



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Private and Confidential

**Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Religious Congregation of
The Medical Missionaries of Mary
undertaken by
The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the
Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)**

**This review was undertaken at the invitation of Congregational Leader,
Sr. Siobhan Corkery**

Date: July 2014

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Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Irish Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union, to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland.

The NBSCCCI is aware that some religious Congregations have ministries that involve direct contact with children while others do not. In religious Congregations that have direct involvement with children, reviews of child safeguarding have been undertaken by measuring their practice compliance against all seven Church standards. Where a religious Congregation no longer has, or never had ministry involving children, and has not received any allegation of sexual abuse the NBSCCCI reviews are conducted using a shorter procedure. The size, age and activity profiles of religious Congregations can vary significantly and the NBSCCCI accepts that it is rational that the form of review be tailored to the profile of each Church authority, where the ministry with children is limited or non-existent. The procedure for assessment of safeguarding practice with such Congregations is set out in the contents page of this report. The NBSCCCI welcomes that in order to have full openness, transparency and accountability, religious Congregations that do not have ministry with children have made requests to have their safeguarding practice examined and commented upon.

The purpose of this review remains the same and it is to confirm that current safeguarding practice complies with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009 *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each of these Church authorities is reviewed through an examination of policy and procedures, and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to the religious Congregation.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Safeguarding Practice within the Congregation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary* undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. The fieldwork visit for this review took place on June 5th 2014. The reviewer would like to sincerely thank Sr. Siobhan Corkery, Congregational Leader, and her sister colleagues for their very warm and kind reception and for their great assistance on that day.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group before being submitted to the Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM), along with any recommendations arising from the findings. The review is not based on a review of

case material as during the relevant time period there were no allegations made against members of the Congregation that were within the Terms of Reference. There also were no allegations in respect of other forms of abuse within the time period, in respect of deceased and living members of the Congregation. The review therefore is primarily based on policies and procedures made available plus interviews with key personnel involved in the safeguarding process within the Congregation, particularly in the services run by the Congregation.

1. Introduction

The Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM) was founded by Dublin woman, Mary Martin in Nigeria in 1937. She had worked as a nurse during the First World War, following which she became a lay missionary in Nigeria in 1921, working with the Irish missionary Bishop Joseph Shanahan. Mary Martin wanted to develop a dedicated work with mothers and babies and she returned to Ireland to gather together a group of like-minded women who could provide professional medical and nursing care to poorer women and children in Africa. Her desire to establish this work was delayed due to her own ill health, but also because “...*the Church would not permit women in religious life to engage in obstetrics and surgery - both of which were central to her vision of serving the peoples of Africa*”.¹

In February 1936 the rules of the Church were changed to allow professed women religious to practice surgery and obstetrics. Marie Martin when she was well enough returned to Nigeria in December 1936 with some female companions and this opened the way for the founding of the Congregation.

2. Past role with children

There have never been any concerns, complaints or allegations concerning the abuse of a child or young person by a member of the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

While the Congregation did own and operate a general hospital in Ireland, the International Missionary Training Hospital, Drogheda, now known as Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, they transferred ownership and management of this service to the North Eastern Health Board in 1997. The hospital is now part of the HSE Dublin – North East, Louth/Meath Hospital Group.

Airmount Maternity Hospital, Waterford was also run by MMM, from 1952 to 1995. In 1995 all of its services were transferred to Ardkeen Hospital (now Waterford Regional Hospital, Ardkeen) which was operated by the SEHB, (now HSE South). There are no concerns with regard to safeguarding children there. These were the only direct service provision that involved children in which the Congregation had an involvement in Ireland, north or south.

