



SAFEGUARDING – ADULTS AT RISK PROTECTION POLICY

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ADULTS AT RISK PROTECTION POLICY

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1.0 POLICY

This policy outlines Safeline's approach to protecting Adults at Risk (previously referred to as "Vulnerable Adults", as defined in section 3.a). Children are defined as individuals under 18 years of age and are covered by a separate Child Protection Policy.

Safeline is a specialist charity working to prevent sexual abuse and rape and to support those affected. Safeline recognises its responsibility to safeguard Adults at Risk and considers effective safeguarding to be fundamental to all areas of its work.

Safeline places the highest priority on the health, safety, and wellbeing of Adults at Risk involved in any Safeline-led services, courses, or activities. The organisation has a duty to ensure that all staff and those working on its behalf take appropriate action to prevent abuse and to report any suspected or disclosed abuse.

This policy applies to all Safeline personnel, including trustees, senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional and agency workers, students, and anyone acting on behalf of Safeline.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect Adults at Risk who access Safeline's services
- Provide staff, students, and others working on behalf of Safeline with clear principles to guide safeguarding practice

Safeline believes that Adults at Risk should never experience abuse of any kind. The organisation is committed to promoting their welfare and ensuring that safeguarding is embedded in all practice.

Safeline will ensure that all relevant parties are informed of the existence of this Adults at Risk Protection Policy.

Safeline commits to the following:

- Working in partnership with appropriate local agencies to safeguard Adults at Risk through effective safeguarding procedures
- Recognising that any Adult at Risk may be subject to abuse and ensuring all concerns and allegations are taken seriously and managed in line with organisational procedures
- Requiring all staff, volunteers, and sessional workers to report any safeguarding concern, regardless of perceived severity
- Implementing, maintaining, and regularly reviewing safeguarding procedures
- Providing appropriate training, resources, supervision, and support to those working with Adults at Risk

2.0 Legal Framework

In accordance with the Home Office Revised Code of Practice for Disclosure and Barring Service – Registered Person dated November 2015, Safeline will carry out an enhanced Disclosure & Barring check on all members of staff, volunteers, sessional workers and trustees who will be working with service users on a one-to-one basis. The check will be renewed every three years.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect adults at risk, including but not restricted to:

- **Care Act 2014** – Principal legal framework for adult safeguarding in England. It defines duty to respond to abuse and neglect and establishes *Safeguarding Adults Boards*.
- **Mental Capacity Act 2005** – Protects and empowers people who may lack capacity to make decisions, and sets best-interest principles crucial in safeguarding responses.
- **Equality Act 2010** – Prohibits discrimination and supports inclusive safeguarding practice.
- **Human Rights Act 1998** – Guarantees fundamental rights (e.g., right to life; freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment) that inform safeguarding duties.
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** – Underpins the vetting and barring scheme (Disclosure and Barring Service) to prevent unsuitable people working with adults at risk.
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** – Recognises various forms of abuse within intimate or family contexts.
- **Modern Slavery Act 2015** – Requires organisations to prevent and respond to slavery and exploitation.
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003** – Criminalises key forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended)** – Prohibits FGM and includes protection measures.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014** – Provides civil orders which may be relevant in abuse cases (e.g., non-molestation orders).
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** – Includes Prevent duties to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation.
- **Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR** – Governs safe sharing and processing of personal data in safeguarding.

3.0 Definitions

3.a An adult at risk, as defined by the Care Act 2014 is:

Any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support’ (Care Act 2014 [England]).

A person aged 18 or over who needs extra help to manage their lives and be independent. This may include:

Many adults, because of illness or disability, who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse. Adults with care and support needs who may be certain older people, people with learning disabilities, physically disabled people, people with mental ill-health, a person with special sensory needs, a person with cognitive needs i.e. acquired brain injury or those with a short or long-term illness.

The Care Act guidance 2014 describes “care & support” as:-

“The mixture of practical, financial and emotional support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives and be independent – including older people, people with a disability or long-term illness, people with mental health problems, and carers. Care and support includes assessment of people’s needs, provision of services and the allocation of funds to enable a person to purchase their own care and support. It could include care home, home care, personal assistants, day services, or the provision of aids and adaptations.” [Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Adults at risk of abuse may have additional support needs, meaning that they are more likely to experience abuse, and less able to protect themselves from it. The abuse of adults at risk can have devastating effects on their physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing, as well as on their children or children connected to them. Statutory guidance means that Safeline must protect adults at risk by reporting concerns to relevant statutory authorities such as adult services.

