



# CHUMS

**Mental Health and  
Emotional Wellbeing  
Service for Children  
and Young People**

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of the organisation in relation to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

All adults over the age of 18 years have the right to be safe from harm and must be able to live free from fear of abuse of any kind and all complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

A person can be vulnerable for many reasons and at different times and situations in their life; it may be that they are unable to protect themselves or are dependent upon others. The abuse may not always be deliberate and can sometimes happen when others are trying their best but do not know the right thing to do and this may cause harm.

This could include people with learning or physical disabilities, mental health problems, older people or people with an impairment. It may also include victims of domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour or even hate crime. There may be drug or alcohol problems, poverty or homelessness.

Adult abuse can vary from not treating someone with respect and dignity affecting their quality of life to causing actual physical harm, violating a person's human and civil rights. Abuse can happen anywhere i.e. at home, work, in the community.

## **Who Might be causing the Abuse**

The person responsible for the abuse is usually known to the person/s being abused and can be: A relative, friend, carer, colleague, health professional, social care professional, paid or unpaid volunteer or neighbour. The person being abused may be worried about what will happen if they speak out and must be reassured it is okay to speak out.

## **The Role of Staff**

All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of CHUMS have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of everyone.

Staff, volunteers and trustees may receive disclosures of abuse or witness vulnerable adults who may be at risk. This policy will enable all personnel to make informed and confident responses if they feel another person is at risk of harm.



### **Procedures if Adult Abuse is Disclosed or Discovered**

#### **Categories and Signs of Abuse**

The following signs MAY indicate abuse, BUT – there could be other explanations:-

#### **Physical**

Physical abuse can occur where there is no satisfactory explanation given. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, using restraint, hair pulling. Physical abuse is any deliberate act to cause physical harm.

**Signs:** Unexplained cuts, bruises or fractures to any part of the body especially, in well protected areas. Slap, kick or finger marks, object shaped injuries, weight loss due to malnutrition/dehydration, untreated medical problem, and unexplained burns – the location of the burn/s and the type of burn.

#### **Emotional/Psychological**

Emotional abuse can include humiliation, shouting, swearing, intimidation, emotional blackmail, denial of human rights, using racist language, prevention of seeing family and friends, controlling, harassment, threatening or verbal behaviour.

**Signs:** Flinching, avoiding eye contact, fearfulness, low self-esteem, tiredness or insomnia, tearfulness, appetite changes, weight loss or weight gain, isolation, lack of personal hygiene and respect, confusion.

#### **Sexual**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing an adult to take part in sexual activities and can be committed by either a man or woman and in some cases a child. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex). They may also include sexual acts that the adult has not or cannot consent to.

**Signs:** Sudden changes in behaviour, poor concentration, disturbed sleep, incontinence, withdrawal, self-harm, bruising to upper arms, torn, stained or bloody underwear, recent difficulty in standing/walking.

#### **Neglect or Acts of Omission**

Neglect is when a person is suffering due to their physical, physiological or medical needs not being met by a carer preventing access to services such as health, social care or educational services. This could include withholding food, drink or heating.

**Signs:** Poor living conditions, isolation, inadequate heating and lighting, changes to physical state i.e. unclean, ill-fitting clothes, malnutrition



### **Financial or Material**

Financial abuse can take place in the form of theft, fraud, exploitation, taking or misusing possessions/property without permission.

**Signs:** Inability to pay bills, personal items going missing, person/s managing finances being evasive or uncooperative, unexplained funds missing from bank account, sudden interest by family/friends.

### **Institutional or Organisational**

This abuse is different from other categories of abuse because it is about who abuses and how they have abused, rather than the types of harm. Abuse occurs in relationships, families, a service or institution such as hospital, nursing home/residential setting. The perpetrator can be a single person or a group of people.

**Signs:** Unhomely or stark living conditions, lack of clothes and belongings, illegal confinement or restrictions.

### **Discriminatory**

May be discrimination due to ethnicity, disability, faith or religious beliefs, culture or sexuality.

