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Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind

Title: **Adult Safeguarding Policy**
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Aims and Objectives

This policy assists paid staff, casual bank workers and volunteers to minimise risk, protect from harm and safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults / adults at risk of abuse. The policy aims to ensure any concerns are managed effectively via:

- Effective recruitment of paid staff, casual bank workers and volunteers
- Clear roles and responsibilities of paid staff, casual bank workers and volunteers
- Clear procedures for recognising, raising and dealing with concerns
- Training

Scope

This policy is applicable to all paid staff, casual bank workers and volunteers.

Related Policy and Procedure

This policy is written in line with the following documents:

- Safeguarding Adults in Tameside: Interagency policy Procedures Guideline (5th edition January 2011)
- Safeguarding Adults in Oldham: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable adults / Adults at Risk from Abuse (April 2012)
http://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/828/safeguarding_adults_policy

It should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct, Recruitment of Ex-offenders and Criminal Record Disclosure Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection Policy, Whistle blowing Policy and all Services Policy.

Legal Context

The following legislation is relevant to this policy:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Family Law Act 1996
- The Mental Health Act 1983
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2009
- National Assistance Act 1948
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Care Act 2014

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Guidance for service user altercations

The Policy

Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind recognises that safeguarding vulnerable adults is a serious and complex matter and is committed to confronting and seeking to protect adults at risk of abuse whenever an issue comes to our notice.

Every adult who participates in activities or has contact through a third party with Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind should be provided a safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every worker, paid or unpaid, involved in this organisation.

Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind recognise its responsibility, both legally and morally to safeguard the welfare of all adults. If we suspect abuse of a vulnerable adult then we will do something about it and ensure our actions are properly recorded.

This policy will ensure that:

For the vulnerable adult:

- Their welfare is paramount. They have a right to privacy, to be treated with dignity and to live an independent life. Their individuality should be respected.
- Whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, they have the right to protection from abuse
- We respect and promote their rights, wishes and feelings, while keeping them informed of the organisation's role in minimising harm and risk
- Involve them as much as possible with any issue and action taken, ensuring their safety is not compromised

For any third party:

- Where a third party discloses safeguarding issues, they should be involved as much as possible with any issue and action taken, ensuring the individual's and their safety is not compromised

For the worker (paid and unpaid):

- Any suspicions regarding abuse should be reported internally and externally, if necessary, following the procedures detailed below.
- Workers should be alert to the signs of potential abuse (as described in this policy), take them seriously and respond swiftly and appropriately to any suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Any actions are based on the premise that the person is able to make informed decisions and the worker will take all practical steps to ensure the individual understands relevant information and is aware of their options, which may include communicating in simple language or other forms. Where that person is unable to make an informed decision we will contact the person's carers or social worker, as appropriate
- Workers should be clear about and follow processes to share information both internally and externally and share information with external agencies in line with this policy. However it is recognised that as a citizen separate from the organisation, a worker has the right to raise concerns direct with external agencies.

- Where a worker reports abuse by a colleague or other agency, the worker will be reassured that the law protects them from actions by those individuals who have been implicated in the abuse, harm and/or neglect as long as the worker's report was not malicious or vexatious.

For the organisation:

- A working environment is created in which those who suspect abuse are not afraid of reporting it and workers are aware of the protection that legislation and policy offers them.
- The organisation will listen and respond to third parties alerting the organisation of abuse and that these third parties will be directed to an access point and protected and supported.
- The organisation recruits, inducts, supervises and trains paid staff, casual bank workers and volunteers relevant to their role to adopt best practice through the Code of Conduct and this policy to safeguard and protect adults at risk of abuse. Staff and volunteers who regularly work with vulnerable adults should receive safeguarding training.
- Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral obligations to protect vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation. We will recognise the importance of confidentiality, but not at the expense of leaving an adult at risk.
- The organisation will identify a designated "Safeguarding Adult Manager" as the liaison point regarding any safeguarding issues.
- Build relations and ensure contact as necessary with local teams, (Tameside Adult Safeguarding Partnership, Oldham Adult Safeguarding Team, Derbyshire Adult Safeguarding team) to ensure up to date practice and policy.
- As with any other risk issue, inform other agencies of adult safeguarding issues relating to individuals.

