

Safeguarding Policy

1.0 Introduction

The mission of The Institute of Registered Case Managers (IRCM) is:

‘To safeguard people who use case management services, by setting and upholding standards for registered case managers’

The Institute of Registered Case Managers (IRCM) is committed to Safeguarding vulnerable adults, children and young people in line with national legislation and local guidelines. IRCM expects its registrants and anyone who works with IRCM to share this commitment.

As a public register we have an important role in safeguarding the public by ensuring that our activities and the activities of our registrants are delivered in a way which keeps vulnerable members of the public safe. We are committed to best safeguarding practice and to upholding the rights of all people to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

IRCM is committed to the recognition of vulnerable persons who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns. IRCM may come into contact with vulnerable persons via any of the following: delivery of services by registrants, lay positions held by staff, complaints procedures, public consultation and feedback exercises. Our safeguarding policy explains how we identify, respond to and manage safeguarding concerns which arise in our role as a public register and in any of the activities that we undertake to support and influence Case Managers and the public.

Our values underpin our responses to safeguarding concerns.

Compassion: Recognising the distress or needs of others and responding with non-judgmental sensitivity and care. We should strive to understand the emotional and physical state of those we are supporting and to prioritise their safety and comfort. This understanding should guide all interactions and responses to ensure that they are always in the best interests of the individual.

Empowerment: Encouraging individuals to have control over their lives and decisions. We support individuals in understanding their rights and options, enabling them to make informed choices. It's essential to help individuals build their capabilities. This could include providing education on personal rights, safety strategies, and available support services. Empowering individuals through knowledge helps them to be active participants in the safeguarding process.

Inclusion and Diversity: Ensuring an understanding and respect for the diverse backgrounds and experiences of individuals. This involves recognising and valuing differences in race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and disability, and adjusting approaches accordingly to meet everyone's needs. Safeguarding responses should be tailored to acknowledge and meet the specific cultural, linguistic, and personal needs of individuals. Identifying and working to eliminate barriers that might prevent individuals from diverse backgrounds from accessing support or fully participating in the safeguarding process. This includes physical barriers, language barriers, and systemic biases.

Person-Centred: Assessing the needs and risks of each individual, ensuring they reflect the specific circumstances, strengths, and vulnerabilities of each person. This involves listening to their concerns, understanding their background, and respecting their perspective in all aspects of the safeguarding process. Adopting a holistic approach that considers all aspects of a person's life, including physical, emotional, social, and cultural factors. This comprehensive perspective ensures that interventions are not only effective in addressing immediate safeguarding concerns but also support the overall well-being of the individual.

2.0 Policy Statement

IRCM believes that everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status. IRCM acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to identifying and preventing abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults, children and young people.

IRCM recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We

recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives. IRCM commits to supporting members of the public, case managers, and other practitioners and stakeholders to raise concerns, about case managers and IRCM. We will ensure that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the individuals involved.

As a public register we have a key role in safeguarding. We exercise registration duties which are central to safety and public protection. Appropriately exercising these duties helps prevent safeguarding risks arising, or where they do we respond appropriately to prevent future harm. Case Managers work with many individuals who may be at risk of or experiencing harm and recognise their duty to help them access support services that could benefit them. While we are not necessarily the most appropriate service to respond to safeguarding concerns, we might receive intelligence in the course of our work that we are duty bound to share with other health, social care and criminal justice agencies for the purposes of keeping people safe from harm.

This policy seeks to ensure that IRCM undertakes its responsibilities with regards to protection of vulnerable adults, children and young people and responds to concerns appropriately as well as supporting case managers to do the same in their day-to-day activities. This safeguarding policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in Institute of Registered Case Managers (IRCM) including representatives and registrants.

This policy establishes a framework to support IRCM representatives and clarifies IRCM's expectations. . This document is underpinned by IRCM Safeguarding Procedures (providing operational guidance for people who work with IRCM and become aware of a safeguarding issue) and a Cause For Concern Form (used to document concerns)It is also underpinned by our HR, Health and Safety Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies, and our fitness to practice process

2.1 Definitions

Safeguarding is embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of vulnerable people wherever possible.

Protection is responding to circumstances that put a person at risk of harm.

Abuse and/or neglect is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm, and those who fail to prevent it. These terms include a range of harms such as physical, psychological, institutional abuse or neglect.

A vulnerable adult is a person over 18 years old in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or over 16 years old in Scotland who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm, neglect or exploitation. This may be the result of: age, mental illness, disability, illness, addiction and or homelessness.

Safeguarding adults at risk is about people and organisations working together to prevent the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

A child is a person under the age of 18 years old.

Safeguarding children is about protecting children from abuse, preventing harm to their health or development. Ensuring that children have access to safe and effective care and ensuring best outcomes.

2.2 Our Approach and Commitments

IRCM is committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults, young people and children.

We will ensure that all IRCM representatives are aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding.
- What to do and who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of a member of the public.

While IRCM does not provide case management services, we exist to protect the public by setting and upholding standards for Registered Case Managers. We have an obligation to minimise harm to those who engage with us; this includes; registrants, those raising concerns, members of the public, professionals and IRCM representatives.

