



World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring, protecting people, especially adults at risk of harm and children, from that harm, and responding appropriately when harm does occur. Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary of terms below.

This definition draws from World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists' (WFSA) values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

The WFSA believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has an equal right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The WFSA does not tolerate harm, abuse, and exploitation by volunteers, staff or associated personnel.

Equality and diversity are at the heart of WFSA's values. This policy will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of the 9 protected characteristics (as cited in the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The WFSA commits to addressing safeguarding consistently and without exception across WFSA programmes and activities, partners, associated personnel and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems are survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

We are aware that those in positions of trust and responsibility may abuse their power and exploit or harm others. We seek to take action to deal with any abuse and to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

2. Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this policy is to protect people from harm, particularly that caused due to their coming into contact with the WFSA. This includes staff and volunteers and particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with the WFSA
- The design and implementation of the WFSA's programmes and activities.

The policy lays out the commitments made by the WFSA, and informs volunteers, staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. It also provides procedures for dealing with reports of breach of Safeguarding Policy, where the safeguarding violation is:



- Against volunteers, staff or members of the public,
- Perpetrated by staff, partners or associated personnel.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under the WFSA’s Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff contracted by the WFSA
- Associated personnel, meaning members of the Board, Council, Committees and other volunteers, trustees, interns, scholars and fellows, agency staff, and anyone from a Member Society, partner organisation or institution that is involved in the WFSA’ work or working on behalf of the WFSA.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

WFSA responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that:

- All staff and associated personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- There is a clear Code of Conduct communicated to all staff and associated personnel which details unacceptable conduct
- There are designated, named Safeguarding Officers with the relevant knowledge and skills and that they have time and resources necessary for them to fulfil these responsibilities to the best of their abilities
- HR procedures include safeguarding requirements when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- All staff and associated personnel receive appropriate training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization. This will ensure all staff and associated personnel have a basic awareness of safeguarding issues including:
 - Being alert to the possibility of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation
 - Sufficient understanding to recognize safeguarding concerns
 - knowing who in the organization to raise concerns with
 - Being competent to take the appropriate immediate or emergency action.
- All staff, associated personnel and the communities we work with have access to safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns
- Complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies are accepted
- Reports of safeguarding concerns are followed up promptly and according to due process outlined in the procedure below
- All staff and associated personnel reporting concerns or complaints are protected by WFSA’s Whistleblowing Policy



- There is appropriate support to those who raise safeguarding concerns and survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be in consultation with the survivor.

The policy and procedure is published and available publicly.

WFSA Board

The Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- The Safeguarding Policy is reviewed on an at least annual basis
- It seeks and receives appropriate reporting of safeguarding matters affecting the organisation and that this forms part of their risk assurance functions
- Members are curious of the individual behaviours, organisational culture and implementation of the safeguarding policy
- There is appropriate support and resources available to staff to implement this policy

Staff and associated personnel responsibilities

We recognise that protecting people from harm is both a corporate and an individual responsibility. All members of staff and associated personnel should be proactive in taking appropriate, proportionate, preventative steps to reduce the risk of, or perception of, harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

All staff and associated personal will:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Design and undertake all their activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with WFSA. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a WFSA staff member or associated personnel to appropriate person (see procedure below). In doing so the primary consideration should always be the best interests of those at risk of or experiencing harm
- Maintain confidentiality at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Ensuring information relating to the concern and subsequent case management is kept secure and shared on a need to know basis only

Responsibilities when working in partnership

Our partners enable us to achieve our goals. They often have the stronger direct relationship with those at higher risk of harm and have better understanding of the law and practice in their country. Therefore, we respect that in most circumstances our partner should have the primary duty of care to beneficiaries of assistance and are best placed to lead investigation of any safeguarding concern. We will always reserve the right to take independent action if we consider that the safeguarding lead organisation is not responding adequately

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that in a joint initiative:



- a written agreement has been made which clarifies who is the safeguarding lead organisation and which procedures will be followed. Where possible this should be included in the relevant Memorandum of Understanding/Project Framework Agreement or similar document.
- The partner confirms that they feel confident that they have adequate safeguarding arrangements compliant with national laws, their context and risks they manage
- The partner(s) is required to inform WFSA of any safeguarding incident in any WFSA supported project or initiative. On the occasions where WFSA is the safeguarding lead, seek to accept challenge and concern from partners in a positive spirit and prioritise actions in the best interests of those who have experienced or are at risk of harm.

