



**Northern Ireland Practice and Education
Council for Nursing and Midwifery**

FINAL REPORT

**Safeguarding Adults
Development of a Core Competency
Framework**

October 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As Co-Chairs of the Safeguarding Adult Steering Group, we would like to thank those staff from the five Health & Social Care Trusts and the independent sector who gave freely of their time to contribute to the development of the Safeguarding Adults Core Competency Framework.

In particular, we wish to acknowledge the members of the Safeguarding Adult Project Group who through their contribution commitment, collaboration and partnership working, enabled the successful overall achievement of this project.

Finally, I wish to thank NIPEC's, administrative and information technology staff, for their significant contribution to the completion of this report.

Geraldine Brown

*Assistant Director of Nursing: Secondary Care
Primary Care and Older People's Services
Western Health & Social Care Trust
Co-Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Steering
Group*

Geraldine Brown.

Eleanor Ross

*Consultant Nurse
Public Health Agency
Co-Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Steering
Group*

E. Ross

Introduction

Safeguarding is part of everyday nursing and midwifery practice in any setting. The NMC encourages nurses and midwives to reflect on their personal and team practice and make changes where necessary to prioritise safeguarding. In addition, the NMC state nurses and midwives should have the skills to confidently recognise and effectively manage situations where they suspect a person in their care is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect, including poor practice. The NMC refer to *The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives (NMC, 2015)* as the foundation of good nursing and midwifery practice, and see the *Code* as a key tool in protecting the health and wellbeing of the public.

For all registrants employed in the HSC it is important that they (nurses and midwives) know their local safeguarding policies. These policies should provide specific details for the different care settings and areas of practice. In addition, all nurses and midwives should be mandated to attend training in the safeguarding of adults.

1.1 Background

The adult safeguarding policy '*Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership*' was jointly developed and published by the Department of Health and the Department of Justice on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive in 2015. The aim of the policy is to improve safeguarding arrangements for adults who are at risk of harm from abuse, exploitation or neglect and to promote a culture where safeguarding is everyone's business.

Strategic leadership and direction relating to adult safeguarding activities is provided by the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) and Local Adult Safeguarding Partnerships (LASPs). Membership of NIASP includes representatives from the main statutory, voluntary and community organisations involved in Adult Safeguarding work across the region. NIASP has produced a Training Strategy (2013, revised 2016) which provides a clear statement of the expectations in relation to the provision of Adult Safeguarding training for everyone who is involved in the lives of Adults at risk in NI. It expects that training delivered reflects the underpinning principles outlined in '*Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership*';

- Adult Safeguarding is 'Everyone's Business'
- Training provision supports a Person Centred Approach
- A Collaborative approach

Every nurse and midwife is responsible for recognising, preventing and managing different types of harm, abuse and neglect, including poor practice. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) provides very clear guidance within The Code (2015) on the professional standards of practice and behaviour expected of all nurses and midwives. This includes an instruction that staff put the interests of people using or needing nursing or midwifery services first, *that their care and safety is the primary concern*, their dignity is preserved and their needs recognised, assessed and responded to. The Code goes on to state that nurses and midwives should make sure that those receiving care are treated with respect and that their rights are upheld. Additional specific guidance is given at section 17 of The Code that nurses and midwives must:

Raise concerns immediately if they believe a person is vulnerable or at risk and needs extra support and protection.

To achieve this Nurses and Midwives need to have a clear understanding of local safeguarding policy and processes and take reasonable steps to support and protect individuals in their care.

Following the successful development of the Safeguarding Children: Core Competency Framework (NIPEC, 2012), the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) requested that the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council (NIPEC) work in partnership with the Public Health Agency (PHA) on the development of a Safeguarding Adults: Core Competency Framework for Nurses and Midwives.

2.0 Project Plan and Approach

2.1 Project Aim

To develop a competency framework for all nurses and midwives that will reflect the skills and knowledge required to safeguard adults.

