CCG(NI)
Vulnerable People Protocol

Addressing the needs
of vulnerable people
in an emergency

CONTENTS

FIVE STEP CHECKLIST

ACTIONS TO IDENTIFY AND MEET THE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE

In order to provide an effective response to address the needs of vulnerable people and to maximise resources at the disposal of the multi-agency response in an emergency, all relevant responding organisations and agencies should follow the five steps outlined below to help identify and prioritise vulnerable people.

Step 1   **Include 'vulnerable people' as a standing item on agenda for discussion at multi-agency group meetings.**

This will ensure that there is early identification of specific vulnerable groups and individuals and help inform how they should be prioritised in the response, as well as monitoring how the evolving incident may impact on other groups and cause them to become vulnerable.

To ensure the identification of vulnerable people is effective, consideration needs to be given at the outset of the multi-agency group meeting that all appropriate organisations and agencies are represented and actively participate in the discussion.

Step 2   **Agree an incident-specific definition of "vulnerable" and keep this definition under review as the incident unfolds.**

Some organisations or agencies already have lists of vulnerable people which they use for the prioritisation of services, such as social services, GPs, utility companies, etc.

It must be remembered that some people may not perceive themselves as being "vulnerable" and therefore will not be captured on any list or register or known to services/agencies. However it needs also to be recognised that people may become vulnerable as a situation or emergency unfolds, or continues for a protracted period.

Consequently responding agencies need to be responsive to emerging situations and recognise that their existing lists of vulnerable people (where these exist) may not be useful in the particular circumstance that they face and that they need to keep this under review.

Therefore, responding agencies should acknowledge that the definition of "vulnerable" which is agreed by the multi-agency group will be subject to the information that is available to it at any given time, as the situation develops.

Responding organisations should advise any strategic or tactical coordination tier[1] (in line with the CCG(NI) Escalation Protocol) that a definition of vulnerable has been agreed and that they will be kept informed of any further action being taken in this regard (including how this definition should be applied in the particular circumstances).

Step 3   Participate in a joint dynamic risk assessment.

This will involve all multi-agency partners involved in the response assessing the information available and reaching a consensus as to which groups of people have specific needs during the emergency, and how these needs can be collectively prioritised and addressed.

The joint dynamic risk assessment will rely on the range of information tabled by individual organisations, bringing their own unique knowledge and expertise to the situation to inform decisions and achieve effective outcomes.

Responding agencies also need to ensure that they advise any strategic or tactical coordination tier of the outcomes of the Joint Dynamic Risk Assessment they undertake in order to inform potential strategic/tactical level decisions that might be taken, including decisions about the deployment of resources.

Where responding organisations have identified and agreed the vulnerable groups likely to be impacted by an emergency, they should then seek to identify vulnerable individuals included in their existing critical care lists or customers, patients or clients who are likely to fall within these groups. These individuals should then be prioritised for service provision and to ensure there is close

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[1] CCG(NI) Protocol for Escalation of the Multi-agency Response (Sept. 2016)

communication with them or their families and friends, as appropriate. These customers, clients and patients falling within the definition of 'vulnerable' should be triaged (and re-triaged) as the emergency progresses to ensure that the needs of individuals are prioritised and responded to appropriately within the resources available

Where possible, responding organisations should share and explain the decision-making process on how and why these priorities were agreed, or why this specific service provision will be required to address the circumstances being faced. Whilst consideration may need to be given to sharing information on individuals with other responding organisations, it will be necessary to be mindful of potential issues in relation to data protection and information sharing as outlined in Section 4 of this protocol which relates to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Step 4   **Record the outcome of the joint dynamic risk assessment at each stage along with decisions taken, the rationale for these decisions and actions proposed with regard to meeting the needs of those identified as vulnerable in this situation.**

There is a requirement that all decisions, the rationale for these decisions and the actions proposed are accurately recorded – and that these should all be kept under review as the incident or event unfolds. Extensive contemporaneous records should be logged (ideally by a trained loggist), stored securely and should be easily retrieved in the event of them being required, particularly for judicial proceedings after an emergency[2].

The chair of the multi-agency group is responsible for recording the detail of the joint dynamic risk assessment, taking account of the likelihood of the situation deteriorating and the impact this will have on the different vulnerable individuals and groups, so that response plans can be adapted accordingly.

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[2] See also paras 9.15 - 9.17 of A Guide to Emergency Planning Arrangements in NI (Sept. 2011)

Step 5   **Communicate with the public, including about how people are to be prioritised, with particular reference to those identified as being vulnerable. It is important to convey consistent messaging in relation to prevention and community emergency preparedness, and to encourage individuals to be more proactive about helping themselves and their neighbours, especially those who are vulnerable.**

Organisations and agencies need to be careful to manage the public's perceptions and expectations with regard to how they will be prioritised and ensuring they understand that this prioritisation may not necessarily mean a return to full normal service – it could mean that they will receive a partial return of service or an alternative form of the service as an interim measure.

This should be carried out in line with the lead organisation's communications strategy and should be a collaborative and consistent message with responding partner organisations, and in line with the CCG(NI) Collaborative Communication protocol[3]. Full utilisation of NI Direct and local media should also be considered.

There should be an agreed Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for handling communications during an emergency, and this SPOC should lead communications with the public, to both ensure consistency of media messaging and to inspire public confidence.

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[3] CCG(NI) Protocol for the Collaborative Communication Process (Sept. 2016)

1   BACKGROUND

1.1   In 2011, as part of the review by the Civil Contingencies Group (Northern Ireland) (CCG(NI)) into the response to winter 2010, a DHSSPS-led Task Group was asked to consider how best to respond to the needs of vulnerable people in an emergency.

1.2   One of the first considerations of the Task Group was the feasibility of creating a single multi-agency list of vulnerable people for Northern Ireland that could be used to identify all vulnerable people affected by the emergency in question. This was quickly discounted for the following the reasons:

- lists held by responding organisations varied considerably in terms of the purposes for which these lists were created and the definitions of vulnerable people used;

- some people may not perceive themselves as being vulnerable and would not be captured on any list or register but may become vulnerable as a situation or emergency unfolds or continues for a protracted period. Therefore responding agencies need to be responsive to emerging situations and the fact that their list of vulnerable people (where these existed) may not be useful in the particular circumstances faced;

- data protection issues were an obstacle with regard to creating a single list or register or sharing information between organisations, given that: the information was collected for differing purposes; differing definitions of vulnerable were used, hence the lists contained different people; lists were likely to be incomplete; and lists were confidential and contained sensitive personal data.

1.3   In light of the outcome of the scoping exercise, the focus of the Task Group in developing the Vulnerable People Protocol was on how to:
- define vulnerable people;
- assess the impact on these groups in an emerging situation;
- maximise information available; and
- harness resource and support services available.

1.4   It was recognised that each event could have different characteristics and therefore the same people would not always be classified as vulnerable and needing extra assistance.

1.5 Therefore this paper is developed in three parts to help support multi-agency groups responding to an emergency situation. It recognises and builds on the Cabinet Office concept[4] of developing a 'list of lists' to maximise the resources and information readily available in the locality to responding agencies. It does this by:

- providing a **checklist of 5 steps** to follow when an emergency has been declared or a significant event is unfolding to ensure that the needs of vulnerable people are being considered from the outset;

- providing clarification on how information can be shared whilst still adhering to the principles of the **Data Protection Act** (see Section 4);

- promoting awareness of **geo-spatial mapping** which can be of benefit to responding agencies in a number of areas (see Section 5); for example:
    - locating facilities where vulnerable people are present eg. hospitals, schools, day care centres, etc.;
    - identifying exclusion zones around an incident, so that decisions on implications for evacuation can be made;
    - identifying appropriate locations for the establishment of Emergency Support Centres; or
    - supporting decision-making on, for example, phased outages of water, electricity or gas, etc.

