

HIQA and the Mental Health Commission join forces to call for better protections for adults who may be vulnerable

Wednesday, 9 May 2018: The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and the Mental Health Commission (MHC) are today hosting a seminar in the Law Society of Ireland on the safeguarding of adults in health and social care services.

The seminar, 'Adult Safeguarding: Promoting Rights, Health and Wellbeing', aims to raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding adults who may be vulnerable, and provides attendees with the opportunity to discuss how Ireland can better promote the rights, health and wellbeing of people at risk of abuse or harm.

Addressing over 200 delegates at the seminar, HIQA CEO Phelim Quinn announced that HIQA and the MHC are developing joint national adult safeguarding standards: "These standards aim to minimise and prevent the abuse and neglect of at-risk adults. This must surely be our aim, every bit as much as reporting and investigating abuse when it takes place".

Mr Quinn added: "These standards are just one part of the solution, however. The State must acknowledge its responsibility to protect vulnerable citizens from harm and abuse by legislating for adult safeguarding".

Interim Chief Executive of the MHC, Rosemary Smyth, commented: "The aim of these standards is to promote and uphold human rights and safeguard those most vulnerable in our society. These standards will promote best practice in providing person-centred, safe and effective care. We hope that, together, we can take another important step toward ensuring that all services work both individually and in collaboration to achieve compliance with these standards and to promote and protect the rights of adults."

Since their establishment, HIQA and the MHC have monitored a wide range of health and social care services across the country. During this time, inspectors have come across many services that provide excellent, person-centred care. Unfortunately, however, inspectors have also encountered services where a number of people have been vulnerable to exploitation or abuse of a physical, financial, psychological or sexual nature.

For this reason HIQA and the MHC are developing adult safeguarding standards to ensure that services and their staff prevent harm from occurring in the first instance, and know how to recognise and respond to it quickly and effectively where it does occur.

To find out more about adult safeguarding, watch our short animation on [YouTube](#). HIQA will also be live streaming the seminar on [Facebook](#) Live. Join in the conversation on Twitter by using the hashtag #adultsafeguarding.

Ends.

For further information please contact:

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Notes to the editor

- Everyone has the right to be safe and to live a life free from harm. Safeguarding means putting measures in place to promote people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and to empower individuals to protect themselves. Safeguarding is fundamental to the provision of high-quality health and social care.
- The purpose of the national standards for adult safeguarding is to ensure that health and social care services in Ireland place people at the centre of everything they do, and know how to prevent harm and abuse from happening.
- These standards will drive improvements in the quality of life of people using health and social care services.
- A background document to support the development of national standards for adult safeguarding will be published today on www.hiqa.ie.