

Vhi Health & Wellbeing Management and staff acknowledge that the welfare of children who attend our services is of paramount importance and our service works to safeguard children at all times. Every staff member has a responsibility and duty of care to ensure that every child / young person availing of our service is safe and protected from harm.

Vhi Health & Wellbeing provide a developing range of clinical services to both adults and children across various facilities nationwide. In our safeguarding practice we strive to adhere to Children First Act 2015 and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs 2017). As our service portfolio grows policies and procedures are being developed at national and local levels to promote safe environments for children and young people, to mitigate the potential risk for harm to arise and to manage it safely where it does.

This Safeguarding Statement is prepared in order to keep children safe from harm* while in our care and in line with requirements for organisations who care for children as defined in legislation. This Child Safeguarding Statement is informed by an ongoing Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment process in respect of the following:

- Risk of harm to a child by a staff member
- Risk of harm to a child from a service user (adult or child), visitor, or member of the public (includes online risk)
- Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a staff member
- Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child
- Risk of harm to a child due to not implementing the Children First Act 2015 and /or related guidance
- Risk of harm to a child by Contractor providing services at the Hospital

*Harm as defined in the Children First Act 2015 as “assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects, or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of the child”

Policies & Procedures

Vhi Health & Wellbeing have appointed a Child Protection Clinical Lead to direct and support organisational compliance under Children First 2015 through the Child Protection Committee. In addition, the following KEY policies and procedures support our intention to safeguard children availing of the service:

- Child Protection Policy outlining governance structures and reporting procedures;
- Recruitment Policies in line with the National Vetting Bureau (children and vulnerable persons) Act;
- Mandatory e-learning training for all staff “An Introduction to Children First”.

Implementation & Governance

The Child Protection Clinical Lead is responsible for guiding & supporting the Child Protection Committee in ongoing risk assessment to inform the review, development and implementation of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legislation requirements which falls under the governance of the Quality, Safety and Risk Committee.

Relevant Person For further information or queries in relation to this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact: Dr Lynda Keaveney - Chief Clinical Officer.