**Signs:** Withdrawn, socially isolated, fear, anxiety, support offered not suitable to individual needs.

### **Modern Slavery**

Includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic slavery. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to bully, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and cruel treatment.

**Signs:** Physical or emotional abuse, unkempt appearance or withdrawn, living in dirty or cramped conditions, lacks of personal effects or identification documentation, frightened of talking to strangers

### **Self neglect**

When someone neglects to care for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

**Signs:** Poor personal hygiene, unkempt appearance, lack of essential foods, living in unsanitary conditions, hoarding, non compliance with services



### **Recognising Abuse**

- The person may disclose themselves that they are being abused
- The person may make a chance remark
- The abuser may disclose it
- You may be witness to the abuse
- You may see physical signs of abuse
- A third party may disclose that someone is being abused

### **If abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected**

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

Write down what you have been told and keep it factual, include the date, time, where abuse took place, names of others involved and a description of injuries if seen

Do not delay

Do not act alone

Do not start to investigate

Consult with the Safeguarding Lead

#### **DO's:**

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Listen carefully to what is being said and repeat back what is being said as this will confirm your understanding and that the person is being listened to
- Explain that all information given will be treated seriously
- Record clear and concise facts as soon as possible
- Report to your Safeguarding lead

#### **DON'T:**

- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion or panic
- Ignore the allegation
- Ask leading questions
- Make false promises
- Make statements such as 'I am shocked, don't tell anyone else'

### **Confidentiality**

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults where necessary and on a need to know basis.



All written records will be kept secure in a locked cabinet in the CEO's office.

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 informs the adult that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

Consent should be obtained from the vulnerable adult before sharing personal information with social care or other agencies unless there is an added safety risk. In the case of young adults with disabilities the professional should consider whether a conversation with the parent/carer should be undertaken in the first instance.

### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults with Suicidal Ideation**

CHUMS supports adults who may be suffering with low mood. Clinical risk within most CHUMS services remains with the G.P. It is however, imperative that a clinical risk assessment is undertaken for all vulnerable adults and where it is felt there is a medium to high level of risk, with no or few protective factors, the clinician should ensure there is a safety plan in place. This may include, but is not exclusive to, informing the G.P. of the current risk. In cases where there is immediate risk the clinician should contact the appropriate adult service or community mental health team. Where there is a raised level of risk but no immediate risk the clinician should ensure that the vulnerable adult knows what to do should the level of risk escalate. Each clinician is responsible for talking to their clinical supervisor and/or the relevant safeguarding lead where the risk appears to be high or significantly escalating. In some circumstances the safeguarding lead may suggest a safeguarding form is completed. The safeguarding lead is then responsible for ensuring this is followed up appropriately. However it is imperative that the clinical risk assessment form is continuously updated also within the PCMISS client database, along with chronological notes. The PCMISS alert function should be used where there is any increased level of risk. This will also alert the supervisor to the level of risk.

### **Advocacy**

Each local authority will have advocates available to support adults when they are struggling to understand care plans and processes. Many people will be able to ask family, friends or neighbours to speak on their behalf if they are struggling but where this is not possible specialist advocacy agencies will be able to help.

Bedfordshire	Pohwer	0300 456 2370
Cambs/Peterborough	Total Voice	0300 222 5704

### **Sexual needs and behaviours of vulnerable adults at risk**

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**For Children & Young People**  
*Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults*



CHUMS acknowledges and understands that any adult service user may wish to form relationships and be sexually active, and there may be circumstances where this will need to be supported, and may include having discussions about safe relationships or signposting to an appropriate agency.