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[4] Identifying People Who are Vulnerable in a Crisis: Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders (Cabinet Office, Feb. 2008)

2   DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROTOCOL

Purpose of this protocol

2.1   The purpose of this protocol is to provide responding organisations in Northern Ireland with a checklist of steps or an aide memoire for use in helping to identify people who are, or might become, vulnerable as a result of an emergency.

Definition of an emergency

2.2   For the purposes of this protocol an emergency is defined in the Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements protocol[5] as

"an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment or the security of Northern Ireland"

Development of this protocol

2.3   This paper was initially developed by a Task Group led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) on behalf of the Civil Contingencies Group (NI) (CCG(NI)) as a result of the lessons learned following the response during the extreme weather experienced in Northern Ireland in winter 2010. It was further tested and refined following debriefs from two local exercises during 2012.

2.4   It has now been refined in light of lessons learned and recommendations made in debrief reports from the Spring Blizzard 2013, Exercise Eluvies 2013 and the Tidal Surges experienced in Northern Ireland in early 2014.

2.5   When an event, incident or emergency has occurred which requires the convening of a multi-agency group at local, sub-regional or regional level[6], consideration needs to be given to identifying and meeting the needs of people who are defined as vulnerable for that emergency.

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[5] CCG(NI) Protocol for the Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements (Sept. 2016)
[6] CCG(NI) Protocol for Escalation of the Multi-agency Response (Sept. 2016)

Definition of vulnerable

2.6 CCG(NI) has agreed the following as a broad, generic definition of vulnerable, which should be kept under review and refined as an emergency unfolds:

(i) a person/group living in the community who is known to Health and Social Care organisations, is in receipt of health and social care services or packages of care.	(ii) those customers of utility companies, agencies or other Government Departments for the purposes of ensuring they are prioritised for receipt of specified services, or for communication in relation to these services, during an emergency.	(iii) those members of the public who are <u>not</u> usually known to any responding organisation/agency or utility company, who declare themselves vulnerable as a result of a prolonged period without essential services, or due to a specific emergency, <u>and who have been risk assessed as vulnerable at the time of the incident</u>.
(i)-(ii) individuals within these categories of the definition must also be risk assessed as being vulnerable for the incident in question.		
(i)-(iii) as part of a joint dynamic risk assessment process, it should also be recognised that people may move between the 3 categories of the definition of vulnerability outlined above as the incident develops/unfolds.		

Identifying vulnerable people

2.7 The most effective way of identifying vulnerable people is to work with those organisations which are best placed to have up-to-date records of individuals and will be aware of their specific needs. Identifying, planning and providing for the needs of vulnerable people will involve a significant number of partner organisations and gathering together a large amount of complex and perhaps, rapidly changing, information. The creation of this "list of lists" at a local level will assist greatly with planning.

2.8 A "list of lists" will <u>not</u> be a central list of individuals who are vulnerable, but rather is a list of partner organisations and their contact details that can be used to gather relevant information in the event of an emergency. This approach might include development of:

- **List of organisations** (likely to be key planning partners) which hold and maintain information on vulnerable people. For example a Data Sharing Agreement (see Section 4) can be established in advance between partner organisations so there is clarity around the parameters in which they will be working in the event of an emergency. This approach might help avoid some data sharing difficulties during an actual emergency.

- **List of types of vulnerability** – identifying the potential range of vulnerable people with specific needs within a local area in advance of an emergency (but not sharing the details of this) will assist with planning and response. This will need to be built upon in the event of an emergency unfolding and more vulnerable people being identified. See Tables 1 and 2 in Annex 1 for a template which summarises potentially vulnerable people/groups and the organisations most likely to be able to identify them and which can be adapted at local level.

