

Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership



1 APRIL 2017 – 31 MARCH 2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the seventh Annual Report of the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) and covers the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Adult safeguarding activity levels have reduced noticeably over the last 5 years. While some of this had been anticipated, the impact of the new policy and procedures is evident as new thresholds are applied and core services respond to more cases of adults at risk.

Prevention activity continues to be led by the Local Adult Safeguarding Partnerships, supported by NIASP. A diverse range of activities and initiatives have continued to develop to advance the prevention agenda.

In 2017/18, NIASP further developed its engagement with service users through the completion of the user feedback audit, which utilised the 10,000 Voices methodology.

The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion has been enthusiastically embraced by colleagues in the community, voluntary and independent sectors.

NIASP continues to be committed to the identification and sharing of learning. This year, learning focused on supporting an adult victim of modern slavery.

NIASP continues to build on national and international links through university colleagues and developing informal practitioner networks at all levels.



WORKPLAN 2017 - 18

The NIASP Workplan for 2017/18 was based on the three core themes of the Regional Policy, Adult Safeguarding in Northern Ireland: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (DHSSPS 2015).

The Policy does not set out a timetable for implementation or identify specific actions that are required to ensure the Policy is embedded in practice.

| Theme 1 PREVENTION | | | |
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| | Rationale | Target for Completion | Commentary |
| Continue to develop a regional programme of awareness raising and prevention activities to complement local prevention plans. | The regional programme will continue to evolve in partnership with local initiatives. Particular attention will be paid in 2017-18 to working in partnership with | March 2018 | Actions complete. Objective achieved |

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| | PSNI and Trading Standards to ensure that crime prevention material and training is rolled out to as many front-line staff as possible, whether in specific training sessions or through access to e-learning opportunities such as Friends Against Scams | | |
| Ensure that NIASP and all partner organisations comply with the relevant requirements set out in <u>Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership</u> | The final template for the Adult Safeguarding Champion Annual Position report and associated common data return will be available for use by ASCs for their annual report on adult safeguarding activity in 2017-18 | June 2017 | Actions complete. Objective achieved |

Theme 2 PROTECTION

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| <p>Ensure that NIASP and all partner organisations have separate internet sections on adult safeguarding which include easy access to core documentation including referral forms.</p> | <p>Information on new roles and responsibilities and core documentation associated with the new policy and procedures are now available. It is vital that this information is accessible to staff at all levels in an organisation.</p> <p>As a first step, NIASP will pilot a brief questionnaire to ascertain how partner organisations are ensuring this information is widely available and publicised. This will be followed up by a full audit of practice and the development of an action plan to address any outstanding issues.</p> | <p>Pilot to be completed by September 2017.</p> <p>Full audit and associated action plan to be completed by March 2018.</p> | <p>Work in relation to the NIASP website has been completed and will go “live” in June 2018.</p> |
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| Ensure that practitioners have access to relevant, evidence-based interventions and approaches | NIASP will continue to ensure that practitioners are provided with access to relevant interventions through sharing learning and best practice through the annual Learning Event. | March 2018 | Achieved The Regional Learning Event on a Social Work Reflection – the recovery of an adult from Modern Slavery took place on the 19th October 2017. |
| | In 2017-18 NIASP will publish a minimum of 1 article in a relevant peer-reviewed journal on the topic of adult safeguarding in Northern Ireland. | September 2018 | 2 articles have been published in The Journal of Adult Protection: <i>“Adult safeguarding in Northern Ireland: prevention, protection, partnership”</i> (vol 19 issue 4) <i>“10,000 voices: service users’ experiences of adult safeguarding”</i> (vol 19 issue 5) |
| | NIASP will continue to promote the use of the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the Safeguarding Adults at Risk Information Hub as | March 2018 | Evidence suggests that SAaRIH continues to be well used across the statutory. The site will continue to be available 2018 / 19 |

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| | effective ways of accessing the most up-to-date developments in practice and research. | | |
| NIASP will ensure that the Manual of Operational Policies and Procedures is kept up-to-date and reflects developing practice in adult safeguarding. | To consider comments and suggestions submitted to NIASP for amendment of procedures and regional documentation | March 2018 | The review of Operational Procedures is ongoing. This work is complex and time consuming and will need to be carried forward into next year's work-plan. Anticipated timescale for completion September 2018. |
| NIASP will ensure that the Joint Protocol is kept up-to-date and reflects developing practice in adult safeguarding. | To consider comments and suggestions submitted to NIASP for amendment of the Joint Protocol and associated regional documentation | Sept 2018 | The review of the Joint Protocol is ongoing. This work is complex and time consuming and will need to be carried forward into next year's work-plan. Anticipated timescale for completion September 2018. |
| Review the interface with Human Resources and Adult Protection | The complexities in adult safeguarding investigations have resulted in increased challenges in relation to the interface between adult | March 2018 | Regional workshop took place. All Trusts were represented. Agreement reached that we would draft regional Joint Principles in relation to Adult Safeguarding/HR joint |

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| | <p>safeguarding and HR processes.</p> <p>The new Procedures include further guidance on this but further work is required to secure a regionally agreed pathway and process.</p> | | working. |
| Develop initial guidance for staff in responding to issues of financial abuse | NIASP will work with relevant partner organisations such as Business Services Organisation, Trading Standards etc. to develop introductory guidance for staff in responding to issues of financial abuse or exploitation | December 2017 | Work ongoing. To be carried over to 2018/19 work plan |

Theme 3 PARTNERSHIP

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| Clarify the interface between adult safeguarding and other public safety strategies such as | NIASP will work with the Department of Justice to confirm the arrangements to be put in place to introduce Domestic Homicide reviews into Northern Ireland and clarify the role and contribution of | March 2018 | While at Departmental level NI is committed to undertake domestic homicide reviews, discussions about the framework, thresholds and processes for these is not yet finalised. The Department of Justice are the lead |
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| <p>the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy</p> | <p>NIASP in this process. This will include consideration of any associated costs.</p> <p>Devise a simple operational protocol to examine the interface between adult safeguarding and domestic and sexual violence strategy</p> | <p>March 2018</p> | <p>department on this. While initially a central role for NIASP had been anticipated, it is now more likely that the NIASP role will be mainly in facilitating the dissemination of learning, not oversight of the process.</p> <p>The first meeting to consider this was held. However, there were concerns within the group regarding the additional responsibilities within the Strategy which require further discussion by NIASP.</p> |
| <p>NIASP will review current adult safeguarding structures and ensure they are fit for purpose</p> | <p>NIASP will continue to keep its structures and operational procedures under review.</p> <p>NIASP will strengthen its internal governance arrangements through the production of a Handbook of Operational Procedures.</p> | <p>To be reviewed annually</p> <p>September 2017</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>Operational Handbook completed and issued at NIASP meeting – September 2017</p> |

