



Appendix 2

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

CARE IN CUCKFIELD, HAYWARDS HEATH AND LINDFIELD

Charity number 291646

The overarching principle of these practice guidelines and procedures is that the first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable adults.

Who is the policy for?

This policy is designed for anyone working with, or concerned about, the care or well being of vulnerable adults.

All volunteers working with vulnerable adults have a duty to protect them and should make themselves fully aware of this policy and the guidelines within it. All allegations of abuse of a vulnerable adult must be treated seriously. All action taken under these guidelines must be carried out sensitively, taking account of the vulnerable adult's individual needs including race, culture and ethnicity, age, gender, religion, disability and sexuality.

Definition

A 'vulnerable adult' refers to any person aged 18 years or over who:

... 'is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against harm or serious exploitation.'

Who Decides – Lord Chancellor's Department, 1997

Vulnerable adults may:

- be physically or mentally frail
- suffer from a mental illness, including dementia
- have a physical or sensory disability
- have learning difficulties
- have a severe physical illness
- have an acquired brain injury.

The term 'adult abuse' is subject to wide interpretation and definition. 'No Secrets' provides the following definition:

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons'.

CARE recognises that a vulnerable adult:

- can be at risk of mistreatment and abuse and that such mistreatment and abuse constitutes a clear infringement of rights
- has the right to request that no further action be taken.

Categories of abuse

Abuse can take many different forms and can occur in many places and in any situation.

Types of abuse can be:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Emotional or Psychological abuse
- Neglect
- Discriminatory abuse.

These are not mutually exclusive and many situations will combine a combination of different types of abuse.

Who abuses?

The abuser is usually well known to the person being abused. They may be:

- a partner, child or relative
- a friend or neighbour
- a paid or volunteer care worker
- a health or social worker or other professional
- by the person they care for
- other vulnerable adult.

Responding and reporting

All staff and volunteers have a duty to report any allegations or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse of a vulnerable adult to the appointed person currently the Volunteer Secretary on **01444 455955**.

If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or in need of urgent medical attention, action must be taken to ensure their immediate safety and well-being. This may include calling the appropriate emergency service.

In all cases the appointed person must contact Adult Services at West Sussex County Council on 01444 446100.

The following checklist provides guidance for staff and volunteers relating to responding, reporting and recording:

Responding

It is important for the volunteer to:

- remain calm and try not to show shock or disbelief
- listen carefully
- reassure the person
- explain that you will need to share the information and who with.

Do not:

- press the person for further details
- promise to keep secrets
- make promises you can't keep
- be judgemental
- break the confidentiality shared between the vulnerable adult, yourself and the appointed person
- ask leading questions.

Reporting

All allegations and/or suspicions need to be reported to the appointed person at the earliest possible opportunity. It is then the responsibility of this person to contact Social and Caring Services to discuss the concerns.

Remember **do not:**

- attempt to contact the alleged 'abuser' or alleged 'victim'
- talk to other staff, volunteers or service users about the information shared with you.

Recording

Accurate and detailed recording is essential. It should include:

- name and position (eg job title, volunteer)
- date, time and setting in which allegation was made or event witnessed
- names of other people present
- record of what was said using individuals own words
- date and sign
- a copy should be kept by the Appointed Person.

Once the information is passed to Adult Services they will make a decision on whether the Police need to be informed and if there is a need for a full investigation. The Investigation team should keep you updated with the progress of the investigation on a need to know basis.

Confidentiality

Personal information may need to be disclosed in the best interests of the vulnerable adult. The following safeguards therefore need to be observed:

- information will only be shared on a need to know basis when it is in the best interests of the vulnerable adult
- informed consent should be obtained wherever possible
- it is inappropriate for staff, volunteers or agencies to give assurances of absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse
- vulnerable adults and their carers should be advised why, and with whom, information will be shared.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the CARE committee at their first meeting after the annual general meeting.

Adopted February 2008
Revised April 2015

Date of Review and approval by the CARE Executive Committee: **April 2015**