



SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION:

This document contains a Policy Statement (Part One) and Procedural Guidance (Part Two). The functions of each are set out below.

Section One – Policy Statement. The statement sets out the broad framework of principles within which this particular area of work will be carried out. It sets out the organisation's broad approach to the issue, including any aims and objectives.

Section Two – Procedural Guidance. The guidance sets out the specific tasks and duties which staff will be required to undertake, and it identifies those who are responsible for their implementation.

STAFFORDSHIRE WOMEN'S AID RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practice
- Data Protection, Confidentiality and Access to Information Policy
- Safety and Security Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedures
- Protection from Abuse Policy
- Service User Participation Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy

SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

SECTION ONE – POLICY STATEMENT

This policy and related procedures is set out as part of Staffordshire Women's Aid's overall aim to safeguard the welfare of those adults using the services who are particularly vulnerable or at risk.

This requires us to:

- Listen to, value, encourage and support those we work with.
- Provide clear internal procedures for identifying and dealing with concerns about possible abuse and ensure their implementation.
- Provide effective management for staff, students and volunteers through supervision, support, and training.
- Adopt and promote a code of conduct for staff.
- Include continuous risk assessment within our work with service users.
- Recruit safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Share information about adult protection and good practice with service users, staff, students and volunteers.
- Develop and maintain effective information sharing with statutory services and other agencies, involving service users as appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and other Adult Safeguarding Boards, steering groups or working group initiatives.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board

The Board of Trustees has a legal responsibility and moral duty to ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded from all forms of abuse whilst in receipt of SWA services and support.

They will ensure that:

- a) There is a designated Safeguarding Champion on the Board.
- b) Safeguarding incidents or failures are regularly reported to the Board.
- c) Safeguarding arrangements within SWA are regularly monitored, reviewed and reported to the Board.
- d) Risk is identified and managed, and changes are reported to the Board.
- e) All trustees and all those involved in the delivery of services are subject to vetting through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or police checks appropriate to their role as outlined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.
- f) All trustees, staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate, effective and regular training enabling them to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding concerns.
- g) Ensure that records and reports are stored securely and in accordance with relevant legislation.

h) Will report to the Charity Commission if:

- A service user has been, or is alleged to have been, abused or mistreated by someone employed by or closely connected with SWA.
- There has been an incident where someone was abused or mistreated, and this was related to the activities of SWA.
- There has been a breach of procedures which put a service user at risk, including the failure to carry out criminal record checks which would have identified an individual who was prohibited from working with children or vulnerable adults.

The current designated Safeguarding Champion on the Board is: Sue Howard

Adult Safeguarding Officer

Staffordshire Women's Aid has a designated Adult Safeguarding Officer. The Adult Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are reported appropriately across the organisation and will ensure that the safeguarding of vulnerable adults is recognised as everybody's business. They will provide advice to members of the organisation on safeguarding issues. If you have queries about this policy, or any issues related to safeguarding vulnerable adults, you can contact the Adult Safeguarding Officer, or alternatively, consult with your Line Manager.

The Adult Safeguarding Officer will ensure:

- a) That all employees and volunteers are provided with necessary and appropriate information, instruction, training, and supervision to ensure that they are able to effectively safeguard the vulnerable adults that they support.
- b) That all employees and volunteers follow safeguarding vulnerable adults procedures.
- c) Effective reporting and appropriate level of investigation into any safeguarding incidents and allegations, ensuring appropriate action and follow up.
- d) That all employees and volunteers are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and duties as individuals and employees.
- e) That any breach of procedure or allegation against a staff member is reported to the CEO.

The Adult Safeguarding Officer is: Melissa Gill or in her absence, Sue Lee.

Tel: 07782 260208
07939 227162

Email: melissa.gill@staffordshirewomensaid.org
sue.lee@staffordshirewomensaid.org

1. What is a Vulnerable Adult?

People who may be included in the definition of a 'Vulnerable Person' include, but are not restricted to:

- People with a learning disability
- People with physical disabilities
- People with a sensory impairment
- People with mental health needs, including dementia
- People who misuse substances or alcohol
- People who are physically or mentally frail

Service users outside these definitions may also be vulnerable due to domestic and sexual abuse and violence, low self-esteem, social exclusion, offending history, homelessness, ethnicity, immigration status etc. It can sometimes be hard to decide if a person is vulnerable within the accepted definition of a vulnerable adult. Abuse of a vulnerable adult may include domestic or sexual abuse. If you are in any doubt, you should consult with your Line Manager. Our named adult safeguarding officer is Sue Lee (Operations Manager).

The Care Act (2014)

The Care Act 2014 is the key legislation on the safeguarding of vulnerable adults, and the duties of local authorities in this area. The Act outlines that from April 2015 each local authority must:

- Make enquiries, or ensure others do so, if it believes an adult is subject to, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. An enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to stop or prevent abuse or neglect, and if so, by whom.
- Set up a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) with core membership from the local authority, the Police and the NHS (specifically the local Clinical Commissioning Group/s) and the power to include other relevant bodies.
- Arrange, where appropriate, for an independent advocate to represent and support an adult who is the subject of a safeguarding enquiry or Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) where the adult has 'substantial difficulty' in being involved in the process and where there is no other appropriate adult to help them.
- Co-operate with each of its relevant partners in order to protect adults experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

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

The statutory guidance enshrines the six principles of safeguarding:

1. Empowerment - presumption of person led decisions and informed consent
2. Prevention - it is better to take action before harm occurs
3. Proportionality - proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
4. Protection - support and representation for those in greatest need
5. Partnerships - local solutions through services working with their communities
6. Accountability - accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

If in doubt about the definition of a Vulnerable Adult, staff and volunteers should always discuss this with their line manager. There is also information on the Staffordshire County Council Safeguarding Website, and this policy aligns itself to the Staffordshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults approach.

2. Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult

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

- Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment.
- Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism
- Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation
- Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc.
- Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition
- Domestic violence, whether physical, psychological, financial or sexual, and including stalking.
- Forced marriage - There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage.
- Female Genital Mutilation.
- So called 'Honour' Based Abuse (HBA).
- Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment
- Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
- Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions
- Institutional abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity
- Modern slavery
- Trafficking.
- Grooming within a terrorism agenda. Staffordshire Women's Aid will as part of its training programme ensure all staff are aware of the government's PREVENT strategy, and of the potential impact on vulnerable adults of those seeking to promote terrorist agendas.

3. The Rights of Vulnerable Adults

Vulnerable adults using the services of Staffordshire Women's Aid have the right to:

- Be made aware of this policy, taking time to communicate it appropriately. This should be a proactive approach, sharing the policy with carers or family members where appropriate.
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously.
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout.
- To be involved in any process as appropriate.
- to receive information about the outcome.

4. Informed consent

In certain situations where an adult safeguarding referral is to be made or discussed, and in working with a vulnerable adult, a decision may need to be made as to whether he/she has the capacity for informed consent. In doing so, the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) will need to be central to the decision as follows:

- A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established she/he lacks it.
- A person is not to be treated as unable to make decision unless all practicable steps to help Her/him do so have been taken.
- A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because she/he makes an unwise decision.

- Anything done for or on behalf of the person must be in her/his best interests.
- Before making the decision, other less restrictive options should be considered.

It will be important to consult with the named safeguarding officer if any doubt remains, and decisions should be made with the oversight of a manager.

5. Training and dissemination of policy and procedures

Staffordshire Women's Aid will ensure that all staff, volunteers and trustees undertake training on understanding and working with vulnerable adults, accessing Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults training Level 1 at a minimum.

An understanding of this policy, and related policies, forms part of staff and volunteer induction at Staffordshire Women's Aid. Any reviews or amendments will be disseminated to all staff and volunteers in accordance with the charity's procedures in regard to key policies.

6. Protection from Abuse within Staffordshire Women's Aid

Staffordshire Women's Aid aims to prevent any form of abuse towards a vulnerable adult from within the organisation's staff and volunteer team. This preventative approach is outlined in the Protection from Abuse Policy which all team members are directed to familiarise with.

SECTION TWO

PROCEDURES FOR VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. Procedures

All those making a complaint, allegation, or expression of concern, whether staff, service, users, carers, or members of the public should be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously.
- Their comments will usually be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk.
- If service users, they will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation.
- If staff, they will be given support and afforded protection.

If an allegation is made to a member of staff or there is a suspicion of abuse, then the member of staff should inform their line manager as soon as possible.

Whatever the circumstances, and whatever decision is made, the process must always be recorded and added to the Safeguarding Log on Oasis (see appendix 1). Even where a decision has been made not to make an adult safeguarding referral, this should be logged, and the reason for the decision must be recorded.

In all cases referrals will be made to the local authority where the abuse is believed to have taken place. In most cases at Staffordshire Women's Aid, this will be to Staffordshire County Council:

Tel: 0345 604 2719 (Monday – Thursday: 8:30am - 5pm) (Friday: 8:30am - 4:30pm)

If you have a concern about the safety of a vulnerable adult and need to report it overnight, over a weekend or on a Bank Holiday, contact the Emergency Duty Service:

Tel: 0345 604 2886

Where a crime has taken place, or the vulnerable adult may be in immediate danger contact should be made with Staffordshire Police. In emergencies dial 999 or if less urgent dial 101.

If a staff member has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the person to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

- The scale of the abuse
- The risk of harm to others
- The capacity of the victim to understand the issues of abuse and consent

If you think someone who has care and support needs is being abused or you think their safety is at risk, then it is important to report your concerns as detailed above. You must never assume that somebody else will recognise and report what you have seen or heard.

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Adult Social Services, then it **should** be reported.

Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred, or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

2. Equal Opportunities and Diversity

It is important where working with vulnerable adults to ensure that Staffordshire Women's Aid's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy is implemented. This means that account is taken of the protected characteristics of individuals including age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, or maternity. SWA aims to ensure that the differing needs of such groups are met, and the challenges they may face are taken into account. Our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Action Plan evidences our proactive approach in working continually to acknowledge and value differences and respond to as wide a range of needs as possible.

3. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential information is necessary in order to protect a vulnerable adult. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual and on a strict 'need to know' basis, and compliant with GDPR (as outlined in the Data Protection, Confidentiality and Access to Information Policy).

4. Recruitment and Training

The organisation will ensure that all new staff, student placements and volunteers whose roles include working with vulnerable adults are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised in line with our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

5. Disclosure Checks

As part of the recruitment procedure, all newly appointed staff that have contact with vulnerable adults will be disclosure checked at the appropriate level for their role. It is the policy of Staffordshire Women's Aid to re-check staff and volunteers every three years.

Staffordshire Women's Aid Safeguarding Log – OASIS

Safeguarding - Anne Other (28336)  **Cost of Living**  **SAVE**

Details **Referrals In (0)** **Referrals Out (0)** **Children (0)** **Service Record (0)** **Notes (0)** 

[Click here to add a new safeguarding incident to this case](#)

Start Date	Alert Raised	Alert Raised By	Associated Service	Outcome	Status	
24/04/2024	-	-	Refuge	-	Open	

Safeguarding Details

Start Date

24/04/2024



Closed Date

Associated Service

Refuge



Safeguarding Alert Raised☐

Date Alert Raised

Alert Raised By

- Please Select -



Safeguarding Alert Notes