**Safeguarding Adults Policy**

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| Created by | Kia Kelly-Hollin |
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| Lead person responsible | Kia Kelly-Hollin |

**1. Introduction**

* 1. This policy lays out Pathways to Independence UK’s (PTIUK) commitment to ensuring safeguarding practice complies with the principles as set out in our safeguarding policy statement.
  2. This policy sets out the responsibilities of paid staff, volunteers and students in relation to promoting a safeguarding best practice culture and the safeguarding of adults.
  3. We define adults as anyone over the age of eighteen. Typically, we support care experienced young adults between eighteen and twenty-one years old as our residents. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children Policy.
  4. This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and good practice guidance that seeks to protect adults in England such as the Care Act 2014 for instance; as well as legislation relevant to supporting formerly relevant Looked After Children such as the Social Work Act 2017.
  5. It is important that we remove barriers for residents in relation to learning to live in the UK which includes safeguarding processes, to promote acceptance of young people within our communities and to challenge discrimination of any kind in order to uphold our resident’s basic human rights. Staff will be supported to do this at all times.
  6. Ensuring that safeguarding related information is accessible may mean accessing a trusted interpreter for important conversations. This accessibility requirement relates to all aspects of this policy and of staff practice.
  7. We will endeavour to take a trauma and wellbeing informed approach to all safeguarding issues to prevent further re-traumatising or direct negative impact on their mental health. This is important because some young people and adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of adverse childhood experiences, displacement, communication needs, level of dependency or other circumstances for example.
  8. Our approach to safeguarding adults is based on the principles that all individuals deserve the right to live free from abuse, fear of abuse, or neglect.
  9. We base our approach to safeguarding adults on the principles of Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership, and Accountability.
  10. Our procedure for managing safeguarding is based on these seven R’s - Recognise, Respond, Report, Record, Refer, Risk Manage and Reassure.

**2. Definitions**

2.1 **Safeguarding adults** means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect and it includes self-neglect in some circumstances.

2.2 An **adult at risk** is a person, aged eighteen or over, who has the need for care and support and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

2.3 A **Care Leaver** is a young person who was previously Looked After as a Child by the Local Authority and is eligible for ongoing Local Authority support as a result.

2.4 **Staff** – for the purposes of this policy staff relates to all paid staff, volunteers and students at PTIUK

**3. Adult Safeguarding Principles**

3.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to follow safeguarding adult principles.

3.2 **Empowerment –** vulnerable adults deserve to be supported to recognise abuse and to be empowered to report it and get help. Adults should be empowered through informed consent to make their own decisions. However, in the context of adult safeguarding these rights can be overridden in certain circumstances such as life-threatening situations for instance.

3.3 **Prevention -** is the work undertaken to prevent abuse by taking positive action on suspicion of abuse or neglect. Early identification of potential risks can ensure appropriate and timely action. All staff should be able to recognise signs of abuse and take appropriate action to prevent abuse and will be supported at all times to do this.

3.4 **Proportionality -** means we should act proportionately to the risk that is identified. The concept of proportionality is in the Human Rights Act, 1998. Our interventions may range from our internal responses to risk management such setting up a risk management plan to a multiagency safeguarding response for instance.

3.5 **Protection** - is how we manage safeguarding concerns to protect adults to ensure their immediate and ongoing safety. Where a criminal offence may have occurred, this may include supporting an adult to contact the Police, or you may need to do this yourself. Protection is also about our support processes such as risk assessments, risk management plans and effective transparent reporting arrangements – see Support Policy.

3.6 **Protection – Mental Health** refers to the capacity of adults with mental health concerns who may need protection under The Mental Health Act 1983 and Mental Capacity Act 2005 for instance. In these circumstances appropriate referrals to statutory bodies will be undertaken as needed.

3.7 **Partnership -** means working with adults at risk and multi agencies to prevent harm, abuse, or neglect from occurring. Ordinarily, this will mean working in partnership with Leaving Care Personal Advisors and other professionals.

