

Policy for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (in need of care and support)

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Current Review: Commenced May 2019 Completed September 2019

Safeguarding adults means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

The Care Act 2014 sets out statutory responsibilities for organisations and defines safeguarding as

Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'

There are six key principals that underpin all adult safeguarding work:

Empowerment People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent

Prevention It is better to take action before harm occurs

Proportionality The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented

Protection Support and representation for those in greatest need

Partnership Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect & abuse

Accountability Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

In achieving these principles Cruse will:

- Ensure volunteers and employees access safeguarding training annually (on-line courses will be forthcoming).
- Ensure that all managers, employees and volunteers have access to and are familiar with this safeguarding adult policy and procedure and their responsibilities within it and receive appropriate training at a level commensurate with their role
- Ensure concerns or allegations of abuse are always taken seriously
- Ensure the Mental Capacity Act is used to make decisions on behalf of those adults at risk who are unable to make particular decisions for themselves

- Ensure that service users, their relatives or informal carers have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of abuse
- Ensure there is a named lead person to promote safeguarding awareness and practice within the organisation

Definitions:

1. Who is an adult at risk?

For the purposes of this policy, an adult at risk is an adult who:

- is aged 18 years or more, and
- has needs for care and support (whether or not these are currently being met),
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Such a definition includes adults with physical, sensory and mental impairments and learning disabilities, howsoever those impairments have arisen e.g. whether present from birth or due to advancing age, chronic illness or injury.

Also included are people with a mental illness, dementia or other memory impairments, people who misuse substances or alcohol.

The definition includes unpaid carers (family and friends who provide personal assistance and care to adults on an unpaid basis). The definition may include victims of Domestic Abuse, hate crime, anti-social behavior, self-neglect and mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

The presence of a particular condition or disability does not automatically mean that an adult is an adult at risk. A person can have a disability but be perfectly able to look after their own well-being etc. Their circumstances as a whole should be considered and all three elements of the definition must be met in order for them to be classed as an adult at risk.

2. What is 'harm'?

The definition of "harm" referred to in this policy does not exclusively pertain to ill treatment (including sexual abuse and all forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but includes the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in physical, or mental health or emotional well-being.

3. What is 'abuse'?

Abuse pertains to the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may consist of a single or repeated act. It may be an act of neglect (abuse by omission) or it may occur when a vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter into a financial transaction or sexual act to which he/she has not consented or whose consent was deemed diminished due to a lack of understanding.

Abuse results in significant harm, or exploitation of, the vulnerable adult. It may be perpetrated by anyone who has power over the person whether as a carer, relative, paid member of staff, volunteer or spouse, or as a result of persistently poor care or a rigid and oppressive regime. When occurring in a family, this can be termed as

'domestic abuse', the most common being between spouses, or parents and children.

The main forms of abuse are:

- Physical
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual
- Psychological or emotional
- Financial or Material
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Modern slavery
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Discriminatory
- Self-neglect
- Exploitation

Explanations and examples of the above can be found in the Procedures for Safeguarding at Appendix 1.

NOTIFICATION OF SUSPICION OF ABUSE

All Projects, Areas, Regions and Nations are required to have a named Safeguarding Officer (SGO) who is appropriately experienced and trained. (N.B. This may be the same person for both Vulnerable Adults and Children and Young People.) The contact details of the local safeguarding contact and named officer (SGO) should be available to all bereavement volunteers, staff, administrative volunteers, supervisors and management volunteers;

ALL cases of suspected abuse must be reported immediately to the National Cruse Safeguarding Lead, who will then take advice as necessary and identify the most appropriate response.

The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales and maintain the charity register. The Charity Commission strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities can be found here;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities>