

Document Name	Protected Disclosures / Whistleblowing Policy			
Document Number				
Issue Date	Revision	Review Date	Policy Owner	Signature
01/01/2026	01	01/01/2029	Emily Boyd on behalf of Silvergrove Home Care	<i>Emily Boyd</i>

1.0 Policy Statement:

1.1 Silvergrove Home Care is committed to the highest standards of transparency and accountability. It is therefore expected that all employees, service providers and agency staff who have serious concerns about the organisation's or an individual's practices, shall come forward and voice those concerns.

2.0 Scope of Policy:

2.1 This policy applies to all employees and external service providers of Silvergrove Home Care.

3.0 Responsibilities:

3.1 Silvergrove Home Care is responsible for establishing and communicating to employees the procedure to make a protected disclosure in reporting a concern.

4.0 Definition:

4.1 Whistleblowing is the protected disclosure by an employee (or professional) of information which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace that places service user or employee at risk.

5.0 Responsibilities:

5.1 Silvergrove Home Care is responsible for establishing and communicating to employees the procedure to make a protected disclosure in reporting a concern.

- 5.2 All employees have a responsibility to report any cause for concern to The Home Care Manager
- 5.3 If however, the employee feels reluctant to do so for fear of recrimination or if they believe an issue is not investigated sufficiently then they may report the issue using the protective disclosure process.
- 5.4 The Home Care will support any employee who requests assistance when reporting any issue or concern under the terms of protective disclosure.
- 5.5 Nurses have a duty of care stated in the *Code of Professional Conduct for each Nurse and Midwife* (An Bord Altranais, 2014):

"Any circumstance which could place patients/clients in jeopardy, or which militates against safe standards of practice should be made known to appropriate persons or authorities."

6.0 What is Protected Disclosure?

- 6.1 Protected disclosure was introduced into legislation under Part 14 of the Health Act 2007(Section 103, Protection of Disclosure of Information) and provides legal safeguards for people who want to report serious concerns they have about standards of safety or quality in Irish health and social care services.
- 6.2 It aims to encourage individuals to voice concerns about the safety and welfare of service users and to foster a culture of openness and accountability throughout the health services.
- 6.3 Protective disclosure is intended to assist individuals who believe that they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious matters.

7.0 Issues That May Be Reported:

- 7.1 Employees may report in good faith any matter which they have reasonable grounds for believing will show one or more of the following:
- That the health or welfare of a person in receipt of health or personal social service has been, is or is likely to be at risk

- That the actions of any person is posing or is likely to pose a risk to the health or welfare of the public
- That the person employed failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which the relevant body or person is subject in the performance of the relevant body's or person's functions
- That the conduct of a person has led, is leading or is likely to lead to a misuse or substantial waste of public funds
- That such evidence to the above (a) to (d) has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed or destroyed

8.0 Procedures for Making a Disclosure:

8.1 If a concern is about an individual medical practitioner, nurse, pharmacist or other healthcare professional, it should be referred to the professional regulatory body responsible for that profession.

8.2 Authorised persons within the Health Information and Quality Authority can receive protected disclosures when they are in the course of monitoring standards or undertaking an investigation in accordance with the Health Act 2007.

8.3 Anyone making disclosure in good faith, to certain professional regulatory bodies in relation to a person who is registered with that body, will also benefit from protection, provided there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person's actions are posing a risk to public health or welfare and follow the procedures laid down in the legislation for making the disclosure.

The regulatory bodies covered are:

- An Bord Altranais
- The Dental Council
- The Health and Social Care Professionals Council
- The Medical Council
- The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland

8.4 Employees working on behalf of Silvergrove Home Care who wish to report an organisation should do so by reporting matters in writing to the Chief Inspector of Social Services at:

