

## Safeguarding Adults: Statement and Policy

**Safeguarding is everyone's business.** It is about being proactive in all that we do as a charity to prevent and reduce abuse.

The Faithworks policy surrounding the safeguarding of vulnerable adults is based on both our Christian ethos and on the BCP and Dorset Safeguarding Adults Procedures, which govern all agencies in the area dealing with abuse issues and concerns.

This policy deals specifically with the abuse of service users, whether by a carer/relative, employee/volunteer or by other service users.

### 1. Aims and Principles

1.1. The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live;
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned;
- raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect;
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult;
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect;
- assist the person concerned to achieve their desired outcomes.

1.2. The following six Person Centred principles (from the Care Act 2014) apply to all sectors and settings including care and support services. The principles should inform the ways in which professionals from statutory agencies and FW staff and volunteers work with adults:

- **Empowerment:** wherever possible, clients should be supported and encouraged to make their own decision; it should be assumed that decisions are made by the people concerned or with their informed consent.
- **Prevention:** wherever possible the aim of staff and volunteers will be to take action before harm occurs and ensure that there is early engagement with all relevant people.
- **Proportionate:** all response should be appropriate to the risk presented, and where possible the least intrusive response should be ensured.
- **Protection:** support and representation should be given to ensure protection for those in greatest need.

- **Partnership:** local solutions should be sought through those services which are already working with the individual's communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability:** there should always be transparency and accountability ensured in the delivery of safeguarding

## 2. Definitions

2.1. The definition of an Adult at Risk (under section 42 of 2014 Care Act) is someone who:

- Is aged 18 and over,
- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs), and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse and/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.

Adults at risk definition may include: older people; people with mental health needs, learning disabilities, a long term illness or physical impairments; people with alcohol or substance dependency; family carers providing assistance to a vulnerable adult; victims of domestic harm etc. This could include volunteers working with FW who could be included in the above definition of adults at risk. In our operations, FW takes a broad view of Adults and Risk.

2.2. Harm is defined as:

- A single act or a repeated act;
- An act of neglect or a failure to act;
- Multiple acts, for example, an adult at risk may be neglected and also financially harmed
- Self-neglect

The various types of abuse, harm and neglect are listed in Appendix 1.

When considering incidents of potential or actual abuse of adults, certain values and the rights of individuals are of particular relevance, and these are listed in Appendix 2.

## 3. Underlying principles

- 3.1. Employees/volunteers should not wait until an incident occurs to put these principles into practice. Doing nothing is not an option; acting positively may prevent risks arising.
- 3.2. Sometimes it will not be obvious whether a situation could be considered abusive or criminal or meet other definitions of concern. If in any doubt, then the employee or volunteer must talk to their line manager so that guidance is sought about whether action is warranted.
- 3.3. All Faithworks employees and volunteers working with vulnerable adults require an understanding of the BCP and Dorset Multi-Agency Adult Protection Policy and Procedures on the Protection of Vulnerable Adults. This will be done through training,

especially induction training that all new starters receive and the more in-depth safeguarding training that all staff attend.

- 3.4. Line managers and employees/volunteers providing services to vulnerable adults will co-operate fully in any adult protection investigation/assessment and comply with any recommendations of an adult protection plan.
- 3.5. Service users have the right to be treated with respect by employees/volunteers, part of whose task is to encourage users to express views and consider the implications of their action or choices. Within the limitations of their personal circumstances, service users should be helped to arrive at their own solution to problems.
- 3.6. It should not be assumed that in any set of circumstances where predisposing factors are present, there is actual harm occurring. The important point is that a discussion takes place or a referral leads to gathering of information and then a detailed assessment to define the risk and agree necessary action. Such discussions will normally be with staff rather than volunteers.

#### **4. Risk, Disclosure and Confidentiality**

- 4.1. Adults have the right to make their own decisions and to exercise choice. These rights are not unconstrained and must be assessed alongside a consideration of the importance of the freedom of others and the risks others may be exposed to. Sometimes there are legal constraints (e.g. mental health legislation), where an individual cannot safely exercise choice for themselves.
- 4.2. It is the responsibility of the employee/volunteer to ensure that the proper account is taken of the individual's capacity to evaluate risk for him or herself and to decide whether the individual is able to act appropriately having evaluated the risk. It must be recognized that the right to autonomy can involve risk and where the service user chooses to stay in risky situations, these will be discussed with Social Services so that they can decide how to proceed.
- 4.3. When an individual has the capacity to make an informed decision regarding their personal circumstances, and where risk has been identified but the individual does not wish to accept the intervention, then that individual's wishes will generally be respected. It is the responsibility of Social Services to make this assessment and where there is any doubt, they should be consulted.
- 4.4. Where the situation appears to include elements of serious crime, risk or harm to the individual or to others, there is an overwhelming responsibility to intervene and set aside the fact that the information was provided in confidence.
- 4.5. The decision to pass on information without the consent of a service user will not be taken lightly. Decisions about breaching confidentiality need to be made by staff members only with the decision being reached between the staff member involved with the individual (taking on board the views of any volunteers directly involved), the project lead, and one of the safeguarding leads (see below for details), taking into account the capacity of the individual to understand the consequences of their action or inaction and the reasonableness of the decision with regard to the circumstances.

