



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2022

FEEDBACK FROM BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS

QUESTION 1: WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE WORK OF THE SCSSA IN RELATION TO YOUR OWN ROLE?

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION SHARING

Clear communication is essential, with channels created from top-down as well as bottom-up. Lessons should be learned

Communication channels should be developed between dioceses to enable priests and volunteers to hear about examples of good practice outwith their own diocese.

Mutual sharing of information between statutory agencies, e.g. MAPPA, should be standardised and policies created.

Information should be concise, and jargon/acronyms should be explained.

Urgent clarification is required regarding lines of communication for Religious Congregations.

Urgent clarification is required regarding some safe recruitment procedures.

SCSSA ACTIONS:

- *Policy Sub-Committee to develop communications strategy;*
- *Ongoing work with statutory agencies, Religious Congregations, Disclosure Scotland to clarify current areas of confusion.*

QUALITY ASSURANCE, CONSISTENCY & STANDARDISATION

There should be national standardisation of all policies, procedures and documents.

There should be consistency in the delivery of national training.

Audits, and feedback from audits, must be approached consistently across dioceses, Congregations and organisations.

The process for both survivors and respondents must be streamlined.

SCSSA ACTIONS:

- *Finalisation of Safeguarding Toolkit;*
- *Development of Safeguarding Training Advisory Group;*
- *Development of Safeguarding & Audit, and Policies, Sub-Committees;*
- *Establishment of a Standard 5 national working group.*

"The group would like a simple and clear presentation that could be used in parishes and by organisations to inform people about safeguarding—this would ensure the same message was passed to everyone."

QUESTION 1: WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE WORK OF THE SCSSA IN RELATION TO YOUR OWN ROLE? (cont'd)

A range of responses from different roles within the Catholic Church in Scotland.

GROUP	HOPES EXPRESSED
Survivors of abuse	<p><i>Trauma-informed Church personnel.</i></p> <p><i>Train clergy and volunteers on how to interact with survivors.</i></p>
Religious Congregations	<p><i>Specific training, focused on Congregational needs.</i></p>
Clergy	<p><i>Priests must see safeguarding as essential to developing a culture of safeguarding.</i></p> <p><i>Development of Standard Five.</i></p> <p><i>Liturgical resources created.</i></p> <p><i>Guidance on including safeguarding as a standing item on pastoral council agendas.</i></p>
Parish Safeguarding Coordinators/ Volunteers	<p><i>PSC role is often misunderstood, including by PSCs— updated training is essential.</i></p> <p><i>Facilitation of regular meetings with parish priest; development of a team approach to parish safeguarding.</i></p> <p><i>More support in general, especially role-specific training.</i></p>
Diocesan Teams	<p><i>Nationally developed training for DSAG and DRAMT to improve function and outcomes.</i></p>
Trainers	<p><i>Update the existing training material.</i></p> <p><i>Train the trainers to a consistent level of delivery.</i></p> <p><i>Support trainers with e.g. online delivery of training.</i></p>
General Feedback	<p><i>Catholic groups in higher education settings need urgent input.</i></p> <p><i>Inter-diocesan meetings should be developed for e.g. PSCs to gather and share experiences.</i></p>

QUESTION 2: WHAT GAPS HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED AND WHAT ARE YOUR TRAINING NEEDS?

TRAINING TOPICS REQUESTED
PVG eligibility, including a flow chart and practical, at-a-glance resources
In-depth training for clergy and PSCs in responding to disclosures and communicating with survivors of abuse
Management of respondents
Audit completion and reflective practice
Digital and online abuse
Bespoke training for Religious Congregations and Catholic Organisations
Safeguarding risk assessments
Trauma training
Role specific training developed nationally in conjunction with volunteers currently carrying out those roles; pathways for development within roles
Nationally developed training for DSAG and DRAMT
Spiritual abuse & clericalism, including lay clericalism
Standardised policies and practices across Scotland with easily accessed training materials for their implementation
Counselling skills
Completion of volunteer forms

SCSSA ACTIONS:

- *Training Sub-Committee to establish the Safeguarding Training Advisory Group (STAG);*
- *STAG and Training Sub-Committee to prioritise training needs, in consultation with dioceses, Congregations and organisations, and plan training development;*
- *STAG and Training Sub-Committee to develop a new Safeguarding Learning Network.*

“The recruitment process is not clear to some PSCs. Some places are unsure of the nitty gritty.”