**CHUMS Safeguarding Adults Contacts - Bedfordshire**

**Safeguarding Lead**

Debbie Robson  
Main Office: 01525 863924  
Email: [Debbie.robson@chums.uk.com](mailto:Debbie.robson@chums.uk.com)

**Bedford Borough Council**

Borough Hall  
Cauldwell Street  
Bedford. MK42 9AP

**Telephone: 01234 276222**

**Email: [adult.protection@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:adult.protection@bedford.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 0300 300 8123 (After hours emergencies only)**

**Central Bedfordshire Council**

**Direct Dial: 0300 300 8122**

**Email: [adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 0300 300 8123 (After hours emergencies only)**

**Luton Council**

Town Hall  
Luton, LU1 2BQ

**Telephone: 01582 547730/547563**

**Email: [adultsafeguarding@luton.gov.uk](mailto:adultsafeguarding@luton.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 0300 300 8123 (After hours emergencies only)**

**Bedfordshire Police**

Safeguarding Unit  
Police Headquarters  
Woburn Road, Kempston  
Bedfordshire MK43 9AX

**Tel: 01234 841212**



## **CHUMS Safeguarding Adults Contacts – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**

### **Safeguarding Lead**

Hannah Baron

Email: [Hannah.baron@chums.uk.com](mailto:Hannah.baron@chums.uk.com)

Main office: 01480 277848

### **Cambridgeshire**

Tel: 0345 045 5202

Email: [referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or  
[gcsx.referralcentreadults@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:gcsx.referralcentreadults@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **Peterborough**

Tel: 01733 747474

Email: [adultsocialcare@peterborough.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialcare@peterborough.gcsx.gov.uk)

Out of hours: 01733 234724

Referrals should be made using the joint SAB safeguarding referral form -

<http://www.safeguardingpeterborough.org.uk/adults-board/reporting-a-concern/>

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**Appendix A: Safeguarding Form for Recording Incidents/Concerns**

The importance of recording all stages of the safeguarding process cannot be overemphasised. This form is designed as an aide memoire to help ensure appropriate procedures are followed after a safeguarding concern. Please ensure that you distinguish between a fact, an allegation and an opinion within the report.

**Please forward to the relevant safeguarding lead who is responsible for recording the information on the CHUMS Incident Tracker.**

Name of Adult		Date of birth	
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Brief description of concerns (including adults view)

**By whom.....**

**Date.....**

**Action Taken**

Description of action taken (including who referred to, names, times, telephone numbers, etc.)

**By whom.....**

**Date.....**

**CHUMS**  
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If a referral has not been made, please give reasons as to why not	Signed	Date

**Further Notes**

Has this report been shared with the named adult? Yes/No

Adult's relationship with peers (Include social skills)
CHUMS relationship with family
Adult's presentation (physical appearance, hygiene, diet if known, etc.)
Attendance and punctuality

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Other comments

Signed:

Dated:

**CHUMS**  
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**Chronology of Events/Concerns**

Concern/event	Action/result

**Signature.....**

**Date.....**

Concern/event	Action/result

**Signature.....**

**Date.....**

Concern/event	Action/result

**Signature.....**

**Date.....**

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Concern/event	Action/result

**Signature.....**

**Date.....**



## **Appendix B    Definition of Vulnerable Adult**

A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 years or over who 'is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental health or other disability, age or illness' and 'is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.

There are no hard and fast definitions of what makes an adult vulnerable. Making a judgement about vulnerability is a process based on gathering evidence and discussion with the person concerned, others, and with the Safeguarding Lead.

Vulnerability may be caused by something inherent to the person –for example, having a learning disability or mental health issue or frailty due to old age –and this can be lifelong, acquired or temporary. However, it is very important to understand that a personal characteristic in itself does not make someone vulnerable –i.e. not everyone with a learning disability, mental health issue will be vulnerable.

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**Governance Committee Authorisation**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hannah Baron", is placed over a blue ink oval.

Signature\*

Name Print Hannah Baron

Position/Role: Chair/Senior Clinical Psychologist

Date: January 2018

Date of review: January 2021

\*Authorised signatory must be the chair (or deputising chair) of Governance Committee