In Wales: The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 was enacted by the National Assembly for Wales to reform social services law; to make provision about: Improving the well-being outcomes for people who need care and support and carers who need support, Co-operation and partnership by public authorities with a view to improving the well-being of people, Complaints relating to social care and palliative care; and for connected purposes. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/enacted>

3.b Abuse

Everyone has the right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect can occur anywhere and the person causing the harm may be a stranger but can often be someone the person knows and feels safe with such as a health or care professional, relative or neighbour.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts and can be listed under the following types of abuse:

3.c Types of Abuse

Abuse and neglect can take many forms. The following list reflects the categories of abuse recognised under the Care Act 2014 and associated statutory guidance. This list is not exhaustive.

Physical Abuse

Including assault, hitting, pushing, rough handling, misuse of restraint, force-feeding, improper use of medication, denial of treatment, and restriction of movement.

Sexual Abuse

Including rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, exploitation, inappropriate touching or exposure, non-consensual sexual activity, image-based abuse, and abuse of a position of trust, power or authority.

Domestic Abuse

As defined by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, coercive, controlling or economic abuse by a current or former partner or family member.

Psychological (Emotional) Abuse

Including threats, intimidation, humiliation, coercion, controlling or coercive behaviour (as defined in the Serious Crime Act 2015), harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, cyber abuse, or unreasonable withdrawal of support or services.

Financial or Material Abuse

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, coercion relating to financial affairs, misuse of property or benefits, and financial scams, including online abuse.

Neglect and Acts of Omission

Including failure to meet medical, emotional or physical care needs, denial of access to appropriate health, care or support services, and withholding necessities such as food, heating or medication.

Discriminatory Abuse

Including harassment, slurs, or unfair treatment based on protected characteristics such as age, disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Organisational Abuse

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or care setting, whether as a single incident or as part of an ongoing pattern.

Mate Crime

Where a person is befriended and exploited by someone whose intention is abusive or criminal, often resulting in ongoing and escalating harm.

Self-Neglect

Including neglect of personal hygiene, health or environment, and behaviours such as hoarding, where this places the individual at risk.

Criminal Exploitation, Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Including exploitation through coercion, control or deception for criminal or financial gain, such as county lines, cuckooing, trafficking, forced labour or servitude, as defined under the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Including any marriage entered into without free and full consent, and all forms of FGM, both of which are criminal offences and safeguarding issues for adults at risk.

Hate Crime

Criminal behaviour motivated by hostility towards a person's protected characteristics, including disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

Prevent / Extremism

Including vulnerability to exploitation or grooming into extremist ideology, where safeguarding intervention may be required under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

The Prevent Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. As part of the Government's strategy to reduce terrorism in the UK, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a range of measures with the aim of **countering the threat of radicalisation and the risk of people being drawn into terrorism**.

'Violent Extremism' is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as:

"The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views, which:

- *Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;*
- *Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;*
- *Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;*
- *Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK."*

There are a number of offences that can be considered when dealing with violent extremism. They include offences arising through spoken words, creation of tapes and videos of speeches, internet entries, chanting, banners and written notes and

publications. The main offences employed to date have been soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred.

'Radicalisation' refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Radicalisation is usually a process not an event.

Safeline will keep its policy and procedures on Adults at Risk Protection under review to take account of any new Government legislation, regulations or best practice documents to ensure that staff/volunteers/sessional workers are kept fully up to date with their responsibilities and duties with regard to the safety and well-being of adults at risk.

3.d Adults at Risk

In agreeing the procedures for dealing with suspected abuse of an adult at risk, Safeline acknowledges the individual's right to a life which maintains their independence and involves a degree of risk. Where the individual chooses to accept this risk, their wishes should be respected within the context of their capacity to understand the nature of the decision and its implications.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 says that “... *a person lacks capacity in relation to a matter if at the material time he/she is unable to make a decision for himself/herself in relation to the matter because of an impairment of, or disturbance in the functioning of the mind or brain*”.

Staff and volunteers working for Safeline are placed in a position of trust regarding the Service users taking part in Safeline activities. Anyone who abuses that trust will be subject to disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of the staff, volunteers and sessional workers of Safeline to report maltreatment of an adult at risk. The procedure for this is detailed in Section 6.