3.8 **Accountability** - means that the roles and responsibilities of staff must be clear, as we are accountable to our service users and our partner agencies in how we fulfil these roles. Adults at risk should be aware of the actions that professionals are intending to take and what their role is within safeguarding them.

**4. The Care Act 2014**

4.1 **The Care Act 2014** concerns safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect and wellbeing is at the core of the Care Act and should be at the centre of all our support. It sets out the duties of local authorities to make enquiries where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area:

* Has need for care and support
* Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse and neglect and
* As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themself against abuse or neglect or the risk of it

4.2 There are several types of abuse:

* Physical abuse
* Domestic violence or abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Psychological or emotional abuse
* Financial or material abuse
* Modern slavery
* Discriminatory abuse
* Organisational or institutional abuse
* Neglect or acts of omission
* Self-neglect

4.3 It is important for staff to remember that people with communication difficulties can be particularly at risk because they may not be able to alert others. Sometimes people may not even be aware that they are being abused, and this is especially likely if they have a cognitive impairment. Abusers may try to prevent access to the person they abuse.

4.4 **Section 42 of The Care Act 2014** places a duty on local authorities to make enquiries where an adult with care and support needs is experiencing, or at risk of abuse, and unable to protect themselves, for example adults who have been victims of Modern Slavery including deprivation of liberty for instance.

**5. Safeguarding Adults Boards and Leaving Care Services**

5.1 **Safeguarding Adult Board** - each Local Authority area must have a statutory Safeguarding Adult Board whose purpose is to help and protect adults at risk through coordination of a multi-agency system made up of Social Services, NHS commissioners and providers, the Police, and regulatory services such as the Care Quality Commission for instance.

5.2 Safeguarding Adult Boards guidance can be found online for instance:

* **Croydon Project** – Croydon Safeguarding Adult Board <https://www.croydonsab.co.uk/preventing-abuse/how-do-i-raise-a-concern/>
* **Brighton Project** –Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Adult Board <https://www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/safeguarding-adults-board/>
* **Redhill Project** – Surrey Safeguarding Adult Board <https://www.surreysab.org.uk/concerned-about-an-adult/>

5.3 **Leaving Care Services –** each Local Authority must provide support for their formerly relevant Looked After Children, who are over the age of 18, until at least the age of twenty-one years old. Section 3 Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires Local Authorities to provide Personal Advisors to care leavers up until they reach the age of 25. This means that ordinarily a Leaving Care Personal Advisor will be responsible for protecting adults at risks through the coordination of multi-agency professionals.

5.4 **Personal Advisors** act as a focal point to ensure care experienced young people are provided with the correct level of support in their transition to adulthood by advising, supporting and befriending.

**6. Transition to adulthood**

6.1 The transition from being a child to an adult can be challenging for vulnerable young people. All staff must ensure young people transitioning to adulthood are supported to manage this process for example that adequate preparation and support is provided in the transition from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health Services for instance.

**7. Responsibilities**

7.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to:

* Value, listen and respect adults
* Always take safeguarding matters seriously and escalate according to procedure
* Follow the safeguarding policies, procedures and our safeguarding adults’ principles
* Follow our code of conduct and professional boundaries – see Safeguarding Children Policy
* Attend safeguarding training, meetings and supervision as arranged
* Promote the safety and welfare of anyone that interacts with our service
* **If you see, hear or suspect a vulnerable adult is being abused in any way, share this with the appropriate designated staff member**

7.2 It is the responsibility of the Project Worker to:

* Build trust and rapport with the adults we support
* Reinforce positive messages about those who seek help – seeking help is a sign of strength
* Be clear about the parameters of confidentiality and when we will share information
* Report all safeguarding matters to the appropriate designated staff member
* Work in partnership with adults, carers, social services and other agencies to promote safety and wellbeing
* Have a positive regard for adults, their capacity for change and their resilience
* Provide keywork on keeping safe as lack of awareness is a significant barrier to seeking help
* See the whole person – engage with adults in terms of their strengths and areas for development
* Help adults to help each other – equip with the skills and tools to support their peers, family and community
* Consider the role of technology – see Online Safety Policy