5. References (related documents)

The Safeguarding Policy must be read in conjunction with:

- WFSA's Code of Conduct
- Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Policies and procedures for staff misconduct
- WFSA Volunteer Agreement
- WFSA Partner Agreement
- WFSA Contract of Employment
- Any other policy documents, role or job descriptions, grant agreements and contracts specific to certain positions or partnerships.

Where there is any conflict between this policy and its associated procedures and other policies, procures or established ways of working, the priority is always to safeguard people at risk of harm.

The WFSA will review this policy and associated documents annually.

Date of Last Review: February 2020
Name of Reviewer: Unanimously approved at Board meeting 26/01/2020
Signature: 



7. Appendices

Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from WFSA's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the WFSA serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child

A person below the age of 18

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Safeguarding

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In the health sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

At risk adult

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.



World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists Safeguarding Reporting and Response Procedure

Stage 1 - Report is received

1.1 Reports can reach the WFSA through various routes. This may be in a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or a message on social media. It may also be in the form of informal discussion or rumour if a staff member or associated personnel hears something in an informal discussion or chat that they think is a safeguarding concern.

1.2 If a safeguarding concern is disclosed directly to a member of staff, the person receiving the report should bear the following in mind:

- Listen
- Empathise with the person
- Ask who, when, where, what but not why
- Repeat/ check your understanding of the situation
- Report to the Safeguarding Officer

If at any point, there is a concern that an individual is at immediate significant risk of harm, and it is not possible or appropriate to seek support from the WFSA Safeguarding Officer, the person should take reasonable steps to seek assistance from statutory protection services.

1.3 The person receiving the report should then document the following information using an Incident Report Form:

- Name of person making report
- Name(s) of alleged survivor(s) of safeguarding incident(s) if different from above
- Name(s) of alleged perpetrator(s)
- Description of incident(s)
- Dates(s), times(s) and location(s) of incident

1.4 The person with the concern should then share this information with the WFSA's Safeguarding Officer based at the WFSA Secretariat in London.

If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Officer or if the person reporting prefers to speak to someone outside of the Secretariat, he or she may contact the Senior Safeguarding Officer. This individual is a Member of the WFSA's Board or Council.

If the person reporting feels that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern he or she may report to any other appropriate Board Member or follow the Whistleblowing Policy.

If you are reporting an incident or behaviour during an overseas project or placement (i.e. outside the United Kingdom), please include (if possible) the name and details of the project lead or co-ordinator and the name and details of the WFSA's local partner for the project.

Safeguarding Officer (Member of WFSA Secretariat)	Senior Safeguarding Officer (Member of WFSA Board / Council)
Nita Pillai	Daniela Filipescu
Head of Programmes	Council Member
safeguarding1@wfsahq.org	safeguarding2@wfsahq.org
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1.5 Due to the sensitive nature of safeguarding concerns, confidentiality must be maintained during all stages of the reporting process, and information shared on a limited 'need to know' basis only. This includes senior management who might otherwise be appraised of a serious incident.

1.6 If the reporting staff member or associated personnel is not satisfied that the WFSA is appropriately addressing the report, they have a right to escalate the report, either up to the Board or to an external statutory body.

Stage 2 - Assess how to proceed with the report

2.1 The Safeguarding Officer will handle the report

2.2 The Safeguarding Officer determines whether it is possible to take this report forward

- Is anyone at immediate risk of harm?
- Does the reported incident(s) represent a breach of safeguarding policy?
- Is there sufficient information to follow up this report?

2.3 If the report raises any concerns relating to children under the age of 18 or an adult at risk of harm, **seek expert advice immediately**. If at any point in the process of responding to the report (for example during an investigation) it becomes apparent that anyone involved is a child under the age of 18, the Senior Safeguard Officer should be immediately informed and should seek expert advice before proceeding.

2.4 If following all reasonable efforts to consider next steps, there is insufficient information to follow up the report, and no way to ascertain this information (for example if the person making the report did not leave contact details), the report should be filed in case it can be of use in the future, and look at any wider lesson learning we can take forward.

2.5 If the decision is made to take the report forward, ensure the Safeguarding Officer will consider if they have the relevant expertise and capacity to manage the safeguarding case, seeking direction from the CEO if necessary. **If you do not have this expertise in-house, seek immediate assistance**, through external capacity if necessary.

2.7 Clarify what, how and with whom information will be shared relating to this case. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times, and information shared on a need-to-know basis only. Decide which information needs to be shared with which stakeholder – information needs may be different.

