



ADOPT NI

Controlled Document

Document Name:	Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
Document Version Number	1
Agreed by Regional Manager	May 2022
Approved by Board of Trustees on:	June 2022
Review Schedule	Every two years
Next review due	June 2024
Owner (Responsibility)	Ciara Scully, Regional Manager
Pass amendments to:	Ciara Scully, Regional Manager
Revision History	See appendix

Document Description

This policy describes the legal responsibilities of Adopt NI to safeguard adults at risk who staff may have contact with during the course of their work. This guidance & procedure is designed to enable everyone who works for Adopt NI to understand and carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding adults who need care and support and are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse.

Implementation and Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice, or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy please contact Ciara Scully, Regional Manager, ciara@adoptni.org or at Adopt NI, 18 Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE.

Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

Adopt NI recognises its legal responsibilities to safeguard adults who staff may have contact within the course of work. The policy applies to all staff and volunteers within Adopt NI.

This policy replaces that issued in March 2011 / reviewed June 2015. The changes reflect the policy changes in Northern Ireland since 2015. It reflects the requirements of - Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership, DHSSPSNI, 2015.

2. Why this Policy Exists

Adopt NI is committed to safeguarding as a key component of our work and recognises that we have a special responsibility towards adults at risk of harm or in need of protection who utilise our services.

Adopt NI are committed to zero-tolerance of harm to adults at risk of harm or in need of protection by creating a safe environment for all of our service users, staff, and volunteers and in line with best practice

3. Policy scope

All Adopt NI staff and volunteers are in positions of trust and as such are expected to adhere to this safeguarding policy and procedures. Adopt NI takes seriously all concerns, allegations, suspicions, and disclosures of abuse and requires such to be reported to the statutory authorities in line with the Regional Safeguarding Policy (NI).

Minimum Safeguarding Expectations:

Adult Safeguarding - Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015) places a requirement on any public service, voluntary, community, independent or faith organisation to meet expectations. Adopt NI are committed to safeguarding adults who may be at risk by:

- recognising that adult harm is wrong and should not be tolerated;
- being aware of 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 the statutory authorities.

4. Legal Framework

In July 2015 the Policy document 'Adult Safeguarding, Prevention and Protection in Partnership' was published by the DHSSPS and the Department of Justice (DOJ). This Policy moves away from the concept of 'vulnerability' towards establishing the concept of 'risk of harm' in adulthood.

The Policy introduces the concept of an 'adult at risk of harm' and an 'adult in need of protection'.

Some key relevant legislation within Northern Ireland is as follows:

- The Criminal Law Act 1967, Section 5
- The Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986
- The Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75
- The Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999
- The Human Rights Act 1998 - enacted 2000
- Carers and Direct Payments Act 2002
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007
- The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

5. Recognising and Reporting

Definition of Abuse

Abuse is 'a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to another individual or violates their human or civil rights'. Abuse is the misuse of power and control that one person has over another. It can involve direct and indirect contact and can include online abuse. The main forms of abuse are:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force feeding, improper

administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is considered a form of physical AND sexual abuse.

Sexual violence and abuse

Sexual abuse is 'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any form of disability). Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping). Sexual violence can be found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background, or sexual orientation.

Psychological / Emotional Abuse

Psychological / emotional abuse is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation, or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse is actual or attempted theft, fraud, or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion, or deception. This may include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property, or inheritance.

Institutional Abuse

Institutional abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in settings which adults who may be at risk reside in or use. This can occur in any organisation, within and outside Health and Social Care (HSC) provision. Institutional abuse may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm. Institutional abuse may occur within a culture that denies, restricts, or curtails privacy, dignity, choice, and independence. It involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services and includes a failure to ensure that the necessary preventative and/or protective measures are in place.

Neglect

Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time. It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, heating or clothing, or failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk.

The Safeguarding Adults: Prevention and Protection in Partnership Policy does not include self-harm or self-neglect within the definition of an 'adult in need of protection'. Each individual set of circumstances will require a professional HSC assessment to determine the appropriate response and consider if any underlying factors require a protection response. For example, self-harm may be the manifestation of harm which has been perpetrated by a third party and which the adult feels unable to disclose.

