



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

Note of Meeting

Date	11 October 2023 (Meeting 11)
Location	Online meeting hosted by Department of Health (DoH)
Chair	Ms Laura Casey, Older Persons Policy Development Unit, DOH
Members in Attendance	Mr Finbarr Colfer, HIQA Mr Gary Kiernan, Mental Health Commission, MHC Dr Orla Healy, National Clinical Director, Quality and Patient Safety, HSE Ms Margaret Brennan, Acute Quality and Patient Safety, HSE Mr James Gorman, Patients' Private Property Accounts Central Unit, HSE Superintendent Derek McGuire, An Garda Síochána (AGS) Ms Áine Kilroy, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) Ms Rachel Downes, Public Interest Representative, Citizens Information Board (CIB) Dr Aine Flynn, Decision Support Service (DSS) Ms Fiona Steed, Chief Health and Social Care Professional, DOH (HSCP) Ms Margaret Hynds O' Flanagan, Health & Social Care Regulatory Forum, CORU Ms Eimear Allen, National Patient Safety Office, DOH Ms Karen Greene, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, DOH
Apologies	Ms Siobhán McArdle, Assistant Secretary, Social Care Division, DOH. Mr Tim Hanly, National Safeguarding Office (NSO), HSE Mr JP Nolan, Community Quality and Patient Safety, HSE Ms Carol Grogan, Chief Inspector, HIQA
In attendance	Ms Imelda Farrell (Secretary), Adult Safeguarding Policy Team (DOH) Ms Deirdre King De Montano (Secretariat), Adult Safeguarding Policy Team (DOH) Ms Stacey Evans (Secretariat), Adult Safeguarding Policy Team (DOH) Mr Ciarán Ó Maoileoin (Secretariat), Adult Safeguarding Policy Team (DOH) Ms Ger McCarthy, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) Ms Lisa O'Sullivan, An Garda Síochána (AGS)

1. Welcome

- The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance, noting that a number of new members have joined the Steering Group and inviting introductions.
- The Chair drew attention to the Conflicts of Interest Policy and asked members who had not yet completed a COI form to complete one and advised COI forms would be circulated after the meeting.
- The Chair noted with appreciation the service of former members Pat Benson, Superintendent Michael Corbett, Ginny Hanrahan and Gráinne Morrissey.



- Apologies were noted for Ms Siobhán McArdle, Mr Tim Hanly, Mr JP Nolan and Ms Carol Grogan.
- The Chair advised that the note from the previous meeting had been circulated and invited members who attended that meeting to advise the Department by the following week if they had any corrections or amendments to suggest.
- The Chair set out the meeting objectives:
 - To update the Steering Group on progress with the policy development
 - To present the key policy proposals which will form the basis of the public consultation
 - To present details of the planned public consultation.

2. Update on progress

- An update was provided in relation to work to date, outlining the background to the policy development and work completed so far through Steering Group and other inputs in the development of the draft policy.
- The Chair confirmed that the scope of the policy was confined to the health and social care sector and that safeguarding issues relating to other sectors were beyond scope.
- Steering Group members were advised of the parallel pieces of work currently being undertaken by
 - the Law Reform Commission (whole-of-society legislation focus)
 - HSE (independent review of their safeguarding processes, policies and procedures)

3. Policy Proposals (Presentation by DoH)

- DOH presented the key policy proposals which will form the basis of the planned public consultation.

4. Public consultation (Presentation by DoH)

- DOH presented the structure of the public consultation questionnaire and launch plan.

5. Discussion

The following matters were discussed in relation to the Policy Proposals.

- Interaction of proposed policy with Protection of Liberty Safeguards (PoLS) arrangements, noting that both POLS and Safeguarding are based on upholding rights. It was noted that work is also advancing on the development of a legal process and safeguards for people who are in a care arrangement that is depriving them of their liberty and they do not have decision making capacity to consent to the arrangement. It was confirmed that the rights-based approach set out in the ADMC Act is a starting point for both POLS and safeguarding processes and that the development of each of these pieces of work is being aligned.



- Clarification was sought on whether improved powers and greater governance would lead to safeguarding concerns being escalated to a central authority or if safeguarding obligations would be entwined into existing processes. The Chair stated that structures and functions would be topics for discussion at the next meeting.
- In a discussion relating to powers proposed in the policy, the Chair advised that some of the powers proposed would be new and would need to be underpinned in legislation.
- A number of points were raising in relation to proposals on training:
 - It was noted that professional regulatory bodies do not have legal powers to prescribe what CPD training professionals should undertake. However, confidence was expressed that this could be covered under competency frameworks and professional codes of practice. The Department noted the points raised and undertook to consult with CORU and other stakeholders to determine the most effective approach for this matter.
 - The HSE noted that it is developing a competency framework in relation to Quality and Patient Safety outlining which competencies are required at different organisational levels.
 - It was stated that training should be standardised, and the employer should have the responsibility for ensuring its staff and volunteers are appropriately trained rather than regulators or professional bodies.
- The DoH noted that views on the Policy Proposals generally, including issues relating to training, will be sought in the public consultation.

6. Next steps / actions agreed.

- DOH to arrange next Steering Group meeting in early November. (DOH)
- Presentation slides from this meeting (#11) will be circulated to Steering Group. (DOH)
- COI forms to be circulated to new Steering Group members. (DOH)
- Draft policy proposals for public consultation to be finalised and shared with Steering Group. (DOH)
- Public consultation to be launched before end of year. (DOH & IPH)

Approved by Chair:

Signature: 

Date: 22 November 2023