7.3 It is the responsibly of the Deputy Safeguarding Lead to:

* Deputise for the nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead in absence
* Be first point of call for all young person related safeguarding issues in the North Project
* To take lead on making referrals to statutory and other agencies as appropriate
* Lead on casework management to promote the safety and welfare of those engaged in our services
* Make sure staff delivering support know what to do if they are concerned about an adult
* Lead de-briefs and staff learning sessions as necessary
* Lead on any safeguarding issues that may arise On Call including reporting matters in line with procedure
* Report regularly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on issues relating to safeguarding
* Update the safeguarding log

7.4 It is the responsibility of the Business Manager to:

* Lead on any safeguarding issues that may arise On Call, including reporting matters in line with procedure
* Lead on Health and Safety compliance in line with legislation, risk assessment process and guidance to ensure safe spaces and Psychologically Informed Environments

7.5 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

* Be first point of call for all safeguarding issues related to young people in the South Project
* To support and work closely with the Deputy Safeguarding Lead
* Take the lead in ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to keep adults safe by promoting safety and welfare in all activities
* Lead on any safeguarding issues that may arise On Call including reporting matters in line with procedure
* Make sure that staff understand policy, procedures and what to do if they have concerns about an adult
* Take the lead in responding to information that may constitute an adult safeguarding concern including concern about an adult involved who may present a risk to children and others
* Take the lead in assessing and clarifying information, updating statutory agencies as appropriate, consulting with and informing the relevant members of the Leadership Team
* Receive and record information about concerns and records according to legal requirements and procedure
* Report regularly to the Director on safeguarding as a priority area of work at all levels of the organisation
* Take the lead in implementing safeguarding policies and procedures ensuring safeguarding issues are properly responded to
* Ensure that adults who take part in our services know who to talk to if they have a concern and what actions we will take
* Take the lead in managing allegations against staff
* Update and analyse the safeguarding log as required and work with the Director to ensure safeguarding best practice is implemented

7.6 It is the responsibility of the Registered Service Manager and the Leadership Team to be:

* Operationally accountable for safeguarding
* Ensure all staff and volunteers are safely recruited
* Ensure staff are suitability trained to respond to safeguarding – see Training Policy
* Hold corporate accountability for ensuring that safeguarding policy and practice is developed, implemented, managed, and monitored across PTIUK
* Ensure safeguarding policies are reviewed annually or with new information – see policy review cycle

**8. Procedure - What to do if you are concerned about an adult**

## 8.1 Recognise

## 8.1.1 All staff need to be able to recognise if an adult is experiencing abuse and will be supported at all times to do so.

## 8.1.2 Any adult from any culture, faith or background can be at risk of abuse.

## 8.1.3 Abuse can take place in a family, in an institution or community setting, by telephone or online.

## 8.1.4 Abuse can be carried out by someone known to the adult or much less commonly by a stranger

## 8.1.5 It is not always easy to recognise abuse and many of the indicators may have reasonable explanations.

**8.2 Recognise – disclosures**

8.2.1 **Disclosure** is the process by which people start to share their experiences of abuse with others. This can take place over time and may happen on more than one occasion – it is a process. It takes exceptional courage for a person to go through the process of disclosing abuse.

8.2.3 All disclosures must be taken seriously.

8.2.4 Adults may attempt to disclose abuse by giving us clues, through their actions and by using indirect words and some, including former unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors, may need an impartial trained interpreter especially if English is their second language.

8.2.5 When people speak out it can be many years after the abuse has taken place.

# 8.3 Respond

# 8.3.1 Immediate serious risk of harm – if you believe an adult to be at immediate risk of harm you must take immediate steps to protect and call 999. For example, if there is a risk to loss of life or a likelihood of serious immediate harm such violence and use of a weapon for instance.