- 4.6. If it should be necessary to breach confidentiality, every effort should be made to inform the service user beforehand where this does not put the vulnerable adult at risk.
- 4.7. It will always be necessary to monitor and re-examine situations in the light of changing circumstances, and the general rule should be to actively secure the care of the individual or alleviate risks whenever possible.
- 4.8. Some service users may fear reprisals or not understand the seriousness of what has occurred, and therefore they may require support, whether or not they have consented to the disclosure taking place.

## **5. Responsibilities for raising a concern (where there is a risk of suicide)**

5.1. Staff and volunteers should contact the emergency services if a client:

- a) Is currently significantly harming themselves, just has, or is about to
- b) Is unable to respond (e.g. is losing consciousness)
- c) Clearly intends to take their own life

Where a client has a suicide plan in place a referral to the appropriate statutory or other support services should be made (guidance should be sought from the safeguarding leads).

Staff and volunteers should be aware that the risk of suicide is higher if a client has taken alcohol, drugs, or is on medication; has previously attempted suicide or has a history of mental health issues.

Where concerns are raised and the client is not in the same place as the volunteer or staff member (e.g. is on the phone) then the staff member or volunteer should find out the location of the person, whether they are alone and whether they are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substance.

## **6. Responsibilities for raising a concern (where there is a suspicion of abuse)**

If you are an employee or volunteer and you suspect abuse, or you are being told about alleged abuse, you should:

- 6.1. Always seek permission to share the information given – however, it may not always be possible to respect the individual's wishes for confidentiality. You will need to override this if:
  - a) There is a risk of harm
  - b) It is in the public interest
  - c) There are child welfare issues
  - d) Consent has been given only under duress
  - e) There is a serious criminal offence
- 6.2. Listen carefully to what the person reporting the alleged abuse is saying, accept this without challenge. If necessary, ask very high-level questions **ONLY** to establish the **basic** facts, and reassure them that the matter will be taken seriously; then reassure

them that they will be involved in decisions about what will happen. You are ONLY asking questions to ascertain whether abuse has taken place at which point questioning should stop and left for statutory agencies as appropriate.

- 6.3. If the person reporting the abuse is not the at-risk adult concerned, then you should not take the initiative in discussing the matter with the client; you should simply follow the appropriate actions described below.
- 6.4. Do not under ANY circumstances:
  - a) get the person to justify what they are saying,
  - b) promise that you'll keep what they say a secret,
  - c) be judgemental,
  - d) contact the alleged abuser.
- 6.5. Ensure that the individual allegedly being abused is safe from harm or further abuse, and then report the concern to the project lead, line manager or one of the safeguarding leads.
- 6.6. Record the incident in writing (electronically or manually); seek to recall the exact words used by the person; state who was involved, any other witnesses, the appearance and behaviour of the person, including any injuries observed; keep the record factual, and confidential. Remember that from a legal point of view, "if it is not written down, it did not happen". Do NOT make an audio or video recording of the conversation.
- 6.7. After the disclosure, or event that leads to the concern, staff should discuss the case with the project lead and/ or one of the staff safeguarding leads who will make the decision as to whether to refer the case to statutory services. Referrals to statutory services MUST be made by a staff member and not a volunteer.
- 6.8. Where there is physical evidence suggesting a crime may have been committed, contact the police immediately and follow their advice; try not to disturb the scene i.e. do not clean up, wash anything or throw anything away; secure the area where the incident took place and make notes of the state of the victim's clothing or any injuries observed.
- 6.9. All referrals to any statutory service must be written up and reported to a Faithworks safeguarding lead as soon as possible. Other concerns that are not reported to statutory bodies should be recorded (e.g., on Charity Log) and if considered significant should be reported to a safeguarding lead.
- 6.10. If the alleged abuser is also a service user, then a member of staff will need to be allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that they do not pose a risk to other vulnerable adults.
- 6.11. If the alleged abuser is a member of staff or a volunteer, consideration must immediately be given to protecting the vulnerable adult(s) from the possibility of further abuse until the issues have been investigated. Any such concerns must be raised with the Faithworks staff safeguarding leads who will consider what further action should be taken.

