Safeguarding
IRELAND

Invitation to tender: 'Scoping study on the issue of "peer-to-peer abuse"'.

Safeguarding Ireland wishes to invite suitably qualified and interested parties to submit a tender proposal to carry out research and prepare a report on the above. The identification, sourcing and analysis of relevant materials and data in conjunction with key stakeholders will inform the development of the final report.

1. About Safeguarding Ireland

Safeguarding Ireland was established to promote safeguarding of adults who may be vulnerable, protect them from all forms of abuse by persons, organisations and institutions and develop a national plan for promoting their welfare. This will be achieved by promoting inter-sectoral collaboration, developing public and professional awareness and education, and undertaking research to inform policy, practice and legislation in the Republic of Ireland. Safeguarding Ireland is a registered charity and is funded by the HSE.

More information about Safeguarding Ireland can be found at
https://www.safeguardingireland.org/about/
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2. Background to the research

The issue of 'peer-to-peer abuse' in the context of Ireland's health and social care services is a complex multifaceted issue. The issue arises mainly in residential health and social care services for older people and people with a disability, registered by the Chief Inspector of Social Services, in line with the Health Act 2007 (As Amended). However, it is also acknowledged that the issue of "peer-to-peer" abuse may also be a feature in other services such as day care and supported living services provided and or commissioned by the HSE. These latter services are not registered or subject to statutory notifications to the Chief Inspector.

Definition and Thresholds

Currently there is no definition of what is meant by "peer-to-peer abuse". Therefore, there is no agreed understanding and consistency of interpretation and the need to record or report incidents. The use of the term 'abuse' may not always be appropriate especially as the issues can occur as a result of compatibility issues between residents and service users. It is generally agreed that peer-to-peer altercations are safeguarding concerns, but it is not clear when a peer-to-peer interaction becomes "abuse".

There is a current concern within services that there may be over-reporting of incidents as the current practice would appear to be that service providers report all peer-to-peer interactions as abuse. It is generally felt that clearer definition would facilitate more assessment of the incident and appropriate reporting of safeguarding concerns as

opposed to categorising the incident as abuse and reporting it as such. It is notable that some provider organisations operate a threshold system for reporting of such incidents, being selective in what is reported as an incident whilst others report all concerns as abuse.

As the result of the lack of a definition of "peer-to-peer abuse", training for staff on the issue appears to be very limited.

Capacity within Services and impact on individuals

At times capacity within the residential health and social care sector can lead to providers having to be reactive to emergencies, in terms of the admission of service users into services. At times, a full assessment and access to full information about the person being admitted to the service may not always be possible. This can lead to situations where people move into a residential centre where incompatibility issues can arise. Circumstances may also arise where the choice of placement for an individual service user is not appropriate but other, more appropriate, options are not available when the admission to a service is deemed necessary in the ensuing crisis. There is currently no appeal mechanism where issues arise as a result of an emergency placement. This is a critical human rights issue for service users as it can result in little to no choice of who they live with or where they live.

It is accepted that people who require older person's and disability residential services are now presenting with more complex needs and there are more people now presenting with complex sensory issues which may result in increased incidents of behaviours that challenge and have a resultant impact on others living within the service.

There are approximately 2,000 people with a disability in need of a residential place (this is based on people who are currently interacting with disability services).

In determining the approach to this research proposal, Safeguarding Ireland have engaged with the 'Five Nations Group on Adult Safeguarding' (UK and Ireland)'[1] and with a wider stakeholder group in Ireland. The issue of "peer to peer abuse" is undoubtedly an issue that exists in all five jurisdictions. It is acknowledged that there appears to be a paucity of research and published literature on this subject, this includes peer reviewed and grey literature.

3. Objectives of the Scoping Study

This study, and any subsequent research, form a core component of Safeguarding Ireland's workplan for 2023/2024 and will enable the progression of a number of strategic priorities under its current Strategic Plan (https://www.safeguardingireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/6419-SI-Strategy-Report-web.pdf).

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[1] This group comprises experts in health and social care from these jurisdictions.

Safeguarding Ireland's overarching goal in commissioning this research is to conduct a scoping study on the issue of "peer-to-peer abuse" in Ireland's health and social care services, provided and commissioned by the HSE, the findings of which will be presented in a comprehensive report on the scoping study.

