



# **GATESHEAD SAFEGUARDING ADULT BOARD**

## **Practice Guide Note 5 Policy Guidance for Partner Organisations**

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# Guidance on the Development of Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures

## Who is this Guidance for?

This guidance is aimed primarily at private and voluntary sector organisations that provide health or social care services for adults who have needs for care and support. It provides recommended content and a suggested structure for safeguarding policies and procedures. Each organisation will be different and therefore will need to use this document to create a policy and a procedure that will accurately reflect the needs of their organisation, their staff members and service users and their families.

## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Considerations:

Your organisation's Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure should detail the steps, which will be followed where there is a concern that an adult is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing abuse/ neglect. This procedure should ensure a timely response for dealing with your concerns. It is important to have your policy and procedure in place as it is vital that your organisation and its employees both recognise their responsibilities to prevent abuse and know how to respond to allegations of abuse. Do not re-invent the wheel as much of the information that your organisation will need has already been detailed in this guidance document or within Gateshead Safeguarding Adult Multi- Agency Policies and Procedures. Your policy and procedure will need to be relevant to your organisation. It is important to consider how systems operate within your organisation and that these are reflected within your policy and procedure.

Use this guidance as a starting point. There is no requirement to adopt the structure suggested within this guidance document. Tailor your policy and procedure to the needs of the service users and to your organisation; however please ensure that both your policy and procedure are consistent with Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Multi- Agency policy and procedure Use this guidance as a starting point. There is no requirement to adopt the structure suggested within this guidance document. Tailor your policy and procedure to the needs of the service users and to your organisation; however please ensure that both your policy and procedure are consistent with Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Multi- Agency policy and procedure.

Ensure that staff members, employees and volunteers have a thorough knowledge of your policy and procedure. A policy will have no value unless people are aware of it and know how to apply it. Make sure it is referred to in induction programmes, training courses and supervision sessions.

Do not forget your responsibility to children and young people. Even if your organisation works with adults with needs for care and support, your organisation still has a duty to act on concerns relating to the safety and wellbeing of children or young people. Make links to your Local Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures. It is important that your organisation has a system in place for updating this policy on a regular basis, to ensure that it reflects any changes in the law and responds to examples of good practice. This policy should be reviewed on an annual basis and the procedure should set out who should be responsible for undertaking this review and what measures are in place to disseminate new information to staff and volunteers.

# Introduction

## Section summary:

Use this section to set out your organisation's commitment to safeguarding those adults who have needs for care and support. It is this section that tells your staff, employees and volunteers, as well as service users, how important the issue of safeguarding adults is to your organisation

## Example content:

At (name of organisation), we firmly believe that we all have the right to live our life free from abuse.

### Your organisation is committed to:

- Ensuring that any allegations of abuse are effectively managed and that staff and volunteers fully understand their duty to act;
- Managing its services in a way that minimises the risk of abuse/neglect from occurring;
- Supporting adults who have needs for care and support who are experiencing or have experienced abuse; and
- Working with adults who have needs for care and support and other agencies to end abuse that is taking place.

### In achieving these aims, your organisation will:

- Ensure that all managers, employees and volunteers have access to and are familiar with your respective safeguarding adult policy and procedure and will understand their responsibilities within it;
- Ensure concerns or allegations of abuse and neglect are always taken seriously;
- Ensure the Mental Capacity Act is used appropriately to make decisions on behalf of those adults with needs for care and support and who are unable to make particular decisions for themselves;
- Ensure all staff and volunteers receive training in relation to safeguarding adults to a level that is appropriate to their role;
- Ensure that service users and their relatives or informal carers have access to information on all aspects of Safeguarding and MCA/DoLS practice and process with particular emphasis on how to report concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect; and
- Ensure that there is a named lead person to promote safeguarding awareness and practice within your organisation.

Your policy and procedure should be developed to be consistent with Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedure.

# Policy Definitions

## Section summary:

Use this section to describe and define terms relating to adult safeguarding so that everyone in your organisation can refer to your policy and procedure and understand the information that the documents contain.

## Example Content:

### Who do the Safeguarding duties apply to?

The Care Act 2014 places Safeguarding Adults on a statutory footing. Chapter 14 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance, issued under the Act, replaces the 'No secrets' guidance.

