

Safeguarding and Protection of Adults at Risk Policy

In line with the Care Act 2015 and the Health and Social Care Act 2008, the Trust has a responsibility for ensuring that all adults in receipt of services from the organisation are free from abuse and that where abuse is suspected or there is evidence that this has occurred, the correct procedures are followed. This policy recognises the need for inter-agency working to address incidents of suspected and actual abuse from the Department of Health publication 'No Secrets: Guidance on Developing and Implementing Multi-agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse'. This detailed the processes for local authorities to develop their own Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults' policies. It is important to understand that the Local Authority policy takes precedence to this policy.

For the purpose of this policy the following definition of abuse applies:

Abuse is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes him/her harm, endangers their life and violates their rights.

Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, financial, through neglect or omission.

An individual, a group or an organisation may perpetrate abuse.

Abuse concerns the misuse of power; control and/or authority and can manifest itself as:

- Domestic violence, sexual assault or sexual harassment
- Racially or religiously motivated assaults
- Discrimination and oppression
- Institutional abuse

Harm is defined as

- Ill treatment both physical and emotional
- Impairment of physical or mental health
- Avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health
- Impairment of physical, emotional, social or behavioural development.

These last two categories apply particularly to the individual's ability to recover from an illness or to have the best possible quality of life (The Lord Chancellor's Department, 1997).

Adults can be abused in any setting; where they live - their own home, or residential or nursing home, places where they spend their days - day centres, colleges, places of work. This list is not exhaustive.

Perpetrators of abuse can be any of the following:

- Informal carers, this includes neighbours, friends and relatives
- Partners, ex-partners and other family members
- People in a position of trust
- People paid to care/provide services
- Other users of services
- Strangers
- Organisations
- Those who deliberately target others in order to exploit them.

This policy can be cross referenced with the Safeguarding Policy and Detailed Guidance for more detail about the definitions of abuse and harm. There are clear parallels about the responsibilities of staff and managers. This includes the recording and reporting of incidents.

For vulnerable adults there is the need to ensure that they are protected from financial abuse. **Financial Abuse** is the exploitation, inappropriate use or misappropriation of a person's financial resources, property, pension, allowances or insurance. This includes withholding

money or the improper use of a person's money or property or denying the rights of an adult who may be competent to handle their own financial affairs.

Indicators are:

- Lack of money particularly after benefits have been paid
- Poorly explained withdrawals from accounts
- Lack of bill payments
- Disparity between income and living conditions
- Deputyship in place when the individual clearly has capacity to make this decision
- Changes to ownership of their own home
- Newly acquired 'friends' with concerning interests in the person and their money
- Reluctance to pay for essential clothing and food.

THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE.

Risk Factors may indicate that a person is being vulnerably abused:

- Person is in receipt of high rate benefits
- Person is unable to see to their own finances
- Person has a number of care givers/workers who have access to monies including PIN numbers
- Carers become financially dependent upon a person
- Person is socially isolated and receiving pressure from money lenders
- Person is known in their community as vulnerable
- Person has no independent advocate.

THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE but will indicate that there may be some cause for concern.

Associated Policies:

- Abuse of Trust Policy and Procedure (Service)
- House Keys and Accessing Service User Spaces Agreement Policy & Procedure (Service - Community and Personalisation)
- Supporting Service Users to Manage their Personal Finances Policy & Procedure (Service - Community and Personalisation)
- Mental Capacity Policy (Service)
- Person Centred Care and Support Planning Policy and Procedure (Service - Community and Personalisation)
- Human Rights Policy and Procedure (Service - Community and Personalisation)
- Risk Policy and Procedure (Service - Community and Personalisation)
- Safe Personal and Pressure Care Policy and Procedure (Service - Community and Personalisation)
- Safeguarding (Children/Young People) Policy and Procedure (Service)
- Safeguarding (Children/Young People) Detailed Guidance (Service)
- Self Injurious Behaviour (Autism Specific) Policy and Procedure (Service)
- Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure (HR)

Legislation and Reference Documents :

- 'No Secrets: Guidance on Developing and Implementing Multi-agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse' (Department of Health)

Safeguarding and Protection of Adults at Risk Procedure

1. No staff can be in a position of caring for an adult or offering a direct service to an adult without a full Disclosure and Barring Service check.
2. All individual adult records relating to matters of abuse, exploitation or allegations must be contemporaneous (up to date) and consistent with the requirements of the service and regulatory body. This is important for potential evidence.
3. Where abuse is suspected this must be reported to the Team Leader and/or Registered manager of the service without delay.
4. Where it is suspected that the manager of the service may be a potential perpetrator, the Whistleblowing Policy applies and the concerned member of staff may contact the relevant senior manager/HR Manager or relevant Director.
5. Concerns must be reported to the relevant Local Authority in which the service is located in the first instance. This must be done by the relevant manager. The Placing Authority, if different will also need to be informed.
6. All services must have available to all staff an accessible copy of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure. All staff must sign that they are aware of the Policy.
7. Staff and managers will follow the Safeguarding policy relating to the Local Authority Area.
8. It is the responsibility of the Manager of the service that training needs are addressed for all staff in line with their induction programmes.

It is not the responsibility of Trust staff to conduct investigations without agreement from local authorities. The responsibilities are to ensure that adults are safeguarded from abuse and that incidents are reported to local authorities because they are the decision makers. Any delays in reporting may further endanger the welfare of vulnerable adults.