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| | NIASP will work with partner organisations to develop a peer support network for ASCs. | June 2017 | ARC NI has submitted a paper regarding the future of the ARC NI ASC Network. Four LASPs have introduced ASC Networks in their areas. |
| NIASP will ensure that the experience of service users is sought at all stages of the safeguarding process | NIASP will complete the full audit of user experience through the 10,000 Voices methodology. The findings of the audit will be presented to NIASP and a regional action plan developed to address any relevant findings | Full audit to be completed by December 2017 Action Plan to be presented to NIASP by March 2018 | Actions completed. Objective achieved Findings to be presented at NIASP meeting in September 2018 |
| Review general and specialist training courses to ensure they meet the needs of practitioners and partner organisations and are responsive to developing policy, | There is a need to ensure that education and training opportunities are fully reflective of the policy, procedures and emerging best practice. The NIASP Training sub-group will continue to keep this under review | December 2017 | Training subgroup completed the mapping exercise - findings were circulated at the September 2017. A final paper was submitted in December papers. No further actions required at this time. |

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| standards and practice | | | |
| Develop and publish a suite of standards for adult safeguarding in Northern Ireland. | <p>NIASP will consider the development of a small number of Standards for practice in relation to the Protocol for Joint Investigation of Adult Safeguarding Cases.</p> <p>On completion, these Standards will be added to the existing suite.</p> | March 2018 | The existing frameworks are to be collated and areas of duplication highlighted. Key standards that would inform practice improvement are to be extrapolated. It is to be determined by NIASP is this objective is to be carried forward into 2018/19 |



ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

This section of the Annual Report is based on activity data collected manually by the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts and then submitted to the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) on a monthly basis. The data is then collated by the Information Team of the HSCB.

The HSC Trusts have agreed that manual collection of data is both inefficient and difficult to quality assure. They are currently introducing a new data collection system, which will be tested in 2018-19 and move to an electronic system in 2019/20

In previous years, analysis of activity information has focused on the number of new referrals into Adult Safeguarding, as a broad indicator of the level and amount of work involved.

Since the first regional report was compiled in 2011, there have been a number of significant developments that mean this is no longer a reliable measure of activity or performance.

1. Service re-engineering has resulted in single access points or Adult Safeguarding Gateway Teams being established in each HSC Trust area. In the transition period, Trust practice in recording new referrals has varied, with some recording every new issue or concern communicated to the Gateway Team as a referral. Other Trusts have only recorded those concerns that have been screened into the specialist Adult Safeguarding Teams for formal investigation as a referral;
2. Alongside the establishment of Adult Safeguarding Gateway teams, the level of adult safeguarding expertise within core teams has also increased. As a result, more concerns in relation to adults at risk are being dealt with in core services under established Trust procedures;
3. The new policy, Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Practice (2015) includes new definitions and thresholds for referral to adult

safeguarding services. This has resulted in changes in practice that make year-on-year comparisons difficult;

4. The policy emphasis on finding alternative responses to concerns has also led to a reduction in referrals to specialist teams;
5. There is an increased emphasis on developing effective prevention and early intervention programmes eg Keeping You Safe, which appear to be equipping vulnerable service users to avoid risky situations eg in the use of social media or avoiding organised scams;
6. HSC Trust community information systems are at different stages of development and implementation. The ability of systems to note the progress of a concern through a screening process to a referral is compromised in some areas. Different recording systems will group these activities together in some Trusts and in some service areas within Trusts, but not in others;
7. Adult safeguarding is a unique service in that it works across all adult Programme of Care boundaries and systems, with staff often using more than one recording system.

In this year's report, analysis of adult safeguarding activity will focus on:

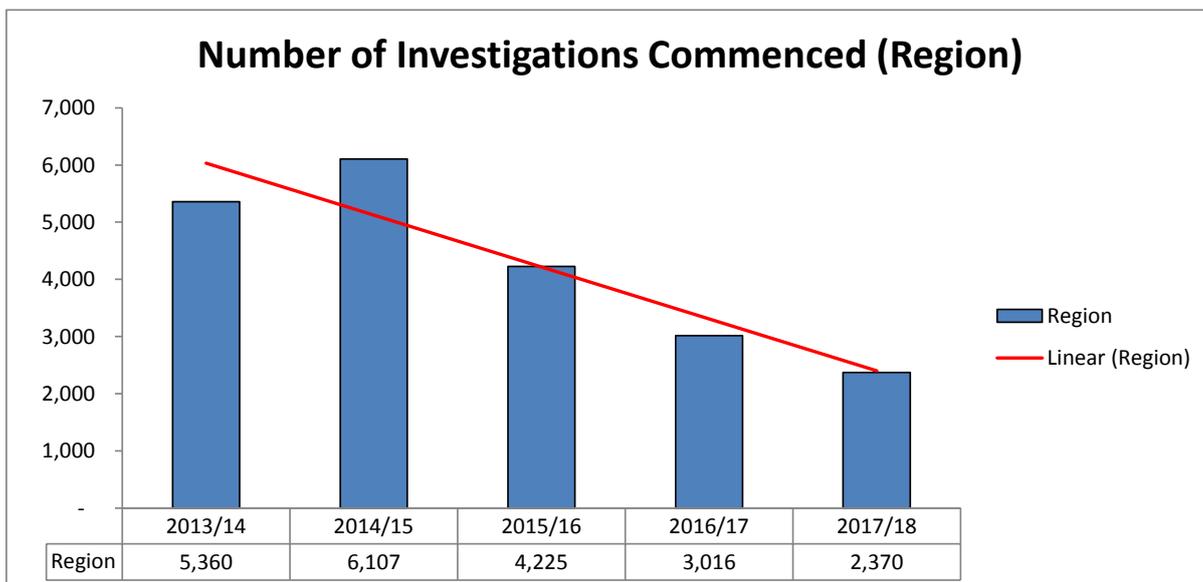
- a) **Trends** in relation to the number of investigations commenced since 2013/14;
- b) **Trends** in relation to the number of adult safeguarding Care and Protection Plans implemented since 2013/14; and
- c) **Trends** in relation to the number of Joint Protocol Investigations (including Achieving Best Evidence Interviews) since 2013/14.

