



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Health and Social Care Trust



NIAS SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL PROCEDURE

Implementation date: 1/11/2016

**SOURCE: Dr Nigel Ruddell. Medical Director
Ciaran McKenna. Clinical Service Improvement Lead**

Version 9 reviewed: 24th Jan 2019

NIAS Safeguarding Referral Procedure reviewed 24/01/2019

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and applies to both adults and children. NIAS may often be the first agency to become aware of safeguarding risks. It is not the role of NIAS staff to investigate concerns; however it is the role of all NIAS staff and / or persons / agencies working on behalf of NIAS to be vigilant about safeguarding issues and refer patients where concerns are identified.

No one should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to the safety and wellbeing of a patient. Where NIAS staff or persons / agencies working on behalf of NIAS have concerns, a safeguarding referral **MUST** be made. This is regardless of whether the patient has been transported to hospital or remained at scene.

Safeguarding referrals will be managed by the social work service. They provide services for:

- Children and young people.*
- Older people.
- People with mental health problems.
- People with learning disabilities.
- People with physical disabilities or sensory impairments.
- Families and carers of all these groups.
- The service is also responsible for emergency homelessness for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and emergency financial issues for the Social Security Agency outside normal working hours.

**Children and young people are defined as those under 18 years of age*

Inclusion Criteria

A safeguarding referral **MUST** be made where any of the following have been identified / suspected regardless of whether the patient has been transported to hospital or not:

- There are concerns that a patient has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm.
- There are concerns in relation to patients who are Looked After by a health and social care Trust or their carers including children in foster care and residents of nursing / residential homes*
- There is suspected or confirmed abuse of a patient.[◊]
- There are concerns about the safety of an adult / child.
- Where there is a serious and imminent risk to a child following family breakdown both in the community, foster care or kinship placements.
- Where there is a need for authorised professionals to make an enquiry to the Child Protection Register.
- All cases of sudden unexpected deaths of infant; children and adolescents (SUDICA).
- Children who are intoxicated through alcohol / drugs.
- Children in the care of adults who are intoxicated through alcohol / drugs.
- Where informal care arrangements have broken down for older patients or patients with physical / learning disabilities and admission to a nursing / residential home is required.
- Where there is a suspicion of radicalisation.

**Where there are concerns regarding clients in nursing / residential care home settings, a safeguarding referral and Datix must be completed as normal. However, upon receipt of the Datix, a notification will be sent to the RQIA who have a role in the oversight of nursing / residential care homes.*

◊ Examples of abuse include: Psychological abuse; Financial or material abuse; Modern slavery; Discriminatory abuse; Organisational abuse; Neglect and acts of omission; Domestic abuse; Sexual abuse including child sexual exploitation

Making the referral

The safeguarding referral pathway is available 24 / 7 across Northern Ireland. To make the referral, NIAS staff or persons / agencies working on behalf of NIAS should ring EAC on 02890 404021 and request the social work team number for the location they are in.

NB – The Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS) manage all calls out of hours including weekends and bank holidays.

NIAS staff or persons / agencies working on behalf of NIAS will then contact the social work team and in addition to providing information about their concerns will also need to provide:

- Patient name
 - Date of birth
 - Address
 - Incident number
 - Crew name
 - Contact number
 - Next of kin details
 - Has the patient consented to a referral?
 - Does the patient have a community nurse / social worker? If so, please
- provide the name of this professional.
- School / College details (children only)
 - Details of care facilities / services e.g. name of nursing home / residential home or domiciliary care agency
 - Reason for referral – brief description of your concerns / suspicions?

A safeguarding referral **MUST** be made without delay even where some of the above information is not known.

The team will advise staff of their planned actions e.g. immediate home visit or follow up at a later date.

In addition to making a referral, all safeguarding concerns **MUST** also be reported via an Untoward Incident Report (UIR). The UIR should detail your concerns and any immediate action taken. On receipt of the UIR, the Trust risk manager will contact the safeguarding team to ensure that the appropriate action has been taken.

