

Safeguarding vulnerable adults



The nature of adult abuse

Vulnerable adults can be abused by anyone including carers, relatives, professional staff, volunteers, neighbours, friends or organisations. More than one person may abuse a vulnerable adult and some perpetrators will abuse more than one victim.

Forms of abuse include physical, sexual, psychological, financial or material, neglect and acts of omissions, discriminatory abuse, self neglect and institutional abuse.

Good practice, principles, policies and procedures

All voluntary and community organisations working with vulnerable people should:

- promote the general welfare, health and development of vulnerable people and protect them from harm
- recognise that vulnerable people have rights and treat them with respect
- be sensitive to every person's identity including culture, beliefs, ethnic background, gender, disability, age and sexuality
- plan the work of your organisation to minimise opportunities for vulnerable people to suffer harm whilst using your organisation's services
- develop effective policies and procedures for responding to incidents and alleged incidents of abuse
- develop effective policies and procedures to handle complaints
- ensure their policies and procedures include mechanisms for reporting and recording
- apply their service principles and practice procedures around safeguarding in a consistent way



- ensure that an appropriate system for referral to, and co-operation with, the Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Committee(s) is in place
- take incidents of potential abuse seriously, discuss these with managers and ensure they are recorded
- adopt and consistently apply a safe method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers
- train volunteers and appropriate staff members to be aware of risks to vulnerable people and their needs
- establish links with other relevant agencies, services, carers and families.

Safeguarding checks and legal requirements

Organisations that fall under the Care Standards Act must screen their staff and volunteers. Other organisations have a duty of care towards the people they work with. This includes Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks for new staff members and volunteers before they start work and obtaining references. Clear recruitment and supervision procedures reduce the potential risks of abuse.

How to report an incident

It is important that all of your organisation's staff, volunteers and trustees know how to report concerns or an incident.

Social Care Direct - This should be your first point of contact for any social care enquiries. Tel: 0845 8 503 503 (line open 24 hours a day), Fax: 01924 303455, Minicom: 01924 303450.

Contacting the police - In an emergency, dial 999. For non-emergencies, telephone 0845 6060606.

Find out more

Download our full toolkit and find details of organisations that can support you at www.wakefieldvcs.org | Telephone: 01924 367418 | Email: ask@vawd.org.uk

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Providing services and support for voluntary and community groups