

## Safeguarding Adults at Risk

HARCSAC is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all adults at risk. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk, ensuring that they are protected from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

### Definition of Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is:

- Someone aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse 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.

### DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Abuse can take many forms. The most widely recognised forms of abuse are physical and sexual however, other forms of abuse include:

<b>Physical:-</b>	Such as shaking, pushing, hitting, force-feeding, tying or locking up.
<b>Sexual:-</b>	Includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not agreed or was pressurised into agreeing to.
<b>Neglect:-</b>	Includes leaving someone alone for inappropriate periods of time, failing to care for them or leaving them in soiled clothes.
<b>Financial:-</b>	Holding back of money, cheating or stealing money.
<b>Psychological:-</b>	Includes rejection, ignoring, humiliation or bullying behaviour.
<b>Discriminatory:-</b>	Prejudicial treatment/approach based on a person's race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age or other belief or characteristic.
<b>Domestic:-</b>	Is the coercive forms of control and dominance in domestic relationships and includes any of the above examples.
<b>Institutional:-</b>	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.

Our approach to dealing with acts of self-harm and/or threats of suicide are dealt with in separate policies.

### Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all adults at risk involved in our activities;
- Promoting a culture where safeguarding is a priority;

- Providing clear procedures for reporting and responding to concerns;
- Ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and trustees are aware of and adhere to this policy;
- Regularly reviewing and updating our safeguarding practices.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

We have appointed a Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of this policy;
- Providing advice and support on safeguarding matters;
- Ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are addressed appropriately;
- Liaising with statutory agencies as necessary.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Name: Heather McKenzie

Email: admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk

Phone: 01707 276539

Internal contacts via WhatsApp

If there is an immediate risk, contact:

Police: 999 (in emergency)

Our principles of responding to safeguarding concerns will align with the following principles:

**Empowerment:** Supporting and encouraging women to make their own decisions and give informed consent. This involves respecting their autonomy and providing them with the necessary information and support to make informed choices.

**Prevention:** Taking proactive steps to prevent harm or potential harm before it occurs. This includes identifying and addressing risks, promoting safe environments, and implementing preventive measures.

**Proportionality:** Ensuring that responses to safeguarding concerns are appropriate and proportionate to the level of risk. This means using the least intrusive intervention that is necessary to address the concern and protect the individual.

**Protection:** Providing support and representation for those who are at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect. This includes offering assistance, advocating for their rights, and helping to ensure that they have access to appropriate services.

**Partnership:** Working collaboratively with individuals, families, and other organisations to address safeguarding concerns.

**Accountability:** Ensuring that individuals are accountable for their actions and responsibilities in safeguarding. This includes establishing clear policies and procedures, providing training, and monitoring practices to ensure effectiveness.

Any person accessing our services who poses a safeguarding risk must be informed of this policy and that we have a duty of care towards her and any other identifiable vulnerable people.

## **Reporting Concerns**

All staff and volunteers are required to report any concerns about the safety or well-being of an adult at risk. Concerns should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible. If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, concerns should be reported to Chris Sutton or a Trustee.

In cases where the concern involves immediate danger or a criminal act, contact the police or emergency services without delay.

Concerns can be raised verbally or by email or by completing a 'Safeguarding Action Record' available from Admin, the DSL and on the intranet.

Concerns raised should include as much information as possible including the names of those involved, the nature and circumstances of the concern, any contact details available, actions taken and when taken and who is reporting the concern.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY & DISCLOSURE**

### **Confidentiality**

We acknowledge the importance of confidentiality in safeguarding matters, however, we recognise that the safety and well-being of adults at risk must take precedence. Confidential information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only and in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

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.

If it becomes necessary to breach confidentiality the client will be encouraged to take responsibility for the disclosure. If they are not willing to do this the client will be advised that this responsibility will be assumed by HARCSAC and we will seek written permission from the client to make that disclosure.

In the event that it is not possible to gain written consent to act on her behalf in making a disclosure the client must be made aware that we will keep a record of the date and time of the conversation and whether or not we were given verbal agreement to act on her behalf.

Any planned disclosure on behalf of a client must be discussed with the DSL in advance.

### **Support for clients making a disclosure**

We can offer support to a client making a disclosure by:

- (a) giving her contact details of the local Safeguarding Teams, and
- (b) offering to contact them on her behalf.
- (c) supporting them in their emotional journey around any disclosure

## **Code of Conduct**

All staff, volunteers, and trustees are expected to adhere to our Code of Conduct, which sets out the standards of behaviour expected in our interactions with adults at risk. This includes:

- Treating all individuals with respect and dignity;
- Maintaining appropriate boundaries;
- Avoiding any form of discriminatory behaviour;
- Reporting any concerns about the conduct of others.

## **Minimising Risk**

HARCSAC will seek to safeguard adults at risk by:

- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary DBS and other checks are undertaken
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with staff, volunteers, and service users
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and training.

## **Review and Monitoring**

Any safeguarding concerns raised will be reported to the Trustees.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any changes to legislation or best practice will be incorporated into the policy as necessary.