friend. However, it is extremely important that the procedure for dealing with allegations is followed accordingly.

When responding to an allegation made against clergy, staff or volunteer, the Diocese of Down and Connor recognises its responsibilities, firstly to the adult at risk, and secondly to the member of clergy, staff or volunteer. Two related but independent strands of enquiry are followed in such circumstances, in relation to reporting concerns and disciplinary/problem solving procedures.

If a staff member/volunteer receives any information about an allegation against another staff member/volunteer this must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) and should include the date and time that the staff member or volunteer became aware of the information and the parties who were involved. If there are notes made this information must be kept in a secure place and passed to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) following the reporting procedures outlined in Chart 1.

The following procedure should be followed:

- The Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) will consult with the HSC Trust and/or PSNI to ensure that any subsequent action taken by the diocese does not prejudice the HSC Trust or PSNI investigation
- Following this consultation, the individual will be informed by the Designated Liaison Person

(Adult Safeguarding Champion) that an allegation has been made against him/her and provide them with an opportunity to respond. The details of this response should be fully recorded

- Through consultation with the statutory authorities the most appropriate way forward will be agreed
- Protective measures should be implemented as a priority. This may include suspending/removing the staff member/volunteer from their role or moving him/her to alternative duties for the period of the investigation. Suspension is a neutral act to allow the investigation to proceed and to remove the staff member/volunteer from the possibility of any further allegation, as well as protecting vulnerable people. Where suspension is considered necessary, it will be dealt with as quickly and sensitively as possible.

All of the above actions will be taken in accordance with the diocese disciplinary/problem solving procedures, and will have due regard to guidance from the HSC Trust and/or PSNI.

## Historical abuse

In the case of a staff member/volunteer receiving information that abuse has occurred in the past, this information should be reported as per the reporting procedures outlined in Chart 1, as there could be a continued risk.

## What if clergy, staff, or volunteer's concerns are not taken seriously?

If a staff member, volunteer, clergy feels their safeguarding concern has not been taken seriously through the reporting procedure, they should discuss the concern with the Director of Safeguarding.

If they remain unsatisfied about how the matter has been dealt with, they have the right to report the matter directly to the local HSE Trust or the PSNI (see Appendix 7 for contact details).

## Whistle-blowing policy and procedures

The Diocese of Down and Connor has a Whistle-blowing Policy, which makes clear that:

- The diocese takes poor practice seriously
- Clergy, staff and volunteers have the option to raise concerns about other clergy, staff and volunteers
- The diocese, where possible, will respect the confidentiality of a member of clergy, staff or volunteer raising a concern
- It is a serious matter to victimise a bona fide whistle-blower and for someone to maliciously make a false allegation.

### ***All diocesan personnel should be familiar with the Whistle-blowing Policy.***

For further information go to

<http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/SO-RESOURCE-PACK-OCT2018.pdf>

## Serious incident reporting

The diocese has a responsibility to report serious incidents to the Charity Commission NI, even if the incident has already been reported to the HSC Trust and/or PSNI. The report made by the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) should outline what happened and explain how it is being managed.

The Commission regards a serious incident as an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in, or risks, a significant:

- loss of charity money or assets
- damage to charity property or
- harm to the work of the charity, its beneficiaries or reputation.

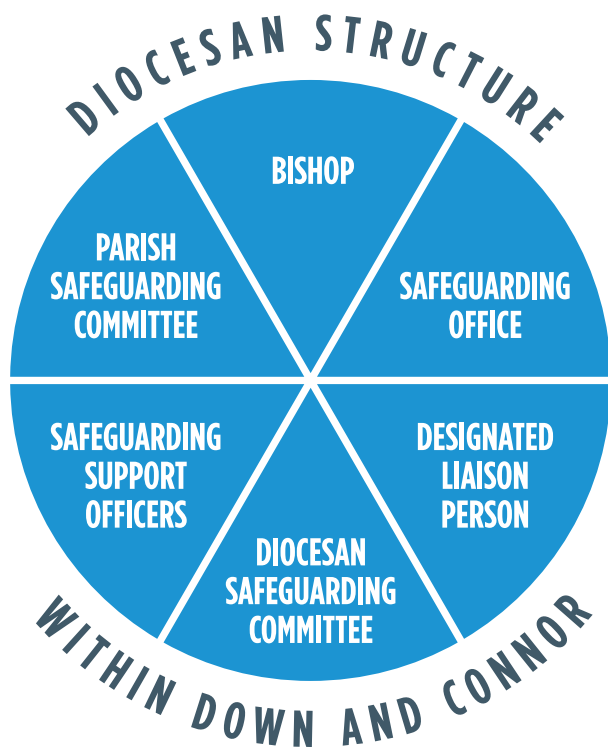
This includes safeguarding incidents. More information can be found at

