



An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health

Adult Safeguarding Models/Approaches

Brief Overview

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13th February 2019

1st Meeting of the Steering Group to assist Department of Health in its development of a national policy on adult safeguarding in the health sector

Introduction



- International examples show a mix of policy and legislative tools for implementation
- Varying approaches to safeguarding with no clear model of best practice



International Examples

- **Northern Ireland**
 - *Policy only – no dedicated legislation*
 - *Various policies over time*
 - *Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015)*
 - *Joint Department of Health and Justice Policy*
- **England**
 - *History of policy evolution from “No Secrets” (2000)*
 - *Care Act 2014 now the primary statutory framework for safeguarding in England*
 - *Various tools/packages of guidance and implementation protocols developed*
- **Scotland**
 - *Significant legislative basis for adult safeguarding in the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007*
 - *Adult Support and Protection Code of Practice 2014*
- **Canada**
 - *No overarching dedicated safeguarding policy or legislation as such, as provincial level approaches have been adopted*
 - *Examples include British Columbia Act 1996 which is similar in approach to Scottish law.*
- **Australia**
 - *Like Canada, safeguarding is mostly led/addressed at the provincial level.*
 - *Wide variety of codes, practices and policies developed*
 - *Almost all focus on elder abuse*
 - *Major Law Reform Report 2017 recommended that each territory should develop adult safeguarding legislation*



Models/Approaches to Safeguarding - Scotland

- **Interagency model with dedicated responder**
 - *Local Authority has the primary responsibility to risk assess, investigate cases, intervene where necessary, refer to other relevant agency where person not deemed adult at risk*
 - *Council officer (statutory role) carries out these functions (social worker, OT, nurse)*
 - *Wide ranging powers*
 - *Each LA must have an Adult Protection Committee consisting of key agencies*
 - *Oversee and review procedures, practices etc.*
 - *Advise public bodies*
 - *Develop guidance to assist staff carryout assessments*
 - *Interagency referral protocols*
 - *Other organisations not involved in APCs but must have various processes, governance arrangements, referral and cooperation*



Models/Approaches to Safeguarding - England

- **Multi-agency, variations in responder**
 - *Local Authority is lead authority for safeguarding*
 - *But statutory roles for key partners such as the NHS, Police etc.*
 - *Has been argued that English approach is minimalist, merely setting a high-level framework*
 - *Organisations including independent organisations are first responders, and are advised to try deal with concerns in the first instance*
 - *Where the concern cannot be appropriately resolved, LA may undertake or direct the undertaking of an enquiry*
 - *Due to high-level nature of legislation variations in practice has developed based on local interpretations*
 - *Who leads an enquiry or the type of intervention to be taken depends on the circumstances of any given case.*
 - *Each LA must have an Adult Safeguarding Board which is responsible for developing policy, protocols and guidance on how the Care Act should be implemented.*



Models/Approaches to Safeguarding – N. Ireland

- **Collaborative Partnership Approach**
 - *Responsibility on organisations that have direct contact with adults at risk to nominate an Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) (must be a senior role in the organisation)*
 - *Health & Social Care Trust Adult Protection Gateway Teams (social worker led designated officers) – main point of contact for referrals along with the police service*
 - *Two primary aspects to safeguarding*
 - **Prevention:** interventions, responsibility sits with all organisations, professionals and individuals
 - **Protection:** where abuse is suspected, likely to occur or has occurred - led by HSC Trusts & PSNI
 - *N.I. Adult Safeguarding Partnership & 5 Local Partnerships*
 - Improved adult safeguarding outcomes through strategic planning, operational policies and procedures
 - Monitor Trends
 - Strategic Leadership



Models/Approaches to Safeguarding – Australia

- **Interagency model but variety of responders**
 - *Mainly relating to older people*
 - *Different States have different approaches – lead authority is typically the authority where the person is an existing client.*
 - *Elder abuse concerns dealt with by the police services*
- **Tasmania**
 - Publicly funded organisations required to have elder abuse policies, protocols and inter-agency referral processes
 - Where abuse happens, primary health care providers assesses and develops care plan.
 - A care coordinator allocated (from an appropriate service), who is responsible for managing referral to identified services.
- **South Australia**
 - Reps from various agencies appointed to (Alliance for Prevention of Elder Abuse) team as Adult Protection Officers.
 - Case conference approach to manage investigations, actions plans etc.
 - If person is a client of an agency, that agency takes the lead. If person is not an existing client, police service takes the lead.
 - Office for the Ageing (Adult Safeguarding) Amendment Bill 2018
 - Proposes the establishment of Adult Safeguarding Unit in the Office for Ageing Well (Department of Health and Wellbeing)
 - Significant powers to request agencies to intervene, prepare reports etc.

Thank You.

