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## **Foundation Futures Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure**

September 2023

Next review September 2024

To be reviewed annually.

### **Introduction**

Having policies and procedures to safeguard adults is a legal requirement under the Care Act 2014. Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

### **Adult Safeguarding – what it is**

- Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved.
- Prevention is Key aspect to the safeguarding agenda.

### **The aims of Foundation Futures Safeguarding Adults Policy**

- To stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in identifying and preventing abuse and neglect.

- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of an adult.

**All safeguarding work with adults should be based on the following principles:**

- The empowerment of adults underpins all safeguarding adults' work.
- The focus of safeguarding adults should always be to identify and endeavour to meet the desired outcomes of the adult.
- Every person has a right to live a life free from abuse, neglect and fear.
- Safeguarding adults is everyone's business and responsibility.
- There is zero tolerance to the abuse of adults.
- All reports of abuse will be treated seriously.
- Every person should be able to access information about how to gain safety from abuse and violence and neglect.

All adult safeguarding work aims to prevent abuse from taking place, and to make enquiries quickly and effectively and take appropriate action where abuse is taking place or is suspected.

**The Safeguarding Policy relates to an adult who meets the following three key tests:**

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

**Six key principles**

1. **Empowerment.** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
2. **Prevention.** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
3. **Proportionality.** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
4. **Protection.** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
5. **Partnership.** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
6. **Accountability.** Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

These six principles should inform the ways in which professionals and staff work with adults.

## **Abuse**

Abuse can take many forms; it can be physical, psychological, sexual, neglect, discriminatory, organisational and financial.

Abuse also includes domestic abuse, Modern Slavery, organisational and self-neglect.

Exploitation is noted as a common theme.

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

Examples of abuse are:

- Hitting, slapping, rough handling.
- Giving medication incorrectly.
- Deprivation of warmth, food, clothing, health care etc.
- Any kind of sexual activity that the person has not consented to or cannot consent to.
- Misuse or theft of money or property.
- Shouting, swearing
- Neglect of medical or physical need
- Discrimination or harassment

Abuse can happen anywhere by anyone but is usually someone the vulnerable adult knows. Some kinds of abuse are a criminal offence.

## **Carers**

- A carer may witness abuse of neglect
- A carer may experience intentional or unintentional harm from an adult they are trying to support
- A carer may unintentionally or intentionally harm or neglect the adult they support

## **How might abuse come to light?**

- Someone discloses abuse
- Witness an event happening
- Notice changes in behaviour
- Notice physical indicators of abuse

## **If someone tells you they are being or have been abused.**

- Stay calm and listen
- Be objective
- Empathise
- Take them seriously and offer support
- Keep them safe if necessary
- Make a written record of what you have been told, note the time and date
- Preserve any evidence

## **What to do:**

Immediate risk-Call emergency services first 999

Gain consent to share personal information. See Appendix 1  
Record of Disclosure. See Appendix 2

Speak to your Manager

## **Designation/Role Contact Details**

Director –Sue Davison Designated Safeguarding Lead  
sue@foundationfutures.org.uk

Director – Jennie Maughan (nee Dixon) Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead  
jennie@foundationfutures.org.uk

Chair of The Board of Trustees – Craig Bankhead  
craig@gatesheadopa.org.uk

North Tyneside and Northumberland One Call: 01670 536400  
Text phone: 01670 536844  
Email: [onecall@northumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:onecall@northumbria.nhs.uk)  
Safeguarding Adults Team: 01670 622683

Newcastle Safeguarding Adults:  
Community Health & Social Care Direct 0191 2788377  
Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) 0191 2787878

## **When a concern is reported to Adult Social Care they will need the following information:**

Is there an immediate or future risk?  
What are the adult's views?  
Has consent been obtained?  
When and where did the incident take place?  
Who was involved?

Any information sharing carried out will be done so in accordance with the eight principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, which provide that data must be;

- a) Processed fairly and lawfully;
- b) Processed for specified purposes

- c) Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- d) Accurate and kept up to date
- e) Not kept for longer than is necessary
- f) Processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects
- g) Protected by appropriate security (practical and organisational)

**What not to do:**

- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Do not ask investigative questions or make judgmental comments
- Do not use leading questions
- Destroy any evidence
- Do not confront the alleged abuser
- Do not make decisions on your own

**Foundation Futures: rights and responsibilities**

- To ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and are adequately trained
- To notify the appropriate agencies if abuse is suspected
- To cooperate with other agencies and the local authority in safeguarding investigations
- To DBS check all volunteers and staff that have direct access to vulnerable adults
- To report concerns in regard to a volunteer or staff member to the Disclosure and Barring service.
- To check at recruitment and at regular intervals, staff and volunteers DBS's (every three years) and at recruitment all applicants references (see screening policy)
- To ensure that this policy is kept up to date

Any concerns raised will be recorded on the appropriate form and spreadsheet and notes kept on the database. All information will be kept confidential and these concerns will be kept for as long as necessary.