Procedure

At any stage in the referral, assessment or on-going work with an individual, where issues relating to potential neglect or abuse of a vulnerable adult are identified, these will be dealt with on an individual basis and action taken will be in line with this policy. This could include withdrawal of the service, but this is not necessarily the only course of action and individual circumstances will be taken into account.

Any action taken will be done on an individual basis, so where issues regarding these matters arise in a group situation (e.g. courses, café, allotment gardening sessions), an appropriate individual meeting will be arranged as soon as possible after the issues arose.

Referral and Assessment

Referrals to the services can either be self-referral or, where appropriate for some services, from a third party. In line with information sharing protocols, external agencies should provide any information relating to risk issues to the organisation.

When we receive an adult referral, we will note whether the individual may be considered "at risk of abuse". This could be for one of the following reasons:

- Physical disability
- Frailty
- Mental Health
- Substance Misuse
- Sensory Impairment
- Learning Disability
- Mental Health Dementia

- Other vulnerabilities

If it is thought for safeguarding or other reasons it may be appropriate for us to discuss their personal information with other third parties and agencies, we will aim to get written consent as to who they are happy for us to share information with.

It is also essential that paid workers and volunteers try and make it clear to the individual, using simple language or other means if necessary, that any information they divulge may be passed on to the relevant authority if workers believe the individual may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

During the referral and assessment procedure, if someone's behaviour or information regarding that person causes concerns, or information is received that raises suspicion of abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult, this will be noted and discussed internally or externally if required.

On-going work/contact

Where any issues are noted relating directly to an adult at risk of abuse, these should be documented and discussed internally and where appropriate, externally following this policy.

Recognising adult safeguarding issues

Safeguarding of Adults procedures apply to any individuals over 18 who might not be able to take steps to protect themselves without support, including those in a caring role.

Abuse may take many forms, including criminal activity, and some indicators are provided below:

Form of abuse	Possible indicators	Possible crime
Physical abuse – results in bodily harm or mental distress and may include physical assault, imprisonment, misuse of drugs and withholding food etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple bruising • Fractures • Burns • Bed sores • Fear • Depression • Unexplained weight loss 	Assault
Neglect - results in bodily harm or mental distress and can involve failure to provide help and support in daily tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malnutrition • Untreated medical problems • Dirty clothes or dishevelled appearance • Bed sores • Confusion • Over-sedation 	Deprivation of meals – “wilful neglect”
Emotional abuse – results in mental distress and can include denial of choice, dignity and respect, fear of violence, threats, humiliation, loss of liberty, name calling or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear • Depression • Confusion • Loss of sleep • Behaviour changes 	Deprivation of liberty – “false imprisonment”

discrimination. This can also include on-line and cyber bullying.		
Form of abuse	Possible indicators	Possible crime
Sexual abuse – when a vulnerable person is involved in sexual activities they do not want to be involved in, do not understand or are unable to give informed consent. It can include looking at pornography or indecent exposure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of sleep • Behaviour changes • Bruising • Soreness around genitals • Torn, stained or bloody underwear • Preoccupation with things sexual • Sexual transmitted diseases • Pregnancy 	Rape Indecent Assault
Financial abuse – theft, misuse or withholding of money or possessions, including verbal, physical and emotional threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual bank account activity • Unpaid bills • Unexplained shortage of money • Reluctance of person responsible for funds to provide food and clothes 	Fraud Theft
Institutional abuse – occurs in a group living situation and can include staff imposing rules without the consent of the inhabitants, lack of privacy, lack of individual attention and deprivation of social contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflexible and non-negotiable systems and routines • Lack of consideration to dietary requirements • Name calling / inappropriate terms of address • Lack of adequate physical care. 	

Where there are concerns regarding safeguarding

Where there is any suspicion, the paid staff member, casual bank worker or volunteer should first revisit this policy to ensure it is adhered to. In cases where a paid staff member, casual bank worker or volunteer has concerns, they should be discussed internally with an appropriate paid staff member; if necessary the paid staff member will discuss further with a member of the management team. Any issues which require referral and discussion with any external agencies should be discussed with both the individual and a paid member of staff. Following on from the incident this will then be notified to the paid staff member's Line Manager for signing off and to ascertain whether any further follow-up work is required. If necessary it will also be forwarded onto one of the designated "Safeguarding Adult Managers" in the organisation, or in their absence, the CEO.