¹ <http://mmmworldwide.org/index.php/about-us/our-foundress>

A report entitled *International Missionary Training Hospital, Drogheda – Report of Independent Review Group, June 1996* examined complaints received about a consultant surgeon at the hospital who was alleged to have inappropriately touched male patients, both child and adult. This report is in the public domain. In relation to the actions of members of the Medical Missionaries of Mary who had become aware of concerns, in 1977 and again in 1982/83, the report states that:

We believe that the complaints against the Consultant made prior to 1977 and in 1982/3 were dealt with in a manner which would have been regarded as adequate at that period. It would not, however, be acceptable today (P. 62).²

The MMM Congregation did take steps to ensure that the consultant surgeon about whom there were concerns would not be allowed to practice in any other hospital until all matters had been fully dealt with and they were commended in the 1996 report for this. In their own written submission to the five-person Independent Review Group, the Congregation stated that:

“There have been lessons for us as a Congregation of Sisters involved in medical care. Now, more deeply than ever, we recognise the necessity for all of us involved in health care – whether as a Consultant, doctor, nursing staff, social worker or related care practitioner – to be aware of the gross damage which can be occasioned by even one single incident of sexual abuse. In caring in particular for children, we become custodians of their innocence and health. Our approaches to issues raised in all cases of sexual abuse have to be victim orientated.

As a result of recent events we have taken steps to update our members on the issues of sexual abuse in general and in particular child sexual abuse.”³

3. Structure, Leadership and current role with children

The Congregation is organised into four areas, and it is led and administered from its Congregational Centre in Booterstown, Co. Dublin. The four Areas are:

1. Europe – mostly Ireland, with a small presence in the UK and one member in the Czech Republic;
2. The Americas – the USA, Brazil and Honduras;
3. West Africa – Nigeria, Benin and Angola; and

² *International Missionary Training Hospital, Drogheda – Report of Independent Review Group, June 1996, P. 62*

³ *International Missionary Training Hospital, Drogheda – Report of Independent Review Group, June 1996, P. 62*

4. East and Central Africa – Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Rwanda and Republic of South Sudan.

Each Area has a leader with a Team. The Congregational Leadership Team in Booterstown is comprised of the Congregational Leader, Sr. Siobhan Corkery, and three councillors: Each councillor is the contact person for an Area and one of them also acts as Assistant Congregational Leader. The process of consultation and selection is described on the Congregation's website

(<http://mmmworldwide.org/index.php/about-us/structure-leadership>) as follows:

Every six years, all the Sisters elect delegates to represent them at a Congregational Chapter, which reviews the life and mission of the Congregation and chooses the Congregational Leadership Team for the coming six years. While in session, the Congregational Chapter is the highest authority in the MMM Congregation. The next Congregational Chapter is due to take place in 2015.⁴

The current Leadership Team will be replaced in April 2015 at the Congregational Chapter.

The Area Leaders are elected/appointed every three years.

While the original healing charism of their foundress is still central to the work and commitment of the Medical Missionaries of Mary, they would describe this *charism* as one of healing, in the widest sense of that word. This description comes from the MMM website:

Our healing mission has evolved over the years and is expressed in a variety of ways. We are committed to care for the sick. Sisters are trained in a wide variety of health-related fields, including nursing and medicine, social work, and administration. We seek to promote the health of persons and communities in a holistic way. Our activities in community development have involved local people in decision-making about their own health and in the provision of clean water, sanitation, and improved nutrition.

In the violent and divided world of today we are aware of the need to promote peace and reconciliation. MMMs work with those affected by trauma and are involved in programmes that assist people working in conflict areas. Others work in pastoral ministry in health facilities and parishes.

⁴ <http://mmmworldwide.org/index.php/about-us/structure-leadership>

*We have a particular concern for the care of mother and child and the fostering of family life. We are with those who suffer, the oppressed, and those on the margins of life. Many MMMs are involved with services for those affected by HIV/AIDS. Others work to prevent human trafficking or assist the victims of this modern-day evil.*⁵

4. Profile of Members

The MMM Congregation has 347 professed member sisters from 18 countries who are working in 14 countries, including Ireland, with an additional 11 novices and 9 postulants, making a total of 367 members. (The Congregation has 11 professed sisters at various stages of academic studies in its House of Studies in Nairobi, Kenya and three other professed sisters in Nigeria, Ireland and Belgium. In addition there are 11 novices in religious formation in its Novitiate in Ibadan, Nigeria).