<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/media/141936/20171116-ccni-eg059-serious-incident-reporting-a-guide-for-charity-trustees.pdf>

## Diocesan safeguarding structure

The structure that has been developed in Down and Connor is designed to support safeguarding practice at all levels across the diocese through identifying what we need to do, being clear about why we need to do it, and detailing how we are going to do it:

- Monitor and review what has been done and achieved
- Learning from what we have done to inform future developments and plans



### Specific roles and responsibilities

#### 1. The Bishop as the church authority for the diocese carries overarching responsibility for all arrangements. In respect of safeguarding this responsibility involves:

- Ensuring that the appropriate safeguarding structures are in place
- Liaising with the Holy See as appropriate
- Ensuring compliance with canon and civil law

The Bishop has appointed an Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding whose role is to represent the Bishop in the operational arrangements for safeguarding. The Episcopal Vicar works within the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.

#### 2. Diocesan Safeguarding Committee is established by the Bishop, comprising members of laity and clergy with relevant backgrounds and knowledge and experience of safeguarding. The committee is responsible for:

- Developing a comprehensive three-year Safeguarding Strategic Plan and communication and overseeing its implementation
- Ensuring local safeguarding policy and procedures are in place and are adhered to
- Ensuring Parish Safeguarding Committees are established and for coordinating and supporting their local responsibilities
- Developing a training needs analysis and training programme for all clergy, staff and volunteers within the diocese
- Ensuring the completion of the annual parish safeguarding audit
- Ensuring the maintenance of appropriate records in respect of all safeguarding activity including records on recruitment, vetting and training
- Ensuring with the Bishop that the appropriate safeguarding personnel are in place.

#### 3. The Diocesan Safeguarding Office

The Diocesan Safeguarding Office is responsible for the operation and functioning of the safeguarding system and the appointment of the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion). The office is responsible for all safeguarding arrangements that operate in parishes across the diocese and provide support in the implementation of best practice.



#### 4. The Adult Safeguarding Champion

The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) is outlined in Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015), the policy for adult safeguarding in Northern Ireland.

The **Designated Liaison Person** (Adult Safeguarding Champion) has a senior position within the Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Office. They are suitably trained, experienced and skilled to carry out the role. The ASC provides strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to adult safeguarding. They are also responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Adult Safeguarding Policy.

The role of the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) is as follows:

- to provide information and support for clergy, staff and volunteers on adult safeguarding within the diocese
- to ensure that the diocese's Adult Safeguarding Policy is disseminated and to support implementation throughout the diocese
- to advise within the diocese regarding adult safeguarding training needs
- to provide advice to clergy, staff and volunteers who have concerns about the signs of harm, and ensure reporting to HSC Trusts where there is a safeguarding concern
- to support diocesan clergy, staff and volunteers to ensure that any actions take account of what the adult wishes to achieve – this should not prevent information about any risk of serious harm being passed to the relevant HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service for assessment and decision-making
- to establish contact with the HSC Trust Designated Adult Protection Officer (DAPO), PSNI and other agencies as appropriate
- to ensure accurate and up-to-date records are maintained detailing all decisions made, the reasons for those decisions and any actions taken

- to compile and analyse records of reported concerns to determine whether a number of low-level concerns are accumulating to become significant; and to make records available for inspection.

Where the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) is not immediately available, this should not prevent action being taken or a referral being made to the HSC Trust in respect of any safeguarding concern.

### Risk assessment and management

An important factor in ensuring the general safety of activities is risk assessment. This is the process of examining what could possibly cause harm to adults, clergy, staff and volunteers involved with the diocese through its activities and services.

In safeguarding terms, the aim of risk assessment and risk management is to prevent abuse or harm occurring, to reduce the likelihood of it occurring and to minimise the impact by responding to it effectively if it does occur.