- **List of establishments housing vulnerable people in your area** – identifying the key establishments that accommodate vulnerable people that are likely to require additional assistance - for example nursing and residential homes.

2.9 It is important to ensure that lists of key contact details for all appropriate organisations are kept up-to-date, allowing the response to vulnerable people to be activated as soon as required.

2.10 Responding organisations should fully utilise available networks to develop position reports on vulnerable people and enable the deployment of resources to assist with addressing their needs.

2.11 To ensure a co-ordinated approach, the full range of all available organisations should be used to gather information, identify individuals, discuss concerns and identify actions to address needs. These groups include: the statutory sector; the voluntary sector; community groups; elected representatives; utility companies; peripatetic employees (eg. milkmen, refuse collectors, postmen, hairdressers, etc.); friends and neighbours; family members; faith groups; and other private industry.

3   INFORMATION SHARING AND DATA PROTECTION

3.1   When considering sharing data or information about people, regardless of whether it is during an emergency, one of the key considerations will be compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the common law duty of confidentiality.

Eight principles of the Data Protection Act

3.2   The Data Protection Act contains eight data protection principles that must be adhered to when processing personal data – these are legally enforceable standards of good information handling:

(1)   Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met; and in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is also met.

(2)   Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purpose, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose.

(3)   Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is processed.

(4)   Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.

(5)   Personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose.

(6)   Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Data Protection Act.

(7)   Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.

(8)   Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

3.3   It is the duty (under the Data Protection Act 1998) for each organisation involved in the response to an emergency to comply with the 8 data protection principles in relation to all personal data for which they have responsibility. These principles have equal weight and there must be compliance with all of them. The ICO provides guidance on data sharing in a

Code of Practice[7] and on the application of the 8 principles[8]. Further information can be found on the ICO website.

3.4   It is difficult to find a 'one size fits all' approach to information sharing. As the circumstances are likely to be different in each instance, so the unique circumstances of an emergency should be taken into account, with only those agencies who need the information receiving it, and only the personal data which is required being shared. Proportionality and necessity should be key considerations, alongside the conditions set by the other principles.

3.5   Responding organisations should, where possible, endeavour to share information for the purposes of assisting an emergency response, whilst being mindful of, and adhering to, the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Personal data versus sensitive personal data

3.6   The Data Protection Act differentiates between personal data and sensitive personal data as follows:

- *Personal data* is information relating to a <u>living</u> individual (e.g. name, address, date of birth) from which that individual can be identified, or which can be used to identify that individual, in conjunction with other information held by a data controller.

- *Sensitive personal data* consists of information about an individual's race/ethnic origin, political opinion, religious belief, Trade Union membership, health, sexual life or criminal activity.

3.7   With regard to sharing personal data, or sensitive personal data, responding organisations should be aware that consent is only one of the conditions which allows for data to be shared.

Schedule 2 conditions

3.8   If *personal data* is to be shared, responding organisations must meet <u>at least one</u> of six conditions set out in **Schedule 2** of the Data Protection Act. These 6 conditions include:
- consent has been given by the individual; or
- sharing is necessary to protect the person's vital interests (ie this can include situations where there is a risk of significant harm to life); or

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[7] https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1068/data_sharing_code_of_practice.pdf
[8] http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/data_protection/the_guide

- sharing is necessary to comply with a court order; or
- sharing is necessary to fulfil a legal duty; or
- sharing is necessary to perform a statutory function; or
- sharing is necessary to perform a public function in the public interest; or
- sharing is necessary for the legitimate interests of the data controller, or of the third party to whom the data is disclosed, unless the rights or interests of the individual preclude sharing.