4.0 Safer Recruitment

Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures for staff, volunteers and sessional workers in the context of adults at risk protection have been adopted by Safeline and include the following.

- A clear definition of any role so that the most suitable appointee can be identified.
- Identification of key selection criteria.
- A wide circulation of vacancies to ensure equal opportunities.
- Confirmation of the identity of the applicant including personal details obtained either through using an application form where appropriate, or through other means.
- Requirement of a declaration of previous convictions and submission to formal check, together with the issue of the Adults at Risk Protection Policy for those candidates whose work will bring them into contact with adults at risk or who will have a management responsibility in relation to those whose work does bring them into such contact.

- A clear guarantee that disclosed information will be treated in confidence and not used against applicants unfairly, including adherence to the DBS Code of Practice.
- Documentary evidence of qualifications.
- Use of several selection techniques to maximise the chance of safe recruitment, e.g. interview, references, checks.
- At least one representative from the Charity conducting the interview will have received safer recruitment training, meet personally with every applicant and conduct an exploration of their attitudes towards working with children.
- **Interview-** where the post involves direct work with adults at risk, two Safeline representatives will be involved and the Adults at Risk protection policy will be represented by relevant interview questions.
- **References-** request two written references from at least two people who are not family members.

DBS (Date and Baring Service)Check. A post offer will only be made subject to a satisfactory DBS check being obtained where appropriate.

5.0 Code of Practice

Safeline expects that all staff, which for these purposes includes anybody in paid or unpaid work on its behalf, will be aware of this Code of Practice and adhere to its principles in their approach to all adults at risk.

- The counselling process and other one to one sessions should be as open as possible, and it is important that no more time should be spent alone with an adult at risk than is necessary to conduct the session.
- It is important not to have physical contact with adults at risk.
- It is not good practice to take adults at risk alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about an adult at risk, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
- It is important not to deter adults at risk from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. If this gives rise to an adult at risk protection concern it is important to follow Safeline's procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern yourself.
- Abuse of adults at risk can be perpetrated by individuals of any age, gender, ethnicity or social background. Staff and volunteers must not allow personal assumptions or stereotypes to influence their response to safeguarding concerns.

Good practice includes valuing and respecting adults at risk as individuals and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.

5.a Working within Limitations

If a client's main presenting issues continue to be self-harm with a high ongoing suicide risk then providing a continued service should be reviewed. This should be discussed by

the Department Lead and if appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Leads to determine the most appropriate course of action in the best interests of the client. Consideration should be given to referral to mental health services, usually via their GP. Safeline services cannot necessarily maintain support even if other relevant services are considered inadequate by staff or rejected by the client.

6.0 Procedures for Reporting Concerns

If any member of staff has concerns about an adult at risk of abuse they should act without delay and share their concerns immediately by contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Safeline. If an adult at risk is deemed to be at immediate risk Safeline will act without delay and share their concerns with Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care Team. See appendix 2 for full contact details.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) for Safeline are:-

Colin Walker (Head of Safeguarding)
Liz Welsh (Head of Clinical Services)
Liz Harrison (Head of Helpline and Online Services)
Emma Dolman (Head of Prevention and Early Intervention)
Anne Brooks (Helpline and Online Supervisor) – Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Dan Woodley (Helpline and Online Supervisor) – Deputy Safeguarding Lead

In their absence refer to Neil Henderson, Chief Executive Officer or the designated safeguarding Trustee, Sara Shoreman in his absence. All can be contacted by the office on 01926 402498 or office@safeline.org.uk.

Sara Shoreman (Designated Safeguarding Trustee)

Queries can also be made directly with the Adult Social Care Team if the case is urgent. In case of emergencies, call Warwickshire Police on 999.

Role and responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Leads:

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the first point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go to for advice if they are concerned about an adult at risk. This may also need to be out of hours so staff and volunteers should always know how to contact them. All staff and those working on behalf of Safeline are issued with a DSL duty rota with contact numbers.
2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a higher level of training and knowledge than the other staff and will have completed Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People training.
3. They will ensure that the organisation complies with safer recruitment procedures for new staff members and their induction.