It should be noted that, as in previous years, most activity related to concerns of physical abuse within the Older People and Learning Disability Programmes of Care.

a) Investigations Commenced :

Adult safeguarding investigations commence once a referral to adult safeguarding services has been made and a decision taken that the incident is sufficiently serious to require a full adult protection investigation.

That investigation may be taken forward on a single agency basis (ie the only agency involved is the HSC Trust), or the investigation may be taken forward in partnership with eg a provider organisation or RQIA.



Since April 2013, the number of investigations commenced has decreased significantly from 5,360 in 2013/14, to 2,370 in 2017/18. This is a decrease of 2,990 or 56%.

There are two possible reasons for this decrease:

- The introduction of new adult safeguarding arrangements between 2010 and 2014 resulted in a “spike” in activity as historic concerns were addressed and service users and staff became used to the new arrangements. This “spike” was predicted and a downturn in activity thereafter was also anticipated;
- The phased nature of the implementation of the new procedures since 2015 is reflected in the downward trend. It is anticipated that in future years, this category of information will refer only to investigations where the adult concerned is considered to be in need of protection and that cases involving adults at risk will be dealt with in core HSC Trust activity.

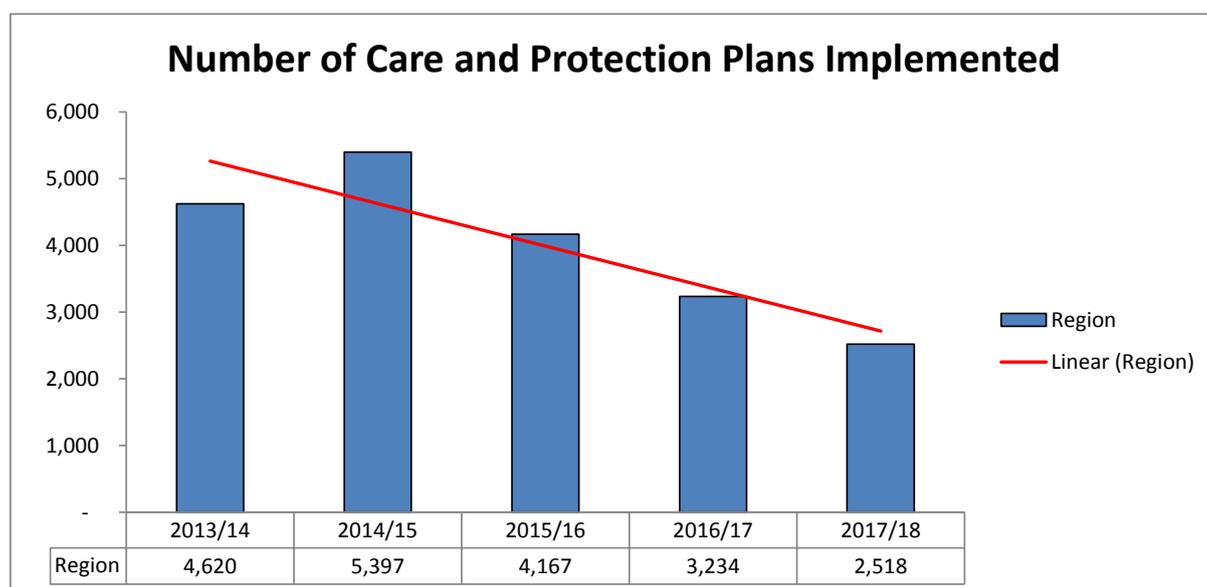
b) Care and Protection Plans Implemented:

Care and Protection Plans are the actions taken by HSC Trusts to protect an adult from further harm, where it has been alleged that they may have been subjected to some form of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

For some adults in need of protection, these plans will be the first time they have received support from the HSC Trusts eg victims of modern slavery.

For others, where there is a single agency investigation lead by the PSNI, no additional support from HSC Trusts may be required. In some circumstances, eg where a member of staff is placed on precautionary suspension pending the outcome of an investigation, appropriate arrangements to reduce the level of risk are already in place and no additional support is required.

From April 2013 to March 2018, the number of Care and Protection Plans implemented has declined by 45%, from 4,620 to 2,518.



Possible explanations for this downward trend are the same as the trend in relation to investigations commenced and outlined above.

However, it is also important to note that some investigations will refer to group living situations where one investigative process may include two or more adults, whereas a Care and Protection Plan is associated with an individual adult in need of protection. Consequently, it is not unusual for the number of investigations and the number of Care and Protection Plans initiated to be slightly different.

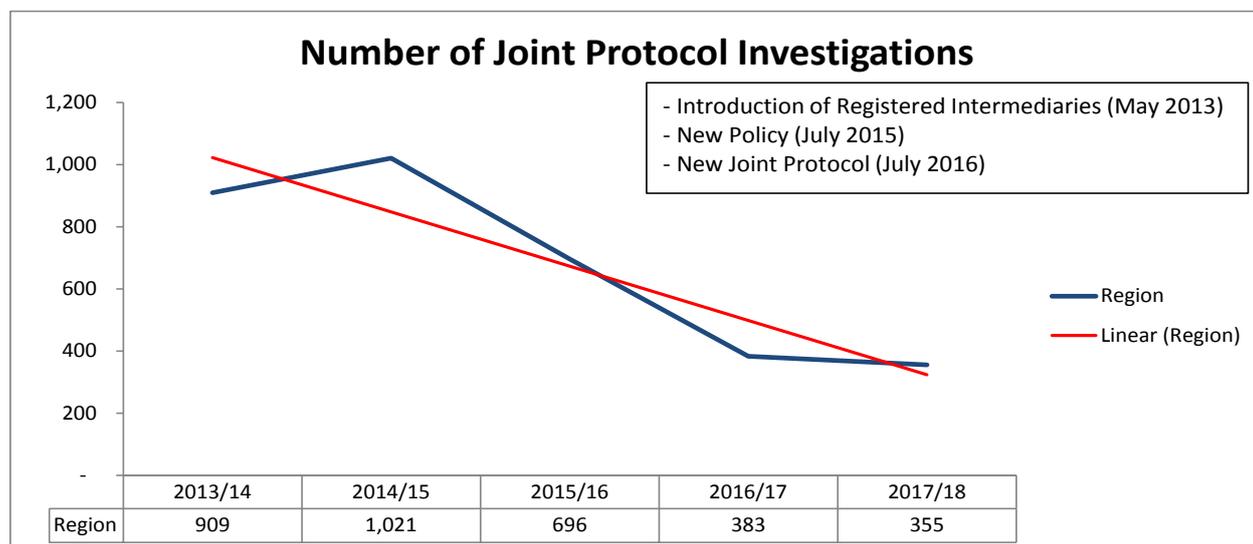
The downward trend in the number of Care and Protection Plans initiated is slightly less marked than the trend in relation to investigations commenced. Again, this may be an indication that new thresholds are being applied and that high-risk situations are being identified and managed appropriately

c) Joint Protocol Investigations (including Achieving Best Evidence Interviews):