In all, 164 sisters live in Ireland, of whom 24 are non-Irish. As is the case in many religious orders and Congregations, the age profile of sisters living in Ireland is rising; and while the age range is 56-99 years, 105 sisters (64%) are over 80 years of age.

Of the 164 member sisters living in Ireland, four work in some form of pastoral care role, three in a hospital setting and one in assisting children to prepare for First Communion and Confirmation.

The Congregation has 17 houses in the Republic of Ireland, and these are listed overleaf, with their designation and approximate number of residents (an exact number of residents cannot be provided due to sisters moving abroad, or arriving from abroad or temporarily being on a visit to another Congregational house).

Medical Missionaries of Mary Irish Houses

Location	Purpose	Number (approximate)
Boosterstown, Co. Dublin	Congregational Centre	7
Boosterstown, Co. Dublin	Communications Centre	0 (office only)
Boosterstown, Co. Dublin	Residence	6
Artane, Dublin 5	Irish Area Office	0 (office only)
Artane, Dublin 5	Residence	5
Terenure, Dublin 6W	Residence	6
Templeogue, Dublin 6W	Residence	3
Crumlin, Dublin 12	Residence	3

⁵ <http://mmmworldwide.org/index.php/our-work/mmm-our-work>

Killester, Dublin 5	Residence	2
Marino, Dublin 3	Residence	2
Raheny, Dublin 5	Residence	4
Drogheda, Co. Louth	Motherhouse / Residence	82
Drogheda, Co. Louth	Nursing Home	30
Drogheda, Co. Louth	Residence	5
Drogheda, Co. Louth	Residence	5
Bettystown, Co. Meath	Residence	2
Bettystown, Co. Meath	Holiday house	0

None of these houses is a centre in which or from which any service to children or young people is provided.

5. Child Safeguarding, and Policy and Procedures

Among the initiatives taken by the Medical Missionaries of Mary in relation to the safeguarding of children since the convening of the Independent Review Group are:

- In 1994 they were involved in setting up a desk for Child Protection in CORI (Conference of Religious Ireland); and they made a financial contribution to the operation of it;
- In 1996, a named sister was appointed to be the Congregational Delegate for Child Sexual Abuse, as the position was called at that time;
- Since the publication of *Child Sexual Abuse: Framework for a Church Response* in 1996, MMM attended all the safeguarding conferences and meetings sponsored by CORI or IMU;
- The Congregational Delegate and two other members of the Congregation were appointed to be part of a committee for Child Sexual Abuse prevention, in which roles they were responsible for attending conferences/meetings and for bringing the information back to MMM Leadership for follow-up.
- The MMM began the process of writing its own policy and procedures, although the Congregation had no responsibility for any ministry with children and young people in Ireland. By 2006 they had a written policy and procedure; and in 2007 it was published in the Congregational policy book for the use of the entire Congregation.
- The Leadership Team took the 2007 document and revised it so that an updated version was published in 2010; and a Congregational template was printed and circulated in 2011.

The current MMM Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for Ireland was published in 2013.⁶

⁶ MMM Manual for Ministries- Child Protection Policy for Ireland, July 2013

The Medical Missionaries of Mary Congregation has developed a *Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy* in 2011 for use in all parts of the world in which they live and work. This 2011 document which is contained in the *MMM Manual for Ministry*, was developed in template form so that each local MMM house and service can insert the relevant local information where required. The Sisters in Ireland have done this and have produced a specific Irish policy and procedures document, *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy – MMM European Area, Ireland, 2013*. This excellent 24-page document is clear, detailed and fit for purpose. It is available on the Congregation's website via a link from the home page at <http://mmmworldwide.org/index.php>. Each of the MMM houses has a copy of the policy. In 2013 the nominated Designated Liaison Person conducted three training days for all staff working with Vulnerable Adults in the Congregation's nursing home and the motherhouse in Co. Louth.