4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess information from staff regarding concerns about adults at risk and make decisions about whether staff concerns are sufficient to notify the Childrens/Adult Safeguarding Team(s) or whether other courses of action are appropriate.
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or member of staff will make formal referrals to the duty and advice team at the Childrens/Adult Safeguarding Team if deemed necessary.
6. They will ensure that all concerns are logged and stored securely and review ongoing safeguarding concerns at regular weekly DSL meetings.
7. They have a joint responsibility with the CEO or the Trustees to ensure that the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated.
8. They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for children and young people /adults at risk involved with Safeline.
9. They will know the contact details of the relevant statutory agencies. e.g. The Adult Safeguarding Team, Police,

Following the conversation with the DSL, the member of staff or person working on behalf of Safeline should complete a Safeguarding Incident Form and forward it by email or in person to the DSL.

It is not the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to decide whether a child / adult at risk has been abused or not, that is the responsibility of the investigative statutory agencies such as the Police. Keeping children / adults at risk safe is everybody's responsibility and all staff and volunteers should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about a child/ adult at risk being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

7.0 Procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse or inappropriate conduct by a member of staff

Allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by any member of staff, other worker or volunteer must be reported to Neil Henderson, Chief Executive without delay or in his absence Colin Walker, Head of Safeguarding who will notify the Safeline Chair of Trustees as soon as possible in order to follow the complaints procedure.

There are clear written procedures for dealing with situations where allegations of abuse are made against an adult or a child/young person within Safeline.

8.0 Whistle-Blowing Policy

Safeline is committed to achieving high standards of integrity and accountability and expects the same commitment from staff, volunteers and all persons working on behalf of Safeline.

Safeline aims to provide an open environment so that employees and those working for Safeline can raise issues they believe to be in the public interest, with the confidence that they will be acted upon appropriately.

Employees and all staff will be protected from detrimental treatment, victimisation or dismissal if they raise concerns.

The procedure complies with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

Whistle-blowing is a formal raising of concerns that are in the public interest (referred to as public interest disclosure). Please refer to the staff handbook for further information about Whistle Blowing.

Examples of concerns include:

- Criminal offences
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Actions which endanger the health and safety of an individual
- Actions which cause damage to the environment
- Actions intended to conceal the above

Safeline encourages staff to raise concerns with their line manager or the CEO.

A written record will be created detailing: -

- what is alleged by the employee
- the action to be taken
- a whistle-blowing investigation log commenced
- incident reported to CEO/Trustees as appropriate
- referral to the Police or other independent body

If the employee believes that they are unable to raise the matter with Safeline management or that the organisation has failed to take appropriate actions they may refer the matter to the Board of Trustees.

Concerns raised in confidence:

Where a concern is raised in confidence Safeline will protect the identity of the whistle-blower. However, there will be circumstances where this is not possible for example

where the whistle-blower is an essential witness and Safeline would be unable to investigate the situation further without revealing the whistle-blower's identity. Anonymous concerns will be considered but may prove difficult or impossible to investigate.

9.0 Responding Appropriately to an adult at risk Making an Allegation of Abuse

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Tell the adult at risk that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
- Allow the adult at risk to continue at her/his own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and always avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the adult at risk that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said, using the adult at risk's own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the Warwickshire County Council Adult Safeguarding Team, following a referral from the DSL in the organisation.

Safeline believes and seeks to adhere to the principle that children/ adults at risk should be given every opportunity to learn that no one has the right to do anything to them that makes them feel uncomfortable. They have the right to not accept any behaviour from adults and children within the organisation that makes them feel threatened.

- Always put the care needs welfare and safety of a child/ adult at risk first.
- Respect a child's/ adult at risk's right to be involved in making choices and decisions which directly affect them.
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy
- Ensure that when you are working with children/ adults at risk you are not in sight or hearing distance of another adult.
- Never engage in sexually provocative games or discussion with an adult at risk
- Never allow yourself or others to touch an adult at risk in a sexually provocative manner
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child/ adult at risk even in jest.
- Do not engage in rough or physical contact with a child/ adult at risk
- Never form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with a child/ adult at risk.
- Never harass or intimidate an adult at risk because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio economic class or disability.
- Never invite a child/ adult at risk to your home or offer a lift in a car

- Never let allegations, made by anyone, go unacknowledged, unresolved or be failed to be acted upon.

Staff/workers should be aware of the potential for misunderstandings when touching children/ adults at risk. If it is an accepted part of an activity touching should be appropriate to the situation and follow accepted guidelines where they exist. Consoling a child / adult at risk who is distressed, administering first aid or supporting an individual in an activity is acceptable and necessary behaviour.

