



In Focus Safeguarding Adults Procedures

Purpose

This document provides clear instructions about the action you should take if you are concerned about an adult at risk.

All practitioners working for In Focus have the responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect whether paid, a volunteer or trustee.

This document also provides a summary of useful information about responding to concerns.

An adult is defined in the UK as anyone over the age of 18 (Care Act 2014).

Please note the importance of a transitional safeguarding approach which is holistic in nature and remain equally aware of our safeguarding procedures relating to both adults and children.

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

If you are concerned that someone is being harmed or is very unsafe right now you should dial 999



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You may need to raise a concern because you have observed something or because of a disclosure made to you.



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If you cannot reach the Safeguarding Lead or if you are not sure if it is a safeguarding adult concern you can call 023 8083 3003 or outside of normal office hours: 023 8023 3344 – more information about reporting concerns available [here](#).

If the nominated safeguarding lead asks for a copy of the written notes you have recorded and email the record as soon as possible and **always within 24 hours**. As far as possible maintain the confidentiality of the individual(s) involved e.g. use initials instead of names, and try to avoid identifying factors such as location unless absolutely necessary. When you have confirmation that the report has been received, delete the record from your email sent and deleted items. The Safeguarding Lead will store it securely.

For all other safeguarding concerns or worries please talk to your
Nominated Safeguarding Leads

- It should however be noted that information should be shared with authorities if an adult is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm. Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference to preventing harm. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding visit [SCIE](#).
- As far as possible maintain the confidentiality of the individual(s) involved e.g., use initials instead of names and try to avoid identifying factors such as location unless absolutely necessary. When you have confirmation that the report has been received, delete the record from your email sent **and** deleted items. The Safeguarding Lead will store it securely in Breathe.
- Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Staff and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.
- We have built opportunities for reflecting on worries and raising safeguarding concerns into our working routines as standing items in our management, team and Trustee Board meetings. If you do not have immediate face to face contact with one of the nominated Safeguarding Leads phone them immediately to discuss your concerns.

What is Abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect an adult at risk by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. It can happen over a



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period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect.

The Care Act (2014) and The Care Act Guidance outline 10 types of abuse that adults may face

1. Physical abuse
2. Domestic violence or abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Psychological or emotional abuse
5. Financial or material abuse
6. Modern slavery
7. Discriminatory abuse
8. Organisational or institutional abuse
9. Neglect or acts of omission
10. Self-neglect

Recognising Signs and Indicators

You are in a unique position to be able to observe signs of abuse, neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate a person may be being abused, neglected or exploited. You should make sure that you are alert to the potential signs of abuse and neglect. You may also be in a situation where someone tells you (makes a disclosure) and it is important that you listen carefully and are curious about behaviour and don't necessarily take what you are told at face value.

SCIE provide a detailed guide of signs and indicators of different types of abuse. Some of which include:

- Physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones - No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened



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- Subdued or changed behaviour - Low self-esteem - Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger - Uncooperative and aggressive behaviour
- Isolation – not seeing friends and family
- Limited access to money - Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle - Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts - Missing personal possessions
- Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP - Signs of malnutrition - A change of appetite, weight loss/gain – frequent infections

Evidence of any one potential indicator should not be taken on its own as proof that abuse is occurring. However, it should alert practitioners to make further assessments and to consider other associated factors. The lists of possible indicators and examples of behaviour are not exhaustive and people may be subject to a number of abuse types at the same time.

Prevent - Radicalisation and extremism of adults with care and support needs is a form of emotional/psychological exploitation. Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through social media. If staff are concerned that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of being radicalised and drawn into terrorism, they should treat it in the same way as any other safeguarding concern. Click [here](#) for more information about Prevent.

Responding

You should make sure you know where to turn to if you need to ask for help. It is not your responsibility to investigate potential abuse, but you should talk to your nominated Safeguarding Lead and be confident that they will refer to social care or to the police if necessary.

If you see it – say it. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is an integral part of everyday practice. We want to promote this sense of shared ownership and have built opportunities for reflecting on worries and raising safeguarding concerns into our working routines – they are discussed explicitly as a standing item in supervision and support conversations – in alternate management and general team meetings, in 1:1s with line manager and in the wash up / debrief process at the end of each session delivered.

