

Adult at Risk Policy

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Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care (H&HHVC) is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees, volunteers and service users. H&HHVC works with adults at risk and we recognise we have a duty of care. H&HHVC takes the risk of abuse of adults seriously and is committed to protecting adults at risk and preventing abuse. All employees and volunteers in whatever setting or role will take necessary action to report an incident when a concern arises or take appropriate action to prevent further abuse.

1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- To protect adults, children and young people who use H&HHVC to ensure that everyone using the building is treated with respect and is safe and free from harm.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to adult and children safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensuring that the names and contact details of the designated trustee and Chief Executive Officer are displayed in a prominent position within the centre and available to all users on request.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy covers the responsibilities of staff and volunteers in relation to the protection of adults at risk. If any staff, volunteer or trustee member is being abused or is abusing another staff member, volunteer or trustee within the H&HHVC, then the internal Grievance and/or Disciplinary Procedure should be followed.

Children and adults may each face a different set of issues and the definitions and terms used differ in legislation therefore procedures for reporting abuse and handling cases are not the same. We therefore have separate policies and procedures to enable everyone to be clear about how to effectively safeguard both children and adults.

Self Determination - An important difference between safeguarding adults and safeguarding children is an adult's right to self-determination. Adults may choose not to act at all to protect themselves, and it is only in extreme circumstances that the law intervenes. This will often only happen when an adult is assessed to lack capacity in that area, or where the concerns may extend to children, such as when they are living in the same household.

This can make the matter of safeguarding adults even more complex. It is not solely focused on creating an appropriate process and system to safeguard. It also needs to take into account the importance of creating a culture that embraces the adults themselves, informing and consulting them on all decisions affecting them.

3. Consent & Confidentiality

Where abuse is suspected H&HHVC will aim to ensure:

- Adults have a right to independence, choice and self-determination. This right extends to them being able to have control over information about themselves and in most cases to determine what information is shared.

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- We will always urge the abused person to have their case referred to Social Services and/or the Metropolitan Police, but as long as we believe they have capacity to make decisions we will respect the person’s privacy if they refuse to allow this.
- We will not allow the person to impose confidentiality on the H&HHVC representative to whom they have disclosed the abuse. In all cases it must be made clear that all details of the conversation will be passed to a manager or the CEO.
- It is essential to consider whether the adult at risk is capable of giving informed consent. If they are, H&HHVC should obtain written consent to share information and should routinely agree and explain what information will be shared with other people.
- Consent to share both personal and financial information with other family members, carers and friends should be explicit with individuals named on the users record
- If information is shared, detailed notes should be made on the users record, stating why the information was shared and who the information was shared with
- If after a discussion with the adult at risk who has mental capacity they refuse any intervention their wishes will be respected unless:
 - there is a public interest, for example, not acting will put other adults or children at risk, or,
 - there is a duty of care to intervene, for example, a crime has been or may be committed.
- The user must be informed of the reduced service as a result of not sharing
- If information is shared after consent is refused, the details must be recorded in the user’s record.
- There must be absolute confidentiality within the H&HHVC and the abused person should be assured of this.
- If, after discussion with the manager and/or CEO, it is decided that the adult at risk is not capable of making an informed decision and abuse is suspected H&HHVC will alert Adult Social Services in London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council or the Metropolitan Police even if consent has not been given.
- All decisions and actions are taken in line with The Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- In a stressful situation a person suffering abuse may later change their mind about pursuing their complaint. The person who suspects abuse must be protected by careful case recording, which will make clear what was agreed with the person who is thought to be abused.
- All user information will be stored on the H&HHVC secure IT system. (please see IT policy for more details)
- Access to safeguarding information will be restricted to those staff who have a need to see it. This will be reviewed annually.
- Any safeguarding concerns involving a staff member or volunteer will not be recorded on the IT system, but dealt with on a secure case by case basis.
- It should be agreed what further support is available, either from within H&HHVC or from other specialist organisations. This is particularly important if the person does not wish to report the abuse, and care should be taken that members of staff and volunteers of H&HHVC are protected from taking on more than they are trained for.
- Members of staff, volunteers and trustees should never at any time allow themselves to be put at risk.

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4. Who is an adult at risk?

The term 'adult at risk' replaces 'vulnerable adult'. An adult at risk can be defined as:

- 18 and over
- People who may be in need of care because they are frail, learning or physically disabled, cognitively impaired or sensory impaired
- People with mental health needs such as dementia or a personality disorder
- People with a long-term condition/illness
- People who misuse alcohol or substances
- A carer such as a family member/friend, who provides personal assistance and care to adults, who is themselves subject to abuse
- A person who is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

5. What do we mean by abuse

Abuse is a breach of an individual's human rights. This may be a single act or happen repeatedly over a period of time. This may be because of:

- Physical or mental aggression
- Neglect
- Persuading someone to agree to something against his/her will
- Taking advantage of someone who is unable to give consent.