“One size does not fit all. There should be suitable training for specific roles, otherwise nobody achieves excellence.”

“Communication around roles and expectations of DSAG are not always clear, and some members are not sure about the function of DSAG.”

QUESTION 2: WHAT GAPS HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED AND WHAT ARE YOUR TRAINING NEEDS? (cont'd)
A VERY SMALL sample of the responses from different roles within the Catholic Church in Scotland.

GROUP	EXAMPLES OF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS
Survivors of abuse	<p><i>It is important that we feel listened to and believed.</i></p> <p><i>There should be a national whistleblowing policy.</i></p>
Religious Congregations	<p><i>Induction for Religious coming from abroad.</i></p> <p><i>Specific to each context of living out our vocation.</i></p>
Clergy	<p><i>There should be regular joint training opportunities with our PSCs; very beneficial if this was held nationally.</i></p> <p><i>Training must address our understanding of safeguarding as being more than just a paperwork exercise.</i></p> <p><i>Profiling abusers so that we know what we are potentially looking out for.</i></p> <p><i>Support Person training is urgent.</i></p>
Parish Safeguarding Coordinators/ Volunteers	<p><i>Clear examples of safe recruitment requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Total revamp of PSC training.</i></p> <p><i>Secure record retention/GDPR.</i></p> <p><i>Development of a national PSC handbook.</i></p> <p><i>Guided diocesan meetings for PSCs.</i></p>
Diocesan Teams	<p><i>Nationally developed training for DSAG and DRAMT to improve function and outcomes.</i></p>
General Feedback	<p><i>Who validates training, whether national or “ad-hoc” within dioceses?</i></p> <p><i>There should be a national training portal.</i></p>

QUESTION 3: WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR ENSURING SURVIVORS' VOICES ARE INCORPORATED INTO ALL THE WORK OF THE SCSSA?

SOME SAMPLE RESPONSES
There should be proper “first contact” training for key Church personnel
Survivor experiences must be incorporated at every level, from grassroots in parishes all the way up to the Agency
Remember we will never have all the answers, because every survivor has different needs
Case studies should be developed in conjunction with survivors and incorporated into training
It is important that everyone, especially those directly in safeguarding, are trauma informed
Many Religious and clergy feel vulnerable and exposed as a result of the legacy of the abuse crisis
Information about the SCSSA needs to be widely available, including direct contact details and communication channels
Avoid tokenism; the pain suffered by survivors is real and we can still feel it isn't safe to disclose
The Church can still be a voice of mercy and consolation to the bruised
The SCSSA needs to prove itself trustworthy by listening to survivor experiences and making sure what they hear effectively informs safeguarding throughout the Church
Support parents and carers in understanding what to do if their child discloses something to them
Never become complacent
The Mission of the Church must always be put before the Institution
Remember the personal cost to the survivor, such as re-triggering, when they disclose abuse
Engage with professional services to ensure the correct support is always in place
Most attendees at the Conference had never had direct contact with a survivor and remain apprehensive
“Joined up” working with other denominations, statutory agencies, schools etc is critical in preventing abuse

SCSSA ACTIONS:

- *Survivor Engagement Sub-Committee will develop links with appropriate national agencies and charities, and establish consultation plans.*

“Many survivors will not approach the church in the first place—why would they go back to where they were abused? You have to find them and gain their trust.”

“What we really need is a better understanding of the impact of abuse on the whole person, and also on the parish or community where the abuse happened.”