



# **DIOCESE OF DOWN AND CONNOR**



## **The Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Strategy**

**September 2012**

**Best Practice in Safeguarding and Protecting  
Children, Young People, Vulnerable Adults  
and the Adults who work with them**

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## PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The introduction of the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order (NI) 2007*, combined with an increase in our understanding and awareness of adult abuse, and the recommendation from the *Independent Internal Review of case files for Down and Connor (Oct 2011)* have set the way for the Diocese to develop good guidelines and policy and procedures for groups and individuals who work with vulnerable adults in parishes across the Diocese.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Office has been tasked with developing a strategy to take this project forward. The Safeguarding Office is mindful that, although there are similarities in practice between children and adults, there are also significant differences. Up until now, the Diocese has managed any issues, relating to the abuse of vulnerable adults, through the existing structures established for safeguarding and protecting children. While this has been effective, it is clear that the Diocese would benefit from having a separate guidance and procedures for vulnerable adults.

Dealing with and managing issues relating to vulnerable adults is, without doubt, much more complex and, the variance in vulnerability, reflected in the definition of vulnerable adults, adds to the complexity.

To ensure that policy and training are applicable and relevant to the work and practices of those within the Dioceses, a small multi-disciplinary working group has been established comprising representatives from the statutory sector (HSCB, the Voluntary sector (Fold Association), SPRED (a Diocesan Organisation whose work has substantial involvement with vulnerable adults), PSNI, Diocese of Armagh, Diocesan Clergy, Diocesan Youth Commission and the Safeguarding Office, to oversee this project of work.

The Diocese will also ensure that the strategy will be shared with the Regional Adult Safeguarding Panel and to seek their advice and guidance regarding the proposed Best Practice Guidance and training.

The strategy applies to **all Diocesan personnel**. This includes all personnel across parishes and those Diocesan Pastoral Organisations and Spiritual Organisations whose work brings them into close contact with vulnerable adults (See Appendix 1 for the list of Diocesan Organisations).

The aim and objectives of the strategy, and the indicators to measure its successful completion, are set out on pages 4 and 5.

The strategy also identifies the training needs of Diocesan staff and volunteers; the proposal for new training materials for targeted groups; and, how this will be managed within existing structures and resources currently utilised in the Diocese, and also indicates where new resourcing may be required.

An action plan for tasks required, who will assume responsibility for these, the timeline for completion and, the plan for implementation and review of the strategy / project, is set out on page 8 of this document.

The strategy is guided by other relevant legislation and guidance and, in particular, will take account of the standards as set out in the document, *Safeguarding Vulnerable adults- A Shared Responsibility, Standards and Guidance for Good Practice in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, 2010, Volunteer Now*.

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## STRATEGIC AIM AND OBJECTIVES

### Aim:

To implement a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults strategy which ensures that all vulnerable adults who receive services from the Diocese of Down and Connor, are safe and protected, and that all Diocesan personnel carry out their work with vulnerable adults by ensuring that the adult's safety and welfare is a priority at all times.

### Strategic Objectives: By the end of the project we will:

#### Objective One

1. ***Have developed Policy and Procedures in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults applicable to all Diocesan personnel***

#### Indicators and time scales:

- 1.1 Policy final draft completed August 2012
- 1.2 Policy final draft verified by the Safeguarding Office Training and Development Reference Sub-group August 2012
- 1.3 Policy endorsed by the Bishop of Down and Connor August 2012.
- 1.4 Policy signed off by the Safeguarding Commission September 2012
- 1.5 Policy launched and disseminated throughout the Diocese October 2012.

#### Objective Two

2. ***Have identified and agreed the structures required to enable the implementation of the Policy and Procedures***

#### Indicators and time scales:

- 2.1 New structures identified and proposed June 2012.
- 2.2 New structures agreed by Diocesan Safeguarding Commission July 2012.
- 2.3 New structures in place July 2012.

