



Policy and Procedures for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults.

It is the responsibility of all workers and volunteers to treat the abuse or potential abuse of vulnerable adults seriously, and to know about this Policy and Procedures and to abide by them where appropriate.

If someone confides in you, you should –

- Be a good listener
- Reassure that abuse is not the victim's fault and that it needs to stop
- Offer support
- Be clear that you have a duty to report suspected abuse to your line manager.

You should not –

- Lead the conversation
- Make promises that you cannot keep
- Agree to keep the abuse a secret
- Confront or accuse suspected abusers

This Policy may be used in conjunction with the "Whistle Blowing" Policy.

Definition of adult abuse.

Abuse is a violation of an individual human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse can take many forms:

- **Physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **Sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- **Psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- **Financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance of financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;

- **Neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including abuse that is racist, sexist, ageist or that is based on a persons disability, or sexuality

Procedure

When there is an allegation of abuse or suspected abuse, a referral must be made to your line manager as soon as possible within the same working day.

Line managers must pass the referral on to the most senior manager on duty (ie: the general manager, the housing manager or the advocacy services manager), who will then oversee the procedures ensuring that an appropriate investigation is undertaken within the agreed time frames:

Preliminary Investigation (fact finding): Within 1 working day, using the appropriate proforma

Full Investigation: Within 3 working days, using the appropriate proforma

While it is likely that in most circumstances the general manager (or the most senior manager on duty) will take on the role of the investigating officer, responsibility for this may also be delegated to others, especially in gathering information at the Preliminary Investigation stage. It is following this initial stage that a decision will be taken by the general manager, in consultation with others, whether to proceed with a Full Investigation and whether further referrals will be made.

It will be the general manager's responsibility to ensure that: -

- Any signs and symptoms of abuse are picked up.
- Evidence is reported clearly and accurately
- People are supported in reporting incidents of abuse
- Victims are supported through the investigation process
- Alleged perpetrators are supported through the investigation process
- Monitoring procedures are put in place where concerns have been expressed previously or where the client is assessed as being in a specific risk category.
- Records are maintained

Flow Chart of Actions