Imminent Risk and Place of Safety

Where there is an imminent risk to the patient, the PSNI **MUST** be called. Patients may also be transported to the ED purely as a place of safety even where there is no clinical need. In these circumstances, the receiving nurse should be fully informed as to the reason the patient was transported to the ED. A safeguarding referral **MUST** also be made and a UIR completed.

Duty Of Care

Once the social work service has verbally accepted the referral they, i.e. the Trust social work team have accepted the duty of care for that patient. The social work team will then provide initial assessment and agree appropriate responses.

Where a patient has remained at home, the patient should be given advice to ring 999 should their condition deteriorate.

Where a patient is transported to hospital, the receiving nurse should be made aware of your safeguarding concerns. A safeguarding referral **MUST** still be made by NIAS or staff / agencies working on behalf of NIAS.

The patient report form should have clear documentation that a safeguarding referral was made and the reason for the referral.

Additional Information

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a form of child abuse and from 31st Oct 2015 the FGM Act introduced a mandatory reporting duty for health and social care professionals to report known cases of FGM in those under 18 years of age to the police.



NIAS Safeguarding Referral Procedure

NIAS response to 999 call

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Appendix A – Adult and child protection Gateway Services

Trust	Children’s Gateway Team Mon – Fri 0900-1700	Adults protection gateway service (for protection referrals only) Mon – Fri 0900-1700
Belfast HSCT	02890 507000	02895 041744
South East HSCT	03001 000300	02892 501227
Northern HSCT	03001 234333	02894 413659
Southern HSCT	08007837745	02837 564423
Western HSCT	02871 314090	02871 611366
Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS) available 5pm to 9am weekdays, 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays. Telephone: 02895 049999		

Appendix B - Full HSC Trust Adult Service contacts for adults at risks.

Also available at: <http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/niasp/>

Belfast Trust	
New referrals - Older Peoples Services	Call management SOUTH & EAST BELFAST 028 9056 5565 NORTH & WEST BELFAST 0845 6066 596
Physical & Sensory Disability Services	NORTH & WEST Grove 028 9501 1458 SOUTH & EAST Mount Oriel 028 9504 2367 Sensory Support 028 9504 2000
Learning Disability Services	AdultSafeguardingLD@belfasttrust.hscni.net NORTH: 028 9504 2376 SOUTH: 028 9504 2693 EAST: 028 9504 6118 WEST 028 9504 1284
Mental Health Services	mhadultsafeguarding@belfasttrust.hscni.net 028 9504 6634

South Eastern Trust		
Older Peoples Services	Ards	02891 801234
	North Down	02891 468521
	Lisburn	02892 501325
	Down	02844 613811
Learning Disability/ Physical & Sensory Disability Services	lyn.preece1@setrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 92 665646	
Mental Health Services	Ards	MHassessment.Ards@setrust.hscni.net Tel:02891512155
	Lisburn	MHassessment.LVH@setrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 92 641362
	Down	MHassessment.Down@setrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 44 613311 x 83311

Northern Trust	
Older Peoples Services Physical & Sensory Disability Services	Sean Falls, Professional Practice Lead sean.falls@northerntrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 9055 2243
Learning Disability Services	Pauline Cummings, Head of Service Pauline.cummings@northerntrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 7936 6836
Mental Health Services	Kate Lambe, Assistant Director Kate.lambe@northerntrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 9441 3314

Southern Trust	
Older Peoples Services	access.information@southerntrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 3756 4300
Learning, Physical & Sensory Disability Services	OOHS.swrefs@southerntrust.hscni.net Tel: 028 3839 4088
Mental Health Services	Tel: 028 3083 5253 (Newry & Mourne) Tel: 028 3741 4462 (Armagh & Dungannon) Tel: 028 3834 7537 (Craigavon & Banbridge)

Western Trust	
Older Peoples Services	028 71864399
Learning Disability Services	
Physical & Sensory Disability Services	028 71864399