Abuse can be:

- Physical - Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- Sexual - Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- Psychological - Including and not limited to; emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, controlling behavior, intimidation and harassment.
- Financial or material – Including, and limited to, theft, fraud, exploitation and the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Neglect or acts of omission - Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care, social care, education services or misuse of medication, adequate nutrition or heating.
- Discriminatory - Including racist, sexist behaviour or harassment based on a person's ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, age or disability, and any other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- Institutional abuse - This can sometimes happen in residential homes, nursing homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect or poor practice that affects the whole of that service.
- Self-Neglect - is considered as the behaviour of a person that threatens his/her own health or safety. Self-neglect generally manifests itself in a person as a refusal or failure to provide himself/herself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medication (when indicated), and safety precautions.
- Modern Slavery
- Domestic Abuse
- Sexual Exploitation

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Signs of abuse can be:

Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Multiple bruising
- Fractures
- Burns
- Bed sores
- Fear
- Depression
- Unexplained weight loss
- Assault (can be intentional or reckless)

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Bruising
- Soreness around the genitals
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- A preoccupation with anything sexual
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy
- Rape – e.g. a male member of staff having sex with a Mental Health client (see Mental Health Act 1983)
- Indecent Assault

Possible Indicators of Psychological and Emotional Abuse

- Fear
- Depression
- Confusion
- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Deprivation of liberty could be false imprisonment. Aggressive shouting causing fear of violence in a public place may be an offence against Public Order Act 1986, or harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Possible Indicators of Financial and Material Abuse
- Unexplained withdrawals from the bank
- Unusual activity in the bank accounts
- Unpaid bills
- Unexplained shortage of money
- Reluctance on the part of the person with responsibility for the funds to provide basic food and clothes etc.
- Fraud
- Theft

Possible Indicators of Neglect and Acts of Omission

- Malnutrition
- Untreated medical problems
- Bed sores
- Confusion
- Over-sedation
- Deprivation of meals may constitute “wilful neglect”

Possible indicators of Discriminatory Abuse

- Abuse can be experienced as harassment, insults or similar actions due to race, religion, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation.
- Possible Indicators of Institutional Abuse
- Inflexible and non-negotiable systems and routines
- Lack of consideration of dietary requirements
- Name calling; inappropriate ways of addressing people
- Lack of adequate physical care – an unkempt appearance

Possible Indicators of Self-Neglect

- This includes various behaviours; disregarding one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings resulting in a risk that impact on the adult’s wellbeing, this could consist of behaviours such as hoarding.

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Possible indicators of Modern Slavery

- Modern Slavery is an international crime, it can include victims that have been brought from overseas, and vulnerable people in the UK. Slave Masters and Traffickers will deceive, coerce and force adults into a life of abuse, callous treatment and slavery.

Possible indicators of Domestic Abuse

Definition of Domestic Abuse:

- Incident of 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 regardless of gender or sexuality. Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage
- Age range extended down to 16 (for the purpose of the safeguarding adult arrangements, safeguarding children arrangements would be applied to a person under 18)

Possible indicators of Sexual Exploitation

- Sexual exploitation is a subset of sexual abuse. It involves exploitative situations and relationships where people receive 'something' (e.g. accommodation, alcohol, affection, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual activities

Evidence of any one indicator from the following lists should not be taken on its own as proof that abuse is occurring. However, it should alert staff to make further assessments and to consider other associated factors. The lists of possible indicators and examples of behaviour are not exhaustive and people may be subject to a number of abuse types at the same time

6. What should you do if you are concerned about abuse

If you are concerned that any adult at risk is experiencing abuse or neglect, whether it is by an employee, carer, family member, neighbour or other, it is your responsibility to report any concern immediately or within 4 hours, to a manager in H&HHVC or the CEO of H&HHVC. The CEO must be made aware of any safeguarding alerts.

After discussing your concerns with a manager or the CEO and agreeing an alert should be raised, the manager or CEO must then raise the alert to Adult Social Services in London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council within 24 hours. The quality of information given in raising an alert is very important and staff should familiarise themselves with what information is needed by looking at the alert form attached. (See Attachment 1)

Named contact for safeguarding:

Robert McRae-Adams (CEO)
Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care
Greenwood Community Centre
1a School Road, Hampton Hill. TW12 1QL
Tel: 020 8979 9662 E: ceo@greenwoodcommunity.org.uk

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7. How to raise a safeguarding alert

7.1. During office hours:

- Telephone: 020 8891 7971
- Text: 07800 002439
- Email: adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk
- Use an online form: https://www.richmond.gov.uk/report_adult_abuse#report_online

Office hours are 9am to 5.15pm, Monday to Thursday and 9am to 5.00pm on Friday.

