

## **Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy**

### **Introduction**

The characteristics of adult abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching well beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or embarrassed to raise any complaint. They may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others.

It is the duty of those who work with vulnerable adults to be aware of the signs of abuse and to be ready to alert other agencies when abuse is suspected.

### **Aim of Policy**

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of adults at risk by outlining clear procedures and ensuring that all those connected with Carecent are clear about their responsibilities wherever the abuse may take place.

### **Definition**

In safeguarding terms, an adult at risk is defined as a person 18 and over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect (including self-neglect); and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

It is important to note that an adult does not need to be in receipt of a care or support delivered by the local authority. Care and support needs arise from or are related to physical or mental impairment or illness. This can include conditions as a result of physical, mental, sensory, learning or cognitive disabilities or illnesses, substance misuse or brain injury (Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2014).

Being homeless may exacerbate physical and/or mental ill-health and impact negatively upon individuals' ability to care for and protect themselves.

### **Types of harm and definitions of abuse**

**Self-neglect** can be broadly defined as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. An example of self-neglect is behaviour such as hoarding.

**Modern Slavery** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

**Domestic Abuse** includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.

**Discriminatory** abuse centres on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

**Organisational** includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. Organisational abuse can range from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Physical** includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.

**Sexual** includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented, or was pressured into consenting.

**Financial or Material** includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. It can also include the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

**Neglect and Acts of Omission** includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

**Emotional or Psychological** includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

People who are experiencing homelessness often also present with a range of risks and needs which, if not addressed, increase the risk of abuse. Indicative examples are:

Interpersonal and Personal

- Mental health needs
- Dependence on alcohol and/or drugs
- Brain damage
- Lack of purposeful activity
- Odd, anti-social or embarrassing behaviour

- Difficulty in communicating
- Impact of trauma and adverse experiences
- Poverty

#### External

- Staff working in isolation
- Unconscious bias, stereotyping and prejudice
- Community disengagement, fear and resentment
- Lack of access to safe and adequate housing
- Lack of access to wrap-around support to address health and social care needs
- Victim of gatekeeping and inflexible policies

### **Reporting Procedures**

**If you or the person you are concerned about is in immediate danger, then you should ring the Police on 999.**

If you or the person you are concerned about are NOT in immediate danger, you should refer the matter to a Day Leader or other responsible person as soon as possible. The Day Leader or other staff member will then inform the Project Manager who is responsible for adult protection (or in his/her absence, another member of the Executive Committee).

The member of staff involved should make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse (see appendix 1) and discuss the situation with the Project Manager responsible for adult protection. The Project Manager [or Executive committee member] should carry out a risk assessment and, if he/she considers it necessary, contact the City of York Social Services Team.

If a client/staff member has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the client to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of the consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), incorporated into the Data Protection Act 2018, allows organisations to share special information (the GDPR term for sensitive information) about clients without their consent in some limited circumstances. They are:

- To protect the vital interests of an individual – the vital interests condition also extends to any other individual who might be impacted by the abuse.
- Where the individual lacks capacity to give meaningful consent.
- Where the use of information is for the provision of social care, treatment, and services.

**If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to The City of York Social Services, then it should be reported.**

Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

## **Responsibilities**

All members of Carecent staff have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have concerning adult abuse.

The Executive member responsible for adult protection is Kiera Snaith, Project Leader. In her absence, a member of the Executive Committee (the nominated person is Judith Stoddart).

## **DBS Vetting**

Carecent volunteers should undergo relevant DBS checks when becoming a volunteer.

## **Contacts**

### **City of York Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)**

To report a safeguarding concern:

- **contact the City of York SAB, on telephone: 01904 555111, Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm**
- **hearing impaired customers can use the text facility on telephone: 07534 437804**
- **out of hours, telephone: 01609 534527**
- **use the [Safeguarding Adults 'concern form'](#) and return this by email or post to the City of York SAB**

**North Yorkshire Police Non-Emergency Number is 101**

## **Making Safeguarding Personal**

Making Safeguarding Personal provides a wider context for providing any service including working with partners, and means safeguarding adults:

- is person-led
- is outcome-focused
- engages the person and enhances involvement, choice and control
- improves quality of life, wellbeing and safety

Statutory guidance<sup>1</sup> requires that adult safeguarding is characterised by six principles. These principles apply to working with people experiencing homelessness, whether that is Adult Safeguarding, using referral of concerns and the duty to enquire (section 42, Care Act 2014), or whether it is adult safeguarding in the broader sense, seeking to prevent abuse and/or neglect, and to meet an individual's accommodation, health, and care and support needs:

Empowerment – look beyond the presenting problem to the backstory; make every adult matter; listen, hear and acknowledge, see and build on the person's strengths.

Prevention – provide integrated wrap-around support.

Protection – address risks of abuse and neglect, and of premature mortality; inreach and outreach to build up and sustain a relationship through which to provide practical assistance and emotional support.

Partnership – no wrong door; make every contact count; be flexible about how to engage; build a team around the person.

Proportionality – minimise risk.

Accountability – get the governance right.

*Reviewed and signed off by Executive Committee February 2023.*

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health and Social Care (2018) Care and Support Statutory Guidance: Issued under the Care Act 2014. London: The Stationery Office.