



SAFEGUARDING POLICY VULNERABLE ADULTS

This policy provides guidance on procedures that should be adopted in the event that a disclosure is received, or a suspicion arises that a vulnerable adult is experiencing or is at risk of significant harm. This guidance includes disclosures from known clients during face to face or video counselling and any woman or young person receiving telephone emotional support.

One Trustee will act as the named Safeguarding Trustee. This person will be responsible for ensuring that all the work of the charity is conducted in accordance with this policy and other good practice in relation to safeguarding children.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who is, or maybe, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Abuse can take many forms. The abused person and even the abuser may not realise that abuse is being committed. The most widely recognised forms of abuse are physical and sexual. However, other forms of abuse include neglect, financial, psychological, discriminatory, domestic and institutional.

Physical Abuse – (is the physical ill treatment) such as shaking, pushing, hitting, force-feeding, tying or locking up.

Sexual Abuse – includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not agreed or was pressurised into agreeing to.

Neglect – includes leaving someone alone for inappropriate periods of time, failing to care for them or leaving them in soiled clothes.

Financial Abuse – the holding back of money, cheating or stealing money.

Psychological Abuse – includes rejection, ignoring, humiliation or bullying behaviour.

Discriminatory Abuse – prejudicial treatment/approach based on a person's race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age or other belief or characteristic.

Domestic Abuse - is the coercive forms of control and dominance in domestic relationships and includes any of the above examples.

Institutional Abuse – takes place in any form of institution, for example, hospitals, residential and nursing homes, day centres and includes any of the above. Also, poor and unsatisfactory professional conduct, or pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct.

The above list is not exhaustive.



SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULT PROCEDURES

HARCSAC will seek to safeguard vulnerable adults by:

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- Sharing information about vulnerable adult protection and good practice with staff, volunteers and service users;
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

DISCLOSURE & CONFIDENTIALITY

We will work within the remit of our policy on confidentiality. Clients who remain in abusive environments will not face disclosure to external agencies without their consent unless it is felt there is significant risk to the Client or the welfare of a child or another vulnerable adult. In these circumstances, any sharing of information will be discussed and explored between us and the Client prior to the disclosure of such information.

The organisation operates a confidential service but if it is assessed that an adult at risk is being abused or likely to suffer abuse, then confidentiality can be breached within procedural guidelines, please see our Confidentiality policy for further information.

Confidentiality can only be breached if a client talks of known ongoing abuse of a named child or vulnerable adult. The volunteer must encourage the client to disclose, and if they will not, the Trustees must agree a course of action to be taken.

A client receiving telephone support must be informed of our policy on safeguarding and that we have a duty of care towards her and any other vulnerable people in the household. Details of the policy can be found at <https://hertsrapecrisis.org.uk/> under the drop down box 'About us'

We can offer to help by:

- (a) giving her contact details of the local Safeguarding Teams, and
- (b) offering to contact them on her behalf.

If it is an urgent call and we are unable to obtain written agreement, we must make it clear that we will keep a record of the date and time of the call and that we were given verbal agreement to act on her behalf.

All matters of suspicion must be taken to the Safeguarding Lead Trustee and group supervision at the next opportunity. Decisions about appropriate action will only be taken after informed discussion with the best interests of the vulnerable adult in mind and in accordance with the 6 safeguarding principles.

In the event the Trustees are unable to make a majority decision on a course of action, the Trustees will seek the advice of the external supervisor.



Any representative of HARCSAC who becomes aware of a safeguarding issue will make a note of the disclosure including, if known;

- name and contact details of the person making the disclosure
- name and contact details of the person at risk
- nature and date of disclosure - historical details of disclosure
- any other information that may be disclosed

Any meeting held as a result of a suspicion or disclosure of abuse of a vulnerable adult will be recorded. Dates, times, names of persons present, descriptions of the suspicion or disclosure and actions taken will be noted and kept in a secure cabinet. This information will be kept for a maximum of five years unless the matter is taken further in which case it will be handed to the relevant authorities.

All volunteers and staff are required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check every 3 years to ensure their suitability for involvement with HARCSAC.

All volunteers and paid staff must undergo training which outlines the legality and importance of safeguarding vulnerable adults.

HARCSAC