

Guide 9: What are the safeguarding considerations I need to make?

Delivering a sport and physical activity service
A toolkit for mental health providers



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This guide covers

- Key issues to consider when planning your service.
- Practical tips to ensure that staff, volunteers and participants are practiced and competent at following your safeguarding procedures.

It is important to make sure that everyone involved in your sessions can participate in a safe and inclusive environment. In guide 8: *What steps should I take when designing my sessions?* we look at the considerations regarding the physical aspects of your sessions, such as the equipment and venue. In this guide we will focus on how you apply your safeguarding policies and procedures to sport and physical activity.

What do I need to consider?

- Review your safeguarding policy in light of your proposed physical activity service – does the policy adequately cover the new service including the volunteers and participants that will be using it; the new operating environments (e.g. community gyms and sports clubs) and new hours your service is running (e.g. evenings and weekends)? Ensure that the amendments to your safeguarding policy are consistent and that everyone is notified of the changes in procedures.
- What are the processes you have in place to assess new volunteers? A checklist to help you think about the key safeguarding requirements for volunteer recruitment can be found in guide 7: *How do I engage volunteers?*
- What are the different ways someone might raise a concern? Who is the named safeguarding contact within your organisation?
- Have you planned your response to different safeguarding concerns including when and how to break confidentiality?
- Does your safeguarding policy complement your other organisational policies?
- Does everyone involved in your sessions have a working knowledge of your safeguarding procedures? How will you achieve this?
- How do you review ‘near misses’, incidents or disclosures, and learn from them? Can this be built into staff and volunteer training?
- Build safeguarding discussions into your team meetings and supervisions.
- Make sure that your safeguarding materials are accessible to everyone delivering your service.

Are there any practical tips I should consider?

- Cut out the jargon – use terms people are familiar with.
- Include a safeguarding section within your volunteer training. Explain any legislation and guidance that supports your safeguarding procedures. Most importantly, share details of the reporting procedures and incident form to help people to feel confident should they need to report a concern or break confidentiality.
- When hiring third party coaches and suppliers, ensure they have the relevant safeguarding training and disclosures.
- When new participants join your sessions, ensure they have the contact details for a named member of staff they can contact in an emergency.
- If volunteers are providing one-to-one support to participants then you should ensure that:
 - The volunteer knows the safeguarding procedures they should follow.
 - Both volunteers and participants have contact details for the project coordinator and, where necessary, out of hours contacts.
 - Volunteers know who to signpost participants to if they require further support.
 - Volunteers know who to contact if the role becomes problematic for them, and starts to affect their own mental health.
 - Volunteers record the date, time and duration of any peer support sessions.
 - Volunteers and participants know that they should only have meetings at the venue the sessions take place at.

How do I define the boundaries in a peer support relationship?

It's useful to have something that defines boundaries in peer support relationships in writing so it can be kept on record and referred back to. You might want to include:

- The remit of the volunteer role – its purpose and aims.
- What is not included in the relationship, such as medical expertise, or financial assistance.
- Agreed methods of communication, including what to do when people are running late or have to cancel appointments.
- Instances when safety concerns supersede confidentiality, such as if either the volunteer or participant discloses information that poses a danger to themselves or others.

Useful contacts and resources

Your local [Safeguarding Adults Board](#) is the local lead for safeguarding arrangements for adults with care and support needs.

The [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) – is an officer or team of officers involved in the management and oversight of individual cases of allegations of abuse made against those who work with children.

Sports coach UK, the Sport and Recreation Alliance and the Ann Craft Trust have developed a safeguarding resource for adults. You can find this on [sports coach UK's](#) website.

If you are working with children and young people then the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit has a range of resources and tools on its website.