

Policy: Safeguarding Adults and Vulnerable Adults Policy (including FGM guidelines)

Date: March 2016

Review Period: Annual

Approved: Trustees Meetings 17th March 2016

Last Reviewed 14th Dec 2023

Next Review Date Dec 2024

Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures are available on line at <http://berksadultsg.proceduresonline.com> Please refer to them for best practice advice and guidance when reading RSG policy and procedure

Designated Safeguarding Worker	Nick Harborne
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Worker	Flora Roshi

For the purposes of this policy, the term ‘staff’ encompasses both volunteers and paid employees. This policy must be abided by all staff and trustees.

This policy will be made accessible to all staff and trustees at Refugee Support Group

Purpose

RSG is committed to ensuring the protection of vulnerable adults through the development and implementation of effective policies and best practice. The Trustees, staff, and volunteers, recognise and accept the responsibility to develop and raise awareness of the issues involved in working with vulnerable adults.

Objectives

- To provide an environment in which vulnerable adults feel safe and valued
- To ensure that Trustees and staff take responsibility to protect vulnerable adults from harm at all times

- To have a minimum of two Designated Safeguarding Workers, Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive who are responsible for ensuring all vulnerable adults are safeguarded
- To ensure that all Trustees and staff are aware of and adhere to the Guidelines on protection of vulnerable adults
- When necessary, and in consultation, to share information and/or concerns in a confidential manner with the appropriate outside agency e.g. Social Services
- To ensure that all staff who engage in regulated activity in relation to adults to have enhanced plus barring list checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and that appropriate references are requested in the recruitment process
- To ensure that induction processes for all Trustees and staff include introduction to this policy and procedures
- To review and up-date this policy and practice annually

Definitions

“A vulnerable adult” also known as an “adult at risk” is someone who:

- Is 18 years or over; and
- Has care and support needs (whether or not these are currently being met by the local authority); and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse or neglect; and
- Because of his or her care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect

(s.42 Care Act 2014)

For the purposes of this policy, and due to the client group supported by RSG, the safeguarding procedures outlined also refer to adults who do not fit into the definition of ‘vulnerable.’

1. What is Abuse?

Abuse can happen anywhere. It may happen at home, in a care home, hospital, day centre or in a public place.

Anyone can be an abuser, but it is usually someone known to the person.

Abuse can take many forms and may include:

Physical Abuse: being hit or injured on purpose, restraining someone inappropriately.

Emotional Abuse: intimidation, threats, humiliation, extortion, racial, verbal or psychological abuse

Sexual Abuse: involvement in a sexual activity which is unwanted or not understood, unwanted sexual attention.

Neglect/deprivation: not providing food, clothing, attention or care. Withholding of aids or equipment (continence, walking, hearing, glasses), putting someone at risk of infection, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care.

Financial Abuse: the theft or misuse of money, property or personal possessions. Pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.

Discriminatory Abuse: treating people differently or worse than you would want to be treated because they are older, more frail, confused or otherwise vulnerable. Self-inflicted injury may be a sign that abuse is taking place e.g. because someone feels disturbed.

Domestic violence: Domestic violence and abuse is officially classified as “any incident of threatening behaviours, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.” Emotional, as well as physical, abuse is a form of domestic violence, as is forced marriage and ‘honour’ based abuse. The perpetrator can be a current or former partner, or family members.

The following are some key principles to remember when encountering service users that may have been victims of Domestic Violence:

- Act – Never assume someone else is addressing the domestic violence and abuse issues
- Respect – Remember it is not the professionals role to comment on or encourage a person experiencing abuse to leave their partner
- Revisit – If a service user does not disclose but you suspect otherwise, accept what is being said but offer other opportunities to talk and consider giving information (e.g. ‘for a friend’)
- Act – Share information appropriately subject to policy and local guidance

Slavery : Modern Slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal/ commercial gain, the victims are trapped in servitude they were deceived or coerced into. Examples can include; criminal exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation. Key things to look for include: malnourished or unkempt, withdrawn,

anxious and unwilling to interact, under the control and influence of others, live in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation, no access or control of their passport or identity documents or use false or forged documents, fear authorities and in fear of removal or consequences for family, in debt to others or a situation of dependence.

