

Protection of Vulnerable Adults

For Trustees, Staff and Volunteers

This document outlines the procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults and dealing with allegations of abuse. These procedures aim to be in line with national policy, and Local Authority multi-agency policies.

Our commitment

It is the right of everyone to live their lives free from abuse of any kind, as independently as possible and with opportunities to contribute to their community. Hope Kitchen will not tolerate abuse or neglect within our organisation. In particular, Hope Kitchen will work towards creating a safe and non-discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the situations that create vulnerability. We are committed to actively work within the framework of good practice set out in Argyll and Bute's good practice guidelines.

Identifying Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may be intentional, or the result of neglect and causes harm to the vulnerable person, either temporarily or over a period.

Examples of Abuse:

National guidance identifies seven examples of abuse in relation to vulnerable adults:

- Physical abuse would include hitting, slapping pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, tying to a chair or bed or inappropriate sanctions.
- Psychological abuse would include emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.
- Sexual abuse including rape, sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, could not consent to, or was pressured into consenting to.
- Financial or Material – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.
- Neglect and acts of omission including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to health, social care, or educational services, withholding of necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.
- Discriminatory Abuse – Includes racist and sexist slurs, other forms of harassment, including comments relating to disability or mental health.
- Institutional Abuse: This occurs when service users are required to 'fit in' with the routine of the service, not a homely environment, stark living areas, lack of privacy, staff not trained.

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Recognising vulnerable adults:

The latest review of Safeguarding Adults 'No Secrets' and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 has led to a change of focus in this definition. Rather than put people into categories the focus has been shifted from the person needing Service to those who work with them in "regulated activity".

Definition as defined by 'No Secrets'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/194272/No_secrets_guidance_on_developing_and_implementing_multi-agency_policies_and_procedures_to_protect_vulnerable_adults_from_abuse.pdf

A person aged 18 years or over who is or maybe in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness.

AND

Who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Vulnerability – See Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

The outline guidance below describes a broad framework and set of considerations that should guide our response to people subject to alleged abuse.

How can we promote good practice?

Promoting a safe organisation is less about procedures and rules than about working together as both helpers and those with differing vulnerabilities to provide the right environment for everyone. It is important that those working together agree on standards of conduct and how activities are to be carried out. This is particularly necessary if those adults involved in the activity cannot speak for themselves. Respect and consideration should be developed in all work with adults, ensuring that everyone is able to make the most of life choices and independence. Privacy and confidentiality are important to everyone, and especially people who are dependent on others for aspects of their everyday living.

Hope Kitchen is committed to:

- Helping in such a way as to maximise a person's independence. People with additional needs lead active and fulfilled lives, but some may need support and resources to do so.
- Respecting the person and all their abilities.
- Recognising the choices people make, even if they may appear to be taking risks.

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- Giving people the highest level of privacy and confidentiality possible in the circumstances.
- Including everyone in decisions affecting their life.

Safe Recruitment

All potential employees:

- Will receive a job description within which their role if suspecting abuse is clearly identified.
- Will complete an application form.
- Ask for two referees, one of which should be from their current/ previous employer.
- Applicant to complete a confidential declaration form.
- Hold an appropriate interview.

Posts will be offered subject to a successful probationary period.

If appointed the appointee should provide an enhanced disclosure under the PVG scheme.

The appointment will be confirmed in writing with the agreed start date

Our duty to alert others when we have concerns or suspicions that abuse has occurred.

Everyone should be aware of situations where those who might be vulnerable are exposed to unacceptable risks. Those who work most closely with vulnerable people are in a unique position to get to know them. We have a duty to alert others when we or others, including the alleged victim, have concerns or suspicions that abuse has occurred, or is suspected. Under no circumstances should anything be done that might be interpreted as an investigation of an allegation, as action of this nature may damage or confuse evidence should a formal investigation by either the police or local authority be made.

Our key responsibilities when we become aware of or concerned about possible abuse or neglect.

- To take allegations seriously, however insignificant they may seem
- Where the concern comes directly from the vulnerable adult allegedly abused, to accept it and avoid making comments other than to comfort or be sympathetic.
- To ensure the immediate safety/welfare of the alleged abused.
- To clearly report concerns urgently to the safeguarding officer.
- To make a careful factual record of complaints or concerns, clearly separating fact from opinion.

Following discussion with the Safeguarding Adviser a decision will be taken on the next steps which might include referral to the Adult Social Care Department in the Local Authority.

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The “referrer”, who may be the Safeguarding Advisor will work within the good practice guidance of the Local Authorities, and consideration to the following activities:

- Gathering all relevant information.
- Making arrangements to meet the immediate health and welfare needs of the alleged victim
- Contacting the emergency services (police, ambulance) if urgent.
- Clarifying the facts. (But do not discuss with alleged perpetrator)
- Checking records and data for additional information.
- Giving attention to any support needs of the person alerting.
- Where appropriate, notifying the relevant local authority Adult Social Care Department via the telephone or using the website link.

Investigation

The government guidance “No secrets” places the responsibility on local authorities to provide a structure for the investigation of harm to vulnerable people. It is therefore important that serious concerns are referred to the designated safeguarding manager in Adult Social Care Departments of Argyll and Bute Council.

The Safeguarding Manager is responsible for making the decision about whether a referral should be dealt with under multi-agency procedures.

When a decision is made that a Safeguarding Assessment is required, the Safeguarding Manager is the person responsible for coordinating all the potential investigations.

The Safeguarding Manager will come from the relevant team within the Adult Social Care Department when they have line management responsibility for Integrated Teams.

The ‘relevant team’ will usually be the one covering the area of the vulnerable adult’s normal residence. This could be an Assessment and Care Management Team (ACMT), a Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) or a Community Learning Disability Team (CLDT) for instance, depending on the community care group to which the vulnerable person belongs.

Confidentiality

In dealing with allegations of abuse we work within a framework of confidentiality. Key principles relating to the sharing of information are:

(i) Information should not be shared any more widely than is necessary to secure protection of vulnerable adults from abuse.

(ii) Information disclosed belongs to the agency not the individual. Any suspicion or allegation of abuse must be shared.

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Safeguarding Officer Hope Kitchen

.....Service Manager

Contact details obanhopekitchen@gmail.com

Phone: 01631 565730

Should a complaint or concern be with relation to the Safeguarding Officer – the Chair of Trustees, should be contacted stuartchalmers53@gmail.com or contact Argyll and Bute Adult Social Care Directly, 01546 605517, During working hours (Mon - Fri 9am to 5pm) 01631 566491 or 01631 569712
Emergency Standby out of hours service <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health>