Exploitation

Exploitation is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person; to take advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain from using them as a commodity. It may manifest itself in many forms including slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse, or human trafficking.

This list of types of harmful conduct is neither exhaustive, nor listed here in any order of priority. There are other indicators which should not be ignored. It is also possible that if a person is being harmed in one way, he/she may very well be experiencing harm in other ways.

Related Definitions

There are related definitions which interface with Adult Safeguarding, each of which have their own associated adult protection processes in place.

Domestic violence and abuse

Domestic violence or abuse is 'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member'. Domestic violence and abuse is essentially a pattern of behaviour

which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another. It is usually frequent and persistent. It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life partner or any other person who has a close relationship with the victim. It occurs right across society, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic or religious group, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or geography.

The response to any adult facing this situation will usually require a referral to specialist services such as Women's Aid or the Men's Advisory Project. In high-risk cases a referral will also be made to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment (MARAC) process. Specialist services will then decide if the case needs to be referred to a HSC Trust for action under the safeguarding procedures. If in doubt, anyone with a concern can ring the Domestic and Sexual Violence helpline (0808 802 1414) to receive advice and guidance about how best to proceed.

Human Trafficking/Modern Slavery

Human trafficking/modern slavery involves the acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat, or deception, for the purposes of exploiting them. It can take many forms, such as domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of human trafficking/modern slavery can come from all walks of life; they can be male or female, children, or adults, and they may come from migrant or indigenous communities.

The response to adults at risk experiencing human trafficking/modern slavery will always be to report the incident to the Police Service.

Hate Crime

Hate crime is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hate towards a person's actual or perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion, or gender identity.

The response to adults at risk experiencing hate crime will usually be to report the incident to the Police Service.

Adult at Risk of Harm

An 'adult at risk of harm' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal characteristics and/or life circumstances.

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. Life circumstances may include, but are not

limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

Adult in Need of Protection

An 'adult in need of protection' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- A) personal characteristics and/or
- B) life circumstances AND
- C) who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; AND
- D) where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' either (A) or (B) must be present, in addition to both elements (C), and (D).

In most situations HSC Trusts will make decisions regarding the degree of risk and level of harm an adult may be facing and decide on the most appropriate action to take. If there is a clear and immediate risk of harm, or a crime is alleged or suspected, the matter should be referred directly to the PSNI or HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service.

If you think a crime has occurred where medical or forensic evidence might still be present consider the need for an urgent referral to the police service and be cautious not to touch or disturb possible evidential material.

What would cause concern or suspicion about abuse?

- There are a number of ways in which concern/suspicion that an adult is suffering/has suffered harm may arise:
- The adult may say it
- Someone else may tell or some incident may arouse concern
- An adult may show some signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no credible or satisfactory explanation
- An adult's demeanour/behaviour may cause a suspicion that something is not right, or possible abuse has taken place
- The behaviour of another individual close to the adult engenders discomfort (this may be another staff member, volunteer, or leader of an activity or family member)
- Through general good neighbourliness and social guardianship
- Being alert to possible abuse plays a significant role in ensuring that adults are safeguarded, and it is important that all concerns about possible abuse are reported.

What if an adult discloses abuse?

Where this happens, it is important that staff and volunteers know how to respond and do so in accordance with the following guidelines:

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay calm• Listen• Reassure the person - tell him/her they did the right thing in telling you• Let them know the information will be taken seriously and give information about what will happen next• If urgent medical / PSNI assistance is needed, call the emergency services• Ensure the safety of the person• Be aware that forensic evidence might be needed• Let the person know that they will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint• Record in writing (date and sign the record) and report to the Safeguarding Officer of Adopt NI• Act without delay	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop someone disclosing• Promise to keep a secret• Press the person for more details or make them repeat the story• Gossip about the disclosure or pass information about it to anyone who does not legitimately need to know• Under any circumstances, contact the alleged abuser• Attempt to initiate an investigation yourself• Leave details of any concern on a voicemail or e-mail• Delay in responding

The line manager or person in charge will take any immediate action required to ensure the adult at risk of harm is safe and make a decision as to when it is appropriate to speak with the adult at risk of harm about the concerns and any proposed actions. They must then report the concerns and proposed actions to the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC).

