



Police Service of Northern Ireland

Dear Healthcare Professional

I wanted to write to you in my capacity as the Police Service Hate Crime lead.

Firstly to tell you how appalled I have been at the recent racist attacks targeting health and social care staff. Please be assured that I, and my colleagues, want to offer you our full support and our commitment to do everything we possibly can to prevent you becoming the victim of hate crime. In addition, as citizens we sincerely thank you for everything you do to support us and our families when we need you. Please be assured that the vast majority of people support you and have no time for those who might seek to intimidate you or cause you, your family or colleagues harm.

Secondly I want to provide you with some information should you be concerned about, or become the victim of, hate crime. The first thing I want to emphasise is how important it is to report this to us, we cannot do anything about something that we are unaware of. I hope that you feel that you can come to us directly but if not please tell your manager, a colleague or seek help from your staff association. Reports can also be made on your behalf through a third party. If you are not the victim, but witness an incident, you can also report this to us. I have attached a leaflet which tells you about reporting, what you can expect from the police and where you can get support. It is so important that you seek help and support if you experience hate crime.

You have my commitment, and that of the Police Service, that we will be doing everything we possibly can to prevent hate crime from taking place and to identify anyone responsible. As our fellow front line workers we want you, and your families, to feel and be safe.

Thank you for all you do, our Health and Care Services simply could not do without you and we all owe you a great debt of gratitude.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Steen'.

Sue Steen
Chief Superintendent
Police Service of Northern Ireland Hate Crime Lead

put yourself
in their shoes



#HATECRIMEHURTS

To stop it, report it.



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of Northern Ireland

What is a Hate Crime

- **Hate Crime:** Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate towards one or more of the protected characteristics.
- **(Non-Crime) Hate Incident:** Any incident, where no criminal offence has occurred, which is perceived by any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate e.g. verbal abuse.

Hate Perception Test

The Police Service of Northern Ireland's policy is to accept the view of a victim or any other person that the crime was motivated by hate on one of the protected characteristics:

- **Sectarian**
- **Racist**
- **Sexual Orientation**
- **Religious/Faith**
- **Disability**
- **Transgender Identity**

How to report a Hate Crime?

- Telephone Police – 101 or 999 (in an emergency). The operator will ask you a number of questions relating to the incident and also your personal information: name, address, date of birth and telephone number
- Make a report in person to Police
- Report online at psni.police.uk/report
- Speak to a trusted person, community representative, support group worker, friend etc.
- Please do not report via social media platforms

What happens when a Hate Crime is reported?

- An Officer will be assigned to make contact with you and INVESTIGATE the report made (this will be the Investigating Officer). You should take a note of the Officer's name, station and the incident number for further reference.
- The Investigating Officer will follow protocols in line with investigation standards and provide you with crime prevention advice, reassurance, support and signposting to special advocates and support agencies.
- The Investigating Officer will complete a **Vulnerability Risk Assessment Matrix** (VRAM). This will include asking questions in relation to the background of the incident, if this is the first time, your perception as a victim etc. If the risk is deemed "High" an Officer of at least Chief Inspector rank will be informed and an action plan will be commenced outlining proactive measures to be implemented.
- The Police Service of Northern Ireland will ensure victim support, safeguarding and welfare. This will include regular updates from your Investigating Officer and a referral to the Hate Crime Advocacy Service.

Support:

The Police Service of Northern Ireland and Department of Justice have contracted the Hate Crime Advocacy Service to help victims of Hate Crime and abuse. We can share the information of victims to them so the best possible support is provided.

They currently have Race, Disability and LGBTQIA+ Advocates who will provide specialist support to victims of Hate Crime in a similar but more focussed way to what Victim Support NI currently provide.

Your Investigating Officer is there to help you so please do not be concerned about asking them questions.

Currently Hate Crime is dealt with using the enhanced sentencing model from the Criminal Justice (No.2) Northern Ireland Order 2004, which allows sentences to be increased if hostility is demonstrated or an offence is motivated by hostility towards a protected group.

Whilst the Police Service of Northern Ireland will record a Hate Crime based on the perception of any person, evidence of the hate motivation for the crime being committed is required for a court to consider enhanced sentencing.

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**we care
we listen
we act**



**Police Service
of Northern Ireland**