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Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy Statement

This policy sets out the statutory requirements that apply to Public Health Wales to ensure the safeguarding of **children, young people and adults** who may be at risk of harm or abuse. In accordance with legislation Public Health Wales has a statutory responsibility to have clear policies and procedures in place to identify and report the abuse of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse, harm, or neglect (including self-neglect) and to act positively to respond to concerns raised regarding abuse.

This Policy also sets out how Public Health Wales will fulfil its responsibility to identify and support staff and/or service users experiencing gender-based violence, domestic abuse, sexual violence and/or exploitation through modern slavery.

Safeguarding means protecting people from harm including physical, emotional, sexual, financial harm and neglect.

Safeguarding children means to: protect children from abuse and maltreatment, prevent harm to children's health or development, and ensure children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care and to take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding adults-at-risk means protecting their right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect. Adults at risk means anyone aged 18 or over who: has needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs); is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

The Safeguarding policy will provide an assurance that the organisation is compliant with legislation. This Policy will support PHW to meet its priorities.

Policy Commitment

The aim of this policy is to:

To set out how PHW will meet its obligations towards the safeguarding of children and adults at risk; and those experiencing gender-based violence, domestic abuse or sexual violence. To give assurances to the board, public, staff, volunteers and people carrying out work on behalf of PHW that there are robust arrangements in place to safeguard

children and adults at risk and those experiencing gender-based violence, domestic abuse or sexual violence.

It is informed through current legislation and guidance both from Welsh Government and United Kingdom Government. These include but are not restricted to the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the Serious Crimes Act 2015 and Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Supporting Procedures and Written Control Documents

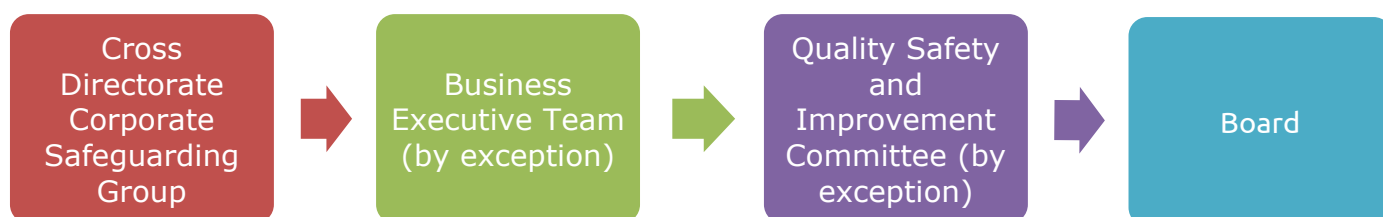
- Adult at Risk Procedures
- Children at Risk Procedures
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Procedures
- Managing Allegations of Abuse by Staff Procedure

Governance Arrangements

Accountability



Governance



Scope	
This Policy is applicable to all Public Health Wales's staff, volunteers, any person who carrying out work on behalf of the organisation.	
Equality and Health Impact Assessment	An Equality, Welsh Language and Health Impact Assessment has been completed and can be viewed on the policy webpages.
Approved by	Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee
Approval Date	12 October 2023
Review Date	12 October 2026
Date of Publication:	19 October 2023
Group with authority to approve supporting procedures	Safeguarding Group Meeting
Accountable Executive Director/Director	Executive Director Quality Nursing and Allied Health Professionals.
Author	Named Lead Safeguarding

Disclaimer

If the review date of this document has passed please ensure that the version you are using is the most up to date either by contacting the document author or [Board Business Unit](#)

Summary of reviews/amendments

Version number	Date of Review	Date of Approval	Date published	Summary of Amendments
2	2018	04.10.18	17.10.18	
3	November 2021			Inclusion of Wales Safeguarding Procedures amendments made to include governance structures. Safeguarding information included within policy.
4	May 2023	19.10.23		Inclusion of Domestic Abuse Act 2021, National Safeguarding Training Standards. NICE guideline Self harm: assessment, management and preventing occurrence section 5.6. Paragraph 5 introductory paragraph included to give further context.
5	July 2025	22.09.25	04.11.25	Inclusion of Section 4.5: Requirement for all new and existing employees in roles requiring a Standard or Enhanced DBS check to subscribe to the DBS Update Service, with reimbursement of the subscription fee. Clarifies ongoing safeguarding expectations and consequences for non-compliance. Changes approved as part of the approval of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS Policy) approved at the People and Organisational Development Committee on 22.09.25