The research objectives:

- Undertake a rapid appraisal of what other jurisdictions have published in respect of the topic of "peer-to-peer abuse" or related concepts within health and social care services. [2]

- Seek to clarify a definition of "peer-to-peer abuse".

- Examine the circumstances and settings in which "peer-to-peer abuse" occurs in Ireland, what data is available from those settings and other sources on the triggers, nature, frequency, management, impact and reporting of such occurrences.

- Examine the existence of current operational policies in Ireland on "peer to peer abuse" noting how such occurrences are reported and whether thresholds are used in reporting and what principles underpin such policies, e.g., person centred, Human Rights Based.

- Make recommendations for further research aimed at influencing policy and practice in care and support settings and with a view to informing Adult Safeguarding and other relevant legislation[3].

4. Tender requirements

A. Understanding

1) Demonstrate the response proposed is relevant to Safeguarding Ireland's mission and strategic objectives, indicating (at a high level) the tenderer's understanding of "peer to peer" abuse in the context of Adult Safeguarding.
2) Describe how the research findings will enhance Safeguarding Ireland's capacity to contribute to the development of relevant consultations on policy/legislative development and awareness-raising campaigns.

B. Approach, project management and final report

Approach

1) Describe how the proposal addresses the stated research objective.

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[2] This should include peer reviewed and grey literature, including relevant information on reporting (if available).

[3]Pending the outcomes of this scoping study and subject to the availability of funding, Safeguarding Ireland may consider further research as part of its workplan for 2024.

2) Clearly describe the research methodology and related timeline.
3) Clearly describe why the selected methodological approach is appropriate to achieve the stated research objective.
4) An indicative list of the sources of information that will form the basis of the scoping study.

5) Demonstrate appropriate consideration of ethical issues that may arise in the research, and compliance with best practices in this respect.
6) Describe the proposed quality controls and research supervision processes that will be put in place.

Project management

1) Tenderers must agree that at the project initiation meeting (first week, February 2024) they will agree the list of sources to be included in the research, the rationale for same and the approach to interrogation of research.
2) Tenderers must agree to provide written progress reports every month: applicants are also required to discuss progress regularly with a nominated member of Safeguarding Ireland.
3) Agree to the provision of an interim report in electronic format. This report must outline progress, including the following elements: methodology, literature review, fieldwork/consultations, data analysis and schedule and timeframe for completion. The report should identify any risks which might affect the timeframe as proposed and proposals for overcoming them.
4) Tenderers should note that they may be required to present the Interim report to Safeguarding Ireland's members and executive and this should be accommodated in the overall project timeline.

Final report

1) A draft final report must be provided to Safeguarding Ireland for comment/observations prior to finalisation.
2) The Final Report must be of a publishable standard noting Safeguarding Ireland's requirements viz. Research commissioned by Safeguarding Ireland is intended to provide a resource to be used by a wide range of people across several professions, sectors and disciplines. The report must:
   • Use language accessible to readers with varying experiences of research.
   • Contain a comprehensive description of the research method, so that the reader understands what was done and the robustness and/or limitations of the data.
   • Organise and, where appropriate, reduce the data to lead the reader either to clear conclusions or to a discussion of the implications of the findings.
   • Avoid over-summarising or over-simplifying the findings.
   • Contain clearly labelled charts, diagrams, and tables (if appropriate) summarising and illustrating the results, with a narrative description of what the chart, diagram or table shows.

C. Experience

Tenderers must provide:

1. Biographies for each of the named personnel who will provide services under the contract.
2. A statement indicating how the qualifications and experience of the personnel equip them to carry out the research.
3. A statement describing the tenderer's track record of the production of relevant work, providing 3 relevant examples.
4. A statement describing how the time and resource allocations are appropriate to the proposed research methodology and delivering the Final Report within the timeline.
5. Details of the person responsible for managing the project and their relevant experience.

D. Cost
1. Evidence that the proposal has been clearly costed and that the cost is realistic and deliverables achievable for the proposed cost.
2. Evidence that the proposed cost will provide Safeguarding Ireland with value for money expended on the project.

   All tenders are required to complete the following table indicating their costs.