This category of adult safeguarding activity refers to the close co-working and collaboration between HSC Trusts and the PSNI in carrying out investigations where it is alleged or suspected that a crime may have taken place, and to support an adult in need of protection to make a statement of complaint to the PSNI.

These are the most complex and demanding adult safeguarding cases, which require significant levels of resource from both the HSC Trusts and the PSNI to achieve a successful outcome.

In common with other area of adult safeguarding practice, there has been a steady downward trend in relation to the number of Joint Protocol Investigations.



There are three possible explanations for this change in activity:

- The role of Registered Intermediary was introduced on a pilot basis in May 2013 and subsequently rolled out across the region. Registered Intermediaries provide communication support to children and adult witnesses in criminal proceedings, from initial complaints right through to any court hearings and is managed by the PSNI. It is likely that the PSNI are using Registered Intermediaries in some situations where previously they would have moved to joint working with the HSC Trust;
- The new thresholds introduced under Adult Safeguarding in Northern Ireland: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015) are also being applied by PSNI personnel;
- Two years ago the PSNI moved to a Central Referral Unit arrangement to manage all adult safeguarding referrals to the PSNI. In much the same way that the introduction of Adult Safeguarding Gateway Teams has concentrated experience in the HSC Trusts, the Central Referral Unit has streamlined decision-making within PSNI systems and processes.

It is also important to note that in 2016 the PSNI and HSC Trusts implemented a new Protocol for the Joint Investigation of Cases of Alleged or Suspected Abuse of Adult. It would appear that the introduction of this Protocol has led to a stabilisation of the number of Joint Protocol cases across the region.

Next Steps:

In 2018/19, NIASP will oversee the pilot phase of a new data collection system for adults in need of protection which is designed to address some of the data quality challenges addressed above.

In addition, the HSCB will undertake a regional audit in partnership with the HSC Trusts to examine referral practice in more detail and implement any associated improvement plan to ensure that referral criteria are applied consistently across the region.



PREVENTION ACTIVITY

Throughout 2017/18 NIASP engaged in a range of different activities focusing on the prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

- Each local Adult Safeguarding Partnership (LASP) now has an Adult Safeguarding Prevention Plan, tailored to address the priorities of the local area and partner organisations:
- Regionally, prevention activity has been led by partners from non-statutory organisations. In particular, faith groups have been very active in raising awareness of the abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults across significant sections of the population.
- Following an audit in 17/18, NIASP has renewed its web presence and a number of changes have been made to ensure individuals and organisations have easy access to relevant information on Adult Safeguarding.
- Further work is required to develop more regional resources to promote prevention activity. In 18/19, NIASP will seek to access sufficient resources to take this work forward.
- Partners continue to seek out ways of addressing concerns of financial abuse. A series of multi-agency workshops have been held in the Northern LASP to support partner organisations streamline their processes to manage service user finances. These have been very positively evaluated by participants and the model is being rolled out within the other LASP areas in 18/19.
- LASPs have also continued to roll out various 'Keeping You Safe' initiatives on a local basis. These programmes vary from targeted seminars within specific facilities, to training programmes with service users and various safe place initiatives.
- The development of Adult Safeguarding Gateway Teams continues to pay dividends and provide a safe point of contact for members of the public to raise concerns about an adult at risk. These have also led to a process of streamlining access criteria to core HSC Trust sources. Further work is required

to ensure that referrals of a general nature are re-directed to core provision more effectively.

- The South Eastern LASP has developed a suite of information on Adult Safeguarding for the Talking Newspaper organisation which has now been distributed throughout the region.
- A key element of prevention activity is equipping front-line staff to recognise and respond positively to situations where an adult may be at risk. Volunteer now continue to deliver high quality training to front-line staff, managers and now Adult Safeguarding Champions. This training is closely monitored and the sessions are continually evaluated very positively.
- Independent sector employers are also required to deliver awareness raising training to front-line staff. Some organisations will avail of training sessions with Volunteer Now to deliver this requirement. Others will choose to use their own in-house trainers or secure the sources of an independent trainer. Regardless of where the training is secured from, it must reach the standards set out in the NIASP Regional Training Framework (2016). The quality of this training is assured by RQIA.



PROTECTION ACTIVITY

The majority of protection activity continues to be carried out by the statutory agencies in the partnership ie the HSC Trusts, PSNI, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, RQIA and the Business Service Organisation. However, the impact of the implementation of the new policy is becoming evident as new thresholds are applied requiring core services to respond to cases involving adults at risk. This has diverted significant numbers of referrals from the protection services (see activity analysis, page 14)

As in previous years, NIASP is committed to a process of continual learning and improvement. NIASP has established a single mailbox to receive comments or queries about the policy and related procedures. These are reviewed at every NIASP meeting, and appropriate adjustments made to the regional procedures once a year.

Similarly the protocol for joint investigation is kept under regular review and any emerging issues are addressed as quickly as possible.

Other protection initiatives in 17/18 include

- Collaboration with Woman's Aid and appointment of a specialist development worker for older women living with domestic abuse;
- Piloting the co-location of a specialist adult protection social worker with the local PSNI two days per week;
- Development of a local protocol for across border working with the Health Service Executive;
- Appointment of a dedicated Designated Adult Protection Officer within the Mental Health Programme of Care;
- A service improvement project to streamline the referral process within adult learning disability services; and
- Exploration of how the new role of Community Guardians can support Adult Safeguarding activity.