Clergy, staff and volunteers must take time to identify risks, evaluate them, and put in place risk reducing measures. An identification of any risk carries a duty to report this risk to their supervisor/line manager, who will then complete a risk assessment.

Risk of harm can result from a number of factors, such as threatening behaviours, injury, abuse, neglect, accidents/incidents/near misses, venue/environment, lack of training/support/supervision, and inappropriate ratios. Factors such as disability and medical/health/additional needs may require additional planning in advance to ensure inclusion.

Clergy, staff and volunteers carrying out risk assessment in relation to adults need to consider the following:

- the assessment and management of risk should promote independence, choice and social inclusion of adults

- risks change as circumstances change
- risks can be minimised but not eliminated
- involvement of the adult, parents, carers, advocates and other agencies helps to improve the quality of risk assessments and decision making
- working in partnership to achieve positive outcomes
- application of good practice, communication and following procedures (such as Code of Behaviour) can help to minimise risk.

## Dealing with accidents, incidents and near misses

Clergy, staff and volunteers must report all accidents, incidents and near misses to their line manager/coordinator/group leader and record the details on the Accident/Incident Report Form. (see Appendix 5).

Where the accident, incident or near miss is in some way connected to a safeguarding matter, it should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion), as per reporting procedures, for appropriate action. The Diocese of Down and Connor is aware of its legal responsibilities in relation to health and safety and will ensure that premises are kept safe. For full details of our Health and Safety Policy contact the Diocesan Property Administrator. [property@downandconnor.org](mailto:property@downandconnor.org)

### Other safe management considerations:

- If transport is required for an activity/service, it is essential that it is roadworthy and adequate for the purpose for which it is intended
- Insurance (for example public liability) is up to date, adequate and appropriate
- Written emergency procedures (which may also feature in risk assessment procedures) will be provided if necessary
- Regular fire drills are undertaken, in addition to

weekly testing of the fire alarm, appointed fire warden, fire extinguishers

- A list of emergency telephone numbers is displayed and kept up to date
- Clergy, staff and volunteers are competent in their given roles and additional training and support is provided as necessary
- Clergy, staff and volunteers are aware of responsibilities in relation to ensuring the safety and safe use of equipment
- Attendance lists are taken and kept for each activity
- Ratios will be identified in advance and adhered to at all times, with emergency situations being accommodated in setting the ratios
- If an activity involves a trip or residential, appropriate risk assessment and planning will be undertaken in relation to the specific requirements of the individuals attending, with provision of clear guidelines for sleeping arrangements and the procedures to be used.

## Receiving comments, suggestions or complaints

### Procedures for managing complaints

Where carers or adults at risk or any parishioners have a concern or complaint about some aspect of the diocese or parish service, they should have access to a complaints procedure. Guidance relating to the management of complaints is provided in the **Resource Pack for Parishes** <http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/parish-resource-pack-2/> and each parish will implement the Diocesan Complaints Procedure to address such concerns and complaints in an effective, satisfactory and fair manner. Complaints about the service offered by the Safeguarding Office will be dealt with under the Safeguarding Office Complaints Procedure.

Anyone who has an issue relating to the service can raise a complaint through the Safeguarding

Office in writing or email directly to the Director for Safeguarding. If the complaint involves the Director of Safeguarding then the complaint should be raised in writing or by email with the Chancellor of Down and Connor.

**NB:** If there is a complaint in relation to a particularly serious incident, for example where abuse or exploitation is suspected, then the reporting procedure, outlined on page 12 takes precedence over the complaints procedure.

If there are comments or suggestions regarding adult safeguarding within the diocese these can be emailed directly to the Director of Safeguarding or raised with the Safeguarding Support Officer at the Pastoral Community Safeguarding Support Meetings.

## **Management of records, confidentiality and sharing of information**

Clergy, staff and volunteers should treat all information relating to adult safeguarding matters as confidential and to be shared only on a “need-to-know basis”. This information should never be shared with anyone, inside or outside of the diocese, other than with those involved in the case, the group leader, the parish priest, Designated Liaison Person, Bishop and any others who need to know. If you are in doubt about who should have access to records, check this with the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion).

It is important that all clergy, staff and volunteers who have received disclosures or allegations of abuse record the factual details and report this to Social Services or Designated Officer or PSNI without delay (within 24 hours).

