

Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy

Introduction

York Mind provides a number of services to individuals recovering from mental ill-health. We are aware that some of the clients we work with may be vulnerable and therefore require procedures in place to protect them from abuse. This policy relates to adults aged 18 and over. For young people and children please refer to our Safeguarding Young People Policy. Appendix 1 sets out the key definitions applicable to this policy.

Policy statement

York Mind believes that every vulnerable person, regardless of age, has at all times and in all situations the right to be safe and protected from any situation or practice which may result in that person being physically or psychologically harmed.

Aims

This policy aims to protect from emotional, physical, sexual and financial abuse any vulnerable persons with whom we come into contact or about whom we receive information and; to protect our staff and volunteers from misunderstandings and false allegations of abuse.

Objectives

In implementing this policy, York Mind will:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding to protect adults from harm, abuse and exploitation and to achieve desired outcomes
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of adults at risk
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the local Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) safeguarding framework
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about an adult, or a worker's conduct towards an adult
- Ensure that the Named Person understands their responsibility to refer any adult safeguarding concerns to the adult safeguarding services;
- Provide appropriate learning opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge, to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to adults

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- Undertake recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers as follows:
 - Requiring the names and addresses of two referees and to always obtain two written references before making a formal offer of work
 - Enclosing a copy of the Job Description and Person Specification with requests for written references
 - Keeping copies of all written references in the applicant's file
 - Enhanced CRB disclosures and checks will be undertaken for any posts (employees and volunteers) that involve one-to-one work with clients.
 - For all posts (paid & volunteer) requiring face-to-face work with vulnerable persons, applicants are asked to provide details of any previous work with vulnerable persons and of any prior investigations or allegations against him/her with regard to abuse of vulnerable persons, as part of the interview process.
 - An induction is carried out with all new employees and volunteers, to include information about all York Mind's policies and procedures, with on-going training available if required.
 - All employees and volunteers have a line manager and receive regular supervision and, where appropriate, (e.g. mentors, counsellors) external supervision is available.
 - All employees and volunteers appointed have a probationary period of three months.
- When working with clients away from York Mind's premises:
 - If meeting a client away from York Mind's premises, this should, where possible, take place in a public place.
 - Although not encouraged, if there is a need for work to be undertaken at a client's home, this should be done in accordance with York Mind's Lone Working Policy.
- Ensure that any employee or volunteer, who has concerns about a vulnerable person's (child or adult) physical, sexual, emotional or financial well-being, reports his/her concerns according to the Suspected Abuse Reporting procedures as detailed below.
- Ensure that if the situation is urgent, or the vulnerable person is too frightened to go home or leave the premises or if we have serious doubts about a vulnerable person's safety, this is reported immediately to the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER who will contact Social Services or the Police immediately.

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Designated Reporting Officer

Designated Reporting Officer	Alyson Scott Position: Chief Executive Officer Work Number: 01904643364 Emergency Number: mobile number Email: Alyson.scott@yorkmind.org.uk
Deputy	Vicky Blakey-Archer Position: Head of Client Services Work Number: 01904 666758 Emergency Number: mobile number Email: Vicky.blakey-archer@yorkmind.org.uk

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Procedures

Reporting Alleged or Suspected Abuse

It is vital that **suspected or disclosed abuse** is reported via these procedures. It is important to do this, even if it is felt an allegation or disclosure may well be untrue, or there are only minor reasons to suspect abuse, as there may have already been other reports of concern made by other staff members, and failure to report concerns may put a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk.

- Any disclosure or suspicion of abuse should be reported as soon as possible to the employee's or volunteer's line manager.
- The line manager will then consult the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER (if the designated reporting officer is unavailable, it should be reported to a deputy or member of the senior management team) as soon as possible. Further information will then be gathered by interviewing the staff member or volunteer, and if appropriate, by directly interviewing the client or other person making the disclosure.
- An action plan will then be made by the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER. It will depend on the individual circumstances but the action plan will often include the involvement of external agencies such as Social Services, or the Police.
- In the event that an allegation is made against a York Mind staff member or volunteer then this must be reported to the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER who will investigate the matter in line with the procedures detailed in York Mind's Disciplinary Policy, if necessary. If an allegation is made against the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER, then this must be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- If a disclosure of abuse is made by a client to an employee or volunteer he/she should be referred to York Minds Confidentiality Policy, and it should be explained to him/her carefully that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality.
- If you feel that a disclosure of abuse is about to take place, remind the person as soon as possible that you are unable to promise to keep such a disclosure to yourself and refer to York Mind's Confidentiality Policy.
- If a client of York Mind makes an allegation about abuse from someone outside the organisation, either a worker from another organisation, family member or informal

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carer, this should be reported to the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER of York Mind who will gather more information and if appropriate report this to the relevant external agency (i.e. Social Services or Police).