The paid staff member, casual bank worker or volunteer should apply the following principles when collecting information about a potential issue:

- Third parties should be reassured they were right to tell and they are not to blame.
- Questions should be kept to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details.
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Inform the individual what you will do next.
- Make a full and written record of what has been said/heard.
- Discuss the issue within the relevant managers, as set out above.
- If appropriate, as soon as possible pass on the information to the designated Safeguarding Adults Team (see Contact Numbers at the end of this document).
- Don't delay in passing on the information.

A written record should be compiled including as much information as possible, including:

- The individual's name, gender, date of birth, ethnic origin, home address, telephone numbers and (if possible) email addresses.
- Reason why the adult is considered to be at risk (physical disability, Mental Health issue etc).
- The nature of the allegation, type of abuse, including dates, times, descriptions of injuries, bruising or any other possible indicators as mentioned in the table above.
- Whether the adult has given consent to share information and invoke Safeguarding Adults Procedures – see below.
- Any other relevant information related to the allegation.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents or contact with other third parties relating to the abuse.

The organisation's confidentiality and data protection policies ensure that information is stored safely within the organisation.

If appropriate, one of the organisations' designated Safeguarding Adult Managers will then discuss the issues with the relevant agency and complete a referral form if required. The relevant Safeguarding Team will then decide the next course of action and may require an investigation.

Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind are not responsible for deciding whether abuse has taken place or not. The organisation has a responsibility to pass onto any relevant authorities as much information as possible. The organisation will never attempt to investigate any safeguarding concerns (including allegations made against a worker). This remains the duty of the relevant Adult Safeguarding Team. The organisation will cooperate with any investigations following reports of safeguarding issues.

Individual's consent

Clients should be made aware as soon as possible on receiving our services of the circumstances where we are unable to maintain confidentiality (see below). Where possible, any decision to report an incident of abuse should always be with the consent of the individual. If the individual does not agree with the decision to report, then the Adult Safeguarding team should still be contacted in the following circumstances:

- The person does not have the mental capacity to protect themselves (in line with the Law Commission Test for Incapacity).
- There is an imminent fear of danger to self or others.
- If it is thought appropriate to contact the Safeguarding team on an "Information Only" basis.

If you are unsure how to proceed and it is believed that the individual may be at risk, then the relevant Adult Safeguarding team should be consulted to discuss the issue.

Emergency situations

If the adult is in immediate physical danger (e.g. being beaten up, seriously hurt or life is at risk), then the emergency services should be contacted by dialling 999.

If there are suspicions of sexual abuse or criminal activity, then the police should be informed. If the abuse has just happened, the police should be contacted as quickly as possible to prevent loss of evidence. The first concern is with the well-being of the individual, but, where possible, evidence should always be preserved i.e. try and avoid physical contact with the individual and do not wash or clean up the individual or the area.

Disclosure of historical abuse

If a paid worker, casual bank worker or volunteer has suspicions of historical abuse, they should explore the following issues with the vulnerable adult:

- Is there reason to suspect that alleged perpetrator is still in contact with the individual?
- Is there reason to suspect that the alleged perpetrator may be abusing other vulnerable adults?
- What action would the individual like to take against the alleged perpetrator?

Consultation with the Adult Safeguarding team can then take place in an informed manner.

Information sharing protocol and obtaining advice

The Department of Health and Home Office “No Secrets” guidance (2000) requires all agencies to work together with service users and carers to protect vulnerable adults.

The organisation recognises that it will pass on any information, however small it appears, as often small amounts of information from different agencies when joined up provide a more coherent picture. This will be to the relevant Adult Safeguarding Teams and other agencies as appropriate. Contact details are provided in the Appendix.

A number of agencies are available for advice and for reporting any issues for safeguarding adults at risk of abuse. Information sharing protocols exist to ensure that information is shared amongst agencies and ensure duty of care across all organisations. The organisation will share any relevant information where this is required for any reviews or incidents concerning vulnerable.

Due to the nature of the information, it may not always be possible to know the outcome of any information shared within the organisation or with an external agency. However, good practice suggests that feedback be provided to relevant individuals within the confidentiality issues of any particular case.