#### Objective Three

3. ***Have identified the training needs of Diocesan personnel, the target audience and the training required.***

#### Indicators and timescales:

- 3.1 Training needs analysis undertaken by Safeguarding Office May 2012.
- 3.2 Training plan outlining the levels of training, target groups and a plan for implementation (October 2012 to June 2013.) September 2012

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## Objective Four

### **4. *Have developed new training materials for identified target groups***

#### **Indicators and timescales:**

- 4.1 New training materials developed and verified by the Training and Development Reference sub-group August 2012
- 4.2 Target groups clearly identified: Clergy; VST facilitators; Parish staff and volunteers June 2012
- 4.3 Plan for pilot of training materials developed and one pilot session completed September 2012

## Objective Five

### **5. *Have developed a Communications Strategy for the implementation of the Policy, new training materials and the training plan***

#### **Indicators and timescales:**

- 5.1 Communications Strategy developed April 2012.
- 5.2 Key players in this project identified and their roles and responsibilities in raising awareness of and the implementation of the strategy, policy and training plan June 2012
- 5.3 Actions disseminated as outlined in the policy September 2012
- 5.4 Report update provided for Bishop Treanor and the new Safeguarding Commission September 2012
- 5.5 Policy reviewed and signed off by Safeguarding Commission September 2012

## Objective Six

### **6. *Have developed a plan for monitoring and reviewing the Policy and training plan***

#### **Indicators and timescales:**

- 6.1 Plan developed for Review of the Strategy June 2012
- 6.2 Review process initiated as outlined in plan *Date to be agreed*
- 6.3 Update report for Bishop Treanor and new Safeguarding Commission
- 6.4 Review and monitoring of strategy completed and signed off by Safeguarding Commission *Date to be agreed*

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## TRAINING AND SUPPORT MATERIALS

Based on information from the following sources: Parish Self Audits (completed in December 2011); feedback from “Open Evenings” held across the Diocese; feedback from evaluation questionnaires of all our safeguarding children training events and by reviewing the roles and responsibilities of clergy and parish staff and volunteers in their work and contact with vulnerable adults, the Safeguarding Office have identified the groups who require training in safeguarding vulnerable adults:

Key groups are:

- Clergy (Bishops, Priests, Religious and Seminarians)
- Vicariate Support Team (VST) facilitators
- Child Care Committee (CCC) members (To be renamed “ Parish Safeguarding Committee” as part of new structures)
- Parish Staff and volunteers who work with vulnerable adults
- Diocesan Bodies / Organisations who work with vulnerable adults, (See Appendix 1 for complete list).

**It is proposed that training, advice and support will be provided as follows:**

- ❖ A new two hour Information Session entitled- *The Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Information Session*
- ❖ The new Information Session is aimed at all identified groups above who work closely with vulnerable adults. The sessions will be delivered either as mixed groups or single groups comprising all of the target groups. This will depend on how each vicariate team coordinates and manages the training and the resources available.
- ❖ The training session will be facilitated by our Vicariate Support Teams (VST) and the Safeguarding Office Training Officer will facilitate the Information Session for seminarians
- ❖ Child Care Committees (Parish Safeguarding Committees) will identify the individuals who require the training through the process of ongoing audits and follow the process currently established in their respective parish.
- ❖ Additional support and information materials will be provided to all parishes in the form of information leaflets and posters and through the Safeguarding Office Resource Pack.
- ❖ VST facilitators will be provided with a Briefing Session to familiarise themselves with the content of the training and any additional support materials developed for the Resource Pack. This will be developed by the Safeguarding Office Trainer.
- ❖ A Training Plan will be established for the roll out of training across the Diocese. VSTs will be facilitated by the Safeguarding Office Trainer in developing and agreeing the plan for training in parishes for all clergy, staff and volunteers.

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The new training pack will be developed by the Safeguarding Office Development Officer, with support, feedback and input from the small working group. The final draft will be presented to the Safeguarding Training and Development Reference Sub-group for feedback and edited for accuracy.

The pilot training programme will be facilitated by the Safeguarding Training Officer and the participants attending the pilot session will be identified by the Training Officer.

Once the pilot session has been completed and account taken of the feedback/ evaluations, the Development Officer will make any adjustments and the final edition will be processed by the Reference Sub-group for accuracy and signed off by the Safeguarding Commission.

The Safeguarding Office Training Officer will make arrangements for the delivery of the Briefing of VSTs and provide a forum for VSTs for questions/ issues relating to the content of the materials.

Plans for the verification of the new “The Information Session” will be discussed with Regional Child Protection Committee Education, Training and Audit Sub-group.

A Training Plan will be established and agreed with VSTs and will indicate the likely number of sessions required to cover the training for the Diocese, venues and arrangements for facilitating the sessions for the period November 2012- September 2013.

## **INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION OF STRATEGY**

To ensure the effective implementation of the strategy, we must communicate effectively with each other, with other departments and with all Diocesan clergy, staff and volunteers. Diocesan clergy, staff and volunteers must have the information they need to undertake confidently the work involved in safeguarding vulnerable groups with whom the Diocese is actively involved. In carrying out their work, they need to understand procedures and guidance in relation to safeguarding and any changes and /or, additions to these, as they are developed.