Two of the councilors on the Leadership Team along with the Congregation's nominated Designated Liaison Person (DLP) take responsibility for child safeguarding and act as a Child Safeguarding Committee as required. The DLP has participated in NBSCCCI training in Maynooth. Child Safeguarding in Ireland is promoted by the Irish Area Team and it is a standing agenda item at the annual Area Assembly.

6. Management of Allegations and relationship with civil authorities

In 2009 the Congregational Leader made contact with the NBSCCCI CEO to share information that had been sent to the Congregation's website about an allegation against an Irish cleric in Africa who was not a member of the Congregation. The reviewer is satisfied that the leadership took all appropriate steps to safeguard children in this situation.

There have been no allegations against any member of the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

The Medical Missionaries of Mary have not had any need to develop working relationships with the statutory agencies responsible for child safeguarding in Ireland as they have had no case to deal with, however, as part of this review contact was made with TUSLA who commented:

“This female RO has been categorised as Category 2 meaning there have been no child sexual abuse allegations against members and those whose ministry does

involve children in Ireland. Of the 159 members in Ireland as of 31.03.2013 a total of five Sisters are involved in ministry – parish ministry and hospital chaplaincy.

The MMM child protection policy has yet to be reviewed as part of our process. In the meantime we have no concerns about this RO.”

Contact was also made with An Garda Siochana, who reported that they have no concerns about this Order.

7. Conclusion

The Medical Missionaries of Mary have developed an awareness of child safeguarding and have developed policies and procedures to deal with any concerns about the safety and welfare of a child that might arise in the future.

Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

Small Religious Congregations

Terms of Reference (which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes)

Introduction

In order for the National Board to be able to state that all Church Authorities on the island of Ireland have been evaluated in respect of their child safeguarding policies and practices, both historical and current, then some form of appropriate assessment has to be conducted of every one of these. It is rational however that the form of assessment is tailored to the profile of each Church Authority, and that needless expenditure of resources and unnecessary interference in the life of religious orders and communities that have no children-specific ministry would be avoided.

This Review seeks to examine the current arrangements for safeguarding children across small Religious Congregations /Orders, and Missionary Societies in Ireland who have limited or no direct contact with children as part of the Congregations ministry.

It would also scrutinize practice within all known cases to ensure that they have been responded to appropriately.

The review's methodology is an adaptation of the methodology developed for all Dioceses and large religious Congregations and missionary societies, where the ministry involves regular contact with children.

The proposed Review would consider the following:-

- (a) Former role with children
- (b) Allegations of child abuse against members and how these have been responded to
- (c) Existing relationships with statutory authorities such as the HSE, Gardai in the Republic and the HSCT or PSNI in Northern Ireland.
- (d) Policies in place and being applied for safeguarding children
- (e) Roles and responsibilities and where they exist the operation of Advisory Panels, and Safeguarding Committees

The objective of the Review would be to confirm if there have been any allegations and how known allegations have been responded to; in addition the review seeks to confirm what the current arrangements for safeguarding children are. In particular, emphasis will be placed on establishing how policies and practice match up to the

standards set down in the Safeguarding Children Guidance published by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church launched in February 2009. Priority, at all times, will be given to how policy and practice can be improved and strengthened. If policies and/or practices are identified that are concerning, inadequate, or dangerous, they will be addressed through the provision of guidance and support, and through the reporting of these situations to the appropriate statutory authorities, if this has not already happened. Similarly, those that are good examples will be highlighted with a view to them being adopted comprehensively across all parts of the Church. All cases that relate to alleged or known offenders that are alive will be read and included in the Review. In cases where the alleged or known offender is deceased, these will be sampled in an attempt to gather learning from them that will be used to inform the framing of recommendations.

