



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

Draft Note of Meeting

Date	22 July 2020 (Meeting 8)
Location	Online meeting hosted by Department of Health (DOH)
Chair	Dr Kathleen MacLellan, DOH
In Attendance	Mr Pat Benson, Public Interest Representative Ms Geralyn McGarry, Public Interest Representative, Citizens Information Board (CIB) Ms Fiona Larthwell, DOH Ms Cornelia Stuart, Asst National Director, Quality Assurance & Verification, HSE Mr Tim Hanly, General Manager, National Safeguarding Office (NSO), HSE Mr Mary Dunnion, Chief Inspector, HIQA Mr Finbarr Colfer, Deputy Chief inspector, HIQA Ms Rosemary Smyth, Mental Health Commission (MHC) Mr Deaglán Ó Briain, Department of Justice (DJE) Mr James Gorman, General Manager, Patients' Private Property Accounts Central Unit, HSE Superintendent Michael Corbett, An Garda Síochána
Apologies	Dr Colette Bonner, Office of the Chief Medical Officer (DOH) Ms Ginny Hanrahan, CEO, CORU, Health and Social Care Regulatory Forum Ms Gráinne Morrissey (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth) Mr JP Nolan, Head of Community Quality and Patient Safety (HSE) Ms Margaret Brennan, Head of Acute Quality and Patient Safety (HSE)
Secretariat	Mr Conor Foy (Secretary), Services for Older People (DOH)

1. Standing items

Note of previous meeting, Conflict of Interest Policy

- The note of the previous meeting was accepted without alteration
- The Chair drew attention to the Conflict of Interest Policy, and asked any Member who had not yet submitted a COI form to contact the Secretariat to do so

2. Updates

Department of Health update

- The Chair welcomed Fiona Larthwell PO as the new head of the Unit in the Department coordinating development of the national policy following organisational restructuring and noted, with thanks, the service Niall Redmond PO on the Steering Group



- A discussion point on adult safeguarding was tabled at the NPHET vulnerable persons subgroup meeting on 24 June. At the meeting:
 - An update was given on the development of the national policy, and on the work of the Steering Group
 - It was noted that the Department has commissioned an evidence review and focus groups in this area, and undertaken stakeholder consultation
 - The Chair opened this item for comment by sub-group members, to highlight any issues of relevance particularly in light of COVID-19
 - Both the Mental Health Commission and HIQA updated the subgroup on their work in this regard, based on issues related to safeguarding they are encountering during their inspections of and other engagements with the centres/service locations that fall within their respective regulatory remits
 - It was noted that both organisations are monitoring and inspecting residential settings and working with service providers to ensure safeguarding of residents
 - MHC noted hesitancy to avail of the benefits of the lifting of some restrictions on the part of some residents, who have concerns about risk
 - HIQA noted that inspectors of social services are carrying out inspections of designated centres, and that it was engaging with some nursing homes with a view to ensuring that residents are facilitated to avail of family visits as much as possible in line with current guidance
- An update was provided on the status of the comprehensive evidence review on adult safeguarding commissioned from Mazar and the report on focus groups with adults at risk to the Department by the Institute of Public Health
- On 17 July the Department held a meeting of its Internal Policy Development Support Group. The discussion focused on:
 - An update on the progress of the national policy and the work of the Steering Group
 - The importance of adult safeguarding to all services in the health and social care sector
 - The potential ramifications of safeguarding policy in all settings

HSE National Safeguarding Office update

- Work items which were paused due to Covid-19 pressures and temporary reassignments are now progressing:
 - The NSO's annual data report is delayed by 3-4 months



- The work of the HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy Review Group has resumed since May
- The review group is focussing on readiness for the revised policy in HSE settings in which the current 2014 HSE adult safeguarding policy does not apply
- NSO is working with the Centre for Effective Services to assist in this
- HSE adult safeguarding elearning modules for staff are almost complete
- Foundation level safeguarding training will be solely delivered through the elearning platform going forward
- The progress of a tender for a case management system was paused due to organisational refocus related to Covid-19 but is due to resume again
- Safeguarding and Protection Teams continued to function throughout Covid-19

HSE update on the paper requested by the Chair on Paper on HSE reporting and line management structures and roles/responsibilities relevant to adult safeguarding (presentation given by HSE NSO)

- The HSE's 2014 Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy & Procedures and the upcoming revised policy concern the care of the adult at risk
- The HSE Trust in Care policy is an industrial relations policy concerning allegations of abuse made about HSE staff
- The HSE Incident Management Framework concerns the safety of health and social care systems
- Processes under these policies generated by the same event can run concurrently
- These policies have a "no wrong door approach" meaning that concerns that are reported via an incorrect route are rerouted to the appropriate location
- A minority of adult safeguarding concerns are about staff, and most concern other service users, family members, and others
- The Chair requested the Secretariat circulate the paper developed by the HSE to the Steering Group

3. Discussion on potential performance measurements and indicators for success or efficiency in relation to adult safeguarding

- A KPI related to access to advocacy may be useful
- Metrics of whether users felt safer as a result of safeguarding measures may be useful for measuring quality of outcomes



- The research of Pearse McCusker of Edinburgh University was noted

4. Opportunity to raise new or emerging adult safeguarding issues arising in the context of the COVID-19 public health emergency to be taken account of in the policy

- NSO has received a number of complaints from service users relating to visiting restriction
- The impact of visitor restrictions on services users in residential care was discussed including:
 - The importance of hearing the voice of service users in relation to visiting restrictions
 - The potential for localised public health data to inform decisions on receiving visits
- HPSC COVID-19 Guidance on visitations to Residential Care Facilities was published by the HPSC on its website on 22 July


5. AOB, Actions

- The Chair requested Members contact the Secretariat regarding any issues they did not have the opportunity to raise.

Summary of actions:

- DOH to circulate the HSE paper presented at the meeting(Secretariat)
- DOH to circulate Mazars research evidence review (Secretariat)
- DOH to request update from Health and Social Care Regulatory Forum re its subgroup discussion on adult safeguarding (Secretariat)
- Steering Group members to return updated mapping exercise template to the secretariat for their own organisations if they have not already done so, and to advise the Secretariat where they consider it would be useful to circulate it to other organisations (All)
- DOH to arrange next meeting of the Steering Group (Secretariat)

Approved by chair

Signature: 

Date: 26 February 2021