An accurate record of the disclosure/event should be made, including the date/time it occurred, when the clergy, staff and volunteer became aware of the event, who else was involved and any action taken. Any questions the clergy, staff and volunteer used to “check out” and clarify information should be recorded also.

All recordings should be clear, brief and factual.

These records may become very helpful to professionals investigating the event at a later stage.

There are specific legal requirements of you when handling a complaint. This information includes **personal data** that directly identifies information of the other person such as their name. Even if that data is recorded as pseudonymous data or any other non-directly identifying information which does not allow the direct identification of that person, it is **still deemed in law as data** because it allows the singling out of individual behaviour. The data is sensitive because it involves information in relation to an allegation or concern.

Due to the particularly sensitive and confidential information being recorded it is important to obtain the consent of the complainant when recording the information.

All oral and written communications and records shall be **stored securely** in accordance with the privacy policies, internal guidance and legal obligations required of you. In order to ensure we comply with the law we must protect the private and sensitive data of all persons, including the complainant and the alleged perpetrator. **You have a duty to hand over all originals and copies of records you retain.** You must not retain any records or information and you are legally obliged to ensure that you have provided the DLP with all of your notes and records, electronic, written or otherwise.

The Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) shall then undertake the legally required security measures to ensure that all of the information you obtained is stored in accordance with the law and if necessary encrypted/anonymised in accordance with the legal requirements. If you have any questions about your legal obligations, please speak to the Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion) in the first instance.

## **Confidentiality**

All records relating to adult safeguarding will be maintained by the Designated Liaison Person

(Adult Safeguarding Champion) in the Safeguarding Office.

**Copies of Records of Concern/ Allegations, and any other information relating to these records, should never be kept or stored at parish level. All recordings relating to a case or a potential referral must be stored securely at the Safeguarding Office.**

## Code of Behaviour

The Diocese of Down and Connor expects all clergy, staff and volunteer to conduct themselves in a way that ensures adults are protected and kept safe from harm while they are engaged in any activity associated with the organisation. Equally, the diocese expects those who avail of services/ participate in activities to behave in a manner that is respectful towards others.

The following Code of Behaviour aims to provide guidance to minimise the opportunity for adults to suffer harm as well as reassuring clergy, staff and volunteer that their behaviour is appropriate.

Clergy, staff and volunteer who breach any of the following may be subject to disciplinary/problem solving procedures, as appropriate to their role.

### **Clergy, staff and volunteers must:**

- Promote and protect the human rights of all adults in every aspect of their work
- Treat all adults with dignity and respect
- Be patient and listen
- Communicate clearly, in whichever way best suits the individual and check their understanding
- Adopt a person-centred approach
- Treat all adults fairly and equally;
- Promote independence and choice
- Encourage participation

- Help all adults to fulfil their ability and potential
- Involve all adults in decision making to the fullest extent
- Ensure that physical contact is supportive, takes place in an open environment and is not secretive
- Ensure that it is in response to the need of the adult and is appropriate to the task required
- Ensure that physical contact is carried out carefully, sensitively and respectfully.

### **Clergy, staff and volunteers should never engage in any of the following behaviours with adults at risk:**

- Abuse, neglect or harm an adult, or place them at risk of harm, whether by omission or commission
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with them
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay
- Engage in sexually provocative games
- Make sexually suggestive comments
- Form inappropriate relationships
- Gossip about personal and sensitive information
- Make/accept loans or gifts of money
- Take a photograph or video, including by mobile phone without consent.

# Appendix 1

## Categories of abuse

### The main forms of abuse are:

**Physical abuse** is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury.

This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force-feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty.

**Sexual violence and abuse** is “any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability)”.<sup>2</sup>

Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping).

Sexual violence can be found across all sections of society, irrespective of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background or sexual orientation.

**Psychological/emotional abuse** is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.

**Financial abuse** is actual or attempted theft, fraud or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion or deception. This may include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property or inheritance.

**Institutional abuse** is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in settings which adults who may be at risk reside in or use. This can occur in any organisation, within and outside Health and Social Care (HSC) provision. Institutional abuse may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm.

Institutional abuse may occur within a culture that denies, restricts or curtails privacy, dignity, choice and independence. It involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services and includes a failure to ensure that the necessary preventative and/or protective measures are in place.

