

Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is a part of the wider role of safeguarding and

promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific vulnerable adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone is responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults and promoting their welfare. All adults, without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults – and protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Some of the most vulnerable adults and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including justice services.

For those vulnerable adults who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote their welfare and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against them. All agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect.
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults.
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances.
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare.
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the individual against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

As one of its major activities Heads2mids seeks to serve the needs of vulnerable adults, promoting holistic development. In doing so Heads2minds takes seriously the welfare of all vulnerable adults who come into contact with the organisation or who are involved in its activities.

Heads2minds aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

Heads2minds recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff, paid and unpaid, to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of vulnerable adults and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

Heads2minds recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

Heads2minds is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with vulnerable adults and to providing supervision.

Heads2minds is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory social services authorities.

Heads2minds works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/safeguarding-children-young-people-adults-at-risk-saaf.pdf>

Applicability

This policy applies to all trustees, other volunteers, employees, contractors, and third-party representatives of Heads2minds. Its requirements should be reflected in other policies and procedures, agreements and contracts, as necessary.

Procedures

For reasons of consistency and practicality, the Heads2minds policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults will be the same as those for safeguarding children and young people except where the law, or the specific circumstances of an individual's need require otherwise.

The Governing Body

The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures, and training in our charity are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place, that the vulnerable adult's protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

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The governor for safeguarding arrangements is named on the front cover of this document. This governor takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements in our charity. The governing body ensures there is a named designated safeguarding lead and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place.

The governing body ensures that all staff members undergo safeguarding vulnerable adults training at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep vulnerable adults safe.

The governing body are responsible for ensuring the charity follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse vulnerable adults. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with vulnerable adults and has recruitment and selection procedures in place.

The Designated safeguarding Lead (and Deputy)

The designated safeguarding lead in the charity takes lead responsibility for managing vulnerable adult referrals, safeguarding training, and raising awareness of all vulnerable adults' policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in the charity is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times.

If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy designated safeguarding lead will act in their absence.

Things to be aware of:

Sexual abuse

This includes:

- indecent exposure
- Sexual harassment
- inappropriate looking or touching
- sexual teasing or innuendo
- sexual photography
- being forced to watch pornography or sexual acts
- being forced or pressured to take part in sexual acts

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- rape

Physical abuse

This includes:

- being hit, slapped, pushed or restrained
- being denied food or water
- not being helped to go to the bathroom when you need to
- misuse of medicines

Psychological abuse

This includes:

- emotional abuse
- threats to hurt or abandon
- stopping the person from seeing people
- humiliating, blaming, controlling, intimidating or harassing
- verbal abuse
- cyberbullying and isolation
- an unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks

Domestic abuse

This is typically an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member.

Discriminatory abuse

This includes some forms of harassment, slurs or unfair treatment relating to your:

- race
- gender and gender identity
- age
- disability
- sexual orientation
- religion

Financial abuse

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This could be someone stealing money or other valuables from the vulnerable person. Or it might be that someone appointed to look after money on their behalf is using it inappropriately or coercing them to spend it in a way, they're not happy with. Internet scams and doorstep crime are also common forms of financial abuse.

Neglect

Neglect includes not being provided with enough food or with the right kind of food, or not being taken proper care of.

Leaving the vulnerable person without help to wash or change dirty or wet clothes, not getting them to a doctor when they need one or not making sure they have the right medicines all count as neglect.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) undertake Safeguarding Vulnerable adult training at least every two years. All staff members and governors receive appropriate vulnerable adults training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard vulnerable adults effectively. Records of any training undertaken is kept for all staff and governors.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue, which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with vulnerable adults. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including family/carers) or promise to keep a secret.

A person's right to confidentiality is not absolute and may be overridden where there is evidence that sharing information is necessary to support an investigation or where there is a risk to others. Information sharing decisions will be based on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions or the actions of the perpetrator.

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Sharing should be necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.

Records and information sharing

Well-kept records are essential to good vulnerable adult's practice. Our charity is clear about the need to record any concern held about a vulnerable adult and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a vulnerable adult, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

Any member receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Promoting positive mental health and resilience in the charity

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community, and we recognise that the charity plays a key part in this. Our charity aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all vulnerable adults and staff, as well as provide specific

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support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors, which increase someone's vulnerability, and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

The charity should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident the safeguarding leadership team will take any concern seriously.

Further Heads2minds policies which promote children's and young people's safety and welfare are social media policy and health and safety policy.

Version Control - Approval and Review

Version No	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Changes	Review Period
1.0	Board	May 23	Initial draft approved	Annually

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