What is an Adult Safeguarding Champion?

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

Does Adopt NI need to have an Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC)?

The guidance states that an organisation must have a nominated ASC if they have staff and volunteers who are subject to vetting. Adopt NI have staff and volunteers

who require vetting, so we must have an ASC.

The role of the ASC

1. To provide information and support for staff on adult safeguarding within the organisation.
2. To ensure that the organisation's adult safeguarding policy is disseminated and support its implementation throughout the organisation.
3. To provide advice to staff and volunteers who have concerns about the signs of harm and ensure reporting to the HSC Trusts where there is a safeguarding concern.
4. 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.
5. To advise within the organisation regarding adult safeguarding training needs.
6. To establish contact with the HSC Trust Designated Adult Protection Officer (DAPO), the PSNI and other agencies as appropriate.
7. 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.
8. To ensure accurate and up to date records are maintained detailing all decisions that have been made, the reasons for those decisions and any other actions taken.

Adult Safeguarding Champion:

Mrs Ciara Scully
Regional Manager
Adopt NI
Ground Floor, Unit 2
18 Heron Road
Belfast
BT3 9LE

Tel: 028 9045 4222
Email: ciara@adoptni.org

Responding to an Adult Safeguarding Concern – the Role of the ASC

When an alert is raised within an organisation in relation to an adult safeguarding concern or disclosure, the ASC or appropriate appointed person, where these tasks have been delegated, will ensure the following actions occur:

1. Consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or not. This may involve some 'checking out' of information provided whilst being careful not to stray into the realm of investigation.
2. Where immediate danger exists, or the situation warrants immediate action ensure any necessary medical assistance has been sought and refer to HSC Adult Protection Gateway or PSNI.
3. Support staff to ensure any actions take account of the adult's wishes.
4. Where it has been deemed that it is not a safeguarding issue, other alternative responses should be considered such as monitoring, support or advice to staff or volunteers.
5. If it is decided that it is a safeguarding issue, the situation should be reported to the HSC Key Worker where known. If unaware of HSC Key Worker contact details, a referral will be made to HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway service. The HSC Trust will then conduct a risk assessment and decide what response is appropriate.
6. If a crime is suspected or alleged, contact the HSC Adult Protection Gateway Service directly.
7. If the concern involves a regulated service, inform RQIA.
8. Act as the liaison point for any investigative activity which is required and will ensure easy access to relevant case records or staff.
9. Ensure accurate and timely records and any adult safeguarding forms required have been completed.

If an adult at risk does not want a referral made to the HSC Trust or PSNI, the ASC or appropriate person must consider the following:

1. Do they have capacity to make this decision?
2. Have they been given full and accurate information in a way which they understand?
3. Are they experiencing undue influence or coercion?
4. Is the person causing harm a member of staff, a volunteer or someone who only has contact with the adult at risk because they both use the service?
5. Is anyone else at risk from the person causing harm?
6. Is a crime suspected or alleged?

These factors will influence whether or not a referral without consent needs to be made. If in doubt contact the HSC Trust Gateway service for advice and guidance.

If it is determined that the concern(s) do not meet the definition of an adult at risk or an adult in need of protection, the concerns raised must be recorded; including any action taken; and the reasons for not referring to HSC Trust.

The ASC will ensure that records of reported concerns are compiled and analysed to determine whether a number of low-level concerns are accumulating to become significant.

Where the ASC or appointed person is not immediately available, this should not prevent action being taken or a referral being made to the HSC Trust in respect of any safeguarding concern.

