

SG2 – Adult Safeguarding Policy

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1. Document Control

1.1 Document History

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1.2 Document Approval

Name & Title:	Authorising Signature:
Karyn Worthington Head of People	

1.3 Distribution

This document will be made available on IUCSF’s DAN’s Platform as well as the organisational Onedrive.

Controlled copies will be produced, distributed and maintained in accordance with IUCSF’s Quality Standards.

1.4 Master Copy

The master electronic copy of this document is held by

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1.5 Document Review

Version	Review Date	Reviewer	Notes
5	01/09/2027	Karyn Worthington	To be reviewed every 1 year

1.6 Referencing

The below Policies referred to within this Policy are to be reviewed simultaneously

Policy/Procedure	Notes

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ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction & Purpose

Some adults are less able to protect themselves than others, and some have difficulty making their wishes and feelings known. This may make them vulnerable to abuse.

The welfare of adults at risk is a key concern of If U Care Share Foundation (IUCSF) which aims to provide an environment within which adults at risk are safe and secure. This Adults Safeguarding Policy aims to make sure that any concern or allegation of abuse is taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and professionally.

2. Adult's Safeguarding Policy Statement

IUCSF seeks to:

- Safeguard and protect adults at risk from all forms of abuse and neglect
- Ensure that proper and prompt action is taken on discovering any form of abuse or neglect
- Acknowledge that Charity members have a duty to ensure that they do not place themselves or others in vulnerable situations

The safeguarding boards in the local areas are responsible for agreeing the arrangements for professionals from all organisations in the area working with adults at risk in accordance with Government guidelines and regulations.

This Adult Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures identify the working practices for IUCSF to address issues of adult protection within the Charity and should be read in conjunction with the local Safeguarding Children Board policies and procedures in each area.

3. Background Information

This Adult Safeguarding Policy outlines the policy and principles underpinning the protection of vulnerable adults. The aims of the Adult Protection Policy are:

- to protect and prevent abuse of vulnerable adults first and foremost
- to work to the highest standard of good practice
- to provide a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected
- to inform staff, trustees and volunteers of their roles and responsibilities, give a clear practice and procedures and ensure they are protected in their work with vulnerable adults

The policy and procedures are based on the Care Act 2014.

Safeguarding Adults (or Adult Protection) can include any work or activity which aims to support adults at risk to retain independence, wellbeing and choice and to be able to live a life that is free from abuse and neglect. It is about both preventing abuse and neglect and promoting good practice when responding to specific concerns.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005

The presumption is that adults have mental capacity to make informed choices about their own safety and how they live their lives. Issues of mental capacity and the ability to give informed consent are central to decisions and actions in safeguarding adults.

An allegation of abuse or neglect of an adult who does not have capacity to consent on issues about their own safety will always give rise to action under the safeguarding adults at risk process and subsequent decisions made in their best interests in line with the Mental Capacity Act and Mental Capacity Act Code as outlined above. Section 44 of the Act makes it a specific criminal offence to wilfully ill-treat or neglect a person who lacks capacity.

4. Definitions & Concepts

4.1 Adults at Risk

The Care Act 2014 defines an Adult at Risk as:

- aged 18 or over
- has a need for care or support (whether or not those needs are met)
- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

An adult at risk's vulnerability is determined by a range of interconnected factors including personal characteristics, factors associated with their situation or environment and social factors.

The vulnerability of an adult at risk is related to how they are able to make informed choices and protect themselves from harm, free from duress, pressure or undue influence of any sort and to protect themselves from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

An adult at risk may therefore be a person who, for example:

- is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a physical disability and/or sensory impairment
- has a mental health need including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long term illness/condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is a carer, such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse
- is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support

4.2 Abuse

Abuse is the harming of another individual, usually by someone who is in a position of power, trust or authority over that individual. The harm may be physical, psychological

or emotional or it may be directed at exploiting the vulnerability of the victim in more subtle ways

4.2.1 Physical Abuse

- bodily assaults resulting in injuries, e.g. hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions
- bodily impairment, e.g. manipulation, dehydration, failure to thrive
- medical/healthcare maltreatment

4.2.2 Sexual Abuse

- rape, incest, acts of indecency, sexual assault
- sexual harassment or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting
- sexual abuse might also include exposure to pornographic materials, being made to witness sexual acts and encompasses sexual harassment and non-contact abuse

4.2.3 Psychological/Emotional Abuse

- including threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, enforced isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- humiliation
- bullying, shouting, swearing

4.2.4 Neglect

- including ignoring medical or physical needs, failure to provide access to appropriate healthcare, social care or educational services
- the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

4.2.5 Self Neglect

- neglecting care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding
- lack of self care, lack of care for environment – dirty home conditions, health and safety risks
- refusal of services that could alleviate these issues

4.2.6 Financial or Material

- including theft, fraud
- exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

4.2.7 Discriminatory

- including race, gender, sexuality, religion, age, a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

4.2.8 Domestic Abuse

- incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those ages 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality, including psychological abuse