7.2 Out of hours:

For emergency queries outside of office hours you can call London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Adults Emergency Duty Team

- Telephone: 020 8744 2442
- Minicom: 0845 600 7752
- Type Talk: 1800 1 020 8744 9414
-

The service is available from 5pm to 8am on Monday to Friday and 24 hours on weekends and Bank Holidays.

If there is **immediate risk** and emergency, action needs to be taken to protect the adult at risk, dial 999 to call the police or ambulance service.

8. Suspected crime

The police should be informed if a criminal activity is suspected. The police must be involved if

- There is an allegation from an adult to another person of sexual abuse
- There is a suspicion that sexual abuse has occurred
- There has been an alleged or suspected case of physical injury that has caused harm to an adult constituting an assault, actual or grievous bodily harm
- An alleged or suspected case of cruelty, including where an adult is ill-treated or neglected
- There are allegations or suspicions that involve unusual circumstances e.g. organised or institutional abuse
- There is an alleged or suspected case of financial abuse

If the crime is in the process of occurring call 999 otherwise call your local station using the following number: 101. Your manager or the CEO should be consulted at the earliest opportunity.

Non-emergency crime allegations should first be discussed with your manager or the CEO and then, if they agree, be referred to the Community Safety Unit at Teddington Police Station. This unit deals with hate crime and domestic violence as well as crime committed against vulnerable people.

- Community Safety Unit Telephone: 020 8247 5809
- Community Safety Unit Fax: 020 8247 5821

9. Regulated social care & health services

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If the adult at risk is allegedly abused by a member of staff who is employed by a regulated health or social care provider e.g. care home, hospital or home care agency, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) must be contacted and an alert must be raised (see above).

10. Mental capacity and consent

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 underpins the safeguarding process where the adult does not necessarily have the capacity. A mental capacity assessment will be carried out by a social worker to ascertain if the person has the capacity to make a decision regarding the abuse allegation and consent to a safeguarding investigation. They may then appoint an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA).

11. Logging and monitoring safeguarding

All alerts will be logged by a manager or CEO and added to the on the Case Record database, as appropriate, and monitored to ensure that all referrals have been investigated. If we share information without consent it must be recorded why we have shared it. After investigation is completed the outcomes will be logged as upheld or unfounded. Only managers and CEO will be able to see any safeguarding concerns or alerts raised. Information will be shared with other staff on a 'need to know' basis only.

12. What can you do to reduce the risk of harm

After the alert has been raised with Adult Social Services discuss with your manager if any other measures or risk assessments can be undertaken e.g. visiting in pairs. If an employee is involved then they may be instructed not to have any further contact until the case has been fully investigated.

All employees working at H&HHVC and all volunteers working alone or unsupervised, with adults at risk will have enhanced DBS checks and complete e-learning training on safeguarding. Training will be repeated every three years.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that adults at risk are protected from abuse. This may mean sharing relevant information with other agencies in a timely manner in order to prevent abuse occurring wherever possible but should be done in accordance with H&HHVC Confidentiality Policy. This might be information concerning someone's general vulnerability due to their health condition, lack of support network, isolation, dependency on one person, new friends etc.

Wherever possible you should be open and honest with the person themselves about the concerns that you have as the person has the right to know what information is being shared and with whom.

You can help an individual to protect himself / herself from abuse by enabling him/her to:

- access information about adult abuse
- access an independent advocacy scheme
- talk about any concerns they may have
- contact agencies including Adult and Community Services and the Police if required
- develop safe and supportive relationships with others

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Staff can minimise the risk of adult abuse by:

- developing an awareness of what adult abuse is by attending up to date training
- acknowledging that it could happen to any adult anywhere and at any time
- being alert to the support needs of carers
- being alert to risk factors
- attending staff meetings and regular supervision to discuss and learn about care practices which could be abusive
- accessing support from colleagues and managers as required

Carers can minimise the risk of adult abuse by:

- accessing support with caring for the adult at risk
- identifying appropriate ways to meet the adult at risks needs
- finding someone to talk to about the caring experience

13. Further information

London Multi Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedures can be found at:

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/6539/safeguarding_london_multi_agency_policy_and_procedures.pdf

14. Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- DBS checks Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Training Plan
- Child Safeguarding Policy

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