

Safeguarding Adults

Introduction

Freedom from abuse is one of our most basic human rights as outlined in the Human Rights Act 1998. “Safeguarding” is a range of activities aimed at upholding an adult’s fundamental right to be safe. Safeguarding the human rights of vulnerable adults is an important part of day-to-day health and social care practice. It is also integral to the work of all staff and volunteers within Sue Ryder services, including Fundraising staff.

Sue Ryder is committed to the prevention of human rights abuse in all aspects of its work.

The Care Act 2014 has six principles that must be considered in any safeguarding action:

1. Empowerment – “I am asked what I want from the Safeguarding process. What I want informs what happens”
2. Prevention – “I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and how to seek help”.
3. Proportionality – “I am sure the professionals will work for my best interests as I see them and will only get involved as much as needed”.
4. Protection – “I get help and support to report abuse and neglect and take part in the safeguarding process”.
5. Partnership – “I know staff share my personal information only when it is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best results for me”.
6. Accountability – “I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they”.

Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s human right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about working together to prevent and stop the risks and experiences of human rights abuse or neglect while making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having their views, feelings, and beliefs considered in decision making.

Categories of Abuse

- **Physical abuse:** including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, and misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Domestic violence:** including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse; so-called ‘honour’ based violence.
- **Sexual abuse:** including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking/touching, sexual teasing/innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography, indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexual acts without consent.
- **Psychological abuse:** including emotional/verbal abuse, threats of harm/abandonment, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, cyberbullying, isolation, or unreasonable/unjustified withdrawal of services/support.
- **Financial or material abuse:** including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery:** including human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse:** including neglect/poor care practice within an institution or care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in one’s own home.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care

needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care/support/educational services, and withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, nutrition and heating.

- **Self-neglect:** this covers a range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings.

Incidents of human rights abuse may be to one person or to more than one person at a time. It is important to look beyond the single incident to underlying patterns of harm.

Some instances of human rights abuse are criminal offences. When a criminal offence may have been committed, it is essential that the Police are contacted as a matter of urgency.

Capacity

Every adult has the right to make their own decisions wherever possible. Sue Ryder will always support a person to make their own decisions if they can. But if a person does not have the capacity to make a decision, even with appropriate information and support, then people supporting them must make a 'best interests' decision for them. Volunteers will never be responsible for assessing someone's capacity or making a 'best interest' decision on their behalf.

Involvement and Consent

When an incident is being investigated, it should be with the consent of the adult concerned. They should be involved and kept up to date with progress as much as they wish to unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify their exclusion from the process. Investigations will be led by members of staff; volunteers will be informed if/when their input is required.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All adults identified as vulnerable have a qualified right to confidentiality. Disclosure of confidential personal information without the consent of the person providing it may take place under certain circumstances; the justification and rationale for doing so must be recorded. More information about confidentiality, disclosure, and sharing information with other agencies can be found in the full-length version of the Charity's Safeguarding Adults Policy.

Recording Information

It is essential that **clear, accurate, and factual** chronological records are kept of all contacts and actions relating to incidents or allegations of human rights abuse.

Responsibilities

The Lead Safeguarding Officer is the Director of Nursing. The responsibilities of the Lead Safeguarding Officer, Centre or Hospice Directors, Service Managers, Education Leads, Directors of Fundraising, and wider staff team can be found in the full-length version of the Charity's Safeguarding Adults policy.

Procedure

1. Care Centre/Hospice/Community Services must ensure that:

- References, DBS checks, and safeguarding training are provided and up to date
- There is supervision and continuing development opportunities for all staff and volunteers
- Reflective practice through clinical supervision is provided where appropriate
- Those working in isolation are given appropriate supervision, guidelines, and support
- There are clearly defined and strong professional leadership
- Advocacy systems to support the service users are made available

2. Staff and Volunteer Support:

- Clinical staff and volunteers are given the means to discuss potential or actual abuse of human rights with senior colleagues
- For those staff or volunteers unjustly accused of abuse of human rights, support needs to be given such as individual clinical supervision or counselling

3. Reporting of actual or suspicions of abuse of human rights:

- Suspicions of abuse of human rights should be immediately reported to the Centre Director/Hospice Director/Service Manager, their Deputy, or Senior Nurse/Senior Manager On Call.
- The person reporting the suspicion or actual abuse of human rights will be asked to complete an incident report.
- The Manager receiving the report must use take steps to safeguard all vulnerable adults. Advice must be sought from the Director of Nursing.
- Contact must then be made with the local Social Services Department/Police who will act in accordance with inter-agency policy/procedure.

Prevent Strategy (Prevention of Terrorism)

Prevent is about recognising when vulnerable individuals are being exploited for terrorist-related activities. Volunteers may face situations that cause them concern about the potential safety of service users, their family, staff, or others around them. Early intervention can redirect a vulnerable individual away from carrying out an act of terrorism. Working closely with local authorities, social services, and the police, can improve the effectiveness of how they protect vulnerable individuals from harm or from causing harm.

Raising Concerns (behaviour indicative of being drawn into terrorist activities)

Indicators may include

- Graffiti symbols, writing, or artwork promoting extremist messages or images
- Service users/staff accessing terrorist-related material online
- Changes in behaviour, friendships or actions and requests for assistance.
- Voicing opinions drawn from terrorist-related ideologies and narratives.
- Use of extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite violence.

Staff and volunteers must report concerns to their line manager or Safeguarding Lead for their Service. The line manager/Safeguarding Lead will report to the Safeguarding Team or Police.