

ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2023

**Congregation of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan
of the Order of St Benedict**



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Acknowledgement of Survivors and Victims

We acknowledge the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors
and their families.

Any failures of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan to protect,
believe and respond justly,
betrayed children's trust and that of the community.

We commit to creating an environment of
respect and safety for all,
especially children and adults at risk.

“

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Throughout 2023 significant progress was made in advancing the safeguarding culture of the many ministries across the communities of the Good Samaritan Sisters and ministry partners in Australia, Japan, Kiribati and the Philippines. We invite you to click [here](#) to read our good news stories to celebrate this achievement. The stories are presented in the Good Samaritan safeguarding annual update.

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01

Good Samaritan Safeguarding

MINISTRY REGISTER

The Ministry Register is a tool that assists the Congregation in capturing the emerging needs of Sisters undertaking ministries with regards to safeguarding.

On 20 November 2023, 84 Sisters in Australia, Kiribati and the Philippines received a request to complete their Ministry Register. The Sisters responded to questions according to their allocated safeguarding category of Church/Other (4), Congregational (3) or Semi-Retired (2A) or (2B).

The Sisters in Japan provided this information via the Safeguarding Conversation held earlier in the year with Veronica McCluskie SGS.

In comparison to 2022 data, the 2023 data shows that a significant number of Sisters minister to Adults at Risk. There is a decrease in the number of Sisters ministering to children in Australia and Japan however Sisters in Kiribati and the Philippines engage directly with children. It is noted that the number of Sisters in active ministry has decreased over the past 12 month period.

Information gained from the Ministry Register indicates

there has been a greater rate of participation in professional/pastoral supervision. Sisters are also being provided with opportunities to receive an annual review/appraisal. The Education & Formation program has had increased participation. The focus is to provide targeted programs based on the identified safeguarding practices of the ministry.

Summary of data :

- 27% of Sisters have direct contact with children
- 66% of Sisters have direct contact with adults at risk
- 100% of Sisters hold a valid WWCC (Australia)
- 100% of Sisters in ministry have access to the SGS Safeguarding Policies
- 100% of Sisters have signed the Code of Practice
- 74% of Sisters in categories 3 & 4 (only) hold a role description defining their

ministry responsibilities (other roles are informed by the SGS Constitution)

- 100% of Sisters in categories 3 & 4 (only) completed an annual performance review/appraisal
- 79% of Sisters in categories 3 & 4 (only) attended 6-10 hours of professional/pastoral supervision per annum
- 100% of Sisters in categories 3 & 4 (only) completed annual Safeguarding Education & Formation
- 100% of Sisters in category 2B (only) completed 6 hours of annual reflective practice (which entails ministry circle or supervision and/or Annual Safeguarding Education & Formation)

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SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY GROUP (SAG)

SAG continues to provide advice and support to the Superior and Council in the leadership and coordination of the Congregation's Safeguarding policies and protocols.

The current members of SAG are Veronica Hoey SGS (Chair), Mary Tobin, Kath Tierney rsm, Nick Halfpenny, and Liz Wiemers SGS.

A summary of topics discussed include:

- NRS and Civil Claims
- Ministry Register Data Analysis
- National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Edition 2 and Audit
- Mapping Adults at Risk
- Cultural Safety Statement
- Kiribati Improvement Plan (Child Wise)
- Safeguarding Policy
- Policies written in Easy English
- Code of Practice Policy
- Breach of the Code of Practice Procedure
- Safeguarding Education and Formation
- SGS Community of Practice
- Development of Safeguarding Resources such as Induction Video, Information Sheets, Online Resource Portal for Staff.

GOOD SAMARITAN SAFEGUARDING VIDEO

As part of the Congregations ongoing commitment to safeguarding a safeguarding induction session is scheduled for all new employees within Australia. The session is delivered online or face to face. The induction session invites conversation. The focus of the session is to respond to the question “**How does the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Rule of St Benedict support our practice of safeguarding? What wisdom do they offer?**”

The presentation of the program is supported by the newly released safeguarding induction video. To view the video click on the image below.



NATIONAL CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS (NCSS) AUDIT

With the revision of the NCSS in 2022 to include **adults at risk** the decision was taken at the March 2023 Superior and Council meeting that the Congregation would delay the audit until 2024 so that the audit could include an assessment of the Congregation with regard to safeguarding of both children and adults at risk

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COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A Good Samaritan community of practice for safeguarding was established in October 2023 and its first meeting occurred on Thursday 9 November 2023. Regular members of the community include the congregational safeguarding coordinators for Australia, Kiribati and the Philippines. The members are Anita Biddle, Taabeia Ibouri SGS and Anne Dixon SGS. Donna Webb, from *Safeguarding Central* facilitates the gatherings. The gatherings are held online via zoom.

The community of practice is a platform for sharing, learning

and collaborating. The 2023 meeting focused on creating and reviewing a code of conduct and engaging with local stakeholders. Members were encouraged to apply the new learnings to policy, practice and resource development. A further three meetings have been scheduled for 2024.

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SAFEGUARDING SNAPSHOT

CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Kiribati & the Philippines - supporting children and adults at risk

2 Schools **1** Community Center

Achievements

- 9** Policies reviewed
- 221** Registered attendances (Sisters & Staff) for education & formation programs
- 27** Renewal of Working with Children Checks
- 69** Sisters in active ministry

Redress

- 35** National Redress Scheme Request for Information
- 8** Civil Claims (historical)
- 1** Non litigated complaints (historical)

Types of ministry include (but not limited to) ...

- Refugee & Asylum Seeker support
- English language tutor
- Prison ministry
- Health care support
- Pastoral care/ outreach
- Disability support
- Hospice
- Parish ministry
- Teaching
- Spiritual Direction
- Counselling
- Formation, Supervision
- Networks, Committees, Advocacy
- Prayer ministry
- Accompaniment

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