**Neglect** occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time.

It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, heating or clothing, or failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk.

<sup>2</sup> The definitions of “sexual violence and abuse” and “domestic violence and abuse” are from *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland, A Seven Year strategy*, March 2016.

**Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership does not include self-harm or self-neglect within the definition of an “adult in need of protection”.**

Each individual set of circumstances will require a professional HSC assessment to determine the appropriate response and consider if any underlying factors require a protection response. For example, self-harm may be the manifestation of harm which has been perpetrated by a third party and which the adult feels unable to disclose.

**Exploitation** is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person; to take advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain from using them as a commodity.

It may manifest itself in many forms including slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse, or human trafficking.

This list of types of harmful conduct is neither exhaustive nor listed here in any order of priority. There are other indicators which should not be ignored. It is also possible that if a person is being harmed in one way, he/she may very well be experiencing harm in other ways.

## Related definitions

There are related definitions which interface with adult safeguarding, each of which has its own associated adult protection processes in place.

**Domestic violence and abuse** is “threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member”.

It is essentially a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another. It is usually frequent and persistent.

It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life partner or any other person who has a close relationship with the victim. It occurs right across society, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic or religious group, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or geography.

The response to any adult facing this situation will usually require a referral to specialist services such as Women’s Aid or the Men’s Advisory Project. In high-risk cases a referral will also be made to the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process. Specialist services will then decide if the case needs to be referred to one of the HSC Trusts for action under the safeguarding procedures.

**Human trafficking/modern slavery** involves the acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploiting them.

It can take many forms, such as domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting.

Victims of human trafficking/modern slavery can come from all walks of life; they can be male or female, children or adults, and they may come from migrant or indigenous communities.

The response to adults at risk experiencing human trafficking/modern slavery will always be to report the incident to the Police Service.

**Hate crime** is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hate towards a person’s actual or perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion or gender identity.

The response to adults at risk experiencing hate crime will usually be to report the incident to the Police Service.

## Appendix 2

### Down and Connor Designated Liaison Person (Adult Safeguarding Champion)

#### Designated Liaison Person

Philip O'Hara

#### DLP Mobile

07534 992 124

#### DLP Email

philip.ohara@soddc.org

#### Address

Diocesan Safeguarding Office  
120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6LA

#### Safeguarding Office Telephone Number

028 9049 2798

#### Safeguarding Office Email

office@soddc.org

## Appendix 3

### Guidance for Adult Safeguarding Champion (Designated Liaison Person)

*This guidance is based on Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (DoH and DoJ, July 2015) and Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures (Health and Social Care Board, September 2016) and should be read in conjunction with these documents.*

#### Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) role and responsibilities

The ASC provides strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to adult safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring implementation of the Adult Safeguarding Policy statement.

The eight key responsibilities of the ASC are:

- To provide information, support and advice for clergy, staff and volunteers on adult safeguarding within the organisation.
- To ensure that the organisation's Adult Safeguarding Policy is disseminated and to support implementation throughout the organisation
- To advise the organisation regarding adult safeguarding training needs
- To provide advice to clergy, staff or volunteers who have concerns about the signs of harm and ensure a report is made to HSC Trusts where there is a safeguarding concern
- To support clergy, staff and volunteers to ensure that any actions take account of what the adult wishes to achieve - this should not prevent information about risks of serious harm being passed to the relevant HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service for assessment and decision making
- To establish contact with the HSC Trust Designated Adult Protection Officer (DAPO), PSNI and other agencies as appropriate

- To ensure accurate and up-to-date records are maintained detailing all decisions made, the reasons for those decisions and any actions taken
- To compile and analyse records of reported concerns to determine whether a number of low-level concerns are accumulating to become more significant. These records must be available on request for inspection or by way of service level agreements or contract review meetings.