Work has continued across the partnership to develop new and innovative protection activities. In 2017/18 NIASP partners continued to contribute to highly specialised training programmes for staff working with adults in a need of protection. The specialist social work Professionals in Practice Award in Adult Safeguarding continues to attract high calibre candidates and is consistently well evaluated by participants.

In 2017/18 NIPEC led on the development of a competency framework for nurses undertaking Adult Safeguarding work. This framework is now out for consultation and it is anticipated that staff will begin to work towards achieving these competences in 2018/19.

In relation to issues of domestic violence and abuse, partners continue to be active contributors to multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) where people at highest risk of serious harm are offered a multi-agency response or support.

MARACs, while playing a vital part in the support and protection of people at high risk of harm, are also very resource-intensive. Adult Safeguarding partner organisations continue to be committed to MARACs but at times it can be challenging to fulfil the obligations associated with them. A recent development has been the introduction of Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Schemes which also require significant contributions from NIASP partners, with no additional associated resources.

In 2017/18 there were a small number of serious adverse incident review reports involving adult safeguarding concerns. These have all now been appropriately reviewed and regional learning eg in relation to recruitment and selection and the management of support to people experiencing difficulties in swallowing, has been disseminated.

At the time of writing, NIASP partners are involved in two significant adult safeguarding investigations. One of these involved an in-patient unit in a statutory setting. The other involves an independent care home. While the outcomes of these investigations have not yet been made public; it is likely that the formal reports will include recommendations to improve protection processes. In 2018/19 NIASP will ensure that systems and processes are in place to implement any regional learning identified from these investigations.



PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY

Partnership working is central to NIASP and the development of systems and processes to safeguard adults at risk and adults in need of protection. It underpins all NIASPs work.

There are a number of primary partnerships that have helped deliver progress in adult safeguarding practice and improved outcomes for service users. These include the PSNI, local HSC Trusts and RQIA.

Partners in the non-statutory sector have also been instrumental in the development of new procedures and in ensuring that adult safeguarding is central to practice for associated organisations.

NIASPs partnership with service users has developed further in 2017/18 as the audit of user feedback has concluded (see page 29).

There continue to be challenges in working effectively and efficiently with colleagues in Human Resources, particularly where a member of staff is placed on precautionary suspension without prejudice, or disciplinary processes are involved. At present, the processes of a safeguarding investigation, PSNI investigation, Judicial learning, review by a professional regulatory body and any disciplinary investigation all happens sequentially rather than concurrently. This poses significant challenges for employers and employees alike, as well as delaying final resolution for the service user. This situation has improved in recent years, but more work is required to streamline these processes further.

In 2016/17 NIASP undertook a limited review of its membership, which resulted in some new partners joining NIASP. However, it is now over 8 years since NIASP was established, and in 2018/19 NIASP will give consideration to the need for a more fundamental review of membership, in order to refresh and review the partnership.



HUMAN RIGHTS

Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Practice sets out 5 guiding principles for practice and notes that all adult safeguarding activity should be rights-based, empowering, person-centred, consent-driven and collaborative in approach.

Adult safeguarding practitioners engage on a daily basis with the sophisticated task of balancing risk assessment with the protection and promotion of an adult's rights and responsibilities.

The wishes of the adult in need of protection are of paramount importance in all cases of alleged or suspected abuse and the consent of the adult in need of protection should be sought as a first step.

Throughout 2017/18, practitioners have continued to adopt a human-rights based approach to adult safeguarding. While there have not been any new procedures or practice guidance that require a human rights screening, experience from practice eg in the stories and reports from the service user feedback audit, indicates that this approach is ingrained in practice.

NAISP will continue to ensure that human rights are at the centre of practice eg through the development of the new data collection system in 2018/19.



ADULT SAFEGUARDING CHAMPIONS

The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) is set out in the regional policy, Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015). It is a key role in the management of situations where an adult may be at risk. The main elements of the role are:

- 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 reporting to HSC Trusts where there is a safeguarding concern (see section 10);
- 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) (see section 11), 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.

The role has a significant governance function in that, through the provision of annual ASC Reports to the organisation's Management Committee or board, the

organisation complies with the regional policy and proactive engagement with the adult safeguarding agenda can be demonstrated.

In 2017/18, NIASP partners in the voluntary, community and independent sectors undertook significant work to introduce the role and to prepare organisations for the responsibilities contained in the regional policy. Work included finalising the template for the ASC Annual Report and agreeing the minimum data set required for inclusion in that report.

This is a role which has been enthusiastically embraced by colleagues in the community, voluntary and independent sectors.

The Association for Real Change (ARC) in particular has provided significant leadership within their network and have organised seminars and workshops to support organisations implement the role of the ASC. These seminars have also been invaluable opportunities for sharing learning and experience with a wider group as well as building a body of knowledge in relation to adults at risk or in need of protection.

The Local Adult Safeguarding Partnerships have also introduced regular support meetings for ASCs in their area and these are proving very popular, with the added advantage of further developing positive working relationships between provider organisations and HSC Trust adult safeguarding teams.



SHARING LEARNING

This year's shared learning event focused on the role of adult safeguarding in the recovery of an adult victim of modern slavery and in supporting them through an initial rehabilitation phase.

The event was one of several activities hosted by the Department of Justice to mark World Anti-Slavery Day and was opened by the UK Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Mr Kevin Hyland.

At the event practitioners from the Southern HSC Trust shared learning and reflections on their engagement with a victim of modern slavery/human trafficking from the initial point of discovery, through an associated criminal justice process including a trial, and finally to resettlement and rehabilitation for the victim.

The event highlighted the importance of partnership working, with a successful outcome for the user depending on effective contributions from core social work staff, specialist adult safeguarding practitioners, PSNI and independent providers.

The event concluded with a DVD presentation by the victim where she highlighted how her life had changed for the better, describing how she had gone from being a prisoner in a locked room subject to regular sexual abuse and exploitation, to living independently in a supportive environment which she characterised as a situation where she is now "Queen of her own home".

The learning from this event has been further communicated through additional seminars and conferences, eg through lunchtime seminars hosted by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.



AUDIT ACTIVITY

The Adult Safeguarding 10,000 Voices project provided enhanced qualitative information about the real experiences of service users and their carers. The overall aim of the project was to identify how the adult safeguarding process can be improved to ensure the service users experience is rights based, empowering, consent driven and as person centred as possible.

This will be achieved by adopting the partnership approach which has been successfully applied in the 10,000 Voices Initiative, using a blend of qualitative and quantitative data through the use of Sensemaker® methodology.