# 8.3.2 No immediate risk of harm - for safeguarding concerns that do not pose an immediate risk of harm you must consult with a designated member of staff on the same day and follow procedure

# 8.3.3 If you are informed about or concerned about an adult, you must:

* Always place the person’s welfare and interests first
* Follow our adult safeguarding principles
* Explain that you need to share all disclosures and causes for concerns with the designated safeguarding lead and relevant authorities
* Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the disclosure. This could make things worse
* Do not investigate. If anything needs to be clarified in order to understand the safeguarding risk, ask clear, open question by using the TED rule: tell, explain and describe for example ask ‘what, when, who, how, where’ questions and ask ‘is there anything else you want to tell me?’
* Use open body language and make it clear that you are interested in what they say and reflect back to check understanding
* Respect silence, pauses and never interrupt allowing them to go at their own pace using language appropriate to needs
* Listen carefully and actively. There is no need to ask questions. Let the person guide the pace and remember their ability to recount an allegation will depend on culture, language, communication skills and disability for instance
* Do not show shock at what is being said as this may discourage further disclosure
* Do not ask any ‘why’ questions as these can suggest guilt or responsibility
* Maintain an unbiased approach and tell them what will happen next and keep them informed of process, as appropriate
* Explain that you need to share all disclosures and causes for concern in line with procedure

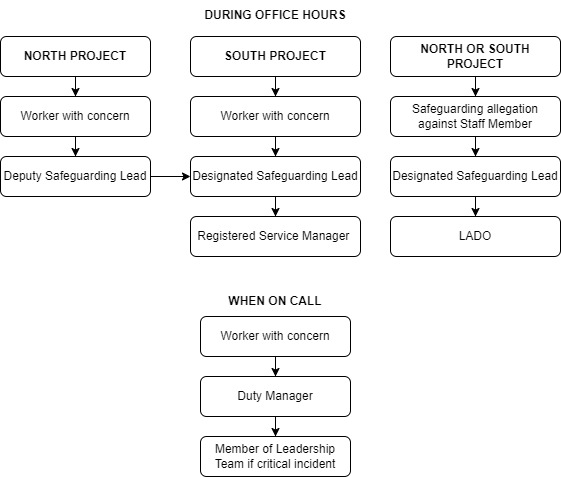
# **8.3.4 **If consent is refused or if you are unable to seek consent** – the decision to disclosure** must be the decision of a Designated Safeguarding staff member, in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), who must:

* Consider each case individually
* Conduct a risk assessment that considers if information sharing **is necessary to safeguard an adult or the public**
* Decide if the need to share information is in the person’s best interest and whether it outweighs the need to maintain confidentiality
* Consider all the implications of sharing the information
* Keep a written record explaining what steps were taken to get consent and communicate the decision in the referral to the relevant agencies

# 8.4 Report

# 8.4.1 If you are concerned about an adult, then first take the appropriate steps to make sure the adult is safe and then report the concern as according to the below flowcharts:

[DIAGRAM ON NEXT PAGE]



# 8.4.2 Timely information sharing helps to ensure adults receive the right services, early help and support, at the right time, before the situation becomes acute.

## 8.5 Record

## 8.5.1 Written notes - it is important to keep accurate and detailed notes, that are also in line with Data Protection.

## 8.5.2 We use a record of concern form for safeguarding reporting. Forms must be saved securely, and promptly escalated to the appropriate designated safeguarding staff member – see incident reporting policy.

# 8.6 Refer

# 8.6.1 Adults not supported by Social Services - referrals must be made on the same day where significant harm or risk of harm has been identified. If concerns arise out of office hours, referrals must be made to the relevant service such as the Police for instance

# 8.6.2 Adults supported by Social Services - For the most part it is expected that safeguarding reports will be sent to allocated Personal Advisor due to the nature of our Service or the Local Authority out of hours Emergency Duty Teams – see On Call information.