The Parish Self Audits, evaluation questionnaires from training programmes, and the range of support meetings held across the Diocese annually, provide feedback from clergy, staff and volunteers on how the Diocesan Safeguarding Office can improve and enhance effective communications.

From the feedback we received at the close of 2011, there were indications that the Diocese needed to enhance its communication of information and new developments. Taking these comments and feedback on board, it is important to take a more strategic approach to communication of safeguarding issues and matters both within and without the Diocese. Given that one of the strategic priorities of the Safeguarding Office is the implementation of a safeguarding vulnerable adults strategy, including new guidance for safeguarding vulnerable adults, a communications plan (see Action Plan, page 8), will be developed to address this and to ensure that all involved in the Diocese are fully aware of and understand, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Guidance and, its relevance and implications for clergy, staff and volunteers across the Diocese.

## TASKS / ACTIONS AND TIMESCALES

Successful implementation of the strategy will require all of the objectives and indicators to be met. Figure 1 below outlines the Action Plan including the actions / tasks needed, who will undertake these, how they will be achieved and timescales for completion:

Figure 1: **Action Plan**

<b>ACTION / TASK</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>HOW</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE(S)</b>
Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Strategy written (Final Copy)	Development Officer  Small Multi-agency working Group  Safeguarding Training and Development Reference sub-group	Research  Existing materials  Consultation exercise from other sectors  Small group working	July 2012
Diocesan Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures developed (Final Copy)	Development Officer  Small Multi-agency Working Group  Safeguarding Training and Development Reference sub-group	Research  Existing policies  Consultation with other sectors/ churches  DHSS&PS Document  Small Working Group Feedback  Consultation with Local Adult Safeguarding Panels (LASPs)	September 2012
Printing/ publication of Policy arranged and completed	To Be Agreed	Printers to be identified.  Safeguarding Committee to confirm printer	Autumn 2012
Launch of new Policy arranged and completed	To Be Confirmed	To be Confirmed	To Be Confirmed
Communication of the new Policy in accordance with communication plan, completed.	Safeguarding Office personnel	Communication plan	June 2012

Training Needs Analysis Completed	Safeguarding Office personnel- Development Officer and Training Officer	Parish Self Audits  Open Evenings  VST Chair Meetings  VFs Meeting  Feedback from Training programme Evaluations	February 2012
New Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Information Session developed  (Final Draft copy)	Development Officer  Safeguarding Training Officer  Small multi agency working group  Safeguarding Training and Development Reference sub-group	Existing training in other churches/ sectors  The gaps identified in Self Audits  Consultation with VFs  Consultation with VSTs and CCCs  Consultation with LASPs	Autumn 2012
Pilot Session delivered and evaluated	Training Officer	Participants identified by Training Officer	September 2012
Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Information Session Confirmed internally	Development Officer	Safeguarding Commission  Safeguarding Training and Development Reference sub-group	October 2012
Briefing Session For VST facilitators developed	Development Officer  Training Officer	One large Briefing Session arranged with VSTs	October 2012
Training Plan for delivery of New Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Information Sessions	Training Officer and VSTs	Two sessions planned per vicariate from November 2012 to June 2013 (Total 24 sessions delivered across Diocese)	November 2012
Safeguarding Annual Training Calendar for Down and Connor 2012-2013 Developed	Development Officer and Training Officer		September 2012

Parish Safeguarding Committees informed of the training plan	Director of Safeguarding/ Development Officer	Email/ letter	November 2012
Resource Pack reviewed and updated to include New Vulnerable adults Policy materials	Development Officer Safeguarding Training and Development reference Sub- group		January 2013
Associated forms relating to vetting, and other Safeguarding Forms reviewed and updated to accommodate Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult issues.	Development Officer Safeguarding Training and Development reference Sub- group		January 2013
Safeguarding Office Website updated and parishes informed of updates to forms	Development Officer	Via the Quarterly Newsletter Update Website	2012
Consultation with Regional Child Protection Education, Training and Audit Sub Group to ascertain the process for verifying training materials	Safeguarding Training Officer	As a representative member of this group	TBC

## REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

Evaluation and review should be an ongoing process of learning, embedding a process of continual improvement and development. The key to evaluating is knowing what you are measuring. The Safeguarding Committee cannot monitor and evaluate the organisation and its activities effectively without clear advance planning of what they want to do and to achieve. Effective strategic and operational planning, incorporating clear measurable objectives, is therefore an important element of accountable management.