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1. Introduction

Legislation contained within the various Acts and guidance identified below enshrine the right to protection from abuse. The legal starting point in achieving this objective is Public Health Wales's employee's duty to report allegations of abuse and neglect. Public Health Wales recognises that good practice in safeguarding brings together all activity aimed at promoting safe environments for vulnerable groups with the aim of preventing abuse and neglect. For this reason and because the law, policy, guidance and regulations change from time to time, it is impossible to provide an exhaustive list of relevant documents but the most significant items are included below: -

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Disclosure & Barring Service Code of Practice (updated 2015)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019
- In Safe Hands' 2000
- Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004'
- Social Services and Well Being Act 2014
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The National Wales Safeguarding Procedures detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Public Health Wales will provide the culture, training and tools to ensure the organisation is compliant with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

Link to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures:

[Safeguarding Wales](#)

This policy relates to all staff, volunteers, service users and the general public. By developing an effective policy, it is anticipated that Public Health Wales provides a consistent approach when dealing with safeguarding issues and suspected or confirmed child and/or adult protection concerns. It will also create a safer environment, both in the workplace and the public arena for those experiencing, or at risk of physical violence, domestic abuse and/or sexual violence.

2. Policy aims and objectives

This policy will set out the responsibilities for all staff in relation to:

- Safeguarding children
- Safeguarding adults
- Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV)
- Modern slavery
- Managing allegations of abuse by staff

It will be underpinned by guidance for staff and managers on how to deal with safeguarding issues for both children and adults, incidences where domestic abuse and/or its effects become apparent and where there are allegations of abuse against staff. It aims to provide reassurance to victims of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence that the issue will be dealt with sympathetically, seriously and confidentially with no fear of stigmatisation. The guidance also aims to assist managers to appropriately address situations where staff are alleged perpetrators or are found to be perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence or any other forms of abuse.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The overarching accountability for safeguarding children and adults at risk and promoting their welfare arrangements rests with the Board of Public Health Wales through the Chief Executive. The Executive Director for Quality, Nursing and Allied Health Professional has delegated responsibility for ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements are in place in Public Health Wales including policies and procedures, and effective governance arrangements. This includes that all statutory requirements are being met and that procedures for reporting concerns are in place and have been communicated to all staff.

3.2 All staff in Public Health Wales are responsible for familiarising themselves with the contents of this policy and associated procedures and providing appropriate support to colleagues, service users and the public in line with its provisions.

3.3 Managers must be able to appropriately address situations where staff are identified as an actual or potential victims of abuse or found to be alleged perpetrators of any form of abuse. They should seek advice from the People and Organisational Development Team and the Named Lead for Safeguarding.

Managers will be responsible for:

- Recruiting employees/volunteers in accordance with relevant Human Resources policy, including (where required) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at the appropriate level.

- Ensure safeguarding Level 1 training is part of every employee/volunteer's induction.
- Identifying employees/volunteers who are likely to encounter children or adults at risk as part of their duties to identify the level of safeguarding training required for their role
- Ensuring safeguarding training is delivered in line with staff roles and recommendations within the Royal Collage of Nursing Intercollegiate Document and the National training standards.
- Ensuring that all employees/volunteers are aware of how to report safeguarding concerns and to whom. Level 1 Datix training will be raise awareness on how this is reported and documented whilst this module in not mandated, it is highly recommended that staff complete this training to understand how to report Safeguarding incidents.
- Ensuring that employees/volunteers are aware that they must conduct themselves in a manner which safeguards and promotes the wellbeing of children and adults at risk.
- Providing employees/volunteers with guidance about safeguarding concerns as required

3.4 Staff should be aware that any misconduct with safeguarding implications inside and outside of work is viewed very seriously and can lead to disciplinary action being taken. Professional registrants must comply with their codes of conduct, where there are safeguarding allegations or concerns about practitioners and those in a position of trust, consideration will be made to refer the concerns to the local authority under Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

4. Safe recruitment and retention

4.1 Legislation requires Public Health Wales to ensure that all employees who have access to children or adults at risk should have relevant pre-employment checks as part of Safer Recruitment.

4.2 The organisation will be committed to safe recruitment and retention of its employees and volunteers in line with current legislation and guidance.

4.3 Public Health Wales will follow the process outlined in the Managing Allegations of Abuse by Staff Procedure for when an allegation of abuse has been raised against any member of staff. This complies with Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

4.4 Recruiting managers must seek guidance from People and Occupational Development, to determine the level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check required for a role. The manager must ensure the check is completed before the applicant commences employment. Should concerns be raised within

the Managing Allegations of Abuse by Staff Procedure, discussions will take place on the need for consideration for a referral to the DBS.

