**Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy**

**Last Reviewed: DATE**

1. **Introduction**

This document does not form part of your contract of employment and may be changed from time to time in line with current best practice and statutory requirements, and to ensure that business needs are met. You will be consulted and advised of any changes as far in advance as possible of the change being made, unless the change is required by statute.

The characteristics of adult abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching well beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or embarrassed to raise any complaint. They may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others.

1. **Aim of Policy**

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults by outlining clear procedures and ensuring that all staff members/ volunteers are clear about their responsibilities.

1. **Responsibilities**

All members of staff/volunteers have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have concerning adult abuse.

1. **Definition**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This **may** include a person who:

* + Is elderly and frail
  + Has a mental illness including dementia
  + Has a physical or sensory disability
  + Has a learning disability
  + Has a severe physical illness
  + Is a substance misuser
  + Is homeless

1. **What is Abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

* Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment
* Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism
* Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation
* Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc.
* Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition
* Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment
* Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
* Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions
* Institutional abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity

1. **Rights of Vulnerable Adults**

The vulnerable adults have the right to:

* be made aware of this policy
* to have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
* to receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
* to be involved in any process as appropriate
* to receive information about the outcome

1. **Reporting Procedures**

All those making a complaint, allegation, or expression of concern, whether staff, service users, carers, volunteers or members of the public should be reassured that they:

* will be taken seriously
* their comments will usually be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk
* if service users, they will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation
* if staff they will be given support and afforded protection

If an allegation is made to a member of staff or there is a suspicion of abuse then the member of staff should inform their line manager as soon as possible.

The line manager should make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse (see Appendix 1) and contact local Community Social Services on **Insert local number**

If a staff member has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the person to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of the consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

* The scale of the abuse
* The risk of harm to others
* The capacity of the victim to understand the issues of abuse and consent

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Community Social Services then it should be reported.

In emergency situations (e.g. where there is the risk or occurrence or severe physical injury), where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services must be contacted.

Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

ORG NAME aims to ensure that any protected adult is kept safe from harm while they are with staff or volunteers in this organisation. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

1. **Selection**

* All applicants to our organisation will complete an application form
* Short listed applicants will be asked to attend an interview
* Short listed applicants will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment
* The successful applicant will be asked to complete a self declaration form prior to the PVG Record being accessed

1. **Screening**

The successful applicant will be asked to complete a PVG Record (relevant to the position applied for) prior to the applicant taking up the post.

1. **Recruitment and Training**

ORG NAME will ensure that all staff whose roles include working with vulnerable adults are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practicing skills needed for work. Training on specific areas such as health and safety procedures, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers and will be regularly reviewed.

1. **Supervision**

All staff and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support. Every member of staff and volunteer will attend an annual review, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. Annual reviews will be minuted and copies made available to the member of staff/volunteer.

It is an offence for an individual who is barred to undertake the type of regulated work from which they are barred.

It is an offence for an organisation to offer regulated work to someone who is barred or fail to remove a person from regulated work if they have been notified that they are barred.

It is an offence for an organisation not to refer an individual to Disclosure Scotland where the grounds have been met.

1. **PVG Checks**

As part of the recruitment procedure, all newly appointed staff that have contact with vulnerable adults will be PVG checked.

ORG NAME will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision, are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.

1. **Local Contacts**

* Social Services: Insert local number
* Police: Insert local number
* (Out of hours Social Work) Emergency Service: Insert local number

1. **Related Policies**
   * Recruitment and Selection Policy
   * Recruitment of ex-offenders and Disclosures Policy
   * Data Protection Policy
   * Induction Policy
   * Staff Training and Development Policy

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| Signed: |  | | |  |
| (for and on behalf of the Board of Directors) | | | | |

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