

To: All NI GDPs

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3 November 2015

Dear Colleague

Re: Adult Safeguarding – Policy Development

In July 2015 the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Justice jointly issued a new policy to safeguard adults at risk of harm or in need of protection.

Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership emphasises that safeguarding is everyone's business. In particular, it notes the specific responsibilities that primary care specialists have in the identification of risks of harm and ensuring appropriate referral to the local HSCT Trust for a further assessment of need and /or risk.

At a minimum, primary care specialists will be expected to safeguard adults who may be at risk by:

- **Recognising** that adult harm is wrong and that it should not be tolerated;
- **Being aware** of the 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 HSC Trusts or the PSNI.

The full policy can be accessed on the DHSSPS websites or by using the following (revised) link:- <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/adult-safeguarding-prevention-and-protection-partnership-key-documents>

Training opportunities are available through NIMDTA and Local Dental Committees may also arrange training. We are also in the process of developing guidance for staff which will provide some practical advice on how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to refer concerns to local HSC Trusts and/or the PSNI. We will share that with you once the content has been agreed.

In the meantime, if you have a concern about an individual patient or you want to discuss any aspect of the new policy, please contact the Regional Adult Safeguarding Officer, Joyce McKee at Joyce.mckee@hscni.net (Tel. no. 028 9536 2810)

Thank you for your assistance with this matter

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Donaldson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M' and 'D'.

Michael Donaldson
Head of Dental Services