2.2 Project Objectives

- (i) Identification and prioritisation of the key competency areas to be included in the competency framework, which reflects current Northern Ireland context and Department of Health (DoH) Policy.

- (ii) Development of a competency profile from the areas identified and prioritised, reflective of the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (NMC) *The Code Professional Standards of Practice and Behaviour for Nurses and Midwives* and Safeguarding Standards, and will outline the relevant knowledge and skills required by nurses and midwives working with adults receiving care from the health and social services.
- (iii) Review the requirement of a learning and development framework that will complement the regional NIASP¹ framework.
- (iv) Development of a proposed implementation strategy to facilitate wide usage of the competency framework and possible learning and development framework.
- (v) Submission of a final project report to DoH.

2.3 Project Implementation

To ensure the success of the project a steering group was established co-chaired by Geraldine Brown, Assistant Director of Nursing, WHSCT and Eleanor Ross, Consultant Nurse, PHA. The steering group provided the overall direction, management and governance of the project. Membership of the steering group included key stakeholders drawn from the following organisations: HSC Trusts, Public Health Agency, Clinical Education Centre, NI Adult Safeguarding Partnership, Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, Independent Health and Care Providers, Four Seasons Health Care, Health and Social Care Board, Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Midwifery (Appendix 1). The Steering Group was tasked with being committed to the project and liaising with their represented organisation throughout the project.

The Steering Group agreed the Project implementation Plan, approving the work programme including the engagement methodologies deemed appropriate to achieve the objectives of the project. The Steering group also had editorial oversight of the Competency Framework as it was developed. A total of 6 meetings were held between June 2017 and Sept 2018.

An Expert Reference Group (ERG) was established from the membership of the Steering Group with the purpose of writing the competency framework and ensuring that consultation with stakeholders was carried out and informed the final framework (Appendix 2). A robust project management approach was implemented to support members of the ERG in their activities. ERG meetings took place in-between steering group meetings. The stages of development of the framework were reported to the

¹ Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (2016) Training Strategy and Framework 2013 (Revised 2016) HSCNI.

steering group, discussed and either approved or amendments where agreed. Approved drafts of the document were shared with the HSC Trust Safeguarding teams and good engagement was achieved ensuring that progressive development of the framework was achieved.

3.0 Project Outcomes

- (i) Identification and prioritisation of the key competency areas to be included in the competency framework, which reflects current Northern Ireland context and Department of Health (DoH) Policy.

Outcome Achieved

The NIASP Training Strategy (2013, revised 2016) was used as the foundation for the development of the Competency Framework. A number of Competency documents from throughout the UK were accessed and informed the structure and the content of the current framework for nurses and midwives. Throughout development of the Competency framework cognisance was taken of current NMC and DoH Policy documents.

- (ii) Development of a competency profile from the areas identified and prioritised, reflective of the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (NMC) *The Code Professional Standards of Practice and Behaviour for Nurses and Midwives* and Safeguarding Standards, and will outline the relevant knowledge and skills required by nurses and midwives working with adults receiving care from the health and social services.

Outcome Achieved

A Safeguarding Adults Core Competency Framework has been developed and is being presented to the CNO and her business team for endorsement. The framework clearly identifies the skills, knowledge and attributes each registered nurse and midwife should have in relation to their own role. It emphasises an understanding of the processes within each trust area, the need to know who the safeguarding team are and how to access them. The competency framework aims to enable nurses and midwives to identify their learning and development needs in relation to Adult Safeguarding ensuring the provision of safe, effective person centred services. The framework has been developed taking cognisance of the NIASP Training and Development Framework (2013, revised 2016) which succinctly outlines the levels of training for everyone who is involved in the lives of adults at risk in Northern Ireland.