## Responding to adult safeguarding concerns

When an adult safeguarding alert is raised within the diocese, the ASC must:

- Consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or not. This may involve some “checking out” of information provided while being careful not to stray into the realm of investigation
- Where immediate danger exists or the situation warrants immediate action, ensure any medical assistance has been sought and refer to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service or PSNI
- Support clergy, staff and volunteers to ensure that any actions take account of the adult’s wishes
- Where it has been deemed that it is not a safeguarding issue, consider alternative responses such as monitoring, support or advice to clergy, staff and volunteers. A record should be made of the concern and the details kept on file, including any action taken, the reasons for not referring, and the situation monitored on an ongoing basis
- If it is decided that it is a safeguarding issue, report the situation to the HSC key worker where known. If the ASC is unaware of HSC key worker contact details, a referral will be made to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service. The HSC Trust will then

conduct a risk assessment and decide what response is appropriate

- If there is a clear and immediate risk of harm or a crime is suspected or alleged, contact the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service directly
- Act as the liaison point for any investigative activity which is required and ensure easy access to relevant case records or staff
- Ensure accurate and timely records and any adult safeguarding forms required have been completed.

### When establishing the correct course of action, the ASC should consider:

#### 1. Is the adult an adult at risk/adult in need of protection?

An **“adult at risk of harm”** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- Personal characteristics  
AND/OR
- Life circumstances.

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An **“adult in need of protection”** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- Personal characteristics  
AND/OR
- Life circumstances  
AND
- Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests  
AND



- Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

The decision as to whether the definition of an “adult at risk” or an “adult in need of protection” is met demands the careful exercise of professional judgement applied on a case-by-case basis.

## **2. Has the threshold for referral to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service been met?**

The threshold for referral to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service is likely to be met if one or a number of the following characteristics are met:

- The perceptions of the adult(s) concerned and whether they perceive the impact of harm as serious
- It has a clear and significant impact on the physical, sexual, psychological and/or financial health and well-being of the person affected
- It has a clear and significant impact, or potential impact, on the health and well-being of others
- It involves serious or repeated acts of omission or neglect that compromise an adult’s safety or well-being
- It constitutes a potential criminal offence against the adult at risk
- The action appears to have been committed with the deliberate and harmful intent of the perpetrator(s)
- It involves an abuse of trust by individuals in a position of power or authority and
- It has previously been referred to a regulated service provider for action, and has not been sufficiently addressed.

**Where there is any doubt or uncertainty about whether there is a safeguarding issue this should be discussed with the HSC key worker (if known) or the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service.**

## **3. Is there a need to dispense with consent?**

Adults at risk of harm should be central to decisions regarding any actions to prevent or protect them from harm; their wishes are of paramount importance in all cases of alleged or suspected abuse.

A duty of confidentiality applies and information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis and, in most circumstances, with the consent of the adult. However, in relation to adult safeguarding, the duty to share information about an individual can be as important as the duty to protect it.

If there is a protection issue (where there is a clear and immediate risk of harm/alleged crime) the ASC may need to dispense with consent and report straight to the HSC Trust Gateway Service or PSNI.

If this threshold is not met and an adult at risk does not want a referral made to the HSC Trust or PSNI, the ASC must consider the following:

- Do they have capacity to make this decision?\*
- Have they been given full and accurate information in a way which they understand?
- Are they experiencing undue influence or coercion?
- Is the person causing harm a member of clergy, staff or volunteer or someone who only has contact with the adult at risk because they both use the service?
- Is anyone else at risk from the person causing harm?
- Is a crime suspected or alleged?

\* There should be no assumptions made regarding an individual’s capacity or incapacity and in the first instance, unless there is contrary information, every individual should be viewed as having the capacity to make decisions about their own situation. However, if an issue is raised in relation to any individual’s cognitive ability to make an informed decision about their safety, the HSC Trust Designated Adult Protection Officer

(DAPO) should ensure a capacity assessment is completed.

**The factors listed on the previous page will influence whether or not a referral without consent needs to be made. If in doubt, the ASC should contact the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service for advice and guidance.**

If it is determined that the concerns do not meet the definition of an adult at risk or an adult in need of protection, the concerns raised must be recorded, including any action taken and the reasons for not referring to the HSC Trust. The ASC will ensure that records of reported concerns are compiled and analysed to determine whether a number of low-level concerns are accumulating to become significant.

