

Child Safeguarding Statement

The National Maternity Hospital (NMH) is committed to providing safe services to all persons served less than 18 years of age including mothers who are considered children in their own right.

Our principles to safeguard children from harm:

We believe in putting children at the centre of everything we do. Every child has the right to feel safe, respected and protected from harm, abuse, discrimination and bullying. Every child has a voice that must be listened to. Children's best interests always come first, and we work collaboratively and responsibly—together with families, staff and partner agencies—to safeguard, support and empower every child. We train our staff to recognise and respond to child abuse, harm and exploitation. Child safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Risks and how we manage them

This Child Safeguarding Statement is based on our assessment of any potential for harm to a child while using this service. It focuses on risks of harm as defined in the Children First Act 2015 (sexual, physical, emotional abuse and/or neglect, that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect a child's health, development or welfare) and the procedures that are in place to manage those risks. It does not address general clinical or healthcare delivery risks (such as

Name and address of service:

	An tOspidéal Náisiúnta Máithreachais The National Maternity Hospital	Sráid Holles, Baile Átha Cliath 2, D02 YH21 Holles Street, Dublin 2, D02 YH21 T: 01 637 3100 www.nmh.ie Máistir/Master: Prof. Jennifer Walsh
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Short description of our service and the activities that we provide.

The National Maternity Hospital (NMH) was established in 1894 and is one of Ireland's largest and most comprehensive maternity hospitals, delivering integrated care across a wide range of specialties including Maternity, Gynaecology, Neonatology, Community Midwifery, Anaesthetics, Fetal Medicine, Fertility, Pathology, Radiology, Maternal Medicine, Genetics, Perinatal Mental Health, Urogynaecology, and the National Neonatal Transfer Service. These services are provided at the primary hospital facility but also across a variety of satellite facilities. Services are provided as inpatients and outpatients and we operate a 24/7 emergency service. Some specialist services are provided within the homes of mothers who are in receipt of care.

We are dedicated to the overall health, well-being and safety of infants (unborn and new born) who avail of our service through careful consideration of bio—psycho—social factors which could impact on the health, safety and well-being of infants.

those relating to standards of care, diagnosis, treatment, communication failures or medical error) where no safeguarding from child abuse dimension exists. Those risks are managed through NMH Clinical Governance and the HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Procedures. Clinical incidents that have a child safeguarding element are included here where relevant.

Below is a summary of the main risks identified. **A more detailed risk assessment for this service is available on request.**

Risk Category	Controls in place to manage risk identified (in addition to the procedures listed below)
1. Risk of harm to a child from a staff member, volunteer or student.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting a Culture of Safety, Quality and Kindness: A Code of Conduct for Health and Social Service Providers. Environmental Controls in place. NMH Chaperone Policy. HSE National Consent Policy. Staff Supervision Policy. SLA's in place with external agencies.
2. Risk of harm to a child, from a service user (adult or child), visitor or member of the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on safe supervision of children through posters, admissions policy, visiting guidelines. Chaperone Policy, Environmental controls such as CCTV, Security Staff, Visitor Pass System.
3. Risk of harm to a child due to a staff member not recognising or reporting a child protection or welfare concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory Training Policy for NMH Employees includes 'An Introduction to Children First' eLearning module. Children First included in NMH Employee Induction. HSE Children First National Office Training and Resource Strategy. Annual Children First Awareness Day.
4. Risk of harm to a child due to a child not recognising or reporting a child protection or welfare concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child-friendly posters on local Child Safeguarding Processes, NMH Child Safeguarding Statements and the NMH Child Protection and Welfare Policy. NMH Complaints Procedure including Verbal Complaints procedure, Maternity Experience Survey.
5. Risk of harm to a child due to a service not implementing the Children First Act 2015 and/or related guidance and policies in HSE services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSE Children First governance and compliance monitoring measures in place. HSE Children First National Office to support implementation of Children First. NMH Children First Operational Steering Committee.
6. Risk of harm to a child in the digital environment (including telehealth, social media, web access, electronic content and interaction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMH Social Media & Internet Usage Policies, HSE National IT Security Policies, NMH CCTV Policy, Guidelines on Recording. NMH guidance for use of Wi-Fi for those under 18 years. HSE procedures and guidelines for digital health. HSE National Policy for Social Media and Data Protection Staff Use.

Procedures to safeguard children and young people from harm

In addition to the controls listed above, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services:

- NMH Child Protection and Welfare Policy and accompanying suite of HSE policy guides (which includes the procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla)
- NMH Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff to work with children, Garda Vetting, Termination of Employment Policy.
- Procedures for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including identification and reporting of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the people in the NMH who are mandated persons
- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct, against staff, of a child while availing of our services (Trust in Care)
- NMH Procedure for appointing a relevant person
- NMH Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure for Employees
- NMH Procedures for the Handling of Protected Disclosures
- HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Procedures
- HSE Incident Management Framework


Putting this safeguarding statement into practice

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. We will review this Child Safeguarding Statement every 2 years (24 months) or as soon as possible after there has been a material change in any matter to which it refers.

Review date: 11th March 2028


Master Prof. Jennifer Walsh


Director of Midwifery Anmarie Sliney


Secretary Manager Ronan Gavin

For queries in relation to this Child Safeguarding Statement please contact our **relevant person**:
 Laura Harrington, Principal Medical Social Worker 01 6373236
 lharrington@nmh.ie