Staff/volunteers should endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstandings of their actions.

10.0 How information should be recorded

All responses to allegation or suspicions of abuse involving children/ adults at risk will be recorded in the Safeguarding Register. The register will be reviewed on a weekly basis by at least two of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and action taken as appropriate to ensure all adults at risk are protected from harm.

11.0 e-Safety Policy

This policy and the procedures that it underpins apply to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Safeline.

- to protect adults at risk who receive Safeline's services and who make use of information technology (such as mobile phones, games consoles and the Internet) as part of their involvement with us
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to e-safety
- to ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use information technology

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the adults at risk who come into contact with our services is paramount and should govern our approach to the use and management of electronic communications technologies
- All people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- the use of information technology is an essential part of all our lives; it is involved in how we as an organisation gather and store information, as well as how we communicate with each other. It is also an intrinsic part of the experience of our

children and young people, and is greatly beneficial to all. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly and, if misused either by an adult or a young person, can be actually or potentially harmful to them

We will seek to promote e-safety by:

- developing a range of procedures that provide clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on the appropriate use of ICT;
- supporting and encouraging the adults at risk using our service to use the opportunities offered by mobile phone technology and the internet in a way that keeps themselves safe and shows respect for others;
- use our procedures to deal firmly, fairly and decisively with any examples of inappropriate ICT use, complaints or allegations, whether by an adult or a child/young person (these may include breaches of filtering, illegal use, cyberbullying, or use of ICT to groom a child or to perpetrate abuse);
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly;
- providing adequate physical security for ICT equipment; ensuring that user names, logins and passwords are used effectively;
- using only official email accounts provided via the organisation, and monitoring these as necessary;
- ensuring that the personal information of staff, volunteers, and service users (including service users' names) are not published on our website without their explicit consent.
- ensuring that images of service users are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given;
- any social media tools used in the course of our work with adults at risk must be risk assessed in advance by the member of staff wishing to use them;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers on ICT issues, through supervision, support and training;
- examining and risk assessing any emerging new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

The name of our e-safety coordinators are DSLs Colin Walker, Liz Harrison and Liz Welsh. They can be contacted on 01926 402498.

12.0 Confidentiality Policy

The sharing of ANY information with additional agencies should only be undertaken following consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and in conjunction with the CEO if necessary and wherever possible with the person's consent.

Regarding allegations against members of staff the Designated Safeguarding Lead in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer will decide on which agencies will be notified following a detailed risk assessment.

13.0 Links with other Safeline policies/ procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Safeline policy documents.

- Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Suicide Risk Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Counsellor Handbook
- Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- ICT Policy

General Data Protection Regulations

This policy should be read in conjunction with Safeline's Data Protection Policy and complies with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) dated May 2018.

It is the responsibility of all staff members/volunteers working within Safeline to record and report adult at risk protection concerns, i.e. where they believe an adult at risk is at risk of abuse, or significant harm. This responsibility extends to all staff and volunteers and not just those specifically working with an adult at risk.

14.0 Guidelines for Staff/Volunteers/Sessional Workers on When to Take Action & How

- 14.a Any rumour, suspicion or knowledge of any abuse of any adult at risk, must be reported **immediately** in person or by telephone to Safeline's DSL, who will refer to the social worker where available or the Adult Safeguarding Team with details of facts only and without any personal opinions or interpretations. The parent/carer/representative of the adult at risk will be informed provided they are not involved in the abuse allegation. Safeline staff/volunteers/Sessional Worker should not attempt to investigate any allegations on their own.

If the abuse allegation is made against a member of Safeline staff/volunteer/Sessional Worker, the matter should be reported immediately to the CEO and or the Trustee representative for Safeguarding:

Queries can also be made directly with the Warwickshire County Council Safeguarding Adults Team (App.2) if the case is urgent.

If the allegation does not concern sexual or physical abuse and is of a minor nature, the concern should be logged as a Safeguarding concern and discussed at the DSL meeting to decide on the best way to support the adult at risk.