Guidance Documents

The Review will be guided by the following:-

- (a) Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance;
- (b) Children First Guidance in ROI; and Regional Child Protection Guidelines in Northern Ireland;
- (c) Legislation that exists in each jurisdiction which contributes to safeguarding children and young people.

The Review will be undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children through their National Office and led by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Review process will be overseen by a **Reference Group** to whom the CEO will report on a regular basis. The membership of this **Reference Group** has been drawn from each of the statutory child protection agencies in both jurisdictions, along with eminent individuals in the field from academia. The current Reference Group consists of : Dr Helen Buckley (TCD); Mr Paul Harrison (Tusla), and John Toner (SBNI).

It is important to confirm that the value of the Review is dependent upon full and complete access to all relevant documentation and information relating to the abuse of children known to the individual Church authorities. The Review will proceed on the basis that willingness exists on the part of each of the subjects of the Review to provide full access to the fieldwork team, subject, where relevant, to the terms of the Data Processing Deed agreed between the Sponsoring Bodies and entered into between the parties hereto.

Step Guide to the Review Process

Step 1.

A letter of invitation to review is sent by the Provincial/Regional Superior or other person responsible for the Congregation/ Order or Missionary Society (hereinafter referred to as 'the Ordinary').

Step 2.

The CEO will forward a survey to the provincial which will identify:

- Current number of members
- Past role with children
- Current role with children
- Total number of allegations received up to 2014
- Number of living members against whom there are allegations

Step 3.

For any Order where there have been allegations a full review will proceed, as per step 4 - 23. For those Orders where there have been no known allegations a desk top examination of policies and procedures will take place followed by a site visit to interview all relevant personnel within the safeguarding structure. For these orders **step 5 and 13-23** will apply.

Step 4.

The CEO and Ordinary will confirm the dates for the fieldwork for the Review, and names of the fieldwork team.

Step 5.

The Church Authority will be asked to make available all of the case files and related documentation in respect of any safeguarding concerns that have been identified within the diocese. The Church Authority will make available a room with wireless internet access for the reviewers to conduct their review of files, so that any records made by the reviewers can be directly typed and stored onto a secure server which is only accessed by the reviewers. In the absence of internet access the reviewers will type their notes onto a secure encrypted usb stick for later uploading onto the secure server.

Step 6.

The Church Authority will be requested to sign the revised Data Processing Deed prior to the arrival of the team.

Step 7.

The Church Authority will arrange a schedule of interviews with all who hold safeguarding roles within its functional area. The designated person and the Church Authority will be available to the reviewers throughout the period of fieldwork.

Step 8.

The fieldwork team when they arrive on site will firstly confirm that they have a suitable place to work in and that all the required documentation has been provided to them for their Review. In the event that the fieldwork team forms the opinion that the Church Authority has not provided access to all such documents, the Board shall give notice in writing to the Church Authority of the opinion of the fieldwork team and such notice shall specify the reasons for same. Thereupon, the Church Authority shall respond in detail to the Notice. Each party shall use its best endeavours to resolve any differences of opinion which shall arise and, in the event that resolution is not arrived at, the parties will attempt to resolve the dispute by recourse to the services of a mediator agreed between them or nominated for the purpose at the request of any of them without prejudice to the Board's entitlement to terminate the Review. In the event that resolution has not been arrived at following mediation, either party shall be at liberty to terminate forthwith the Review.

Step 9.

On arrival, the fieldwork team should be supplied with a single case file index that lists all the cases that have been created within the diocese. These may be divided into two groups. The first group will contain all allegations that relate to living alleged or known perpetrators. The second will contain any that are deceased.

Step 10.

Depending on the volume involved a decision should be made as to whether all or a random sample of the "deceased group" should be reviewed. Care should be taken to include all prominent cases in the sample.

Step 11.

Each case file will be reviewed by each fieldworker independently in the first instance. They will create a written summary with chronological information of the case. In certain cases a second reader may be required, this will be discussed and agreed between the fieldworkers.