In Focus Education & Development are committed to the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) - SCIE - SCIE (MSP) which enables safeguarding to be done with, not to, people – 'no decision about me, without me' and we will ensure that



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decisions made will allow adults to make their own choices and include them in any decision making.

Information Sharing_–

Confidentiality and information sharing - In Focus Education & Development expects all staff, volunteers, trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law, In Focus Education & Development does not share information if not required. You should not let other considerations, like the fear of damaging working relationships, get in the way of protecting adults at risk from abuse and neglect. Honesty is one of the most important foundations of any working relationship therefore clearly build in from the start of any 1 :1 or group work that concerns about harm will be shared. Equally, if referral to social care is necessary, be clear that this is the beginning of a process of inquiry, not an accusation. Further advice is available [here](#).

Do keep colleagues up to date with any new information and never assume it has been shared by another worker, friend or family member.

Do remain open to changing your views about the likelihood of significant harm.

Handling Disclosures

- **Remain calm and in control** – don t panic.
- **Find a safe space** – take the individual to one side so they cannot be overheard but so that you are both visible to other staff or adult practitioners.
- **Listen carefully to what is being said** – you need to remember as much as you can.
- **Don t give you own view or opinions** – actively listen but do not comment even if what they are saying is shocking or difficult to hear, try not to show this.
- **Only ask questions if you don t understand what is being said** – perhaps they said something very quietly, perhaps you didn t understand a word they used.
- **Don t promise to keep a secret** – often an individual begins by saying “please don t tell anyone”. You cannot keep this secret. You do not need consent to share the information but it is best practice. Reassure them that concerns will only be shared to support their safety.
- **Reassure them that they have done the right thing** – you could say something like “you did the right thing to tell me this.”



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- **Make notes straight after your meeting with the child or young person** - use their words. Write it up accurately and clearly as possible recording the date and time.
- **Report it** - as soon as possible (always within 24 hours) to the Nominated Safeguarding Lead. It is not your job to notify the police or social care unless it is urgent and the Safeguarding Lead cannot be contacted.
- **Request support** – safeguarding disclosures are difficult.

Support your own wellbeing:

Informing your line manager that you have been involved in a disclosure and discussing any support you might benefit from	Letting family / friends know that you need to talk about your own emotions and asking for support in processing these	If you continue to be affected or the situation is ongoing you can ask your GP to be referred to a counsellor	Considering contacting a relevant charity / voluntary organisation that can provide counselling / guidance
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Local Safeguarding Partnership Procedures

If the Safeguarding Lead feels that it is appropriate to make a safeguarding referral they will refer to Hampshire, IOW, Portsmouth and Southampton 4LSAB Multi-Agency Home - Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board which provides all information about local safeguarding adults principles, practice and process.

Concerns about a professional - If you have concerns about someone who works with a vulnerable adult contact the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) via the MASH/CRS numbers given on the home page of the procedures above.

Principles

We are committed to the six principles of safeguarding adults as demonstrated in our Safeguarding Umbrella infographic.

1. Empowerment - Adults are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with support and information.
2. Prevention - Strategies are developed to prevent abuse and neglect that promote resilience and self-determination.



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3. Proportionality – A proportionate and least intrusive response is made balanced with the level of risk.
4. Protection - Adults are offered ways to protect themselves, and there is a coordinated response to adult safeguarding.
5. Partnership - Local solutions through services working together within their communities.
6. Accountability - Accountability and transparency in delivering a safeguarding response.

Legislative Context

The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support statutory guidance provide the framework for working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect.

The multi-agency policies and guidance from Southampton Safeguarding Adults Board provide advice and guidance about responding to concerns about an adult at risk.

Further Reading

Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people, is fundamental to good practice in safeguarding adults but has been highlighted as a difficult area of practice, SCIE have produced a useful guide to information sharing, available [here](#).

Care Act Factsheets (see 7 and 11 in particular)

Free on-line training is also available from Southampton Safeguarding Adults Board [here](#).

See also

- In Focus Safeguarding Policy
- In Focus – Safeguarding Overview presentation for Trustees
- In Focus Safeguarding Action Plan 2025 – ongoing developmental activities for In Focus
- In Focus Safer Recruitment Policy
- In Focus Whistleblowing & Anti Bullying Policy

Contact details

In Focus Education & Development is a registered charity 1207105

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We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on:

Date: 15/07/2026