- 14.b When an adult at risk makes a disclosure of abuse to you ensure you respond correctly by following the guidelines below.
- ☐ allow them to speak without interruption
 - ☐ never trivialize or exaggerate the issue
 - ☐ never make suggestions
 - ☐ never coach or lead them in any way
 - ☐ reassure them, let them know you are glad they have spoken up and that they are right to do so
 - ☐ always ask enough questions to clarify your understanding, do not probe or interrogate, no matter how well you know them.
 - ☐ spare them having to repeat themselves over and over
 - ☐ be honest. Let them know that you cannot keep this a secret, you will need to tell someone else.
 - ☐ try to remain calm and exercise patience. Remember this is not an easy thing for them to do.
 - ☐ do not show your emotions. If you show anger, disgust or disbelief, they may stop talking. This may be because they feel they are upsetting you or they may feel your 'negative' feelings are directed towards them
 - ☐ let them know that you are taking the matter very seriously
 - ☐ make them feel secure and safe without causing them any further anxiety.
 - ☐ Check out how they are really feeling and do not avoid the subjects of self-harm and/or suicidal thoughts. Explore any feelings to ensure there is no serious and immediate intent.

14.c **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff and volunteers must act on the basis that the safety of the adult at risk is the overriding concern. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the adult at risk ~~who~~ should be informed at the earliest opportunity of the disclosure. All conversations regarding an adult at risk should always be held in private.

Safeline complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, which allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of an adult at risk.

Whatever happens, always be open and honest with the adult at risk of your intention to take the case further.

You must not discuss the case with anyone other than those involved in the case. If you have any concerns about the progress of the case or have any other concerns these must be discussed with the DSL/CEO/Trustee acting.

14.d Allegations Against Staff/Volunteers/Sessional Workers

The primary concern of Safeline is to ensure the safety of the adult at risk. It is essential in all cases of suspected abuse by a member staff that action is taken quickly and professionally whatever the validity.

There could be occasions where an adult at risk will accuse a member of staff/volunteer of physically or sexually abusing them. In some cases, this may be false or unfounded. However, in some cases the allegations may be true.

Any instance of an adult at risk being abused by a member of staff is particularly serious. On the other hand, for an innocent person to be accused of such an act, is a serious ordeal which can result in long term damage to their health and career.

If any member of staff/volunteer/sessional worker suspects any other member of staff/volunteer/sessional worker of abusing a Safeline user, it is their responsibility to bring these concerns to the CEO who should inform the designated safeguarding Trustee.

If the allegation concerns the CEO or a trustee, the matter should be discussed directly with the Chair of Trustees.

14.e The member of staff will be advised to:

- ☐ contact their union representative if they have one or a legal adviser
- ☐ keep records of all conversations, meetings attended, letters received and telephone calls relating to the allegation.

14.f If a decision is made to pursue an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, this will be dealt with under Safeline's disciplinary procedures related to adult at risk abuse allegations.

14.g CODE OF BEHAVIOUR ON ADULT AT RISK PROTECTION FOR SAFELINE'S STAFF/VOLUNTEERS/SESSIONAL WORKER

Safeline recognises that it is not practical to provide definitive instructions that would apply to all situations at all times whereby staff and volunteers come into contact with adults at risk and to guarantee the protection of adults at risk and Safeline's staff and volunteers.

However, below are the standards of behaviour required of staff or volunteers who work in an unpaid capacity on behalf of Safeline in order to fulfill their roles. This code should assist in the protection of both adults at risk and members of staff and volunteers

Staff/volunteers must implement the Adult at Risk Protection Policy and Procedures at all times.

14.h Staff must never:

- ❑ engage in rough, physical games including horseplay with service users
- ❑ allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind
- ❑ do things of a personal nature for service users that they can do for themselves
- ❑ physically restrain a service user unless the restraint is to prevent physical injury of the person or anybody else. **In all circumstances physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable, otherwise the action can be defined as assault**
- ❑ make sexually suggestive comments to or within earshot of a service user.
- ❑ Invite a service user on their own and into their own vehicle, unless this is as a part of the ISVA role. Also, it is essential that there is adequate insurance for the vehicle to cover transporting service users as part of the business of your work. In extreme emergencies (for medical purposes) where it is required to transport a service user on their own, it is essential that a line manager is notified immediately
- ❑ spend time alone with a service user on his/her own, outside of the normal working relationship, i.e. a counselling sessions or private meeting

14.i Implications for staff, volunteers and sessional workers

Staff who breach any of the above may be subject to the disciplinary procedure or, if volunteers, the complaints procedure. If an allegation against a member of staff has occurred then an investigation will be carried out in accordance with the Complaints Procedure

14.j Action to be taken if you receive an allegation about yourself.

Keep calm. Do not get involved in an argument which is likely to make the situation worse.