2.8 Check your obligations on informing relevant bodies when you receive a safeguarding report. These include (but are not limited to):

- Funding organisations
- Umbrella bodies/networks
- Statutory protection bodies (in the UK this may include local authority social services, the police)
- Statutory regulatory bodies (in the case of a serious incident the Charity Commission or a medical professional registration body dealing with fitness to practice issues)
- Insurance providers



Some of these may require you to inform them when you receive a report, others may require information on completion of the case, or annual top-line information on cases. When submitting information to any of these bodies, think through the confidentiality implications very carefully.

2.9 For reports relating to serious incidents which are being followed up, undertake a risk assessment to determine whether there are any current or potential risks to any stakeholders involved in the case, and develop a mitigation plan if required. Continue to update the risk assessment and plan on a regular basis throughout and after the case as required.

Stage 3 - Case management

3.1 If the report alleges a serious safeguarding violation, the Safeguarding Officer may wish to hold a case conference. The Senior Safeguarding Officer will consider who to invite as appropriate depending on the circumstances of the case. This could include:

- Safeguarding Senior Officer (Chair)
- Person who received the report
- CEO or other senior member of staff
- Other Member of the Board
- External Safeguarding adviser (or equivalent) if needed
- HR Advisor or equivalent

The case conference should decide the next steps to take, including any protection concerns and support needs for the survivor and other stakeholders (see below).

3.2 The Senior Safeguarding Officer will lead the conference meeting to decide the next steps. These could be (but are not limited to)

- No further action (for example if there is insufficient information to follow up, or the report refers to incidents outside the organisation's remit)
- Investigation is required to gather further information
- Immediate disciplinary action or other actions if no further information needed
- Referral to relevant authorities (if not already done so).

3.4 If the report concerns associated personnel (for example volunteers, contractors, consultants or suppliers), the decision making process will be different. Although associated personnel are not staff members, WFSA has a duty of care to protect anyone who comes into contact with any aspect of our programme from harm. WFSA cannot follow disciplinary processes with individuals outside our organisation, however decisions may be made to terminate a volunteer's role in any WFSA activity or to terminate a contract with a supplier based on the actions of their staff. If the person in question holds an elected WFSA position then the action should be treated as a failure of duty as per the WFSA Constitution.

3.5 If an investigation is required and the organisation does not have internal capacity, identify resources to conduct the investigation. Determine which budget this will be covered by. External advice should be sought as required.

Stage 5 - Provide support to survivor where needed/requested



5.1 Provide appropriate support to survivor(s) of safeguarding incidents. Nb. this should be provided as a duty of care even if the report has not yet been investigated. Support could include (but is not limited to)

- Psychosocial care or counseling
- Medical assistance
- Protection or security assistance (for example being moved to a safe location)

5.2 All decision making on support should be led in consultation by the survivor.

Stage 6 - Manage investigation if required

The relevant investigator will use their best endeavors to manage any investigation in line with guidelines for investigating safeguarding reports, such as the [CHS Alliance Guidelines for Investigations](#).

Stage 8 - Make decision on outcome of investigation report

8.1 The Senior Safeguarding Officer makes a decision based on the information provided in the investigation report. Decisions relating to the Subject of Concern should be made in accordance with existing policies and procedures for staff and associated personnel misconduct. In principle, the WFSA will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy and appropriate measures to associated personnel.

8.2 If at this or any stage in the process criminal activity is suspected (in whatever jurisdiction), we will where necessary and appropriate report the crime and consider what steps we can take to support prosecution. We will always seek to comply with our statutory duties to protect people from harm.

In cases where referral to the relevant authorities would be inappropriate as *this may pose a risk to anyone involved in the case*, the Senior Safeguarding Officer together with the Board of Directors will need to decide how to proceed. This decision should be made bearing in mind a risk assessment of potential protection risks to all concerned, primarily the survivor and the Subject of Concern and its duties as a charity and the requirements of the Charity Commission.

Stage 9 - Conclude the case

9.1 Document all decisions made resulting from the case clearly and confidentially.

9.2 Store all information relating to the case confidentially, and in accordance with the WFSA's policy and local data protection law.

9.3 Record anonymised data relating to the case to feed into organisational reporting requirements (eg. serious incident reporting to Board, safeguarding reporting to donors), and to feed into learning for dealing with future cases.



TO BE ADDED TO THE ORGANISATIONS CODE OF CONDUCT

Child safeguarding

WFSA staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.

Adult safeguarding

WFSA staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

WFSA staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.