IRCM Directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring clear lines of accountability within IRCM for safeguarding.
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- Providing training for IRCM representatives, appropriate to their role and ensuring continuing professional development, so that they remain competent in identifying and addressing concerns.
- Ensuring safeguarding is considered in all relevant IRCM policies, processes and procedures.
- Nominating and appointing a Safeguarding Team to advise the Board, Committees and Groups on developing and establishing an informed approach to safeguarding.
- Maintaining confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns and securely storing them in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Ensuring robust referral, reporting and escalation processes, working with relevant organisations across the UK as appropriate.
- Promoting effective inter-agency working, including effective information sharing.
- Sharing information about anyone found to be a risk to children and young people with the appropriate bodies. For example: Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure Scotland, HCPC, NMC, Police, Local Authority/Social Services.
- Ensuring that there is a culture of openness and transparency where colleagues are empowered to raise concerns.
- Ensuring that there are sufficient resources allocated to safeguarding, including finances, people and training.
- Reflecting on Safeguarding concerns to consider gaps in training and experience levels.
- Reviewing actions and policy on an annual basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board, or as a result of any other significant change or event.
- Ensuring access to relevant legal and professional advice.

All representatives of IRCM are expected to:

- Understand and be familiar with current safeguarding/ child protection legislation and guidance and know how to recognise, respond to, report and record a safeguarding concern or any concern regarding harm to others.
 - Adopt approaches that do no avoidable harm to those affected by our work. We recognise that some aspects of our work can have a negative effect on
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people's wellbeing such as our fitness to practise processes. We take steps to reduce any harm to all those who engage with us.

- Ensure any concern that a member of the public is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with our policy and procedures.
- Ensure any actions taken respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and are proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Put the well-being of those at risk of harm first and actively supporting the public to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Those views and wishes will be respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to.
- Co-operate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard members of the public.
- Listen to and act upon advice given by IRCM Safeguarding team.
- Complete all mandatory safeguarding training.
- Promote good practice and contribute to safeguarding discussions.
- Have their own safeguarding policies and procedures in place and/or be familiar with their organisation's.

IRCM Registrants are expected to:

- Follow the terms of their registration. This includes but is not limited to complying with IRCM Standards of Proficiency; IRCM Case Management Competency Framework and to complete relevant CPD.

2.3 Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

IRCM may become aware of a safeguarding concern in many different ways. While safeguarding risks may arise via any IRCM operations there is an increased risk of safeguarding concerns arising throughout the process of concerns being raised about registrants either by service users and their representatives or other practitioners. The increased risk relates to the vulnerabilities of both registrants and members of the public throughout this process.

Safeguarding concerns may arise as a result of: a direct disclosure to us, an allegation, concern, referral or complaint reported by another person, an observation during a meeting, and/or an incident. Where concerns do arise there is an expectation that representatives will follow our guidance on safeguarding, requiring them to manage the risk and inform the safeguarding team, who will provide advice and support.

We will ensure that:

- Safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly, appropriately and reported in a secure and responsible way to all relevant agencies.
- We comply and engage with any external processes to support those at risk of harm, including sharing appropriate information.
- Where possible we engage with those at risk of harm to ensure we act in a person-centred way that represents their wishes and best interests.
- Appropriate and proportionate measures are put in place to protect from harm all those who work for, with us, or come into contact with us.
- Where we continue to engage with individuals involved, reasonable adjustments will be put in place to support them.

2.4 Communications, Training & Support

IRCM is committed to providing resources for induction, training of representatives, effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to safeguarding. All representatives that might have interactions with children or vulnerable adults as a result of their role will have access to safeguarding training and information at an appropriate level.

Our current safeguarding training and support includes:

- Discussion of Safeguarding policy (and confirmation of understanding).
- Discussion of other relevant policies.
- Familiarity with reporting processes and safeguarding leads.
- Basic training on working practices, understanding safeguarding and how to raise a concern.
- Advisory support from the safeguarding team.
- Reflective debriefing practice.

2.5 Reporting

IRCM recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its representatives as well as its registrants. We are committed to managing incidents that result in harm to people who engage with us and to promptly report them. The safeguarding team will provide advisory support on whether referrals will be made to: The police, the local safeguarding body and any other relevant organisations including regulators and registers.

2.6 Sharing Information

IRCM encourages members of the public and registrants to submit safeguarding concerns, but IRCM may not be the most appropriate organisation in the first instance, we may therefore need to share the information with external organisations.

We recognise that we have a duty to comply with the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulations. This means that we will share information with the appropriate agencies whether there is reason to suspect a child or adult at risk experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing harm.

Central to information sharing is appropriate record keeping. Records relating to safeguarding concerns will be accurate, kept up to date and evidence about decision making will be retained.

There is a duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality. However, information will be shared on a need-to-know basis, as judged by the safeguarding team.

All representatives and registrants must be aware that they cannot promise service users, carers and or family's confidentiality.

2.7 Statutory Framework

We operate across all four countries of the UK. There are some differences in adult and children safeguarding legislation, policy and practice in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

We will ensure that we maintain an up-to-date understanding of the legislative and public policy requirements in each country and that our operational guidance and processes meet the specific requirements in each of the four countries.

2.8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will give equal priority to keeping all adults and children at risk safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation and we recognise that some adults and children at risk are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of their previous experiences, their level of

dependency, communication needs or other issues. This is in line with The Equality Act 2010

3.0 References

- The Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- UK Government Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers 2015
- NHS Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework (SAAF)
- The Charity Commission for England and Wales: Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- The Police Act 1997
- Mental Health Act 1983
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council Policy on Safeguarding and Protecting People

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