

ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Policy Statement

This policy promotes zero-tolerance of harm to all adults from abuse, exploitation or neglect. The policy will establish clear guidance for reporting concerns that an adult is, or may be, at risk of being harmed and which also helps to prevent abuse in the first place.

We have a duty to:

- Protect, as well as a duty to care;
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harm/abuse/neglect/exploitation;
- Deliver training;
- Report concerns immediately;
- Understand that a delay may place individual's at further risk;
- Co-operate and be in partnership with other agencies;
- Take our responsibilities seriously as stated within the policy;
- Appropriately share information that may assist in the protection of others and in the promotion of good practice.

These guidelines move away from the concept of 'vulnerability' in adulthood and towards establishing the concept of 'risk of harm' in adulthood. In doing so, the guidelines place the responsibility for any harm caused with those who perpetrate it and not with the person who has been harmed.

Key Definitions:

An **Adult at risk of harm** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their;

A. Personal characteristics

AND/OR

B. Life Circumstances

An **'Adult in need of protection'** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their;

A. Personal Characteristics

AND/OR

B. Life circumstance

C. AND who is **unable to protect** their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests.

D. AND where the **action or inaction of another person or persons** is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of 'adult in need of protection' **either** A. or B. must be present, in addition to **both** elements C. and D. *This decision would involve professional judgement on a case by case basis.*

Adult Safeguarding, DHSSPSNI

Forms of abuse;

The types of abuse are not exhaustive, nor listed in any order of priority.

- **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty.

- **Sexual violence and abuse**

Sexual abuse is any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (also known as groping). Sexual violence can be found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background or sexual orientation.

- **Psychological/emotional abuse**

This is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, withholding security, love or support, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.

- **Financial abuse**

The actual or attempted theft, fraud or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion or deception. This may include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property or inheritance.

- **Institutional abuse**

This is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult, by a regime or individuals, in settings within which adults who may be at risk reside or use. Institutional abuse may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines which violate their dignity and human rights and place adults at risk of harm. Institutional abuse may occur within a culture that denies, restricts or curtails the privacy, dignity, choice and independence. It involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services, and includes a failure to ensure that the necessary preventative and/or protective measures are in place.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is the deliberate withholding, or failure through a lack of knowledge, understanding or awareness, to provide appropriate and adequate care and support, which is necessary for

the adult to carry out daily living activities. It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health and social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, heating or clothing, failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk. Note that self-neglect and self-harm do not fall within the scope of this definition.

- **Exploitation**

This is the intentional maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person; to take selfish and unfair advantage of another person or situation usually but not always for personal gain from using them as a commodity. It may manifest itself in many forms including slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse, or human trafficking.

- **Domestic violence and abuse**

Domestic violence and abuse is 'threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation. Domestic violence and abuse is essentially a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another. It is usually frequent and persistent. It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life partner or any other person who has a close relationship with the victim. It occurs right across society, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic or religious group, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or geography.

- **Human trafficking**

This involves the acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purpose of exploiting them. It can take many forms, such as domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of human trafficking can come from all walks of life; they can be male or female; children or adults; and they can may come from migrant or indigenous communities.

- **Hate crime**

Hate crime is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hate towards a person's actual or perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion or gender identity.

Lisburn Downtown Centre believe that:

- The welfare of the adult at risk is paramount.
- Adults at risk regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

2. The policy aim is to

- Promote good practice to ensure all adults at risk are appropriately supported during their time at the Lisburn Downtown Centre, and to allow all volunteers and people working with the Lisburn Downtown Centre to make informed and confident responses to specific adult safeguarding issues.
- Influence the way the organisation thinks about harm to children and adults resulting from abuse, exploitation or neglect by embedding a culture which recognises every person's right to respect and dignity, honesty, humanity and compassion in every aspect of their lives.
- Prevent and reduce the risk of harm to adults, while supporting their right to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices free from coercion.
- Promote a continuous learning approach to safeguarding.

