ADULT SAFEGUARDING CHAMPION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership

The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) is set out in Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership 2015, the policy for adult safeguarding in Northern Ireland. This guidance answers some of the most frequently asked questions about the role of the ASC. The guidance is not prescriptive. Many organisations already have effective arrangements in place to safeguard adults at risk or in need of protection. These may need some slight adjustment to ensure that your organisation meets the requirements for an ASC as set out in that Policy. It is up to each organisation to decide how best to do so.

What is an Adult Safeguarding Champion?

The ASC provides strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to adult safeguarding for an organisation or group and is responsible for implementing its adult safeguarding policy statement.

The ASC should ensure that, at a minimum, the organisation safeguards adults at risk by:

- **recognising** that adult harm is wrong and that it should not be tolerated;
- **being aware** of the signs of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect;
- **reducing opportunities for harm** from abuse, exploitation and neglect to occur; and
- **knowing how and when to report** safeguarding concerns to HSC Trusts or the PSNI.

Who needs to have an ASC?

Although we would encourage all groups and organisations working with adults to identify an ASC, not every group or organisation will need to do so.

If you have staff or volunteers who are subject to **any** level of vetting under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, then you must have a nominated ASC.

If you do not have staff or volunteers who require to be vetted, then you are not required to have an ASC.

How does the ASC access training for staff or volunteers?

Some organisations and groups have well-developed arrangements for training in adult safeguarding in place already.

The Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership's Training Framework sets out what level of training is required for staff and volunteers across the different levels within organisations. The Framework does not specify how that training is delivered, that is a matter for each organisation to decide.
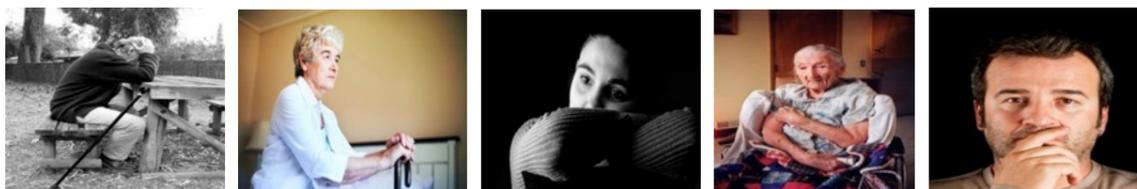
However, both Volunteer Now (www.volunteernow.co.uk) and the Safeguarding Adults at Risk Information Hub (www.saarih.com) websites can direct you to relevant training in your locality.

HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding Team contact

The Adult Safeguarding Gateway teams can be contacted at the following numbers:

Northern Trust	028 9441 3659
Western Trust	028 716 11366
South Eastern Trust	028 925 01227
Belfast Trust	028 950 41744
Southern Trust	028 375 64423
Emergency (Out of Hours) Social Work	028 9504 9999

Does my organisation need more than one ASC?

No. Each eligible group or organisation is expected to have a single ASC.

Who can be an ASC?

The ASC should be in a senior position within the organisation. They should be suitably trained, experienced and skilled to carry out the role.

Further details on the different levels of training required can be found in the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership's Training Framework.

What are the key responsibilities of an ASC?

The ASC role has both strategic and operational components.

Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership summarises the key responsibilities for the ASC as follows:

- **to provide information and support** for staff on adult safeguarding within the organisation;
- **to ensure** that the organisation's adult safeguarding policy is disseminated and support implementation throughout the organisation;
- **to advise** within the organisation regarding adult safeguarding training needs;
- **to provide advice** to 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 staff** 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 **make records available** for inspection.

In larger or more complex organisations the ASC may delegate some of the operational tasks or activities as appropriate. For example, a provider with a number of Nursing Homes throughout Northern Ireland may choose to delegate some of the tasks of an ASC to a member of staff in each facility. They would then report to the ASC on adult safeguarding matters on a regular basis and assist in the compilation of reports, training needs analyses and data analysis.

What sort of information should an ASC Monitor

Most ASC will already have daily access to a great deal of information that will assist the organisation or group improve the services it provides to adults at risk or in need of protection.

- To meet the governance requirements set out in the Policy, the ASC should compile an annual Adult Safeguarding Position Report using the following core data:
- Number of referrals made to HSC Trusts involving both an adult at risk and an adult in need of protection;
- Number of adult safeguarding discussions where

the decision taken was to **not** refer to HSC Trust;

- Any untoward event that triggered an adult protection investigation;
- Adult safeguarding training opportunities provided and uptake across staff groups; and
- Any action that your organisation plans to take to ensure it is compliant with Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership and to implement the organisation's own adult safeguarding policy.

What does the ASC do with the Adult Safeguarding Position Report?

The Position Report is an important overview and governance tool for all organisations and groups supporting adults at risk or in need of protection. As such, it contains significant information for your organisation's Senior Management Team and/or Trustees. It should be scrutinised by them on an annual basis.

It would also be appropriate to provide core information from the Position Report in any organisational annual reports or updates.

The Position Reports should also be made available for any external audit purposes, for example any audits undertaken by the Local Adult Safeguarding Partnership, and to

demonstrate compliance with policies as specified within any contracts with HSC Trusts.

Services that are externally regulated by RQIA, CJINI or other relevant bodies may also be subject to inspection on adult safeguarding arrangements. The Position Report will be key in demonstrating that the organisation is complying with the requirements of the regional policy.

If the service or group you represent is contracted to provide services by the HSC Trust, as part of your normal contract monitoring process you should provide confirmation to the Trust that the annual Safeguarding Position Report is available for scrutiny.

What Support is Available for an ASC?

The HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Team is available to advise and support each ASC on operational issues as necessary, particularly if the ASC is unsure whether or not a referral is required.

The HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding Specialist is available to offer advice and support on strategic issues such as local developments in adult safeguarding, regional policy or strategic direction and prevention initiatives in your area.

Every ASC should know how to make an appropriate referral to the relevant HSC Trust.

The contact details for each HSC Trust and the Out of Hours service are included overleaf.