

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding Adults at Risk is everyone's responsibility; everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. This document provides guidelines on what you should do to keep Adults at Risk safe from abuse and neglect.

As a volunteer you might observe signs of abuse or neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate that a person is being abused or neglected. It is important that you are aware of what to look for and what to do if you are concerned that a vulnerable adult is at risk.

Your volunteering role will involve working with Adults at Risk, and Clevedon Aid will actively work to prevent harm, harassment, bully abuse and neglect to our residents and volunteers.

### **What is abuse**

The Care and support statutory guidance identify ten types of abuse, these are:

Physical abuse, domestic violence or abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational or institutional abuse, neglect or acts of omission and self-neglect.

Abuse can occur in public places, people's own homes or in care services like residential homes or day centres. Abuse can be perpetrated by a relative, friend, carer, volunteer, in fact anyone who has contact with an adult at risk.

Evidence or suggestion of any one indicator from the list should not be taken on its own as proof that abuse is occurring. However, it should you to raise your concern with our Safeguarding Director, Jane Alexander via [clevedonmutualaid@gmail.com](mailto:clevedonmutualaid@gmail.com)

### **Who is an adult at risk**

The Data Protection Act 2018 and defines an Adult at Risk as someone over 18 years of age who (i) has needs for care and support; and (ii) is experiencing, or is at risk of, neglect, or physical, mental or emotional harm; and (iii) as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against neglect or harm, or the risk of it.

### **Why do we make a safeguarding policy**

Although the above definition is useful, it is important to remember that abuse, harassment and harm can happen to anyone. The need for care and support may be only for a short time or it may be lifelong. Abuse and neglect are not always visible and often it is not spoken about. Sometimes the person being abuse may not recognise that abuse it happening or may not fully appreciate the risks to their wellbeing.

Abuse harm and neglect are wrong. We at Clevedon Aid have a duty to do something about it.

When everyone understands safeguarding and their right to be safe people who have nowhere to turn are protected

Good safeguarding practices keep volunteers safe from false accusations.

### **Keeping Clevedon Aid clients safe**

Never enter a client's home unless you have explicit consent from a Team Lead unless in emergency situation.

If you have any concerns about the well-being of a resident please contact a team lead at the first opportunity.

### **What to look for**

Apart from the obvious physical signs of abuse, such as bruising, cuts or burns, or someone actually telling you that they are being harmed, there are many other potential signs of abuse. These might include lack of money, weight loss, lack of confidence, lack of access, a carer for example may try to stop you seeing a resident. A dangerous living situation might be a sign of self-neglect, for example, exposed wiring or hoarding newspapers or other items.

### **If you have immediate concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a resident, or for your own safety or wellbeing call 999 and ask for the Police**

If a resident tells you something that you think may indicate they are being abused or at risk of abuse, please keep calm and offer them reassurances. Listen, try not to ask leading questions. After the conversation, make note of their own words, exactly what they said using the words that they used.

Expect and welcome queries of your authenticity. You should always carry an identity card when working as a volunteer. Get into the habit of showing it to clients without being asked. Clients who want to check your identity can call the number on the card. It will connect with a team leader or the central team member who can verify against our central database

Please update the volunteer feedback via the Volunteer Portal or by email if you are unable to access the Portal, regularly to help the Central Team spot patterns of concerns should they emerge and make sure support is consistent.

### **Keeping yourself and other volunteers safe**

Always make sure someone knows where are going and when you are expected to return.

Take care of yourself and your family first, you cannot give from an empty dish. You can try and help again at a later date.

You never need to accept a task that you do not feel comfortable with. Always discuss concerns you have with a Team Lead who are there to listen and to support. Call them if you need to chat.

Make sure your contact details are relevant and up to date

You do not need to disclose personal information to clients unless you wish to.

### **Important points**

This very short introduction is designed to provide you with some very high-level advice to protect adults at risk in your role as a volunteer with Clevedon Aid.

You will notice that abuse is complicated. It takes many forms, can happen to anyone at points in their lives, be perpetrated by anyone and is quite often not obvious.

You are not an expert on abuse. The key message is if you are in any doubt that someone might be being abused, talk to your supervisor. They can help you think through your concerns and together, you can decide what the next steps need to be to ensure our clients and you are safe.

For more information about abuse see the following website

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>

### **Further support for volunteers**

Some of the support you provide may put your mental health under pressure. We want to help make sure you get the right support with your mental health both now and in the future [mentalhealth@work.org.uk](mailto:mentalhealth@work.org.uk) This organisation offers round the clock, 121 support by call or text from trained volunteers plus resources, tips and ideas to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing. This service is free to Clevedon Aid volunteers.

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