Trafficking: Human Trafficking involves men, women and children being brought into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion and forced to work against their will. People can be trafficked for many different forms of exploitation such as forced prostitution, forced labour, forced begging, and forced criminality, domestic servitude, forced marriage, forced organ removal.

Reference: Safeguarding adults, NHS England 2017 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf>

Signs of abuse are:

You may become concerned that someone is being abused in a number of ways:

- the person may tell you
- the person may say something that worries you
- you may see something – an incident or an injury or other sign

You might see and/or hear something happen:

- someone being bullied or intimidated
- someone being made to feel frightened or unhappy
- someone in a situation of unnecessary risk

The person or somebody else might say something that gives cause for concern, for example:

- a colleague
- family member
- member of the public

There might be physical signs or unexplained or unusual injuries:

- bruises
- slap marks
- black eyes
- bleeding
- burns or scalding
- cigarette marks
- torn, stained or blood stained clothes

There may be other signs such as:

- inappropriate, dirty or soiled clothes
- no food or drink available for the person
- bills not being paid or services, e.g. telephone cut off
- shortage of money

The person might say things or behave in a way that causes you concern:

- the person may seem unhappy or distressed
- the person may appear frightened, anxious or agitated without an obvious cause, or in relation to certain people
- sleeping problems
- constant visits to the toilet without a medical reason
- other unexplained changes in how the person behaves

The behaviour of a colleague or other person might cause concern:

- dismissive or intolerant attitude
- task / routine orientated rather than person focused
- not a team player; insists on doing tasks on their own or in their way; secretive about contact with clients
- oversteps professional boundaries with clients and colleagues, maybe overfriendly; neglects professional development

You may not *know*. It is enough that you are worried.

2. If You are Concerned about Yourself/an Adult at Risk

You should follow the Referral Procedures outlined on page 4. In an emergency situation, call the Police.

3. What Should You Do if Someone Tells You That They Are Being Abused

Do:

- Stay calm and listen;
- Take what you are being told seriously;
- Offer support to help them stop the abuse happening;
- Be aware that medical or other evidence might be needed;
- Follow the RSG Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Procedure ;

Do not:

- Press the person for more details;
- Assume that someone else will take action;
- Contact the alleged abuser;
- Promise to keep it a secret;
- Be afraid to contact social care or the police.

4. What Will Happen Next?

Trained staff will carry out a careful and sensitive enquiry. What happens then will depend on the wishes of the person concerned and the seriousness of their situation. If they are in danger, ensuring their safety will be of utmost importance.

Information and advice will be offered so that the person concerned can make an informed choice about any practical help they need or action they wish to take. If they are unable to make an informed choice, care will be taken to support or protect them.

“Workers” for the purposes of this document, includes both paid staff and voluntary staff within RSG.

Guidelines:

Code of Conduct

- Staff to treat vulnerable adults with respect and sensitivity at all times. Staff to ensure that the safety and dignity of vulnerable adults is maintained at all times, and confidentiality respected according to our Confidentiality Policy.
 - Information Sharing: the Data Protection Act 1998 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately. If RSG are required to share information they will refer to the ‘Flowchart of when and how to share information’ included in the Government Guidance; Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, 2015.
- All staff should be made aware of this *Vulnerable Adults Policy* during induction, and of the procedure to follow for reporting possible / alleged cases of abuse or harm.
- All PAID staff should undertake an enhanced Disclosure Check with the DBS.
- Only those who have been DBS checked can work unsupervised with vulnerable adults. Volunteers do not require this unless they are working alone with vulnerable adults.

Referral Procedures

1. The Designated Safeguarding Workers for implementing this policy are the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive
Nick Harborne
Flora Roshi
2. If somebody believes that an adult may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they have a duty to refer such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Worker, no matter how trivial they might seem.