The process for review of the strategy is also initiated by the *Diocese* and includes investigating:

- whether the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures are consistent with best practice, strategic directions of the Diocese, and changes in national or local government policy and legislation;
- whether the strategy and the new Policy meets stakeholders' needs;

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- constraints on implementing the Policy at lower organisational levels, particularly in all parishes; diocesan bodies and; other groups;
  - the level of compliance with the existing Policy and Procedures;
  - whether any related guidance needs to be revised or rescinded.

### **Draft Policy and Procedures**

Based on feedback, research and analysis, a draft of the new, amended or revised policy and procedures will be prepared by the *Safeguarding Office*. If consequential revision is required to related policies or procedures, these drafts must also be prepared.

### **Consult key Stakeholders**

The Safeguarding Office will discuss the drafts and any recommendation to rescind with the *key stakeholders*. Consultation may include formal meetings, phone conversation or email. Key stakeholders (including external stakeholders) need to be clearly identified and agreed. (see Appendix 1)

The Safeguarding Office must also consult with the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland to ensure that the draft is consistent with, and complies with, relevant standards.

The final Draft is then processed by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Working Sub-Group for final comments and approval.

The final stage will involve the Safeguarding Training and Development Reference Sub- Group to edit, check for accuracy and consistency.

The final revised materials will be up loaded on to the Safeguarding website and communicated to all Diocesan personnel (as per Communications plan).

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **List of Diocesan Organisations for whom the Policy and Procedures in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults applies:**

**SPRED (Special Religious Development):** Enables people with learning difficulties / disabilities to take their rightful place in the life of the Church. Within a SPRED group, each person with learning difficulties/ disabilities has an adult catechist who accompanies him/her on their journey of faith, friendship and relationship with God.

**Koinonia John the Baptist** is one of the new ecclesial movements formed within the Catholic Church after Vatican II. Formed in 1979 in Italy, it now has almost 5, 000 members world-wide, consisting of priests, brothers and sisters and lay faithful. Koinonia is involved in Houses of Prayer, various courses and training and actively engaged in outreaches such as street and door to door evangelisation, city faith festivals, and monthly Jesus Heals meetings.

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**Neo-Catechumenal Way:** Neo-Catechumenal Way is at the service of the bishops and parish priests as an itinerary for the rediscovery of Baptism and ongoing education in the faith. This itinerary is lived in parishes and small communities, with the goal of gradually bringing the faithful to an intimacy with Christ, making them active subjects of the Church and credible witnesses to the Good News.

**Charismatic Renewal:**

**Catholic Nurses Guild:** Monthly meetings held in Belfast City Hospital or homes, retreats, fundraising events, outings and Masses and Blessing of Hands. All nurses welcome. They hold an annual pilgrimage to Knock each year (special Nurses Day).

**Knights of St Columbanus:** An order of Catholic laymen dedicated to the service of Christ in daily life, in the workplace, market-place, city and urban / provincial areas

**Family Ministry:** Supports families in parishes to experience Christ in their everyday lives, by working with different parish groups.

**ACCORD Catholic Marriage Care Service:** A national organisation.

**Anam Cairde:** For the care of people living in second relationships, in the first instance, through week-end encounter with self, with Christ, and with the Community, and subsequently through weekly and monthly group meetings

**Belfast Beginning Experience:** Weekly support group meetings in St Bride's Hall. A Beginning Experience Residential weekends for widowed, separated and divorced people are arranged periodically.

**Cursillo Movement of Down and Connor Diocese:** The Cursillo Movement is an international evangelical movement composed of people from all walks of life. The movement was founded in Spain in the 1940's and came to Ireland around 40 years ago, and has been in the Diocese since 1989. Its principal remit is to re- Christianise our environment. This is done through 3 day Cursillo courses in Christianity (some times referred to as a 3 Day walk with Christ). Members are then encouraged to Christianise their environments, beginning with their home, and from there, evangelising on an individual level.

**Families First:** Provides Parenting Skills programmes across the Diocese.

**Bethany Bereavement Group:** Parish based groups which aim to help those bereaved and grieving. Support is offered on a one-to-one basis in the individual's home, to groups in drop-in centres, by telephone and by helping at funeral liturgies and remembrance services.

**St Joseph's Centre for Deaf People:** The centre provides a range of facilities for deaf people.

**Diocesan Youth Commission:** An umbrella body for Youth Ministry Services in the diocese. The role of the commission is to co-ordinate existing youth ministry services and to develop new initiatives which address the spiritual needs and faith development of young people in the diocese. It aims to support parishes in their outreach to young people and to offer a forum through which young people, and all of those working in youth ministry, can share learning, resources, skills and best practice.