3. Good Practice Guidelines

- Always work in an open environment.
- Treat all members with respect and dignity.
- Where possible, always ensure that someone in authority from the Lisburn Downtown Centre is present at workshops and other events.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from participants and only engage in physical contact when necessary.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Volunteers should not transport any member in their vehicle.

4. Practices Never to be Sanctioned.

The following should never be sanctioned.

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Sharing a room with an adult at risk on your own (The exception will be the Co-ordinator who is vetted by Access NI and who, to carry out their duties effectively, may from time to time have to conduct a brief confidential interview with a member on their own).
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to an adult at risk, even in fun.

- Reducing an adult at risk to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing allegations made by an adult at risk to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Inviting or allowing an adult at risk to stay with you at your home.

5. Responding to allegations or suspicions

Trust representative phone number	9-5pm	(028) 92 66 51 81
	Out of hours	(028) 90 56 54 44

Suspicions

- If you see or suspect abuse of an adult at risk you should inform the Downtown Coordinator who will record information and if deemed serious enough will inform Trust representatives.
- The Downtown Coordinator will make the person with legal responsibility for the individual (e.g. social worker, care manager or CPN) aware of the problem.

Accidents and Injuries

- If an adult at risk is injured whilst involved in a group at Lisburn Downtown Centre you must make a record of the injury in the accident book and inform the Downtown Coordinator and carer and/or referrer.
- If an adult at risk arrives at Lisburn Downtown Centre with an obvious physical injury you should make the Coordinator aware. The injury should be recorded in the accident book and note that the injury was not sustained during the activity. You should inform Local health and Social Care Trust using designated contact numbers in regards to adults at risk.

Signs of Abuse

Abuse and neglect can be difficult to spot. You should be alert to the following possible signs of abuse and neglect:

- Depression, self-harm or suicide attempts
- Difficulty making friends
- Fear or anxiety
- The person looks dirty or is not dressed properly

- The person never seems to have money
- The person has an injury that is difficult to explain (such as bruises, finger marks, 'non-accidental' injury, neck, shoulders, chest and arms)
- The person has signs of a pressure ulcer
- The person is experiencing insomnia
- The person seems frightened, or frightened of physical contact
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- The person is withdrawn, changes in behaviour.

Allegations

- If a complaint or allegation of abuse is made against a member of Lisburn Downtown Centre, other volunteers or workers, it would be the responsibility of Lisburn Downtown Centre to inform social services.
- Social services will liaise with the relevant departments on a 'need-to-know' basis and will, if appropriate, inform the police. It is the responsibility of the authorities to determine whether abuse has occurred.
- Lisburn Downtown Centre will follow its own disciplinary Policy to investigate the incident.

If someone confides in you

It is possible that an adult at risk who is or has suffered abuse will confide in you. The following action should be taken if there are concerns of abuse:

- Listen carefully to what is said. Allow the person to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. **Do NOT ask leading questions or suggestive questions, the member must tell you what happened in their own words.**
- Don't promise to 'keep it a secret'. Use the first opportunity you have to say that you will need to share the information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the adult at risk that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the adult at risk what you are going to do next.

- Speak immediately to the person's social worker and phone the trust designated numbers for adults at risk.
- As soon as possible after disclosing the conversation, make a note of what was said, using the individual's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, who gave the information to you. Ensure this information is stored in a confidential manner and only kept until information is shared with the relevant bodies.

Adult Safeguarding Champion; _____

Responsibilities of Safeguarding Champion

Prevention and Protection in Partnership requires us to have an identified Adult Safeguarding Champion in place.

The role of the Safeguarding Champion is to;

- Provide information and support on adult safeguarding within the organisation.
- Arrange training.
- Provide advice and support to volunteers who have concerns about the signs of harm, and ensure this is reported.
- Establish contact with the relevant Health and Social Care Trust in respect of any safeguarding concerns.

References

Adult Safeguarding, Prevention and Protection Partnership (DHSSPSNI)

Taking Care of All, Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council