Step 12.

Following the reading of the case and the creation of a summary, the fieldworkers will analyse and assess the actions taken in the case. They will assess compliance with agreed Church policy that was extant at that time. They will also indicate whether any current risk exists in respect of the information contained within the file and advise the church Authority of necessary safeguarding action to reduce the risk.

Step 13.

When all the case files have been read, the fieldwork team will then examine and review any procedures or protocols that exist within the diocese to confirm that they are in compliance with the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document issued by the NBSCCCI in February of 2009.

Step 14.

To complete the Review, the fieldwork team will then seek to speak to those directly involved in the safeguarding structure in the diocese. This should include the Advisory Panel, a sample of parish safeguarding representatives, the designated person, the safeguarding committee, victim support and advisors and the Bishop/Provincial. The purpose of these interviews is to form a view of the competence and effectiveness of the safeguarding structure that exists within the Church Authority.

Step 15.

The fieldwork team will also seek to speak to representatives of the key statutory agencies to provide them with an opportunity to express their views on the quality of the working relationships that exist between them and the Church Authority.

Step 16.

A verbal feedback session on initial key findings will be given to the Church Authority.

Step 17.

Upon completion of the field work, the team may request to take materials – other than casework records to review off-site; this alongside all materials gathered by the reviewers, including written notes on cases and meetings, will be analysed and will form the basis of the draft assessment review report.

Step 18.

The draft will be forwarded to the Church Authority for factual accuracy checking.

Step 19.

Alongside all other reports under review, the report will be presented in draft to the Reference Group for their critique and comment. If further work is required at the direction of the Reference group the CEO will ensure this work is completed and advise the Church Authority accordingly.

Step 20.

The report will be legally proofed by NBSCCCI lawyer.

Step 21.

The report will be forwarded to the National Board for approval

Step 22

A final draft report will then be submitted to the Church Authority. The expectation would be that the Report will be published by the Church Authority at an agreed time in the future.

Step 23.

All case material written, including summaries, as part of the review, which are for the reviewers use only, will be stored on a secure server.

Guide for Reviewers

In terms of small (female religious orders) reference should be made to the following:

1. Has the Order provided alternative care to children in an orphanage, industrial school or children's residential home, but no longer is engaged in running such services;
2. Has the order provided education to children, in both or either boarding schools and day schools, but no longer does so ;
3. Has the order provided medical and/or nursing services to children, but no longer does so;
4. Has the order provided any other services to children, in community services centres, youth clubs etc., and no longer does so;
5. Does the order currently provide any sort of service to children and families that brings them into regular contact with children;
6. Has the order never provided any service to children (e.g. contemplative orders).

In relation to category 1 above;

1. The reviewers will establish whether any service they provided is included in the list of children's residential services produced by the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB);
2. If this is the case, reference should be made to this.
3. If complaints have been referred to the Redress Board or Ryan Commission, this review cannot access these records and that will be stated in the report.
4. If the order has received complaints which have not been processed through Redress or Ryan these cases will be thoroughly examined as detailed above.

Review of Policy and Procedures

1. It is recognised that not all Orders will have any ministry with children and therefore their policies and procedures should reflect the work that they do with children.
2. If the Order only works through other organisations, example in Diocesan work or in schools, they are required to follow the policies of those organisations.
3. If there are gaps in the policy document an assessment should be made as to whether the ministry engaged in requires full compliance with all criteria attached to the seven standards
4. Where it is clear that the criteria do not apply a reference should be made at the beginning of the review report that the Order's ministry is not directly with children and therefore adherence to particular criteria do not apply.
5. If the Order is a contemplative Order, there is no expectation that they will have detailed policies and procedures, but reference should be made to their ministry and that they have no contact with children.
6. In all cases, contact will be made with the civil authorities to identify if they have any child safeguarding concerns in relation to the order.