Development of the tool

In keeping with the principles of the 10,000 Voices approach to improving experience of people who use our services, a tool for the project was developed in collaboration with the key stakeholders. Two workshops were held to ensure engagement with and contribution from the stakeholders was achieved. The SenseMaker survey tool was designed, in partnership with Kings College London and Social Care Workforce Research Unit and key stakeholders during a series of workshops. Following these workshops the tool was agreed.

The project asked service users and/or their representatives to consider the following questions:

1. To what extent did you feel listened to during meetings and conversations?
To what extent did you feel satisfied with how the safeguarding investigation was carried out?
2. To what extent were you able to understand the information given to you during the safeguarding investigation?
3. To what extent were you given the information you needed at the right time during the safeguarding investigation?

4. To what extent were you satisfied with the outcome of the investigation? and
5. Do you feel that you are safer now as a result of the safeguarding investigation?

The scope of the Project

The project took place across all Trusts from January 2017 – Dec 2017. In total 109 surveys were received. The survey was completed by 76 service users; 16 people acting on behalf of the service users; 16 carers and one other person.

1. Responses to the question “To what extent did you feel listened to during meetings and conversation?”

The majority of respondents (67%) “felt they were listened to in a respected way”. (73 out of a total of 109 experiences) A further 16% felt they were listened to but for some their views didn’t affect the decisions. This reflects the complex nature of decision making within adult safeguarding

4% of the survey respondents reflected that they felt “judged” in some way. 3 out of 5 of these experiences related to the criminal justice process and outcomes and the other 2 related to experiences involving incidents relating to care staff. This illustrates the importance of supporting individuals to consider their desired outcomes at the beginning of the process and provide appropriate support throughout and after the outcomes of both a judicial and internal HSC safeguarding process.

2. Responses to the question “To what extent did you feel satisfied with how the safeguarding investigation was carried out?”

Again there is a 67% cluster of respondents who felt that they were supported to work things through as the investigation proceeded

Professionals had anticipated that service users and carers would have responded in this question by indicated that the “process dragged on” however only 5% reflected the length of time the process took in their experience. There were indications throughout the narratives that individuals recognised that the investigation process

took time but respondents highlighted they understood the reasons behind this and did not reflect this as a negative experience. However, 29% of the respondents placed their experience between “The Process dragged on” and “I didn’t know what was happening”. This reflects the need for ongoing effective communication with service users and carers throughout the safeguarding process. This not only provides information but also enables service users and carers to respond to the investigation progress made, preparing themselves for potential outcomes and also to develop personal resilience to strengthen their own safety.

3. Responses to the question “To what extent were you able to understand the information given to you during the safeguarding investigation?”

It is encouraging that 91% of the respondents felt that “the information was clear and easily understood” or that “someone had helped them to understand the information”. A small number of experiences reflected that they didn’t understand the information during the investigation. The narratives in these 6 experiences reflect the importance of working at the pace of the service user / carer. In one experience a carer reflected that they were so distraught at the time because of what had happened that she could not take in anything and therefore on reflection she felt she did not fully understand what was happening.

4. Responses to the question “To what extent were you given the information you needed at the right time during the safeguarding investigation?”

The responses to this question clearly indicated that 70% of respondents felt that they had the right information at the right time. However, the responses which report that “I was not kept up to date” require further analysis. Of these 9 experiences, 5 reflected in the previous question that the information given by professionals was clear and easily understood DURING the investigation, however, they stated that they didn’t get the information that would have helped them understand better at the right time. A further 2 of these individuals reflected that someone had helped them

understand the professional information during the investigation but again reflected that the information was not given at the correct time. This highlights the importance of providing person centred responses during the safeguarding process. This also evidences the importance of working at the pace of the service user / carer to support them through a traumatic experience and a complex system of choices to be made to respond to what has happened.

5. Responses to the question “To what extent were you satisfied with the outcome of the investigation?”

It is encouraging to see that the majority of experiences reflected that “people worked together to make things better” encompassing the spirit of the new adult safeguarding policy and procedures. However, it is of concern that 7% of respondents “did not know what the outcome was.” It is interesting to note that these experiences do not relate to criminal justice outcomes but rather experiences where there has been a change in practice and the harm has ceased but the service user / carer has not felt that they had “closure” on the safeguarding concerns due to recommendations from investigations not being implemented; communication from agencies to reflect learning and actions taken to improve systems; or actions taken to improve quality of service provision. This was particularly reflected in the experiences of carers of individuals who had a diagnosis of dementia and had complex comorbidities.

6. Responses to the question “Do you feel that you are safer now as a result of the safeguarding investigation?”

| | |
|--|----|
| I feel that I am not at all safer now | 4 |
| I feel that I am not much safer now | 12 |
| I feel that I am quite a bit safer now | 47 |
| I feel that I am completely safe now | 46 |

This perhaps is the most important question in the survey and asks the service user / carer to give their views on how safe they feel after the safeguarding investigation has been completed. 93 out of 109 people felt either quite a bit safer or completely safe. Those whose experience reflected that they did not feel safer or not much safer frequently were situations where service users choose to remain in the relationship where the harm was alleged to have occurred. Many of these were relating to situations of domestic abuse. This is further explained in the analysis below.

Overall how would you rate your experience?

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly positive | 42 |
| Positive | 37 |
| Neutral | 15 |
| Negative | 7 |
| Strongly negative | 3 |
| Not sure | 7 |

(Anomaly of 2)

Emerging Themes of Positive Experiences

The responses overall would note that the safeguarding process has been perceived by service users and carers as a positive experience. The majority of the respondents (85%) note that they feel safer after the process. This is a significant indicator of success in terms of meeting the desired outcomes of the service user.

One service user reported experiencing “*a feeling of despair, then hope and eventually light*”. Another reflected that “*People believed me.*” Experiences commonly reflected the sense of being listened to in a confidential way and being

provided with information to support service users and carers to make decisions about what they wanted to happen next.

Importantly, service users and carers felt that they were supported sensitively, respectfully and empathically throughout their experience. The role of the social worker to support, and provide clear concise information is key to continuous improvement and is acknowledged as being helpful and beneficial to the service user experience of safeguarding.

“I felt that people in the meeting listened to me and heard what I wanted to happen. They agreed with me and did what I wanted.”

Another carer commented, *“I felt I had options and support, things are a lot better now.”*

89% of service users and carers felt that they understood the information provided to them about the safeguarding process. This included being supported to understand the information.