# 8.6.3 Additionally, where staff have safeguarding concerns about an adult with children, including those with a child protection plan, you must take the following steps:

* Share the concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead – see Safeguarding Children Policy
* Share the concern with the child’s Social Worker, the adult’s Personal Advisor or in their absence, their manager, or the duty Social Worker as soon as possible on the same day
* Seek a written response to the concern, which outlines the agreed actions and risk management plan – see Safeguarding Children Policy

# 8.6.4 What to expect from the local authority following the referral - if the local authority’s response appears inadequate, or doesn’t sufficiently address the risk of abuse, employees must discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide if escalation is required.

# 8.7 Risk management

8.7.1 Risk management is best undertaken through planning with adults in order to help them remove, mitigate and better manage risks. Risk management must adopt our adult safeguarding principles in practice. It is important to consider the following:

* Identifying the risks and triggers present to the individual and others particularly our residents
* Considering potential changes to current circumstances that can be made to reduce the risks present on both a short- and long-term basis
* Generating practical, realistic responses to risks by assessing vulnerabilities
* Considering physical and emotional needs of the adult at risk when exploring potential actions and changes encouraging the person to be empowered to prevent abuse
* Developing an emergency safety plan with suitable phone numbers including such as the Samaritans for instance.

**9.** **Reassure**

9.1 It is the responsibility of staff to reassure the young person and appropriate persons and professionals of the steps being taken to safeguard from harm.

**10.**  **Responding to concerns about People in a Position of Trust**

10.1 People can be considered to be in a ‘position of trust’ where they are likely to have contact with adults at risk as part of their employment or voluntary work, and:

* Where the role carries an expectation of trust
* Where the person is in a position to exercise authority, power or control over an adult at risk

10.2 Positions of trust may include, but are not limited to any staff working on behalf of:

* Social Services
* Health services
* Police and criminal justice
* Housing staff (such as Project Workers, Team Leaders or Managers)
* Education

10.3 PTIUK is obliged to raise a safeguarding concern under adult safeguarding procedures where we become aware of concerns about a Person in a Position of Trust – see Whistleblowing Policy. This includes when a person in a Position of Trust may have:

* behaved in a way that has harmed an adult at risk
* committed a criminal offence against an adult at risk
* committed a crime or behaved in a way towards any child or adult that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with adults at risk.

10.4 This may include safeguarding concerns raised through someone’s personal life and may be disclosed by the police under Common Law Police Disclosure arrangements (2015). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-law-police-disclosure>.

10.5 It is the responsibility of all staff to:

* Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if you become aware of concerns that relation to a person in a Position of Trust.
* Inform the Registered Service Manager if you become aware of concerns that relate to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10.6 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

* Ensure that concerns are shared according to local procedure, at an early stage.
* Ensure that where the concerns may also pose a risk to children, they are shared with the Local Authority Designated Officer/s in the appropriate Local Authority – see Safeguarding Children Policy

**11. Adults who Disclose Childhood Sexual Abuse**

11.1 The term **Historical abuse or disclosure** refers to disclosures of allegations of abuse that were perpetrated in the past such as abuse experienced during childhood.

11.2 Consideration must be given to whether the alleged perpetrator presents a current risk and if they are that still working with, caring for, or having contact with children or adults with care and support needs.

11.3 It is the responsibility of the person to whom the disclosure is made to:

* Follow our safeguarding procedures and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
* Clarify whether there are children or adults who may currently be at risk from the alleged perpetrator
* Offer referrals and support from voluntary sector and community resources
* Advise and support the adult that they are able to make a formal complaint to the Police

11.4 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

* Make a same day Safeguarding Adult Concern
* Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer/s if it ascertained that the alleged perpetrator has or may have had contact with children
* To consider if the adult is at risk and consider a referral to the Police as necessary

12. **Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS)**

12.1 If a member of staff is suspected as being unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, a referral must be made to the DBS explaining the nature of the concerns and stating any investigations or disciplinary hearing a staff member has been involved with.

1.2 This referral should only be made by an appropriate member of the Leadership Team after full consideration and consultation with the LADO if the case involves or affects a child.