The completion of the framework has been informed by a robust process of consultation with colleagues from both the HSC Trusts and the independent sector. A successful workshop was held on the 8th March 2018 at Antrim Civic Centre (Appendix 3). Over 30 representatives from across HSC and the independent sector attended from all fields of nursing practice and Midwifery. The aim of the day was to test the completeness and acceptability of the competencies developed at Level 2 and 3 (Appendix 4). The discussion on the day highlighted how different groups experienced adult safeguarding in their day to day working. The majority of participants could see how the framework could be utilised in their own workplace and made useful suggestions which ensure the clarity of the competencies. Overall analysis of the feedback received indicated that the competencies were appropriate and useful for practice. The suggestions from the day were incorporated into the framework and following further development of level 4 Competencies a further round of consultation was undertaken.

The final draft of the Competency framework was shared with Practice nurses, Prison Nurses and Public Health nurses via established RCN forums and with the HSC Trust Safeguarding Teams. Feedback was wholly positive and suggestions were discussed and incorporated as appropriate. This level of consultation has contributed immensely to the development of the final framework.

- (iii) Review the requirement of a learning and development framework that will complement the regional NIASP framework.

Outcome Achieved

A template was developed to capture information on any training and education programmes that nurses and midwives are accessing in relation to Adult Safeguarding. Following completion of the scoping exercise it is clear that a range of programmes relating to Adult Safeguarding exist. The HSC Clinical Education Centre programme is used extensively for the HSC and is mandatory every three years. The independent sector undertakes training annually and use a range of providers.

The Competency framework is presented as the foundation for the content of education and training programmes required by nurses and midwives. It will be incumbent on those organisations providing adult safeguarding programmes to ensure that their programmes reflect the requirements of the Competency Framework. Those commissioning programmes for nurses and midwives should satisfy themselves that the programme meets the requirements for the role the

nurse or midwife needs to fulfil and reflects the competencies articulated in the framework.

Organisations providing adult safeguarding programmes must ensure that the content of education and training programmes required for nurses and midwives reflect the requirements of the Competency Framework.

- (iv) Development of a proposed implementation strategy to facilitate wide usage of the competency framework and possible learning and development framework.

Outcome Achieved

The project report and competency framework will be presented to the CNO and Ex Directors of nursing for their endorsement. Following this there should be wide dissemination of the competency framework and it would be anticipated that a launch event will be held. Implementation of the framework will be the responsibility of those organisations employing nurses and midwives and should ensure that appropriate education, training and support is in place to enable registrants meet the competencies relevant to their role.

- (v) Submission of a final project report to DoH.

Outcome achieved

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Present the final *Safeguarding Adults Core Competency Framework* to CNO Business team for consideration and endorsement.

Recommendation 2

Following endorsement of the *Safeguarding Adults Core Competency Framework* by Executive Directors of Nursing/CNO Business team, HSC Bodies and Independent organisations employing registered Nurses and Midwives should, following wide dissemination and implementation of the framework, ensure that registrants are supported to meet the competencies commensurate with individual roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation 3

Organisations providing Adult Safeguarding education and training should confirm that those programmes intended for registered nurses and midwives are reviewed and planned to ensure that registrants are supported to meet the competencies outlined within the competency framework and those commissioning programmes for nurses and midwives should satisfy themselves that the programme meets the requirements of the framework.

Recommendation 4

The Regional network for Safeguarding nurses should be maintained, supported by the PHA, to provide peer support and to influence future development and support for the role.

References

DHSSPSNI, DoJNI (2015) **Adult Safeguarding; Prevention and Protection in Partnership**. Belfast; DHSSPSNI & DoJNI

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Northern Ireland Practice Education Council (2012) **Safeguarding Children and Young People; A Core Competency Framework for Nurses and Midwives**. Belfast: NIPEC

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2015) **The Code: Professional Standards of Practice and Behaviour for Nurses and Midwives**. London; NMC

Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board (2017) **Safeguarding Adults Competency Framework**. Available from: http://www.ssab.org.uk/media/upload/sub_documents/SSAB-Competencies-Feb-2017.pdf

Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board (2017) **Safeguarding Adults Competency Framework**. Available from: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/42733/170223-SSAB-Competency-Framework-2017-final-02.pdf