3. Any incident or concern should be recorded on the Green Safeguarding Concern Forms kept in the main office. On these you should include detailed factual information. You should refrain from including opinions. Dates, times and full names also need to be included. These Green Forms should be given directly to the Designated Safeguarding Worker (or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Worker in their absence) or placed in their paper tray ready for them to see when they return to the office. You should try your best to ensure your Green Form is seen before the end of the working day. The Designated Workers are responsible for checking their paper trays regularly. If you feel a person is at risk of imminent significant harm it is imperative you seek safeguarding advice before the end of the working day.
4. The Designated Worker will review the information on the Green Form, take appropriate action, and record these actions on the Green Form. These forms will then be filed within a locked filing system to which the Designated Workers have access to.
5. It is the responsibility of the Designated Workers to feed back to the staff who reported the concern what the actions have been taken, if deemed appropriate.
6. The Green Forms will be discussed during a weekly Office Management Team Meeting if deemed necessary.
7. If appropriate, the incident will be discussed with a Trustee before breaking confidentiality.
8. If a staff member has a safeguarding concern they must follow the procedures outlines above. However, if they feel a concern has not been dealt with appropriately, or the safeguarding concern implicates the Designated Workers, they must speak with their line manager. If they still feel the issue is not resolved they may get in contact with the Trustee Chair.
9. If appropriate, advice may be sought from the Duty Officer for community and well-being in Social Services Reading Council works closely with the other Councils in the West of Berkshire, the police,

probation, health and a range of private and voluntary agencies to try and prevent adult abuse occurring and stop it when happens.

In the case of a serious concern, a referral will be made to the Duty Officer, (phone numbers below) using a Social Services referral form.

- 10. If a referral is made, the Designated Worker will seek advice from the duty officer on whether the family or vulnerable person should be notified that a referral has been made
- 11. Further guidance can be found in the Berkshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy on <http://berksadultsg.proceduresonline.com> and at <http://www.reading.gov.uk/adultabuse>

Safeguarding Contact Numbers

Internal:

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for Refugee Support is:

Nick Harborne CEO 0119 850 5356 nick@rrsg.org.uk

If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is unavailable please contact the Safeguarding Trustee at Refugee Support Group, who is:

Doon Lovett safeguarding@rrsg.org.uk 0118 950 5356

External

County	Adults
Reading	Safeguarding adults telephone advice line 01189376 550 Reading 0118 937 3747 (Adult Care Team) 01344 786 543 (Emergency Duty Team - out of hours) safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk
Wokingham	(0118) 974 6772 (Adult Social Care) To report a concern online https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/safety-and-abuse/report-a-safeguarding-concern/

West Berkshire (Newbury)	safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk 01635 519056 To report a concern online https://www.westberks.gov.uk/article/38897/Safeguarding-Adults
Windsor and Maidenhead	01628 683744 SAB@rbwm.gov.uk Emergency duty team outside of office hours 01344 786543

FGM Guidelines

- Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for procedures which include the removal of part/all external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons.
- The practice is not required by any major religion and is medically unnecessary, painful and has serious health consequences at the time it is carried out and in later life.
- The procedure is typically performed on girls between 4 and 13, but is also performed on new born babies and on young women before marriage/pregnancy. A number of girls die from blood loss or infection.
- Girls may be circumcised or genitally mutilated illegally by doctors or traditional health workers in the UK, or sent abroad for the operation.

If we become aware that a pregnant woman (over the age of 18) may have had this procedure (FGM), we should refer her to specialist ante-natal care at the Rose Clinic, Upton Park Hospital.

Recruitment and Induction

- All new workers will complete a Safeguarding Induction process which includes meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Worker, completing safeguarding training (either online or at an annual training session), and reading the current Safeguarding Policies.
- New workers will fill in an application form, provide 2 references and undergo enhanced DBS checks as part of the recruitment process.
- All new Trustees and workers will be introduced to this policy as part of their induction procedure.

This Policy has been drawn from the following guidance:

'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' by the Home Office, HM Government, March 2015.

'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation' by the Home Office, HM Government, 2016.

Reference: Safeguarding adults, NHS England 2017 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf>

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees to ensure it remains fit for purpose.