



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Policy and Procedure

Introduction and Policy Statement and Aims

Jasmine House aims to support women and girls who have experienced rape and sexual abuse by providing a variety of services. JH is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the all those we work with.

Objectives

To explain the responsibilities the organisation and its staff, volunteers and trustees have in respect of vulnerable adult protection.

To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where vulnerable adult protection issues arise.

To demonstrate the commitment towards the safeguarding of all those who use the services by or on behalf of the JH.

This policy applies to all staff, including the board of Trustees, staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of JH.

Definitions – Who is a vulnerable adult?

An **adult** at risk refers to any **adult** aged eighteen or over: “who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”

Definitions and types of abuse

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which she has not consented or cannot consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The Department of Health in its 'No Secrets' 2000 report suggests the following as the main types of abuse:

Physical abuse - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual abuse - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Neglect and acts of omission - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Discriminatory abuse - including race, sex, culture, religion, politics, that is based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment, hate crime.

Institutional abuse - Institutional abuse although not a separate category of abuse in itself, requires specific mention simply to highlight that adults placed in any kind of care home or day care establishment are potentially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. This can be especially so when care standards and practices fall below an acceptable level as detailed in the contract specification.

Multiple forms of abuse - Multiple forms of abuse may occur in an ongoing relationship or an abusive service setting to one person, or to more than one person at a time, making it important to look beyond single incidents or breaches in standards, to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

Recruitment and selection

JH recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse vulnerable adults in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with our service users. Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All trustees, volunteers and staff must complete the appropriate application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- DBS checks will be required by anyone working (paid or voluntary) for JH.
- Two confidential references must be provided and taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving license with photo).
- Employment or volunteering activities with JH will not commence until the above procedures have taken place.

Interview and Induction

- All staff, volunteers and trustees will be required to undergo an interview carried out to the established protocol and recommendations. At the interview stage a check must be made to ensure the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures). Prior to commencing employment qualifications will need to be evidenced.

During the induction process the job requirements and responsibilities for all posts will be clarified.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyze their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a Service User.
- Work safely and effectively with Service Users.
- All staff, volunteer and trustees will have their training refreshed on a bi-annual basis.

Role of the Designated and vulnerable adult protection officer

The role of the designated officer is to deal with all instances involving adult protection that arise at JH. They will respond to all vulnerable adult protection concerns and enquiries.

The designated Vulnerable Adult Protection Lead for the LRC is Cara Perry (CEO) and Antonia King (Trustee). Should you have any suspicions or concerns relating to Adult Protection, contact Cara Perry on: 07852660006 or Antonia King on: 07935448140.

Procedure in the event of a disclosure

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused.

Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full written record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information by the person receiving this information. Using the attached template this must include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

Determining need for further action

In all cases if it is disclosed that a service user is being abused:

The DSL should be informed immediately, and the issue discussed as soon as possible with the named lead officer for Safeguarding Cara Perry or Antonia who shall advise the course of action to take.

The key decisions that will need to be made if abuse is still being alleged or suspected are described in this policy.

These are:

- Whether immediate measures need to be taken to protect the abused person
- Whether the alleged victim needs medical treatment
- Whether the police or social care services should be informed

The lead officer for safeguarding (CEO) shall take steps to protect the adult at risk from serious harm and offer them support.

- Establish and record the facts about the circumstances giving rise to the alert
- Establish evidence for formal proceedings (e.g. criminal, registration or disciplinary)

- Establish with the adult at risk whether they feel that their personal safety is at risk, whether they want professional intervention to occur and what their views are on sharing information about the incident with other staff that need to know
- Decide if protective or other action is needed for the adult at risk or others
- Identify the sources and levels of risk
- Decide whether actual or suspected abuse has taken place and record the reasons for these conclusions
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in respect of any perpetrator
- Identify any lessons to be learnt for the future, including recommending changes to existing practices or service delivery

The nominated person shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local adult social services duty social worker. Using the attached template, a written record of the date and time of the report shall be made, and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to Leicester City Council adult social services department within 24 hours.

Information Sharing

The appropriate sharing of information between agencies is vital for the protection of vulnerable adults.

If abuse of a vulnerable adult is alleged, discovered or suspected it needs to be made clear that such information may need to be shared with other agencies on a “needs to know” basis. The person should be advised if the information is to be shared with another agency and the reasons for doing so.

The service users consent to the sharing of information should always be sought. In some circumstances information about a person may be disclosed without their consent.

When overriding a service user’s wish for confidentiality, the Trustees need to be clear about their reasons for doing so: Such reasons may include:

- The service user lacks mental capacity to make an informed decision.
- There is a risk of significant harm.
- There is a potential risk of harm to others.
- The alleged abuser is a staff/voluntary worker with access to other vulnerable people.
- That it is necessary for the prevention of crime or disorder.
- The service user has associated complex mental health needs

The personnel to whom the “need to know” criteria should be applied are those who are involved in the investigation of the abuse and those involved in safeguarding vulnerable adults who are allegedly or could potentially be the victims of abuse.

The information to be shared should only be that which is relevant to the investigation or to the protection of the vulnerable adult or to protect other vulnerable adults who are potentially at risk or harm.

Confidentially

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

If an adult confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tells the adult sensitively that they have a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

Where possible, consent must be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

Where a disclosure has been made, staff/volunteer must let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result. Staff /volunteer must assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why.

How to respond when an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff/volunteer:

If a vulnerable adult makes an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, the CEO must be informed immediately, and a formal internal investigation carried out line the organisations Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

Reporting to the Charity Commission

Actions you need to take you should something go wrong in order to prevent or minimise any further harm, loss or damage

- report it to the Commission as a serious incident, email RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk
- report it to the police, if you suspect a crime has been committed, and to any other regulators the charity is accountable to
- plan what to say to your staff, volunteers, members, the public and the media
- review what happened and prevent it from happening again - this may include strengthening internal controls and procedures, and/or seeking appropriate help from professional advisers.

When making a serious incident report you should provide details of:

Who you are and your connection to the charity

- The authority you have to report on behalf of the charity's trustees
- Who in the trustee body is aware of the incident, for example all or only the Chair
- What happened and when the charity first became aware of it
- Action being taken to deal with the incident and prevent future problems.
- Whether and when it was reported to the police or another regulatory/statutory agency (including official reference numbers.
- Media handling lines you may have prepared.

Review time frame

This policy and procedure will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis unless changes in legislation/case law require the policy to be reviewed sooner.

Policy agreed by the Board of Trustees at their meeting in January 2022

Review date: January 2024



LRC

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Reporting Form

Date

Time

Name of individual cause for concern is about

Age (if known)

Address (if known)

Describe your concern and action taken

Observations to support cause for concern

Description and location of any visible marks, bruising etc

Name of alleged abuser, relationship with vulnerable adult (if known)

Name of person completing form:

Signature:

Date:

Name of Safeguarding Lead

Signature:

Date:

Useful contacts:

Leicester City Safeguarding Board <http://lrsb.org.uk/contact>

Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children & Adults Board Managers (Job Share) Andy Sharp 0116 305 0359 James Fox 0116 305 8077

Out-of-hours phone number 0116 255 1606 (between 5pm-8.30am)

Write to the Safeguarding Boards at: Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adults Board, The Safeguarding Boards Business Office, Room 100, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire, LE3 8RA.

Secure Information - if you need to send **sensitive information** please call the Boards Business Office on **0116 305 7130** for further instructions.