4.2.9 Organisational Abuse

- mistreatment or abuse or neglect of an adult with needs for care and support by a regime
- the systems and regimes of an institution results in poor or inadequate standards of care and poor practice which affects the whole setting and denies/restricts dignity, privacy and independence of adults with needs for care or support

4.2.10 Modern Slavery

- if the victim of human trafficking is an adult who needs care or support, the response will be under the adults safeguarding adults process, including organisations dealing with victims of human trafficking. This includes police, health trusts and other relevant support services. Modern slavery also includes children or adults at risk that may have children

4.2.11 Prevent safeguarding those at risk of recruitment to violent extremism

- Contest – Government strategy for reducing risks to the UK and its interests overseas from international radicalisation and terrorism
- Prevent – aims to stop people becoming terrorists or support violent extremism

4.2.12 Honour Based Violence – HBV

- HBV is a form of domestic abuse, which is perpetrated in the name Honour. This is set at the discretion of male relative and women who do not abide by the 'rules' and are then punished for bringing shame to the family. 'Breaking the rules' may include a woman having a boyfriend, rejecting a forced marriage, inappropriate dress. HBV can be fatal, therefore ensuring the victim's safety is paramount. Women are predominantly but not always the victims. Many victims are so isolated and controlled they fail to report the violence

4.2.13 Forced Marriage

- a marriage that is performed under duress and without the full and informed consent or free will of both parties. In 2013, the domestic abuse definition now includes forced marriage.
- in forced marriages one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage and duress is involved.

4.2.14 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- 'comprises of all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non medical reasons'

Multiple forms of abuse may occur in an on-going relationship or abusive service setting to one person, or to more than one person at a time, making it important to look beyond single incidents or breaches in standards, to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

4.3 Recognising Abuse

Recognising abuse is not easy and may need professional guidance. Even the list below is not comprehensive

Physical abuse signs

Note: some ageing processes can cause changes which are hard to distinguish from some aspects of physical assault, e.g. skin bruising can occur very easily due to blood vessels becoming fragile

- A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries
- Bruising in well protected areas or clustered from repeated striking
- Finger marks
- Burns of unusual location or type
- Injuries found at different states of healing
- Injury shape similar to an object
- Injuries to head/face/scalp
- History of GP or agency hopping or reluctance to seek help
- Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence
- Weight loss due to malnutrition or rapid weight gain
- Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing
- Drowsiness due to too much medication or lack of medication causing recurring crises/hospital admissions

Sexual abuse signs

- Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as 'it's a secret')
- Medical problems, e.g. genital infection, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting
- Disturbed behaviour, e.g. depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self injury, showing fear or aggression to one particular person, repeated or excessive masturbation, inappropriately seductive behaviour, loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down
- Behaviour of others towards the adult at risk
- Psychological/emotional signs

- Isolation
- Unkempt, unwashed, smell
- Over meticulous
- Inappropriately dressed
- Withdrawn, agitated, anxious, not wanting to be touched
- Change in appetite
- Insomnia or need for excessive sleep
- Tearfulness
- Unexplained paranoia or excessive fears
- Low self esteem
- Confusion

Neglect signs

- Physical condition poor
- Clothing in poor condition
- Inadequate diet
- Untreated injuries or medical problems
- Failure to be given prescribed medication
- Poor personal hygiene

Self Neglect signs

- Lack of self care
- Refusing help services
- Lack of care of environment
- Possible hoarding

Financial or Material Signs

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts
- Disparity between assets and satisfactory living conditions
- Extraordinary interest by family members and other people in the vulnerable person's assets

Discriminatory Signs

- Lack of respect shown to an individual
- Signs of substandard service offered to an individual
- Exclusion from rights afforded to others, such as health, education, criminal justice

Domestic Abuse Signs

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Controlling behaviour

- Coercive behaviour
- Financial abuse

Organisational Abuse Signs

- Lack of health and safety care
- Little support
- Poorly supervised
- Rigid routines

Other signs of abuse

- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Sensory deprivation, e.g. spectacles or hearing aid
- Denial of visitors or telephone calls
- Failure to ensure privacy or personal dignity
- Lack of flexibility of choice, e.g. bedtime, choice of food
- Restricted access to toilet or bathing facilities
- Lack of personal clothing or possessions
- Controlling relationships between care staff and service users

People

Adults at risk may be abused by a wide range of people including

- Informal carers, family friends, neighbours who might abuse
- Paid staff, volunteers
- Other service users
- Neighbours
- Strangers

4.4 Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding

Recognising that adults at risk increasingly use digital technologies, social media platforms, messaging applications, online communities and internet-based services as part of their daily lives. While these technologies can provide opportunities to access information, support, connection and services, they can also expose adults at risk to abuse, exploitation and harm.

Online safeguarding concerns will be treated with the same level of seriousness as concerns identified in face-to-face settings.

4.4.1 Online Risks

Adults at risk may experience harm through online activity, including but not limited to:

- Financial fraud, scams and economic exploitation.
- Coercion, manipulation and controlling behaviour through digital platforms.
- Cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation.
- Online grooming and sexual exploitation.