Schedule 3 conditions

3.9 If *sensitive personal data* is to be shared then one or more **Schedule 3** conditions must also be met, in addition to Schedule 2 conditions. These include:
- that the individual has given "explicit consent to share their information; or
- sharing information is necessary to establish, exercise or defend legal rights; or
- sharing information is necessary for the purpose of, or in connection with, any legal proceedings; or
- sharing information is necessary to protect someone's vital interests and the person to whom the information relates cannot consent, is unreasonably withholding consent, or consent cannot reasonably be obtained; or
- sharing information is necessary to perform a statutory function; or
- is in the substantial public interest and necessary to prevent or detect a crime and consent would prejudice that purpose; or
- processing is necessary for medical purposes and is undertaken by a health professional; or
- processing is necessary for the exercise of any functions conferred on a constable by any rule of law.

Vulnerability maps

3.10 It is possible to create a resource pool of information which can also be shared in an emergency situation. For example, a 'vulnerability map' which would plot the geographical location of those people who may need specialised or prioritised assistance in an emergency. Land and Property Service has been progressing this area of work on behalf of CCG(NI) and has developed a template for a Data Sharing Agreement and a Privacy Impact Assessment for use by responding organisations to help them address these issues in relation to data sharing. Section 5 has further information on geo-spatial mapping.

3.11   The starting point for creating this vulnerability map would be lists of vulnerable people already held by organisations and agencies for their own business purposes, and augmenting this as an emergency unfolds and more vulnerable people are identified. As part of the multi-agency group's joint dynamic risk assessment, when deciding whether or not to share information in an emergency, the risks in not sharing it must also be considered. It should be noted that during an emergency, it is more likely than not that it will be in the interests of an individual for their personal data to be shared[9]

Exemptions to the Data Protection Act

3.12   Where appropriate, exemptions to the Data Protection Act should be considered and documented, if it is decided to apply these. Where a decision has been made to share personal data in an emergency responding organisations should maintain a record of the decision and the rationale.

3.13   At all times responding organisations and agencies must look to the eight Data Protection principles to advise on individual cases, taking into account the unique circumstances, fairness and conditions for processing as defined within Schedule 2 and 3 to the DPA.

Privacy Notices

3.14   It is the responsibility of responding organisations to consider how best to meet the interests of the data subjects and ensure that all partners (with whom they share information) are aware of the requirement to keep information secure and the level of security appropriate to the nature of the data to be protected. Each responding organisation (or data controller), is required to inform users about its use of privacy notices and to ensure that these privacy notices are updated to reflect the circumstances where data might be shared, with or without consent. Further information and guidance can be found in ICO guidance on its' website[10].

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[9] Data Protection and Sharing – Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders (Feb. 2007) available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60970/dataprotection.pdf
[10] http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/data_protection/the_guide

Retention and destruction periods

3.15 Responding organisations should also provide details of retention and destruction periods for the information shared, and should articulate what steps should be taken by all partners in terms of identifying how long this shared information should be retained and how it will be destroyed. This detail should be set out in detail in Data Sharing Agreements.

3.16 Regardless of the cause of the emergency, the effects can be the same and require an emergency management response which may require the sharing of sensitive personal data about vulnerable people to better meet their needs by a range of responding agencies working together.

Key points to note regarding information sharing

3.17 In Northern Ireland, some key points to note with regard to information sharing are as follows:

- The DPA does not prevent organisations sharing personal data, where it is appropriate to do so. Rather, it provides a framework for sharing data, with appropriate safeguards around the handling of this data to ensure that an individual's privacy is respected.

- Factoring in the risks involved in not sharing data is an important consideration. Responding organisations and agencies need to balance the potential harm to an individual (and, where appropriate, the public interest) in not sharing information, against the public interest in sharing the information as part of the response to an emergency (including the humanitarian response).

- Consent of the data subject is not a necessary precondition for lawful data sharing. It is only one of a number of conditions which allows for data sharing in relation to personal or sensitive personal data. Furthermore, this consent does not need to be explicit – it can also be implicit. See information in relation to Schedules 2 and 3 to the DPA set out in paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 for further detail.