Concerns

Health Information and Quality Authority

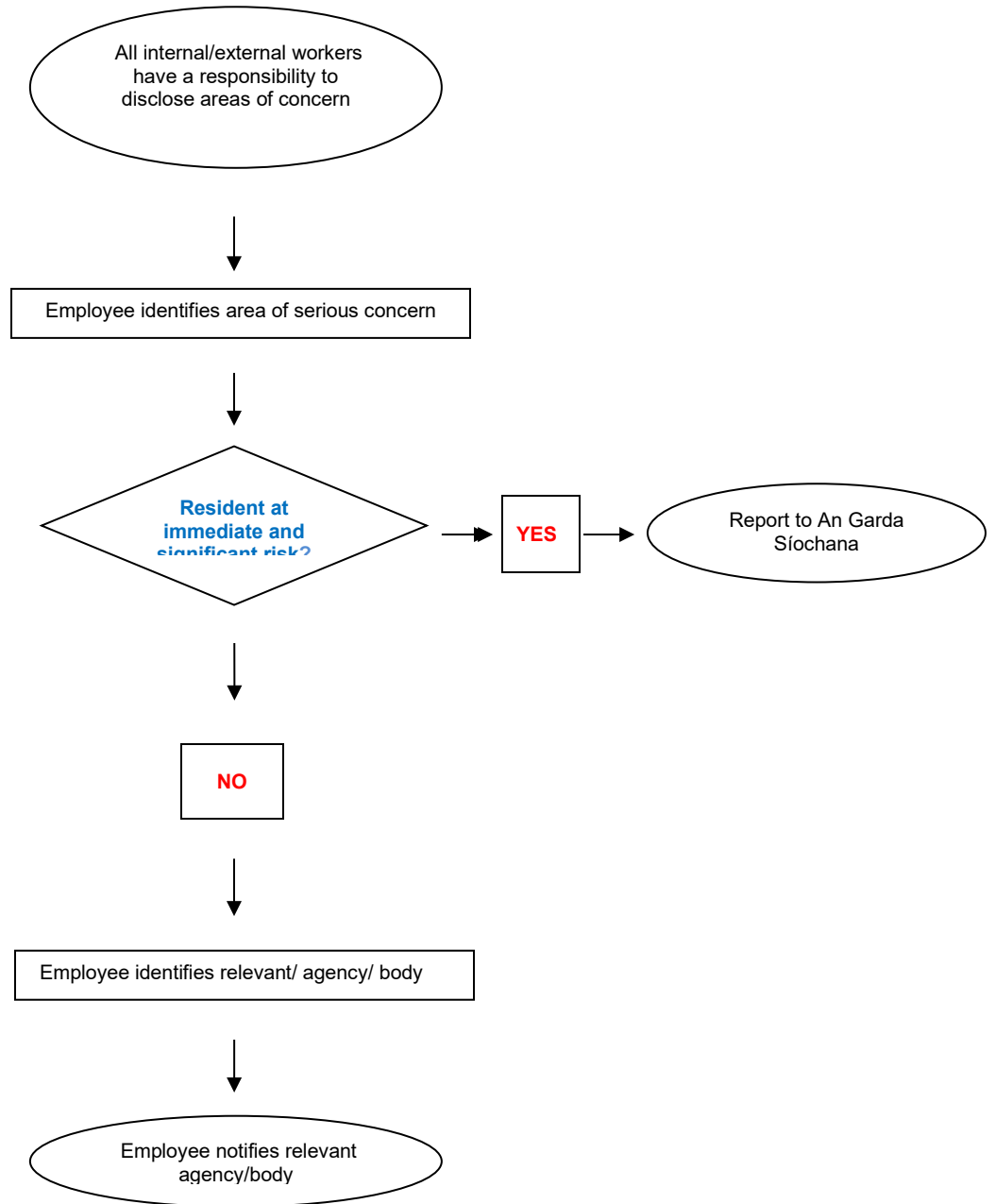
George's Court

George's Lane

Dublin 7

8.5 A matter can also be referred to the Gardai if it is believed a criminal offence has been committed

8.6 Flow chart of protective disclosure process



9.0 Members of the Public:

9.1 Members of the public can make disclosure in this manner and will be protected against civil liability that might otherwise arise.

10.0 Untrue Allegations:

10.1 If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, which is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against the individual. In making a disclosure the individual should exercise due care to ensure the accuracy of information.

10.2 If however, a person makes a report that is false or misleading, s/he may be prosecuted for committing an offence.

11.0 Confidentiality:

11.1 The company will treat all disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure will need to provide a statement.

12.0 References:

Code of Professional Conduct for each Nurse and Midwife (An Bord Altranais, 2014):

Whistleblowing Policy Human Resource Solutions 2010