- Sharing of intimate images without consent.
- Sextortion and blackmail.
- Identity theft and impersonation.
- Radicalisation and exposure to extremist content.
- Exposure to harmful content relating to, but not limited to, self-harm, suicide, eating disorders or violence.
- Online hate crime and discriminatory abuse.
- Exploitation through dating applications or social networking platforms.
- Misuse of artificial intelligence technologies, including deepfake images, false identities and deceptive communications.

4.4.2 Safe Communication and Professional Boundaries

All staff, volunteers and trustees must maintain clear professional boundaries when communicating with adults at risk through digital means.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Use only approved organisational communication methods and platforms.
- Ensure digital communication remains professional, respectful and related to service delivery.
- Avoid communicating through personal social media accounts wherever possible.
- Not establish relationships online that could compromise professional boundaries.
- Not share personal information unnecessarily with service users.
- Report any inappropriate, concerning or boundary-crossing communications.
- Seek management advice where digital communication creates safeguarding concerns.

4.4.3 Social Media and Online Platforms

Where social media or online platforms are used as part of service delivery, awareness raising or engagement activities:

- Appropriate privacy and security controls must be applied.
- Platforms should be risk assessed before use.
- Staff and volunteers should model safe and responsible online behaviour.
- Any concerns relating to abuse, exploitation, harassment or harmful content must be reported through safeguarding procedures.
- Individuals accessing services should be supported to understand online risks where appropriate.

4.4.4 Online Support and Virtual Services

Where IUCSF delivers support, meetings, training or interventions through digital platforms:

- Approved and secure systems should be used.
- Access to online sessions should be controlled appropriately.
- Clear expectations for participant behaviour should be communicated.
- Confidentiality and privacy should be maintained wherever possible.

- Any safeguarding concerns identified during online contact should be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

4.4.5 Reporting Online Safeguarding Concerns

All staff, volunteers and trustees have a responsibility to act on concerns relating to online abuse or exploitation.

Where concerns arise, individuals should:

- Remain calm and listen to the concern being raised.
- Record relevant information accurately.
- Preserve evidence where appropriate, for example screenshots, messages or online account details.
- Avoid sharing harmful material further.
- Report concerns immediately to an Adult Protection Officer.
- Refer urgent concerns to emergency services or safeguarding agencies where there is an immediate risk of harm.

4.4.6 Promoting Online Safety

IUCSF will promote online safety by:

- Raising awareness of online risks and protective measures.
- Providing training and guidance to staff and volunteers.
- Maintaining policies and procedures that reflect emerging digital risks.
- Working with partner organisations and safeguarding agencies where required.
- Supporting adults at risk to make informed choices about their online activity while respecting their rights, autonomy and capacity to make decisions.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Trustees	- To ensure this policy and associated procedures are reviewed annually - To ensure adequate supervision for employees and volunteers working with adults at risk
Senior Management or Managers	- To ensure that volunteers and employees are aware of this policy and their responsibilities through training and supervision - To establish good communication with agencies working in the field of Adult Protection - To promptly investigate and refer appropriately any allegations or suspicions of abuse of adults at risk - To maintain appropriate links with the safeguarding boards in each area - To be familiar with current legislation and guidelines on Safeguarding Adults - To understand and implement relevant Adult Protection procedures - To ensure appropriate recruitment and vetting of staff and volunteers
Volunteers and staff	- To adhere to the principles of this policy - To carry out associated procedures or processes in line with the agreed documentation - To undertake appropriate training relating to this policy and associated procedures - To inform and support the Adult Protection Officer with any concerns or worries regarding the safety and well-being Adults at Risk - To follow agreed procedures for reporting any causes for concern or Disclosure made by adults at risk
IUCSF Adult Protection Officers	While all trustees, staff and volunteers must work co-operatively to comply with this policy and associated procedures, a coordinating responsibility rests with Dean Smith (dean@ifucareshare.co.uk - 01913875661) and Matthew Smith (matthew@ifucareshare.co.uk 01913875661) as the Adult Protection Officers for IUCSF. Specifically their duties are: - To ensure that all trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of the requirements to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the designated person - To report all cases of suspected abuse to Social Care Services or the Police

6. Related Procedures Linked to this Policy

The following processes and related procedures have been developed and should be used by IUCSF members to comply with this Adult Safeguarding Policy;

1. Adult Protection Procedure including the process for Responding to Disclosure and completing a Cause for Concern Report
2. DBS Disclosure Procedure

If a trustee, member of IUCSF staff or volunteer is working at an alternative venue, for example in a school, that organisations Adult Protection Policy and procedures should be adhered to and the responsible person for Adult Protection identified and consulted if required.

7. Appropriate Training to Ensure Compliance with this Policy

All trustees, staff and volunteers will receive training so that they are better able to recognise signs of abuse and are clear about what action they must take if abuse or neglect is suspected. The IUCSF Adult Protection Officers will receive training to assist in managing the Safeguarding Adult Policy and Procedures.

8. Policy Signature & Review Arrangements

This policy document and the associated procedures listed in section 6 above have been developed to satisfy the requirements and minimum standards of Adult's Safeguarding guidelines as set out in the Safeguarding Board policies and procedures.

Policy control and review arrangements are provided on the front cover of this policy.