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CN II D I N C I P I E

DESIGNATED NURSE FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

The role of the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children (DN) is a complex and demanding one. It involves a range of responsibilities, including the identification and assessment of children at risk of harm, the coordination of multi-agency responses, and the provision of support and advice to children, young people, and their families. The role is also responsible for the development and implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures within the organisation.

The changing NHS architecture has undoubtedly impacted on the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children function, with many being expected to undertake additional commissioning and senior managerial functions, whilst trying to balance the core function of the role. This may include; complex safeguarding case work, maintaining and improving multiagency partnership arrangements and active participation in the work of the local safeguarding children boards.

The recent RCN survey of Designated Nurses for Safeguarding Children and Young People highlighted concerns that NHS England has not provided a stronger challenge to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in how this function has been managed, especially in respect of role overload, competing demands and dilution of functions of the designated nurse role. The impact of the NHS changes is adding to the complexity of the role.

10
0 of 10 Nurses

Context and Rationale

The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children provides safeguarding, child protection expertise and leadership throughout health and multi-agency partnerships. The role is pivotal to complex case management, improved partnership working, strategic planning, quality assurance and performance monitoring. It is essential when advising on the development and provision of services. CCGs and the NHS need a much greater awareness of and commitment to the role to ensure that these key professionals are able to undertake their core function to adequately safeguard and protect the wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people within their geographical footprint.

Key Messages

- CCGs should have access to the expertise of the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children, the establishment being in line with the requirements of the intercollegiate guidance.
- The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children role is distinct and should not be combined with other designated nurse roles or functions, for example vulnerable adults.
- The designated function should be a strategic post without any responsibilities for individual children or young people.
- Safeguarding supervision arrangements should be in place to meet statutory requirements and promote safe practice across the health economy.

Department of Education (2015) *Working Together to Safeguard Children* <https://www.gov.uk/.../working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

NHS England (2014) *Managing Conflicts of Interest: Statutory Guidance for Clinical Commissioning Groups* www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/man-confl-int-guid

NHS England (2015) *Safeguarding Vulnerable People in the Reformed NHS Accountability and Assurance Framework* www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/safeguarding

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2014) *Safeguarding children and young people: roles and competences for health car for Dr RRRAk@icp.org.uk*