

Peak Accountancy Training

Safeguarding Newsletter | September 2021 | Issue 12



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Introduction

Welcome to this month's edition of safeguarding news. I hope everyone has had a good summer. I have attended a couple of festivals over the summer, I'm sure some of you will have too. A strange experience after such a long period of lockdown and isolation to be standing in a field with thousands of others. But we are in a period where we must learn to live with covid. According to the statistics on the day of writing this 89.7% of the population over 16 have had a single shot of vaccine and 82.4% of the population over 16 have had both doses. It is due to the success of our vaccine programme that we are now able to be getting back to normal.

Boris announced a couple of weeks ago the government plan for autumn/winter.

Plan A includes:

- Encouraging the unvaccinated to get vaccinated
- Vaccines for 12 to 15 years olds
- Booster jabs for millions
- Continued testing, tracing, and self-isolation for those with the disease

There is also a plan B that will be activated if too much pressure is applied on the NHS and the government considers additional measures may be necessary. These will include things like:

- Mandatory vaccine passports for mass events
- Face coverings becoming mandatory in some settings

Let's hope that plan A is successful. Continue to exercise caution and be responsible for both yourself and others.

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Article 1 – Sexual consent

One of the festivals I attended this summer featured Sophie Ellis-Bextor. I wanted to highlight an article just the other day on BBC news which reported extracts from her book 'Spinning Plates'. The article raised the issue of 'consent'. The artist revealed that she was raped at the age of 17 by an older musician. In her book, she reveals that she felt rape was associated with aggression rather than lack of consent and it was due to this that she didn't feel able to speak out at the time. The article can be read by following this link:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-58705186>



Well worth considering here, is the meaning of 'consent'. Consent can only arise as a result of freedom, capacity and choice. Consent is not overarching and therefore different consent is required for:

- Different sexual activities
- Certain conditions

Consent can be withdrawn at any time and should be sought every time. Just because someone has consented once, it doesn't mean they will continue to consent forever.

It is important that both parties to sexual acts understand the principles of consent to reduce the risk of sexual harm.

Article 2 – Words of warning

You have all been introduced to the PREVENT strategy as part of your apprenticeship programmes. PREVENT is a government led programme that aims to safeguard people from being drawn into terrorism. I came across the following article that reports on an alarming and sinister practice whereby gamers are being potentially groomed by extremists through chat sites. You may want to have a read: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-58600181>



We have highlighted in the past the risks caused by posting images on the internet. Think very carefully before you post or exchange images as they potentially exist forever, even if they are deleted – don't forget someone can take a screen shot of an image which you then subsequently delete, but the copy of the image is still out there. These days employers could well access social media to have a look at potential candidates for vacancies. Remember as accountants and finance professionals you have an ethical principle of professional behaviour. This extends beyond your Monday to Friday 9 – 5 working hours. You represent your profession, your employer, but also importantly yourself. So, do think before you post or share. I was having a conversation with a friend recently whilst out on a dog walk. They were telling me that their nephew had been the subject of a blackmail attempt. Having just started at college they had received threats to pay £300 to an online blackmailer to stop the blackmailer from sending naked images that had been stolen by hacking into their email account to their new college. The nephew fortunately confessed to their parents before paying the money. The college was warned but they did indeed receive the photos. By talking to their parents, the young man avoided what would have undoubtedly been a financial disaster and didn't jeopardise their future at college. A reminder as well that talking to someone to share your concerns or worries really does help.

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MIND (Mental Health)	Phone: 0300 123 3393 Text: 86463 Website: www.mind.org.uk
NHS (Urgent medical conditions)	Phone: 111
Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)	Phone: 999
PREVENT (Suspicious activity, terrorism, radicalization)	Phone: 0800 789 321
RUN. HIDE. TELL. (Although terrorist attacks are very rare, we are not complacent about keeping you safe)	Website: www.npcc.police.uk/staysafe
Support services for some of the issues discussed this month	Website: Help after rape and sexual assault - NHS (www.nhs.uk) Home Rape Crisis England & Wales Rape Crisis England & Wales Cyber Bulling (supportline.org.uk)