The project has highlighted the benefits from a service user and carer perspective on the importance of collaborative working through the joint protocol process. Some comments included;

“The social worker/investigating officer couldn't have been nicer....they were really caring and easy to talk to. They really listened to me and didn't pity me.”

“both PSNI and Adult safeguarding excellent. PSNI more than helpful and understanding.”

“Everyone tried to help and only for the police I wouldn't have gone through with any of it and wouldn't have been able to go back to my home.”

Furthermore there were emerging patterns where 68% of the narratives reflected the partnership working across various agencies and disciplines where service users and carers reflected that working together improved their experience. This included

references to “GP’s”; “nursing home staff”; “medical hospital staff”; “day care staff” and “domiciliary care staff”; “Alzheimer’s Society”.

“Two social workers visited me and my brother at home and they found us somewhere to live which was warm and had loads of food. I went to the doctor in hospital and my toe is now better. I am happy and safe now.”

Emerging Themes for Service Improvement

The importance of ongoing communication with service users and carers remains an area for improvement. While it is acknowledged that this was not the experience of the majority of service users and carers the learning from the experiences where this was not positive provides good evidence of the impact that poor communication has on the outcomes for individuals. This theme was repeated particularly in the Joint Protocol cases. One service user / carer stated

“Disappointed by the police feedback and lack of conviction. Police left me in limbo.”

Comparatively, those who noted they were kept informed throughout the investigation and in a timely way reported an overall more satisfactory outcome.

Some recommendations for improvement from service users and carers include

“Explaining things a wee bit better” “Asking do you understand? Asking them to repeat the information”

“I wanted to be told exactly what was reported to the safeguarding team and I believed it was minimised by the staff member”

“Better and more frequent updates of action being taken. More positive reassurance”

“Waiting to hear from the PSNI.”

“More one to one time with my social worker”

Outcomes that lead to endings of interventions are important to service users and carers. This was further highlighted throughout the study by the response to the completion of the survey as a post investigation intervention.

“I found it very helpful. I found the 10,000 Voices had a good approach. I was upset by the whole thing.”

The added value of engagement and completion of professional endings to support the individual to process and respond to the outcome of their investigation is evident in the responses.

The length of time an investigation took has been noted as a common theme across all the Trusts. However, only 5% of respondents felt *“The Process dragged on”*. Therefore it is important to understand the context and complexity of the concerns in these situations. One carer reported *“Time delays but I understand it can take time.”*

“My experience was one of frustration, anger, sporadic communications, not being made aware of incidents at the time and having to draw attention to adult safeguarding issues myself regarding my relative. I am still waiting closure...”

Another

“The process run on far too long to be called reasonable because as long as the matter loomed over us, we all as a family were affected”

Others reported they *“found the experience lengthy.”*

There is an emerging theme which identified the resilience of service users and carers in responding to their circumstances. One service user commented that an area of improvement would be

“Help to understand what I could do to keep myself safe”

Many carers reflected actions in seeking out information to support them through the safeguarding process and also prevent harm reoccurring. Using “google”, “Age NI”,

“Alzheimer’s Society”, “Carers NI” and the safeguarding teams to provide advice and support was a recurring theme. There is an opportunity to strengthen protection planning, by building on strengths and resilience of service users and carers through the coproduction of protection plans and ongoing social work interventions to support and grow safety.

NEXT STEPS:

The final report of the Project will be presented to NIASP in the early Autumn. However, where possible the learning from the intermediate report has been shared with HSC Trusts and, where appropriate, incorporated into NIASP’s workplan for 2018/19.

Individual HSC Trusts and LASPs will also include implementing the learning from this project into their action plans for next year.



NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LINKS

Throughout 2017/18, NIASP continued to build on links between adult safeguarding in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK and Ireland.

The link with the National Centre for the Protection of Older People (NCPOP) in Dublin continues to provide NIASP with access to cutting-edge research on the topic of financial abuse of older people.

NIASP was asked to contribute a paper to a special edition of the Journal of Adult Protection devoted to the legislative and policy context to adult safeguarding across the UK. In the event, NIASP members contributed 2 papers to this special edition,

Following on from publication of an article reporting on the pilot phase of the use of 10,000 Voices to obtain user feedback on adult safeguarding, the article authors were invited to present a paper at the European Social Work Research Conference held in Edinburgh.

NIASP was also asked to contribute to a policy development seminar in Dublin organised by the Irish Government, as they seek to review the legislation underpinning adult safeguarding in Ireland.



RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Looking forward to 2018-19, there are a number of risks as well as opportunities for adult safeguarding. NIASP will continue to work with partner organisations and HSC Trusts to implement Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015) and the associated procedures. However, the continued lack of dedicated funding means that implementation of some aspects of the policy and procedures may be delayed. For example, lack of resources to provide enhanced training opportunities has meant that available funding has been targeted at existing Investigating and Designated Adult Protection Officers and it has not been possible to train practitioners new to these roles.

The existing data return is not reflective of the new roles, responsibilities and activity contained in the policy and associated procedures. Adult safeguarding is just one priority among many in terms of the development of an electronic recording system. In 2018/19, NIASP will move forward to pilot a new data return for work with adults in need of protection, with a view to having a final version ready for consideration by the relevant information management governance bodies by the end of the year.

Some aspects of the policy do not require new or additional investment. The new Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy offers NIASP a number of new and exciting opportunities to address the abuse of adults at risk or in need of protection. The Department of Justice will shortly be starting a consultation on new arrangements to review situations where domestic violence has resulted in a death and it is anticipated that NIASP will make a significant contribution to the identification and sharing of learning from these tragic events.



WORKPLAN 2018 -19

The NIASP Workplan for 2018/19 is again based on the core principles of prevention, protection and partnership. The Workplan focuses on core elements of these principles and assigns the lead role on the objectives to one or more of the NIASP Workstreams.

Regular updates on progress in relation to each objective will be provided at the quarterly NIASP meetings.