## **Referral to the HSC Trust**

The ASC should contact the HSC Trust by phone in the first instance, but should send the referral in writing under confidential cover within two working days. They should expect to receive an acknowledgement from the HSC Trust within two working days of the referral. As a minimum the referral information must include the name and address of the adult at risk and his/her current location or address; the nature of the harm; the need for medical attention, if any; the reasons for suspicion of abuse; any action already taken; and any other information that may be useful, e.g. information related to the alleged perpetrator and his/her location. The ASC will be required to provide this information on the HSC Trust APP1(a) Referral Form and Body Map (available from the local HSC Trust).

## Appendix 4

# Adult Safeguarding Referral Form



This form will be completed by the DLP (Adult Safeguarding Champion) for referral to PSNI and Social Services.

<b>Adult Safeguarding Referral Form</b>	<b>Admin: Reference Number ADULT/SGO/DATE/001 (OFFICE USE ONLY)</b>
---	---

### About the suspicion/concern/allegation

Date of suspicion/concern/allegation:						
Time of disclosure/concern/suspicion:						
How was information received? (attach any written information to this form) Please tick as appropriate.	Telephone	Letter	Email	In person		

### Details of person making disclosure/raising concern *(if different from complainant)*

Name:						
Address:						
Telephone:		Mobile:				
Email:						
Relationship to complainant:						

### Details of complainant

Name:		DOB/age:				
Address:						
Telephone:		Mobile:				
Ethnic origin:		Language (is interpreter/signer needed?):				
Disability:		Special needs:				
Church body (if applicable):						

## Appendix 4 continued

### Relative/carer details (where necessary these details can be anonymised)

Name:			
Address (if different from above):			
Telephone:		Mobile:	
Are they aware of the suspicion, allegation or complaint? Please tick as appropriate.			YES
			NO

### Details of respondent (if Applicable)

Name:		DOB/age:	
Address (if different from above):			
Telephone:		Mobile:	
Relationship to complainant (relative/priest/teacher, etc.):			
Position in Church body:			
Address at time of incident:			
Any additional information:			

### Details of concern, allegation or complaint

(Include dates/times and location the incident occurred, and any witnesses, if known. Does the complainant know this referral is being made?)

--

## Appendix 4 continued

### Referral to the statutory authorities

Has the matter been referred to the statutory authorities? Please tick as appropriate.	YES		NO	
---	-----	--	----	--

Has the matter been notified for the purpose of the Charity Commission? Please tick as appropriate.	YES		NO	
--	-----	--	----	--

If the answer to the question above is **yes, please complete the details below**. If the answer is no, please explain why the matter was not referred to the statutory authorities.

--

#### HSCT

Date referred:	
Time referred:	
Name of person it was referred to:	
Designation:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

#### PSNI

Date referred:	
Time referred:	
Name of person it was referred to:	
Designation:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

### Referral to a member of the Church

*(Only complete if the allegation relates to church personnel or clergy or member of a religious order)*

Has the matter been referred to the Church authority? Please tick as appropriate.	YES		NO	
--	-----	--	----	--

Date referred:		Time referred:	
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Name of person it was referred to:	
------------------------------------	--

Designation:	
--------------	--

Address:	
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Telephone:	
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Email:	
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## Appendix 4 continued

### Next steps

*(Only complete if the allegation relates to a cleric or religious)*

What actions have been taken (if any) by the Church, in relation to the respondent, to safeguard an adult at risk or in need of protection following receipt of this information

### Sign off

DLP (ASC) name:	
DLP (ASC) address:	
DLP (ASC) telephone:	
DLP (ASC) email:	
DLP (ASC) signature:	

**Data Protection** This form will be held on file, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, data protection policy of the Diocese of Down and Connor and the Privacy Notice of the Down & Connor Safeguarding Office, which can be found at <http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/privacy-notices/>

The data entered will be used only for the purpose indicated on the form and will be held confidentially. The data may only be accessed by those with responsibility for managing records or group activities and will not be shared with external organisations unless there is a need and a lawful reason to do so. The data will be updated when appropriate and destroyed when no longer necessary or relevant.

## Appendix 5

### Accident/Incident Report Form Adult Safeguarding



Event Leader:	
Name of Parish:	
Contact Number:	
Name (person involved/injured):	
Date and Time of Accident /Incident:	
Place of Accident/Incident:	
Circumstances of Accident/Incident ( <i>continue on separate sheet if necessary</i> ):	
Sample	
Names of those present at the accident/incident:	
Nature of Injury/Harm:	

## Appendix 5 continued

Action taken including any medical intervention that was required:

Reported to whom:

Other action taken including learning:

Signature:

Printed Name:

Date:

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The data entered will be used only for the purpose indicated on the form and will be held confidentially. The data may only be accessed by those with responsibility for managing records or group activities and will not be shared with external organisations unless there is a need and a lawful reason to do so. The data will be updated when appropriate and destroyed when no longer necessary or relevant.