Immediately inform your line manager. The quicker that action is taken to investigate the allegations, the sooner the situation will be resolved.

Record the facts as you understand them.

Ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.
Do not contact another agency involved with the service user or the person concerned.

Await further contact from your line manager.

14.k Action to be taken if you suspect an abuse of trust has occurred

Discuss your suspicions with your line manager.

Record the facts which support your suspicions

Once your suspicions have been passed on to the appropriate person, you should have no further involvement.

- 14.l Whatever the nature of the complaint, it must be kept confidential. You must not discuss the disclosure with any individual or party other than those identified in the above procedure.

We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and good practice annually.

Appendix 1



Protection of Adults at Risk: Concern Form

Strictly Confidential

Use this form to record any concern you have about the potential abuse of a client or the disclosure of abuse made to you by a client by a member of staff or volunteer. The report should be factual and should not include opinions or personal interpretations of the facts presented. It should be used in conjunction with the policies and procedures laid out in the Adults at Risk Protection Policy.

If the report is made directly after the disclosure, it should be signed, dated and passed as soon as possible, or at the latest within 24 hours, to a Safeline DSL, the CEO or the Designated Safeguarding Trustee and followed with a discussion of the incident.

DSLs: Colin Walker, Liz Welsh, Liz Harrison, Emma Dolman, Anne Brooks
CEO; Neil Henderson. Trustees; Sara Shoreman (Designated Safeguarding Trustee,
Contact details: 01926 402498, office@safeline.org.uk

Your Name:	
Centre:	
Any other people present at the disclosure:	

Client Name:	
Name of carer/institution	

Date:		Time:		Location:	
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Details of the Concern/Disclosure: please use the space on the other side of this form to record the information. Please include:

- Reason for the concern
- Any apparent physical signs of abuse
- A factual account given to you of abuse by the adult concerned without personal opinion or interpretation, as accurately as you can record it.

- Dates and times of incidents and when notes are made
- Do not send Strictly Confidential forms through the internal or external post

Protection of Adults at Risk: Concern Form

Strictly Confidential

Form completed by: Signed: Date: Time:.....
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Discussed with: DSL, CEO or Trustee. Name: Signature: Date:

APPENDIX 2 – Guidance for Reporting Concerns to Warwickshire or Coventry Safeguarding Adults Team

How do I make a safeguarding referral?

Contact Warwickshire County Council or Coventry City Council to make an alert on the details below:

Safeguarding Adults Warwickshire

Email: [Adult abuse concerns – Warwickshire County Council](#) Tel: **01926 412080**, Out of hours: 01926 886922.

Address: Warwickshire County Council, Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4RR

Safeguarding Adults Coventry

Address: Room 48, Civic Centre 1, Little Park Street, Coventry, CV1 5RS

Tel: **024 76833800**

E-mail: ascdirect@coventry.gov.uk

Safeguarding Adults in Coventry where to refer:-

Adult Social Care Direct: Including for Older People (65 and over) & Adults with Learning or Physical Disabilities

Tel: **024 7683 3003** (you will be transferred out of hours to emergency duty team)

Email: ASCDirect@coventry.gov.uk
rygcsx.gov.uk

Secure: ASCDirect@coventry.gov.uk

Mental Health: For Adults (18 and over) with Mental Health issues 24 hours.

Tel: **0300 200 0011** Email: cwp-tr.specoventryadult@nhs.net

Outside Warwickshire and Coventry:

Each local authority in England has a **Safeguarding Adults Team** or **Adult Social Care** service responsible for receiving safeguarding referrals.

- During office hours: contact the local authority's **Adult Social Care / Safeguarding Adults** service
- Out of hours: contact the authority's **Emergency Duty Team (EDT)**

Local authority contact details can be found via:

- The relevant local council website
- The NHS "Find your local council" service on GOV.UK

To report a crime or raise a concern about abuse you can phone non-emergency number on 101. In case of emergencies, always dial 999.

Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) provide a process for all partner agencies to identify the lessons that can be learned from particularly complex or serious safeguarding adults cases, **where an adult in vulnerable circumstances has died or been seriously injured and abuse or neglect has been suspected.**

For a word-version of the SAR referral form please contact the Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board directly via WSAB@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk. Please ensure all details are completed and submissions are **ONLY** made via the WSAB email.

Appendix 3 - Flowchart regarding Child Protection and Adults at risk Procedure