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|---|---|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| RAISE AWARENESS OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING Continue to develop a regional programme of awareness raising and prevention activities to complement local | Develop video graphic explaining abuse and how to get help. | Prevention Work stream | September 2018 |
| | Pilot 6 monthly briefing note for Partners highlighting developments in Adult Safeguarding. | | March 2019 |
| | Partners to include link to NIASP website on their respective | NIASP | September 2018 |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| <p>prevention plans.</p> <p>Ensure relevant Adult Safeguarding information is easily available to staff, people who use services, their family carers and members of the public.</p> | <p>organisation's website</p> <p>HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding web page to include LASP member agencies and web links</p> <p>Publicise NIASP Work Plan on NIASP and HSC Trust websites</p> <p>Promote regional awareness of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on 15th June</p> | | <p>December 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> |
| | <p>Establish editorial team to quality assure additions to the NIASP web page, and complete annual review to ensure information is kept up to date.</p> | HSCB | September 2018 |
| GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE | <p>Test ASC Annual Position Report Template for review in April 2019</p> | Prevention Work stream | March 2019 |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|---|---|--------------|--|
| Support NIASP partner organisations to comply with the relevant requirements set out in <i>Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (July 2015)</i> | Conduct regional audit of referral activity to Adult Safeguarding Gateway Teams | HSCB | March 2019 |
| | Monitor and Review Adult Safeguarding activity data following implementation of revised Data 4 format | NIASP | March 2019 March 2019 March 2019 |
| | Meet 4 times per year providing a multi-agency forum to co-ordinate the implementation of <i>Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (July 2015)</i> | | |
| | Develop an Adult Safeguarding Strategic Plan for the next 5 years. | | |
| Provide advice and guidance to other statutory agencies to include ASC requirements in their contract; regulation; or quality improvement frameworks. | HSCB | March 2019 | |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <p>TRAINING AND SHARED LEARNING</p> <p>Ensure that practitioners have access to relevant training and opportunities to learn from practice</p> | <p>Organise an annual learning event focusing on adult at risk of harm and alternative safeguarding responses</p> <p>Cascade peer education / self-protection programmes such as “Keeping Yourself Safe” or equivalent training for Adults at Risk of harm across services and settings.</p> | <p>Prevention Work stream</p> | <p>March 2019</p> <p>March 2019</p> |
| | <p>Adapt and implement Department of Health & Social Care (Jan 2018) Safeguarding Adults Protocol: Pressure Ulcers and the interface with a Safeguarding Enquiry for the Northern Ireland context.</p> | <p>Protection Work stream</p> | <p>December 2019</p> |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|-------------------|--|--------------|---|
| | <p>Review and update Adult Safeguarding Training Strategy and Training Framework 2016 to reflect emerging needs.</p> <p>Support nursing colleagues with the development and implementation of the Adult Safeguarding Nursing Competence Framework</p> <p>Facilitate Operation Repeat prevention training to Statutory and Independent Sector domiciliary care workers.</p> <p>Provide a network for taking forward regional learning from reviews and enquiries.</p> | NIASP | <p>March 2019</p> <p>September 2018</p> <p>March 2019</p> |
| | <p>Make the SAaRIH web site available to NIASP Partners for 2018/19</p> | HSCB | <p>June 2018</p> |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p>REFINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES</p> <p>NIASP will ensure that the Manual of Operational Policies and Procedures is kept up-to-date and reflects developing practice in adult safeguarding.</p> | <p>Review the regional adult safeguarding procedures, 2016</p> <p>Review and refine HSC / PSNI Joint Protocol arrangements.</p> <p>Develop / implement regional principles of practice to support staff when coordinating an Adult Protection (and /or PSNI) / Human Resources (SHSCT guidance shared as good practice example).</p> | <p>Protection Work stream</p> | <p>September 2018</p> <p>March 2019</p> <p>December 2018</p> |
| | <p>NIASP will continue to keep its structures and operational procedures and Handbook under review</p> | | <p>NIASP</p> |
| <p>FINANCIAL SAFETY</p> | <p>Develop information booklet suitable for prevention and alternative safeguarding responses.</p> | <p>Prevention Work stream</p> | <p>March 2019</p> |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Develop initial guidance for staff in responding to issues of financial abuse | Develop information booklet to support for staff conducting investigations. | Protection Work stream | March 2019 |
| | Continue to circulate Scamwise and Trading Standards information and updates through networks. Support regulated Independent Sector service providers Improve their financial governance arrangements. | NIASP | March 2019 March 2019 |
| STREAMLINE INTERFACES Clarify the interface between adult safeguarding and other public safety strategies such as the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy | Represent AS at interdepartmental DV & SV strategy group and identify and raise interface issues Represent AS at interdepartmental Modern Slavery strategy group and identify and raise interface issues Represent AS at interdepartmental Hate Crime Delivery group and identify and raise interface issues. | Prevention Work stream Protection Work stream NIASP HSCB | |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|--|---|---|----------------------|
| <p>CO- PRODUCTION</p> <p>NIASP will ensure that the experience of service users is sought at all stages of the safeguarding process</p> | <p>Develop an action plan to implement learning from the 10,000 voices project</p> | <p>Prevention Work stream Protection Work stream NIASP</p> | <p>December 2018</p> |
| | <p>Integrate outcomes form Adult Safeguarding interventions within work to develop social care outcomes framework</p> | <p>HSCB</p> | <p>March 2019</p> |
| <p>STANDARDS</p> <p>Ensure existing standards reflect good governance in Adult Safeguarding practice</p> | <p>Implement standards associated with the NI Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery Strategy 2016/17 where these intersect with Adult Safeguarding</p> | <p>Prevention Work stream</p> | <p>March 2019</p> |
| | <p>On completion of the review of Joint Protocol arrangements Develop standards for Joint Protocol</p> | <p>NIASP</p> | <p>March 2019</p> |

| THEME / OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | BY | Completion Date |
|-------------------|---|-------------|-----------------|
| | Investigations | | |
| | Ensure that Adult Safeguarding standards are included in Programme of Care Service Frameworks | HSCB | June 2018 |



APPENDICES

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Action for Elder Abuse

Action Mental Health

Age NI

Association for Real Change

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

Business Services Organisation

Carers NI

Faith Sector - Presbyterian Church in Ireland

HSCB (Integrated Care)

HSCB (Social Care and Children)

Independent Healthcare providers

Northern Health & Social Care Trust

Northern Ireland Association of Social Workers

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Probation Board for Northern Ireland

PSNI

Public Health Agency (Allied Health Professionals)

Public Health Agency (Nursing)

Red Cross

Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

Royal College of Nursing

Social Security Agency

SOLACE

South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust

Southern Health & Social Care Trust

Volunteer Now

Western Health & Social Care Trust

Women's Aid