The guidance notes state that safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support;
- 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 overarching purpose of adult safeguarding is to protect an adult's right to live in safely and to be free from abuse and neglect. It is also crucial to safeguard adults in a way that supports them to make choices and to have control over how they live in order improve their quality of life.

It is important for organisations to promote the wellbeing of adults in their safeguarding arrangements and to make sure that organisations and the individuals working within an organisation are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities.

Information regarding your organisation's policy and procedure on Adult Safeguarding and Mental Capacity Act/ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards should be made available and accessible to help people to understand what abuse is, how to prevent abuse and how to raise a concern about a person who may be experiencing abuse or neglect.

### What are abuse and neglect?

There are no definitive explanations or definitions of what would constitute abuse or neglect.

Abuse should generally be regarded as behaviour by an individual, which violates or could violate the human or civil rights of an adult with needs for care and support.

Chapter 14 of the Statutory Guidance notes, issued under the Care Act 2014, provides further information of the more common forms of abuse and neglect and also make specific reference to financial abuse, domestic abuse and self-neglect.

In this section information should be provided about the different types of abuse. It is important to acknowledge within this statement who abuses and where abuse may occur. All staff members and volunteers should be familiar with this information.

Your organisation must recognise the following:

- Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated act;
- Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect including spouses, partners, family members, neighbours and professionals;
- It is more likely that the person responsible for abusing an adult with needs for care and support is known to the adult but is also in a position of trust; and
- Abuse can happen anywhere including in a person's own home, in hospital, at college or in a care home.

You will need to link this information to how your staff are made aware of what constitutes abuse and what work/training is in place to support them to recognise signs and symptoms.

## Key Roles

### **Section summary:**

Use this section to describe which people/posts are responsible for the various safeguarding roles within your organisation. It is helpful to be as clear as possible so there is no confusion in the event that an incident of abuse needs to be responded to.

### **Example content:**

#### **Organisational Lead for Safeguarding Adults**

Every organisation that works with adults should have in place a named person who is responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding Adults issues that may arise. A deputy should be available in their absence. These individuals should be trained in Safeguarding Adults, have a good knowledge of Gateshead's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults from Abuse Policy and Procedures and fully understand their responsibilities, which should be clearly outlined within this procedural document.

Your policy and procedure should include the following information:

- A statement of purpose to commit to promoting wellbeing, preventing harm and responding to concerns;
- Full names, role title and responsibilities of those nominated as organisational leads;
- Contact details for those nominated people including telephone number, mobile number and emergency contact number;
- Information on how to record allegations of abuse or neglect, any enquiries and subsequent action;
- Information on how to access advice and support both within and outside of operational hours;
- Information on support services and expert advice

The responsibilities of the organisational leads should include:

- Ensuring staff and volunteers are aware of what they should do if they have concerns about someone who is/or has experienced abuse or neglect;
- Ensuring concerns are clearly recorded;
- Making certain that concerns are acted upon and alerts are made to Adult Social Care Direct;
- Following up any referrals and ensure concerns have been addressed;
- Ensuring good practice with regard to confidentiality and security;
- Making certain that staff and volunteers who are working with adults with needs of care and support are appropriately supported and receive supervision.

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers, regardless of level of seniority, within the organisation to 'Raise a Concern', about the welfare and safety of adults at risk.

Every member of staff and volunteer has a responsibility to raise a concern, by informing their line manager or designated safeguarding lead for safeguarding adults

# Safe Employment

## Section summary:

This section should outline the commitment of your organisation to safe employment, thereby reducing the risk of exposing adults with needs of care and support to people who are unsuitable to work with them. This section need not be extensive and could cross reference to your organisation's relevant Human Resources Policies/Procedures.

