

HARC SAFEGUARDING ADULT POLICY

HARC is committed to promoting the welfare of those who are vulnerable or at risk, and to supporting their right to be protected from harm or abuse. **Safeguarding is Everybody's Business** and HARC staff and volunteers will work together to prevent and minimise abuse and act promptly when there are allegations, suspicions or concerns relating to possible abuse.

What is Adult Abuse?

Abuse is about the misuse of the power and control that one person has over another. It may be a single or a repeated act. A precise definition is difficult, but it most commonly involves an intentional, reckless, or dishonest act by a person or group, who is trusted by the adult.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from harm and abuse

Types of Abuse include;

- o **Physical** e.g. hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, inappropriate use of restraint,
- o **Sexual** e.g. forcing a person to take part in sexual acts that they don't want to or can't appropriately consent to.
- o **Emotional** e.g. threatening, humiliation, controlling, harassment, bullying, verbal abuse
- o **Financial/material** e.g. taking money or anything of value
- o **Domestic violence** – threatening, violent, controlling or coercive behaviour
- o **Organisational** - occurs when adults don't receive the expected level of care from a service provider e.g. supported accommodation provider and includes neglecting their needs, poor level of care, being bullied or mistreated.
- o **Neglect** e.g. ignoring medical or care needs, withholding medication, inadequate nutrition, lack of heating
- o **Discriminatory/hate incidents** e.g. racist, sexist, anti-disabled & other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

What to do if abuse is alleged or suspected?

Abuse can happen to anyone, but some adults are more at risk of abuse or harm because their situation makes them more vulnerable e.g. isolated, homeless, poor mental health, alcohol/drug dependency. Therefore, it is important that all HARC staff and volunteers understand what constitutes abuse or harm and know what to do if they have concerns

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION - If you think abuse has, or may have, occurred you **must** act on your concerns, and follow these three steps;

1. Make Safe - Deal with the immediate needs of the person as appropriate. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking urgent medical treatment if required. If someone is in immediate danger call 999

2. Inform – Tell the HARC Safeguarding Lead (Project Lead) immediately about your concerns. If they cannot be located tell the HARC Shift Lead or Deputy Shift Lead

3. Record – record details of the allegation or concern as soon as possible, including date, what was said/observed, appearance and behaviour of the victim, any other information you consider relevant.

N.B. You do not have to be ‘sure’ that abuse has taken place before acting and reporting your concerns. If a person discloses abuse, or tells you something concerning, explain that you need to share the information and ask their consent to do so. However, failure to obtain consent must not stop you sharing the information, as the welfare of the individual is paramount. Explain that issues around abuse cannot be ignored, but that the information will be dealt with as sensitively as possible.

What happens next?

The safeguarding lead will listen to your concerns, take them seriously and then act accordingly. This may include;

- Gathering more information
- Referring/seeking advice from Adult Social Care Access team- tel. 0114 273 4908 (24hrs)

A referral or discussion with Adult Social Care should always takes place if;

- A crime has, or could have been, committed
- The allegation involves a member of staff or volunteer
- There has been a clear disclosure of abuse or reasonable grounds to suspect that abuse has taken place
- Other vulnerable adults are at risk

Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the concern must be recorded with the reason for the decision.

Finally, remember, *Safeguarding is Everybody’s Business*, and we must all listen to adults, be alert to any signs of abuse, harm or neglect and always act on any concerns.