**Responsibilities of Foundation Futures volunteers and staff**

- To be familiar with the Adult Safeguarding policy and procedure and attend appropriate training
- To take appropriate action in regard to safeguarding of adults.
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions. Failure to do so will be regarded as gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal.

These principles assist in ensuring that;

- a) The legal basis for the information sharing is established and that there is both a clear and legitimate purpose and need for the information to be shared
- b) That personal and sensitive information is anonymised where possible to prevent any identification of any individual within the information
- c) Where possible consent should be sought from a person when information is going to be shared about them (consent may not be sought or is overridden where there is sufficient public interest)
- d) Where a person lacks the capacity to consent to information being shared as per the Mental Capacity Act 2005 a best interests decision should be made
- e) Where there is uncertainty about sharing information, advice should be sought from managers / legal advisors.
- f) Information is shared appropriately and securely
- g) Records are made when information is shared or requested

## **SHARING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

The fundamental principle upon which the sharing of information is based is that it should not be utilised for any purpose or reason other than that which the individual gave consent for, unless subsequent permission is sought.

The key principle is that any information confided should not be used for any other purpose or disclosed further except as originally understood by the confider or with their subsequent permission.

Specific Information Sharing Principles are as follows;

- Must have Lawful Authority (i.e. the enabling power)
- Must be necessary
- Must be proportionate
- Must need to know
- Must be accountable
- Must ensure the safety and security of the information shared

The duty imposed is not absolute in nature and the disclosure of confidential information can be justified where:

- The information is not confidential in nature
- The individual to whom the duty of confidence is owed has expressly authorised the disclosure of the information
- Disclosure is required by a court of law
- It is required by legislation or legal obligation
- If there is a serious overriding public interest that the information relates to such as; Prevention or detection of Crime; Danger to a person's life; Danger to other people; Danger to the community; Serious threat to others, including staff; Serious infringement of the law; Serious risk to the health of the person.

## **Methods of requesting & transferring information**

Verbally, face to face, in wider meetings;

Verbal conversations and interviews should be recorded in a statement that is agreed by the information giver. Care must be taken to record and denote information clearly as fact, statement or opinion and to attribute any statement or opinion to the owner. All information should be recorded in such a way that it can be used as evidence in court should it be required at a later date.

Internal & External Post;

Internal mail should only be used for protect or unclassified information. With regards to external mail confidential and restricted information must be sent via a secure delivery method (e.g. recorded delivery or in person). Confidential or restricted information should be double enveloped, with no protective marking on the outer envelope only "to be opened by the named addressee only". The outer envelope should also identify a return address. The inner envelope should be protectively marked as applicable.

Telephone;

When information is shared by telephone the giver of the information must verify that they are speaking to the intended recipient. Information will not be shared if it can be overheard by anyone who should not have access to it. A record should be made of the information given, to whom and how verified.

Safeguarding adults meeting; When information is shared in a safeguarding adult meeting a confidentiality agreement will be signed by all present and this will be verbally highlighted as part of the agenda. All documents will be marked with a confidentiality clause stating "The contents of this document are restricted and should only be reproduced with the agreement of the Chair person; you are responsible for the safe storage and disposal of this document". Considerations should be made by the chair and all attendees for the sharing of third party information. Meetings should be recorded in minutes that are agreed by those present.

Fax or Text phone;

Information should be sent to fax/text phone numbers that have been verified as belonging to the intended recipient. The fax/text phone should be located in a safe and secure environment (safehaven). The person to whom the information is being sent should be notified that the information is about to be sent and that they will wait at the fax machine for the fax. Confirmation from the recipient to the originator should then be made that the information has been received.

Email;

Information will only be shared by email through a secure network or via encrypted email. Non-secure networks or non-encrypted email systems should never be used to send personal or sensitive information.

Databases/electronic records;

Information stored electronically will be used in accordance with agreed policies and guidance in relation to the recording of information, security of information and authorized access levels.

The safe and secure handling and transfer of information will depend upon the level of sensitivity of the information. Where this is uncertainty then the originating person/organisation should be contacted.

All decisions relating to information sharing, and the reason why the decision was made, will be recorded. This includes if a decision was made not to share information.

### **Designation/Role Contact Details**

Director – Sue Davison Designated Safeguarding Lead  
sue@foundationfutures.org.uk

Director – Jennie Maughan (nee Dixon) Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead  
jennie@foundationfutures.org.uk

Chair of The Board of Trustees – Craig Bankhead  
craig@gatesheadopa.org.uk