- In some cases, information shared may relate to the physical or mental health of an individual who is considered to be vulnerable – this would be considered to be sensitive personal data for the purposes of the DPA. Therefore one condition from Schedule 2 and a further condition from Schedule 3 will need to be met. Conditions that may apply in these situations are where the processing is necessary "in order to exercise any statutory function" (Schedule 3, condition 7) or "to protect the vital interests of an individual" where consent cannot

be given (Schedule 3, condition 3). The 'vital interests' condition provides that personal data (and sensitive personal data) can be shared *"in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject or another person where consent cannot be given by or on behalf of the data subject, or the data controller cannot reasonably be expected to obtain the consent of the data subject"*. The condition of vital interests would apply to "life and death" situations, but is also likely to be particularly relevant in emergencies where there is substantial risk to an individual's life. For further information on this see guidance produced by the UK government (in consultation with the ICO) in relation to data sharing in the context of emergencies[11].

Information sharing and vulnerable people

3.18   There is likely to be reluctance among organisations and agencies to identify vulnerable groups or individuals, or to share specific details in advance of an incident or emergency due to worries about breaching data protection legislation.

3.19   Before organisations share information they must ensure that they have the legal power or ability to do so. All agencies that are considering sharing information should check their legal status in this regard. Further guidance can be found in the ICO's Data Sharing Code of Practice[12].

Planning stages

3.20   At the planning stages however these organisations or agencies could do the following:

- **Share information about who holds what** sort of details, for what purposes, along with relevant contact details. This should include details for out-of-hours contact that would only be shared with other responding organisations and agencies. That way, in an emergency, organisations can save time and be one step ahead.

- **Share less detailed information** – such as giving an indication of the type of vulnerabilities and indicative numbers that may exist in certain geographic areas. The detail of who those people are; their vulnerabilities; and what their needs might be, may only need to be shared when an incident is imminent or an emergency happens.

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[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60970/dataprotection.pdf

[12] https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1068/data_sharing_code_of_practice.pdf

- **Agree the method and format** in which information could be shared in the event of an incident or emergency. This could take the form of a Data Sharing Agreement , which clearly sets out:

  o   what personal data each organisation holds, what can be shared, for what purposes, how and with whom in the event of an emergency;

  o   what triggers would be set for providing more detailed information; and

  o   what the organisations' (data protection) responsibilities are regarding that information, including its' destruction, after the emergency is over.

- Where a **Data Sharing Agreement** is in place it should be reviewed regularly, particularly where information is to be shared on a large scale or regular basis. This agreement should be clear and transparent about the roles of the parties involved, and make it clear what is happening to personal data at each stage of the process. Personal data, particularly sensitive data, should be held securely, with a clear retention policy in place for when the data is no longer needed.

3.21   Furthermore, when deciding whether to share information in an emergency, the risks in not sharing must also be considered. This needs to be balanced against any unwarranted detriment to an individual whose personal data is shared, and wherever possible, individuals should be aware that the sharing might take place in certain circumstances, or have given consent for that to happen.

- **Produce a vulnerability map** using anonymised data, using geo-spatial mapping capability with the assistance of Land and Property Services (LPS). This mapping can be done in advance and shared with responding organisations in the event of an emergency. This data can be over-layered with information already held by other responding organisations to produce a more complete picture of unfolding events and impacts on particular areas (see further information on geo-spatial mapping at Section 4).

  There is no difficulty with sharing anonymised data with other organisations as it is not sensitive personal data as defined in the Data Protection Act. However, depending on what and how information is held in a 'vulnerability map', if this leads to an individual being identifiable, then it is considered to be personal data and should be treated as such. This does not necessarily mean it cannot be shared,

just that if vulnerability maps do contain personal data then the DPA must be considered when deciding whether, and with whom, to share.