# Appendix 6

## Risk Assessment



To be completed by Parish Group leader, annually or in response to a new event or procedure

Name of organisation/event:	
Date undertaken:	
By whom:	
Review date:	
Date and Time of Accident /Incident:	

Identify the Hazard	Who might be harmed?	What is the risk?	Action - how to minimise risk

**Data Protection** This form will be held on file, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, data protection policy of the Diocese of Down and Connor and the Privacy Notice of the Down & Connor Safeguarding Office, which can be found at <http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/privacy-notices/>

The data entered will be used only for the purpose indicated on the form and will be held confidentially. The data may only be accessed by those with responsibility for managing records or group activities and will not be shared with external organisations unless there is a need and a lawful reason to do so. The data will be updated when appropriate and destroyed when no longer necessary or relevant.

## Appendix 7

### Statutory Authorities

#### Police

To contact the police in a non-emergency situation, phone 101.  
Emergency, telephone 999.

#### Adult Protection Gateway Service

HSC Trust	Areas covered	Normal working hours 9.00am – 5.00pm telephone number	Out-of-hours emergency telephone number 5pm to 9am, weekends and bank or other public holidays
Western Adult Protection Gateway Service	Londonderry/Derry, Limavady, Strabane, Omagh, Enniskillen	028 7131 4090	028 9504 9999
Southern Adult Protection Gateway Service	Craigavon, Banbridge, Dromore, Lurgan, Portadown, Gilford, Armagh, Coalisland, Dungannon, Fivemiletown, Markethill, Moy, Tandragee, Ballygawley, Newry, Bessbrook, Annalong, Rathfriland, Warrenpoint, Crossmaglen, Killeel, Newtownhamilton	028 3756 4423	028 9504 9999
Belfast Adult Protection Gateway Service	All of Greater Belfast Area	028 9504 1744	028 9504 9999
Northern Adult Protection Gateway Service	Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey, Larne, Ballymena, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Portrush, Coleraine	028 9441 3659	028 9504 9999
South Eastern Adult Protection Gateway Service	Lisburn, Dunmurry, Moira, Hillsborough, Bangor, Newtownards, Ards Peninsula, Comber, Downpatrick, Newcastle, Ballynahinch	028 9250 1227	028 9504 9999

## Appendix 8

### Useful Contacts

#### **Towards Peace**

Spiritual support for survivors of abuse by Catholic Church personnel in Ireland.

telephone + 353 (0) 1 505 3028

email [towardspeace@ie.con.ie](mailto:towardspeace@ie.con.ie)

website [www.towardspeace.ie](http://www.towardspeace.ie)

#### **Towards Healing**

Towards Healing is an independent organisation providing professional support for people who have experienced institutional, clerical or religious abuse in Ireland.

Freephone **0800 0963315**

(Northern Ireland and UK)

Hearing impaired ext Line Number **085 802 2859**

website [www.towardshealing.ie](http://www.towardshealing.ie)

#### **Nexus**

Advice and confidential support and counselling for those who have been sexually abused

**+44 (0) 28 9032 6803**

[www.nexusni.org](http://www.nexusni.org)

#### **Domestic and Sexual Violence**

The Domestic & Sexual Abuse Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week across Northern Ireland. It provides support, advice, information and referral to any victims, as well as concerned friends or family and professionals

**0808 802 1414**

#### **Lifeline**

This is a Northern Ireland crisis response helpline service for people who are experiencing distress or despair.

**0808 808 8000**

Deaf and hard of hearing Textphone users can call Lifeline on **18001 0808 808 8000**

#### **Action on Elder Abuse NI**

Action on Elder Abuse (AEA) Northern Ireland is a specialist charity working to protect older people from all forms of abuse and neglect.

**0808 808 8141**

#### **Northern Ireland Housing Executive**

**03448 920 900**

#### **Human Trafficking**

Crime Stoppers

**0800 555 1111**

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)