Doubts about the person`s current safety

The following guidelines have been put in place for **when immediate action is required to report a disclosure or suspicion of abuse** if there are serious doubts about the person`s safety at the present time.

- If you feel that a disclosure of abuse is about to take place, or once a disclosure is made, remind the person as soon as possible that you are unable to promise to keep a disclosure to yourself and refer to York Mind`s Confidentiality Policy.
- It is important to act calmly when a client has disclosed an allegation of abuse. He/she has put his/her trust in you and you would not want to deter him/her.
- Re-assure him/her that you are pleased he/she has told you that it must have taken courage to do so and positively accept what he/she says.
- Let him/her know your priority is his/her safety and therefore the information may need to be passed on to another person for the matter to be dealt with appropriately.
- Be sure to listen carefully to whatever he/she is saying and to take him/her seriously. This will enable him/her to tell you what has happened in his/her own words and own time.
- Continue to summarise what he/she has to say in order to clarify and establish the facts.
- Inform the person making the disclosure of exactly what you intend to do with the Information he/she has given you and then Inform DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER of the disclosure.
 - Notes will be taken by the DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER once they have been informed of the disclosure, and will decide if urgent action is needed to report the suspected/alleged abuse to Social Services or the Police. The person making the disclosure is to be informed of this and that the notes will be kept on site, and stored in a locked filing cabinet, or on an

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organisational database. He/she should also be informed if his/her disclosure has been reported to an external agency such as Social Services or the Police.

- It is important to acknowledge the risk to the vulnerable person if a disclosure is reported, as disclosure may result in heightened emotional and/or mental distress or fear of reprisals from his/her alleged abuser. Therefore safety procedures may need to be put in place. Emergency services may need to be contacted if the vulnerable person threatens suicide or harm to him/herself or to others. Referring the vulnerable person to other services or agencies for appropriate support may be appropriate for crisis or on-going support.

Contact Information to report allegations of abuse

Customer access and assessment team:	Telephone: 01904 555 111 (8.30-5.00pm)	For individuals who are hearing impaired please Text: 0753 443 7804	Email: adult.socialsupport@york.gov.uk
Out of hours, Emergency Duty Team	Telephone: 0845 0349 417		Email: edt@northyorks.gov.uk
For information/advice: Safeguarding Adults Team	Telephone: 01904 555 858 (and ask for the duty worker)		Email: adult.socialsupport@york.gov.uk

Further information on safeguarding including forms can be found at; <https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/>

Additional Reading:

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This policy should be read alongside:

- City of York Council's joint safeguarding adults multi agency policy and procedure summary

<https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/media/1124/joint-ma-safeguarding-adults-policy-procedures-summary-final-approved-april-2018.pdf>

- York Mind confidentiality policy
- York Mind lone working policy
- York Mind safeguarding children policy
- York Mind recruitment and selection policy

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Appendix 1: Definitions

Vulnerable Adult: A person aged at least 18 years of age, who is or may be in need of personal or community care services by reason of mental or emotional distress, learning or other disability, age or illness, who is or may be unable to protect him or herself against abuse, harm or exploitation.

Adult abuse: Abuse / neglect can happen anywhere including at home, in care homes or in day care centres or hospitals. It may be a single act or take place over a longer period of time. Abuse can take different forms:

Common forms of abuse:

Physical abuse : including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic Violence: including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.

Sexual abuse: including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography.

Psychological abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation or blaming.

Financial or material abuse: including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements.

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

Discriminatory abuse: including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse: including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home.

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

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Self neglect: this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding

Child: In the context of child protection, the term child refers to anyone who has not reached his/her 18th birthday. For the purpose of this policy York Mind adopts the same definition.

The Care Act 2014 introduced a number of new safeguarding adults' statutory duties for Local Authorities and other agencies and the "Statement of Government Policy on Safeguarding 2013" highlighted:

- Empowerment - Presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention - It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality – Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection - Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership - Local solutions through services working with their communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability - Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

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Appendix 2: York Mind Safeguarding Adults reporting form

1.	Date of Incident:
2.	Person completing the Report Form:
3.	Job Title:
4.	Name and address of person reporting poor practice or potential abuse (If different from No. 2 above:
5.	Details of Incident: (Be specific, include times, dates, location, details of any witnesses' etc. Has Consent been given?
6.	Date incident reported to DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER:
7.	Brief notes of discussion with DESIGNATED REPORTING OFFICER including any action/instructions agreed:
8.	Action/Instructions Agreed: (Please include any details and contact numbers where appropriate). NB: Please attach any other information that you feel is relevant to this form