6.12. If you have reason to believe your line manager is colluding in the abuse, you should report your concerns directly to the CEO or if not possible to one of the nominated trustees for safeguarding. Failing that you should report your concerns directly to the Duty Officer of the appropriate Social Services team closest to the home of the vulnerable adult. In addition to this you should consult the Faithworks Whistle-blowing Policy. See contact details below.

## 7. Contacts

- 7.1. Faithworks Safeguarding Lead (staff) is the CEO and the deputy safeguarding lead is the Business Support Manager. The contact number for both is 01202 429037.
- 7.2. BCP Adult Social Services can be contacted on 01202 123654 (daytime) and 0300 123 9895 out of hours (emergency only). Dorset Council Social Services can be contacted on 01305 221016 (daytime) and 01305 858250 out of hours (note not 24 hours).
- 7.3. BCP Child Social Services can be contacted on 01202 123 334 (daytime) and 01202 738 256 (out of hours). Dorset Council Child Social Services can be contacted on 01305 228866 (daytime) and 01305 228558 out of hours.
- 7.4. The nominated trustee for Safeguarding is Rev. Sarah Yetman who can be contacted on 07920 005688.
- 7.5. Concerns may also be expressed to the Chair of Faithworks, who can be contacted via the office on 01202 429037.

## 8. Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other Faithworks policies:

Child Protection policy  
 DBS policy  
 Lone worker policy  
 Confidentiality policy  
 Professional Boundaries policy  
 Safer recruitment policy (both staff and volunteers)  
 CMA Vulnerable Adults Consumer Duty Policy

## 9. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the trustees of Faithworks. Previous of this document are shown below

<b>Date of review</b>	<b>File name</b>	<b>Where reviewed</b>
April 2019	FW Safeguarding Adults Policy – Apr 19.doc	Trustee Board
November 2021	FW Safeguarding Adults Policy – Nov 21 v1	AGM

## APPENDIX 1: TYPES OF ABUSE

The following forms of abuse are taken from the BCP Safeguarding Adults Board: [www.bcpsafeguardingadultsboard.com/what-is-safeguarding.html](http://www.bcpsafeguardingadultsboard.com/what-is-safeguarding.html)

**Physical abuse:** This is causing someone physical harm or injury on purpose; for example, by hitting pushing, kicking or restraining someone inappropriately. It also includes misusing medication, controlling what someone eats or denying someone of their liberty.

**Domestic violence:** Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This may be a one-off incident or a pattern of incidents or threats, violence or controlling behaviour. It also includes being forced to marry, honour based violence and female genital mutilation (FGM).

**Sexual abuse:** This may involve a person in a sexual activity which is unwanted or not understood. It includes rape, indecent exposure, inappropriate looking or touching, or sexual activity where the other person is in a position of power or authority.

**Psychological or Emotional abuse:** This includes intimidation, threats, humiliation, extortion, racial, verbal or psychological abuse. It includes exploitation, coercion, harassment, online or mobile phone bullying and isolation.

**Financial or material abuse:** This includes the theft or misuse of money, property or personal possessions; it also includes putting pressure on a person in connection with wills, property or inheritance. It also includes postal or internet scams.

**Modern slavery:** This includes slavery, a person being forced to work for little or no pay (including in the sex trade), being held against their will, tortured, abused or treated badly by others.

**Discriminatory abuse:** This includes treating people less favourably and unfairly on the grounds of a person's race, ethnicity, religion or belief, age, gender, gender identity, disability, culture, sexuality or mental health needs. Self-inflicted injury may be a sign that abuse is taking place, e.g., because someone feels disturbed. Hate crime is a form of discriminatory abuse.

**Organisational abuse:** This includes neglect and providing poor care in a care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in a person's own home. This may be a one-off incident, repeated incidents or on-going ill-treatment.

**Neglect and acts of omission:** This includes not providing food, clothing, attention or care; it also includes withholding of aids or equipment (continence, walking, hearing, glasses) and putting someone at risk of infection. Failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care and misuse of medication by inappropriately giving medication, overdosing or withholding it are also examples, imposed isolation or confinement are also included.

**Self-neglect:** This may involve a person being unable, or unwilling, to care for their own essential needs, including their health or surroundings (for example, their home may be very unclean, or there may be a fire risk due to their hoarding).

**Other forms of abuse that may trigger a safeguarding concern are:**

**Coercive Control:** an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

**Cyber Bullying:** the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

**Exploitation by radicalisation:** Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Sexual exploitation:** The term “sexual exploitation” means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another