Appendix 1

Membership of the Steering Group

Name	Designation	Organisation
Geraldine Brown	Assistant Director of Nursing for Secondary Care (Chair)	WHSCCT
Eleanor Ross	Consultant Nurse	PHA
Joel McFetridge	Safeguarding Nurse	BHSCCT
Raymond Mc Cafferty Norma McIntyre	Safeguarding Nurse	NHSCCT
Louise Magee	Safeguarding Nurse	SEHSCCT
Louise Hall	Mental Health Nursing	SHSCCT
Megan Miller	Safeguarding Nurse	WHSCCT
Sibymol Joseph	Safeguarding Nurse	SHSCCT
Joyce McKee	Regional Adult Safeguarding Officer	NIASP
Kathy Fodey	Director	RQIA
Janet Montgomery	Director	IHCP
Lorraine Thompson		FSHC
Melanie McClements	Assistant Director of Older Peoples Services	SHSCCT
Maura McKenna	Union	
Joanne Blair	Lecturer	QUB
Seana Duggan	Lecturer	UU
Eilish Boyle	Senior manager	CEC
Martina Doolan	Team Leader NHSCCT	RCM
<i>Rosaline Kelly</i> Dolores McCormick		RCN
Jane Greene	Consultant Nurse	SHSCCT
Valerie McConnell Randal McHugh	Social Care Commissioning Lead MH & LD	HSCB
Karen Murray	Senior Professional Officer (Project lead)	NIPEC

Appendix 2

Membership of the Expert Reference Group

Name	Designation	Organisation
Eleanor Ross	Consultant Nurse	PHA
Karen Murray	Senior Professional Officer (Project lead)	NIPEC
Joel McFetridge	Safeguarding Nurse	BHSCT
Raymond Mc Cafferty Norma McIntyre	Safeguarding Nurse	NHSCT
Louise Magee	Safeguarding Nurse	SEHSCT
Megan Miller	Safeguarding Nurse	WHST
Sibymol Joseph	Safeguarding Nurse	SHSCT
Joanne Blair	Lecturer	QUB
Seana Duggan	Lecturer	UU
Eilish Boyle	Senior Manager	CEC



***Adult Safeguarding Competency Framework
Regional Testing Workshop
Programme***

**8th March 2018, 13:30 – 16.30 hrs.
Steeple Suite, Antrim Civic Centre**

Time	Activity	Led By
13.30	Lunch and Registration	
14.00	Welcome by Chair of Steering Group	Eleanor Ross Assistant Director Public Health Nursing, PHA
14.10	Presentation – setting the scene – The need for a competency framework.	Joel McFetridge Safeguarding nurse, BHSCT
14:30	Activity One	
15.00	Facilitator Feedback	Karen Murray Senior Professional Officer, NIPEC
15.20	Break: Tea, Coffee and biscuits	
15:30	Activity Two	
16.00	Facilitator Feedback	Eleanor Ross Assistant Director Public Health Nursing, PHA
16.20	Next steps and close	

Appendix 4

***Adult Safeguarding Competency Framework
Regional Testing Workshop
Activities***

**8th March 2018, 13:30 – 16.00 hrs.
Steeple Suite, Antrim Civic Centre**

Activity One; (Warm up and beginning to get the conversation going)

What do I need to know and be able to do in my role to safeguard adults?

What could help me achieve this?

What are the things preventing me from doing this?

Karen to take feedback and Eleanor to capture any issues on the electronic version of the document.

Activity Two; (Give a copy of level 2 & 3 competencies to each table on A3)

Review the competencies developed to date and reflecting on the discussion in the last activity add in any additional competencies that we have missed and/or reword any of the competencies to refine and make them clearer. (Find your own form of words)

How helpful are the competencies in guiding your professional development in this area?



For further Information, please contact

NIPEC

Centre House
79 Chichester Street
BELFAST, BT1 4JE

Tel: 0300 300 0066

This document can be downloaded from the NIPEC website
www.nipec.hscni.net

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