6. Recruitment and Selection

Adopt NI endeavour to provide safe recruitment and selection processes, to minimise the opportunity for unsuitable candidates to work or volunteer with adults. The recruitment procedure requires that:

- There is a clear job description and personnel specification for staff and volunteers outlining the key skills and abilities required for the role.
- There is an open recruitment process.
- There is an application form that covers past experience/work/volunteering.
- There is a declaration form requesting information on previous convictions and investigations.
- There is an interview process appropriate to the role and task.
- There are written references sought from two people (not relatives, which are followed up when necessary).

- There is an identification check and Access NI vetting
- There is a code of conduct.

Effective Management

Adopt NI recognise that a thorough induction process is integral to good organisational practice. Induction should take place when personnel take up a new role and should include:

- Information on the policies, procedures, guidelines, activities and ethos of Adopt NI.
- Expectations and boundaries within which they should operate.
- Awareness-raising and training on the recognition, recording and reporting of abuse.

A timeframe should be set within which induction should be completed. New personnel should be provided with the opportunity to read Adopt NI's Adult Safeguarding Policy and know where to access the document for reference purposes.

A Probationary Period

Appointments should be conditional on the completion of a satisfactory period of probation established at the time of taking up the role. A record should be kept of any matters arising and/or any training needs identified. During the probationary period, progress in the role should be reviewed at regular intervals and any concerns addressed appropriately.

Structure for Line Management and Support appropriate to the Role

Good practice indicates that support and supervision are beneficial in enabling personnel to feel supported in the work which they do, and to ensure that they are carrying out their duties to the required standard. Regular meetings between personnel and management provide the opportunity to give and receive feedback on performance and other relevant issues and to assist in the identification of areas for attention/development. Written records of line management, support and training should be retained.

Relevant Training appropriate to the Role

Personnel should receive training appropriate to the nature of their role and the profile of the adults concerned. The training should be reviewed and updated in line with changing legislation and practice. It is recommended that updated training be delivered at least every three years. A good understanding of the nature of abuse is essential to ensure that personnel remain alert to signs that an adult may have been abused. Adult safeguarding training should include a basic awareness and understanding of the factors, which contribute to an adult at risk or in need of protection, the possible signs of abuse, responding when abuse is disclosed or suspected, the meaning of confidentiality in the context of adult safeguarding, recording, and reporting procedures.

Personnel must –

- take concerns around abuse seriously.
- deal with information about alleged abuse sensitively.
- know not to make promises to keep secrets.
- understand that their role is not to investigate.
- know how to report concerns.
- know the procedure to follow in relation to reporting to the ASC.

7. HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding Contact Details

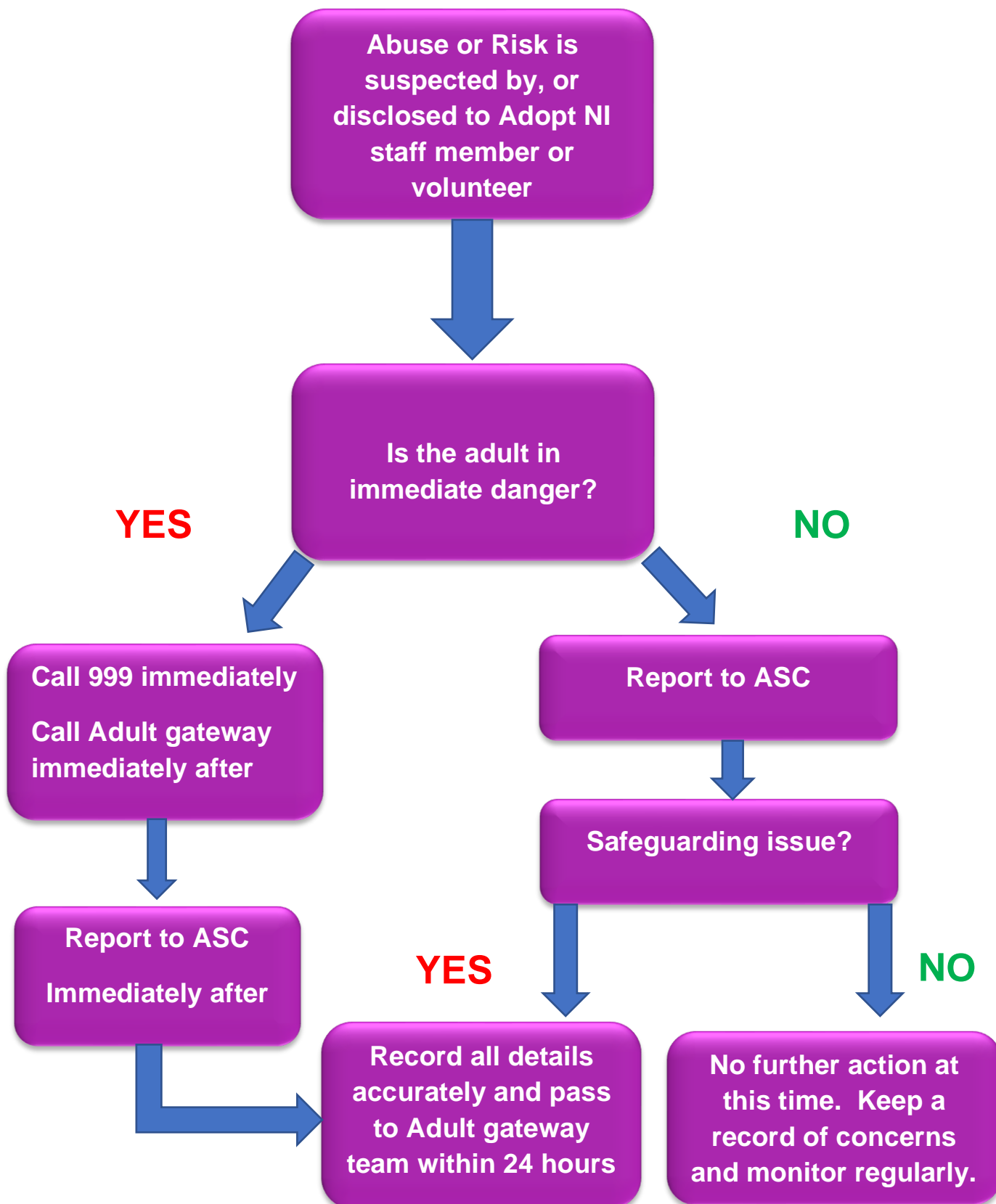
HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding Contact Details

HSC Trust	Adult Safeguarding Number
Belfast	028 9504 1744
Northern	028 2563 5512
Western	028 7161 1366
South Eastern	028 9250 1227
Southern	028 3741 2015/2354

Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS)

Tel: 028 9504 9999 (Mon-Fri 5pm-9am; Saturday & Sunday)

Appendix 2 – Adult Safeguarding Concern Decision Pathway



Appendix 2 -

Reporting Form

Adopt NI

Restricted Information

Notification of Suspected/Admitted/Known Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult to Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC)

This form should be completed by the ASC on the basis of information received from the individual reporting a concern for a child.

Section 1 of this form should be reviewed, confirmed, and signed by the person making the report to the ASC.

Section 1:

Name & status of individual making report:

.....

Name of ASC/deputy ASC to whom report made:

Adult's name (if known):

Adult's address (if known):

.....

Postcode:

Adult's date of birth (if known):

Family details (if known):

.....

Date/time of incident:

Location of incident:

Reason for report (include as many details as possible as regards what was said/seen/heard and where by the person making the report)

.....

referral to external agencies if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

.....

External Agencies contacted:

Agency:

Branch:

Name of individual spoken to:

Contact No:

Advice received:

Agency:

Branch:

Name of individual spoken to:

Contact No:

Advice received:

Agency:

Branch:

Name of individual spoken to:

Contact No:

Advice received:

To be completed by ASC/Deputy ASC:

Signature:

Name in capitals:

Date:

Revision History

Version	Author	Revision date	Summary of Changes	Next Review	Other Comments
1.0	Regional Manager	May 2022			New Policy Recommend to the Board for approval June 2022
1.0		June 2022	Reviewed by Board	June 2024	Approved