## Example content:

### An example statement may include:

*"Our organisation is committed to achieving best practise in respect to the safe recruitment of employees and volunteers".*

It is recommended that you refer to your own organisation's Human Resources policies for further information

# Prevention

## Section summary:

This section details the measures that your organisation has in place to reduce the risk of abuse occurring and should make reference to key policies that work to prevent or reduce abuse occurring. It is also an opportunity to further consider the staff ratio and also empowerment work that you can undertake with your service users to inform them about the prevalence of abuse as well as what support can be offered

## Example content:

Key Policies include;

- The Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance, issued under the Care Act 2014, October 2014
- Local Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures

It will also be important to link this policy to other policies in place within your organisation these may include:

- Equal Rights and Diversity
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs)
- Whistle blowing – Public Interest Disclosure policy
- Confidentiality
- The Investigation of Complaints
- Recruitment and Selection.
- Disciplinary and Grievance.
- Incident Reporting Procedures
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- The handling of money and personal effects



# Safeguarding Adult Procedures

## Section summary:

The following section should provide clear guidelines for staff and volunteers to follow if they have concerns about a person they are working with; it is a good idea to incorporate a flowchart outlining the stages, as it can be easier for staff to follow

## Example content:

It is important to state that your organisation has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse and neglect and that doing nothing is not an option. If a person discloses abuse directly or abuse is witnessed, use the following good practice principles to respond to them:

- Reassure the person concerned;
- Listen to what they are saying;
- Keep calm;
- Tell them all information provided will be treated seriously;
- Do not promise to keep a secret – (duty of care);
- Factual records should be kept of what they have disclosed; and
- Do not investigate or ask probing questions.

Your responsibilities are:

- To call an ambulance if required;
- To call the police if a crime has been committed;
- To preserve evidence;
- To keep yourself, staff and service users safe;
- To inform your named person for safeguarding, you cannot keep this information a secret, even if the person asks you to; and
- To factually record what you have witnessed, has been disclosed, what has happened and any actions taken.

If you do not feel that your manager/safeguarding lead is taking an issue of possible abuse or neglect seriously or if there may be a delay in reporting which may leave the person a further risk, then you should consider making the safeguarding alert yourself.

Making a report is called raising an Alert. Anyone can make an Alert, however this would usually be undertaken by a manager/ safeguarding lead within the organisation.

The nominated person for Safeguarding/Safeguarding lead can contact the Safeguarding Adults Coordination Team, Gateshead Council if they need further advice or guidance.

If it is appropriate and there is consent from the individual, or there is good reason to override consent, such as risk to others, the named person for safeguarding can then raise an alert with

**Adult Social Care Direct - 0191 4337033**

If the adult experiencing abuse lacks capacity, an alert will be raised without that person's consent. The person making the safeguarding alert should contact the adult's family or advocate to ensure that information is shared with them appropriately.

It is possible that this alert may need to progress to the next stages of the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Adults from Abuse Procedures and it is important that the nominated person for safeguarding has an overview of this process so it can be explained to the person concerned and support can be offered through the process.

Information on the safeguarding adult's process should be provided to the individual concerned.

You need to ensure that your organisation's policy and procedure incorporates the prescribed timescales that are reflected in Gateshead's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults from Abuse Policy and Procedure.

Your policy and procedure should include guidance on the importance of accurate record keeping. Training should be provided to members of staff relating to what information should be recorded and how this information should be recorded.

It is essential for your organisation to retain such information so that this information can be easily collated and shared as required. The Care Act 2014 gives Safeguarding Adults Board the power to request information to assist the Board to carry out its duties.



# Managing Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer

## **Section summary:**

All organisations that work with adults need to ensure that they have procedures in place to deal with allegations of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer. This is to demonstrate their commitment to Safeguarding Adults and acknowledge that abusers can be workers within the organisation.

## **Example content:**

Links need to be made to Whistleblowing, Complaints and Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

This procedure needs to show the organisations commitment to ensuring that allegations made against a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly.

If a member of staff is thought to have committed a criminal offence, the police will be notified. If a crime has been witnessed, the police will be notified.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount and it should be ensured that they are safe and not in contact with the alleged perpetrator(s)

Your organisation needs to ensure that any allegation is managed appropriately and is coordinated alongside any safeguarding adult's activity.



# Record Keeping and Managing Confidential Information

## **Section summary:**

This section should include details of how any allegations, disclosures or suspicions are managed, to include a place to record incidents, detailing what information needs to be collated.

## **Example content:**

Reassurance that this information will be kept in a secure place and only shared with those who need to know should be included.

Reference should be made to your organisations confidentiality policy and data protection policy.



If you would like any more information or to discuss this document further - please contact a member of the Safeguarding Adults Board on 0191 433 3990, email: [safeguardingadultsboard@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadultsboard@gateshead.gov.uk)