Table 1 Cost table

Element:	€ Cost (ex. VAT)	€ VAT amt.	€ Total incl. VAT
Project Management including meetings with and presentations to Safeguarding Ireland			
Implementation of proposed research methodology			
Preparation of Draft and Final Reports			
Any additional expenses anticipated must be separately identified, described, and listed below (noting that the total project			

Element:	€ Cost (ex. VAT)	€ VAT amt.	€ Total incl. VAT
budget is €30k inclusive of VAT and expenses):			
TOTAL:			

5. Essential Criteria for selection of successful Tender:

Evaluation of tender submissions will be based on criteria specified in the tender requirements (**4** above), using the following awarding criteria:

UNDERSTANDING   20%
- Demonstrated understanding of the project and the requirements as it relates to the work of Safeguarding Ireland.
- Understanding "Peer to Peer" abuse in the context of Adult Safeguarding.

APPROACH   35%
- Structure and quality of response.
- Clarity and appropriateness of methodology proposed.
- Capacity to deliver the project within the proposed time-frame.
- Experience of preparation of research reports to publication standard.

EXPERIENCE   25%
- Experience of research and data analysis specific to the requirements of the proposed study.
- Capacity to manage a research project of this nature.

COST   20%

Safeguarding Ireland will establish a tender assessment panel to assess the applications and to award the contract to the successful applicant. The panel will have to be satisfied that the method and programme of work meet the requirements outlined and are cost effective. The panel does not commit itself to accepting the lowest or any tender and will not accept any responsibility for any expenses incurred in the preparation and submission of a tender.

Following completion of the tender evaluation, the successful tenderer will be notified by email. In addition, emails will be issued to the unsuccessful tenderer/s notifying them of the result.

Short listing may apply and if so, applicants will be required to present to the panel on a date to be agreed.

6. Reporting mechanisms and structures

The successful individual/ organisation will collaborate with and be directed by Safeguarding Ireland on an on-going basis and will provide regular updates on progress.

It is likely that a small Oversight/ Advisory group will be established to oversee this project.

The successful tenderer will be expected to meet formally (either virtually or in person) with those overseeing this project on a minimum of 3 occasions.

1. An initial project initiation meeting within 1 week of the tender being awarded.
2. An interim meeting to focus on progress being made.
3. A final meeting where a report is presented. (There may be a requirement to present the final report to Safeguarding Ireland's National Safeguarding Advisory Committee).

7. Project Finance and Timeline

The budget for this tender will not exceed €30,000 inclusive of VAT and expenses. An overall price for the work should be clearly detailed and specified (using the format provided in 'Table 1 Cost Table').

A breakdown must also be provided of the individual elements and associated timeframe for the delivery of key milestones.

It is envisaged that the successful applicant will work collaboratively with all key stakeholders, and work must start in early February 2023, with a view to the Final Report being completed by end May 2023.

8. Tax Clearance Certificate

Before the contract is awarded, the successful applicant will be required to produce a valid Tax Clearance Certificate, and if the Certificate should expire within the course of the contract, a new Certificate will be required. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the person/ organisation being in possession of a valid certificate at all times.

9. Insurance

The successful tenderer must produce evidence of valid insurance prior to signing of the contract.

10. Ownership of material resulting from this work

Ownership of material and documentation resulting from this research will reside with Safeguarding Ireland and must be returned to Safeguarding Ireland at its request, or on termination of any contract in the format requested by Safeguarding Ireland and may not be used without the written consent of Safeguarding Ireland.

<u>Closing date for receipt of tender Wednesday 10th January.</u>

11. Submissions of Tenders:

Please forward tenders, no later than Tuesday 9th January by 5pm, by email to annmarie@safeguardingireland.org

Tenders received after this time will not be opened or included in the evaluation process.

Any queries can also be emailed to annmarie@safeguardingireland.org no later than 5pm on the 19th December 2023 and will be responded to no later than 48 hours after the day of receipt.

12. Summary of key dates[4]:

Final date for submission of queries	19th December 2023 (5pm)
Closing date for submission of tenders	10th January 2024 (5pm)
Project Initiation meeting	1st week February 2024
Final Report	End May 2024

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[4] Further dates for the delivery of agreed milestones will be in accordance with the project plan to be agreed with the successful tenderer.