- **Seek consent from those listed as vulnerable** on existing lists to share their personal or confidential information in an emergency situation, in order to best meet their needs. Organisations should take the advice of their organisational Data Protection Officer (DPO), Personal Data Guardian (PDG), Information Asset Owners (IAOs) (or equivalent, where these specific roles do not exist), and/or the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), to satisfy themselves that they are following best practice in this regard.

- **Keep lists and contact details up to date.** Responding organisations and agencies should ensure that their lists of vulnerable people, where they exist, are as up-to-date as possible and reviewed on a regular basis – this is a key requirement of the Data Protection Act.

4   GEO-SPATIAL MAPPING

4.1   The Northern Ireland Executive made a commitment to developing a Geographic Information (GI) strategy for Northern Ireland. Geographic information includes any information that can be referenced to a specific location (such as a grid reference or postal address) and can be represented on a map. The core premise of this strategy is to encourage the effective use of GI throughout government in Northern Ireland by placing information about location at everyone's fingertips in order to:

- deliver better services to the public;

- improve data utilisation and sharing;

- manage resources more effectively and efficiently; and

- inform evidence-based policy decisions through access to more information.

4.2   Most emergencies have a strong geographical dimension, since their location and spread will determine their impacts and how they should be managed. Consequently, many local and regional responders have found that Geographical Information Systems (GIS) provide a valuable tool in planning for, responding to, and recovering from incidents that may require evacuation and shelter. GIS can:

- assist emergency managers to identify and take account of demographic aspects of an emergency (such as its location, extent, consequences, and who will be affected); and

- allow geographical information from multiple sources and agencies to be integrated to provide an informed response.

Spatial NI

4.3   In Northern Ireland Land and Property Services (LPS) within the Department of Finance operates the Spatial NI GIS portal – further information is available at: www.spatialni.gov.uk

4.4   Spatial NI provides much of the GIS functionality required to support civil contingency planning, response, recovery and restoration and a dedicated emergency response viewer and support service has been created to assist CCG(NI) activities. The system already contains a number of data sets relevant to emergency management.

4.5 Spatial NI sits within the IT Assist secure environment and has a range of access controls that can be enabled to protect the information held within the system and restrict who has access to that information.

4.6 Spatial NI will provide those organisations that are required to share information on vulnerable people with a secure means to do so and, more importantly, a range of mapping and visualisation tools to help make more effective use of the information during an emergency.

4.7 All responding organisations and agencies should consider making use of Spatial NI by collaborating with LPS to populate maps with relevant information in advance of an emergency and agree permissions to allow other responders to view/share their information as necessary.

ANNEX 1:

Templates for sample tables

Table 1: Identifying potentially vulnerable people and communicating with them through other organisations

Table 2: Example of generic information that might be used for planning/sharing purposes

Table 1: Identifying potentially vulnerable people and communicating with them through other organisations

Potentially Vulnerable Individual/Group	Examples and Notes	Target through the following organisations/agencies	Contact details
Children	Where children are concerned, whilst at school, the school authorities have duty of care responsibilities. Certain schools may require more attention than others.	• Education Authority • Department of Education • HSC Trusts • Crèches/playgroups/nurseries	*Responding organisations should insert local contact details for appropriate organisations in this column* Schools are mapped at www.spatialni.gov.uk
Older People	Certain sections of the elderly community including those of ill health requiring regular medication and/or medical support equipment	• Residential Care Homes • Nursing Homes • Age NI • HSC Trust Social Services • Supported housing/sheltered accommodation	NIHE has contact details for over 300 community groups - RQIA's website has details of the locations of registered nursing and residential homes http://www.rqia.org.uk/ inspections. Nursing and residential homes and hospitals are mapped on Spatial NI at www.spatialni.gov.uk Fold Telecare
Mobility impaired	For example: wheelchair users; leg injuries (e.g. on crutches); bedridden/ non movers; slow movers.	• Residential Care Homes • Charities • HSC Trust service providers • Community mental health care teams	RQIA's website has details of the locations of registered nursing and residential homes http://www.rqia.org.uk/inspections. Nursing and residential homes and
Mental/cognitive function impaired	For example: developmental disabilities; clinical psychiatric needs; learning		

Potentially Vulnerable Individual/Group	Examples and Notes	Target through the following organisations/agencies	Contact details
	disabilities.		some HSC facilities (including hospitals and mental health facilities) are mapped on Spatial NI at www.spatialni.gov.uk
Sensory impaired	For example: blind or reduced sight; deaf; speech and other communication impaired.	• Charities eg RNIB, RNID • Local groups	
Individuals supported by HSC Trusts		• HSC Trust Social Services • HSC Trust Community Care Teams • GP practices	
Temporarily or permanently ill	Potentially a large group encompassing not only those that need regular medical attention (e.g. dialysis, oxygen or a continuous supply of drugs), but those with chronic illnesses that may be exacerbated or destabilised either as a result of the evacuation or because prescription drugs were left behind.	• GP practices • Other health providers (public, private or charitable hospitals etc.) • Community nurses	
Individuals cared for by Relatives/friends	• Home ventilated patients • Home dialysis patients • Older people • Learning disabled adolescents/adults • Children with special needs	• GP practices • Carers groups eg Carers NI, Belfast Carers Centre, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers	
Homeless		• Shelters • Soup kitchens	

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Potentially Vulnerable Individual/Group	Examples and Notes	Target through the following organisations/agencies	Contact details
		• Salvation Army	
Pregnant women		• GP practices • HSC Trust ante-natal clinics	
Minority language speakers		• Community Groups • Job centres • Interpretation services	NIHE has contact details for over 300 community groups
Tourists		• Transport and travel companies • Hoteliers • Bed and Breakfast establishments • NI Tourist Board • Port Authority	
Travelling community		• HSC Trust Social Services • Education Authority • Community groups • Local Traveller support groups eg An Munia Tobar	NIHE has contact details for over 300 community groups

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Table 2: Example of generic information that might be used for planning/sharing purposes

Potentially vulnerable group(s)/ individuals	Location	Address	Contact details	Estimated numbers of vulnerable involved	Anticipated support needed	Notes
Elderly people	Detail area/ location involved List whether independent sector or private residence	List the full address of the facility and postcode (for GIS purposes)	Include: name of contact(s); their role; organisation; contact no.(s); etc	Detail actual or best estimate of numbers involved	Detail what sort of support needed or anticipated. Equipment dependent?	Include any other relevant information
Adults	List whether private residence, sheltered accommodation or other	List the full address of the facility and postcode	Include: name of contact(s); their role; organisation; contact no.(s); etc	Detail actual or best estimate of numbers involved	Any physical or mental disability? ie. needs water for dialysis or needs electricity for life saving/medical equipment	Include any other relevant information
Children	List whether • schools • special schools • crèches/nurseries	List the full address of the facility/location and postcode	Include: name of contact(s); their role; organisation; contact no.(s); etc	Detail actual or best estimate of numbers involved	Medication dependent?	Schools mapped on Spatial NI at www.spatialni.gov.uk

Potentially vulnerable group(s)/ individuals	Location	Address	Contact details	Estimated numbers of vulnerable involved	Anticipated support needed	Notes
Travelling community	List camp sites in council areas	List the full address and postcode	Include: name of contact(s); their role; organisation; contact no.(s); etc	Detail actual or best estimate of numbers involved	Detail what sort of support needed or anticipated	
People in HSC facilities eg hospitals, statutory homes, day care centres, etc.	Detail area/ location of facility	List the full address of the facility and postcode	Include: name of contact(s); their role; organisation; contact no.(s); etc	Detail actual or best estimate of numbers involved	Detail what sort of support needed or anticipated	Health facilities and independent sector homes/centres freely available on Spatial NI at www.spatialni.gov.uk
Insert date table last updated/by whom						