



Theme 3 – Safe Services and Supports

(Standards and Features extracted from Interim Standards for New Directions Report)



Theme 3: Safe Services and Supports

Service providers should promote the safety of people using their services through the assessment of risk, learning from adverse events and the implementation of policies and procedures designed to protect people with disabilities.

People with disabilities should make decisions about the services and supports they receive and should feel safe and secure when using them. They have the right to choose to take appropriate risks.

Service providers should protect people from abuse and follow policy and procedure in reporting any concerns of abuse to the relevant authorities.

Safe services and supports are open, transparent and accountable. Learning from adverse events should be shared internally with staff.

Theme 3: Standards for Safe Services and Supports

Standard 3.1: Each person is protected from abuse and their safety and welfare is promoted, while using services and supports.

Standard 3.2: Each person receives services and supports that promote positive behaviour and emotional well-being.

Standard 3.3: Adverse events and incidents that happen while people are using services and supports are managed and reviewed in a timely manner and outcomes inform practice at all levels.

Standard 3.1: Each person is protected from abuse and their safety and welfare is promoted, while using services and supports.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 3.1.1. The '**HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy and Procedures**'¹ are in place to ensure that each person is protected from all forms of abuse, while using services and supports.
- 3.1.2. People using services are protected by practices that promote their safety, and the HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are adhered to in relation to:
 - recruitment, selection, training, assignment and supervision of staff and volunteers
 - the provision of intimate and personal care to people who require it
 - the duty of each staff member to report any past or current concerns for the safety of the people using the service or in any other setting
 - knowing who they can go to if they have concerns about safety
 - having private access to advocacy services or an advocate of their choice
- 3.1.3. In compliance with the HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, risk assessment and management policies and procedures are in place which enable staff to support people to manage situations where they may be vulnerable. The approach to risk management supports positive risk taking and informed decision making, as a means to enhancing the quality of life, competence, social skills, independence and community participation of people using the service.
- 3.1.4. Each person is assisted and supported to develop the knowledge, self-awareness, understanding and skills needed for self-care and protection, including self-advocacy, in line their needs and wishes.
- 3.1.5. All information and advice given to people to care for and protect themselves is sensitive towards their individual needs and circumstances.

¹ Also referred to as the '**HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**'

- 3.1.6. Individual strategies are developed to support each person to best understand the HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as they apply to them and to communicate issues or concerns that they might have.
- 3.1.7. Staff work in partnership with each person and their family/representative where appropriate, to promote the person's safety and wellbeing, in accordance with their wishes.
- 3.1.8. All allegations of abuse are dealt with in an effective and timely manner, in accordance with the HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures that describe:
- how people are to be supported and facilitated to take their concerns directly to an external agency should they so wish
 - how the service provider responds to concerns and/or allegations of abuse
 - the reporting of concerns and/or allegations of abuse to statutory agencies including the HSE, and where appropriate, An Garda Síochána.

These policies and procedures are publicly available and are communicated to all stakeholders, including people who use the service, in a format that is accessible and can be easily understood by them.

- 3.1.9. Where a concern arises for a person's safety, the service provider takes all reasonable and proportionate interim measures, using a safeguarding plan in line with the HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- 3.1.10. Where there is an allegation of abuse or ill-treatment, this is reported in accordance with legislation, and the HSE Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- 3.1.11. Where there is a concern that a person may have been abused or ill-treated while using services and supports, the person is offered counselling and support. Where appropriate, and in accordance with the wishes of the person, their representative, family and professionals are involved in their support.
- 3.1.12. There is a designated person to act as a liaison and to receive concerns or allegations of abuse from anyone who has protection concerns. The designated person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse to the HSE or to An Garda Síochána in accordance with national guidance.
- 3.1.13. There are policies and supporting procedures for ensuring that people are protected from financial abuse, where staff support people with their financial affairs.

3.1.14. People do not contribute to any communal fund without their informed consent.

Standard 3.2: Each person receives services and supports that promote positive behaviour and emotional well-being.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 3.2.1. The service has a written policy on the provision of behavioural support to people using the service that is based on the principles of positive behaviour support and details how specialist and therapeutic interventions are implemented.
- 3.2.2. People are supported to express their feelings and to deal with issues that impact on their emotional wellbeing in a way that best suits their needs.
- 3.2.3. Communications are clear, appropriate and positive and help people to understand their own behaviour and to behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights of others and supports their development.
- 3.2.4. People are supported to access mental health services, where appropriate.
- 3.2.5. Specialist and/or therapeutic supports are implemented in accordance with national policy and guidelines, where they exist, and with the informed consent of each person, or persons acting on their behalf and reviewed as part of the personal planning process.
- 3.2.6. Where a person has behaviour support needs, an assessment is carried out which outlines the needs and characteristics of the person and the contexts in which behaviour is likely to arise, in order to develop responsive strategies or draw up a positive behaviour support plan, where appropriate.
- 3.2.7. Where a person has a positive behaviour support plan, the plan includes ideas for adapting the environment, teaching skills and focused interventions which are designed to prevent behaviours that challenge or reduce the likelihood of their occurrence. The plan also includes non-aversive reactive strategies. The plan is monitored and evaluated regularly.
- 3.2.8. Staff consult family members, with the informed consent of each person, in order to develop a shared strategy and where appropriate, a behaviour support plan.
- 3.2.9. Staff are:
 - trained in the provision of positive behaviour support to people with disabilities

- trained to deal with issues of disrupted attachment, neglect and abuse and how this can impact on the behaviour of people with disabilities
- trained to understand and to respond non-aversively to behaviour and verbal and non-verbal communication that may indicate an issue of concern
- given all relevant information required to assist them in supporting people to manage their behaviour

3.2.10. Staff have access to specialist advice and appropriate support when working with people who present with behaviours that challenge. Such support includes:

- interventions designed to promote effective communication
- guidelines for appropriate responses to particular situations
- staff debriefing following involvement in a difficult incident

3.2.11. The service regularly monitors and audits its approach to behaviour support, as outlined in the service's policy.

Standard 3.3: Adverse events and incidents that happen while people are using services and supports are managed and reviewed in a timely manner and outcomes inform practice at all levels.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 3.3.1. There are policies and procedures for the management, review and evaluation of adverse events and incidents which happen while people are using services and supports.
- 3.3.2. Adverse events and incidents are notified to the relevant authorities as required and within the specified timeframe in accordance with their requirements.
- 3.3.3. The service provider ensures the prompt and effective dissemination of the recommendations and learning from the management and review of adverse events and incidents.
- 3.3.4. The learning from the evaluation of all adverse events and incident reviews is communicated in the service. The lessons learned are used to inform the development of good practice and improve service provision.