4.5 To enhance the safety and protection of children and adults at risk, all employees, workers, new appointees, and volunteers, whose role requires a Standard or Enhanced DBS check are required to subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Update Service as a condition of their employment or engagement. The cost of the subscription will be reimbursed by Public Health Wales. Regular re-checks through the Update Service are essential to ensure individuals remain suitable for their roles and continue to meet safeguarding requirements, reinforcing our commitment to protecting children and adults at risk and maintaining a safe environment. Failure to subscribe to or maintain the DBS Update Service subscription may result in disciplinary action.

5. Support and safety of employees

Public Health Wales as a Trauma Informed Approach organisation is committed to supporting its employees. Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as harmful or life threatening. While unique to the individual, generally the experience of trauma can cause lasting adverse effects, limiting the ability to function and achieve mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. Public Health Wales aims to create a culturally sensitive, safe organisation where its employees feel safe and supported when facing difficulties and vulnerabilities in their personal and family relationships.

5.1 Public Health Wales will assist staff in obtaining appropriate support if they have been subjected to domestic abuse and/or violence or any other forms of abuse. This will be supplemented through prioritising health and safety in the workplace e.g., by conducting a risk assessment.

5.2 Public Health Wales will assist staff in obtaining appropriate support if they have been subjected to domestic abuse and/or violence or any other forms of abuse. This will be supplemented through prioritising health and safety in the workplace e.g. by conducting a risk assessment. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for Public Health Wales to support an employee who is seeking help to address their abusive behaviour.

5.3 Whilst staff are encouraged to seek help and assistance from within the organisation, there are also several external agencies that may be of further assistance.

5.4 Public Health Wales will provide help and support to all staff (including volunteers) when dealing with any safeguarding issue. This support will be through line managers and/or the Named Lead for Safeguarding. Appropriate support will also be provided when there are allegations of abuse made against staff.

5.5 In some circumstances it may be appropriate for Public Health Wales to support an employee who is seeking help to address their abusive behaviour.

Whilst staff are encouraged to seek help and assistance from within the organisation, there are also several external agencies that may be of further assistance. Public Health Wales will provide help and support to all staff (including volunteers) when dealing with any safeguarding issue. This support will be through line managers and/or the Named Safeguarding Lead. Appropriate support will also be provided when there are allegations of abuse made against staff. Safeguarding should be considered for individuals who self-harm.

5.6 NICE guidance recommends that those who self-harm should be asked about safeguarding concerns, for example, domestic abuse, violence, or exploitation at the earliest opportunity and, if appropriate, when the person is alone. Explore whether the person's needs should be assessed and documented according to local safeguarding procedures and be aware of local safeguarding procedures for vulnerable adults and children in their care and seek advice from the Named Lead for safeguarding if needed.

[Overview | Self-harm: assessment, management and preventing recurrence | Guidance | NICE](#)

5.7 Public Health Wales will support staff managing and receiving distressing calls. Public Health Wales recognise the impact of receiving a challenging call on employee's wellbeing and support and escalation will be provided by the manager. Where the caller presents with indicators of deteriorating mental health or suicidal ideation, the employee will respond with empathy, signpost the individual and escalate the concern to the manager. Further advice and support will be accessible from The Named Lead for Safeguarding.

6. Confidentiality

6.1 Public Health Wales recognises that employees experiencing domestic or other forms of abuse normally have the right to confidentiality. However, in circumstances where children or adults with vulnerabilities are at risk, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In such circumstances advice must be sought from the Named Lead for Safeguarding.

6.2 Information can be shared without consent to Local Authority or the police if there is concern that a child may be at risk, or an adult is in danger of being killed or seriously injured or there is an overriding public interest. All information will be shared in accordance with the Caldicott principles.

7. Child Practice Reviews, Adult Practice Reviews and Domestic Homicide reviews

7.1 Public Health Wales will fully engage with any requests for participation in Child Practice Reviews, Adult Practice Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews where the organisation has information that can support these reviews.

8.Training and communication with staff

8.1 All staff will undertake appropriate level of safeguarding training commensurate with their roles and responsibilities, as determined by the Public Health Wales Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy.

8.2 This is informed by all relevant national guidance and training prescribed by Welsh Government found in the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 and set out in the National Training Framework in addition to the Royal Collage of Nursing Intercollegiate Document and the National training standards.

8.3 All managers should ensure that staff are aware of this policy and how they may locate it.

9.Procedures and guidance

9.1 Managers and staff must follow the procedures and guidance (including relevant flowcharts) that support this policy. These can be found on the Intranet.