

Document: Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy (POVA)

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1. Introduction

1.1 The characteristics of adult abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching well beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or embarrassed to raise any complaint. They may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or be unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others

2. Aim of Policy

2.1 To ensure the safety of vulnerable adults, and to outline the duty and responsibility of CLENCHWARTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST'S staff and volunteers whilst carrying out the aims and objectives of CLENCHWARTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST.

2.2 To provide staff and volunteers with an overview of vulnerable adult protection.

2.3 To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented when a vulnerable adult protection issues arises.

Definitions

3. Safeguarding vulnerable adults

3.1 Safeguarding means to protecting the health, wellbeing and human rights of adults at risk, enabling them to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and reduce both the risks and experiences of abuse or neglect.

3.2 The Department of Health defines a vulnerable adult as "A person aged 18 or above who is in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation"

4. What is abuse

4.1 Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act. It can take a number of forms of which the following are examples;

4.2 **Physical abuse** - Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, scalding, poisoning, misuse of medication, restraint (e.g., double sheeting, tying people up, clothes too tight, locked doors), or use of inappropriate sanctions;

4.3 **Sexual** - Rape (vaginal and anal), sexual assault or sexual activity which the vulnerable adult does not want, could not consent to or was pressured into consenting to, including prostitution, pornography, masturbation, inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing, oral sex or sexualised language. It is withholding a person's human rights if they are not allowed to have a sexual relationship with another person, of whatever sex, if they are able to understand what they are doing and both parties want this to occur.

4.4 **Emotional/Psychological** - This can be verbal and non-verbal harassment, ridicule or treating with contempt. It can include deliberate misrepresentation of a person's behaviour or views, emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, infantilisation (treating an adult as if they were a child), humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, withholding pleasurable foods, activities, social contacts, and withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

4.5 **Financial or material** - Theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

4.6 **Discriminatory** - Harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of a person's race, gender, age, culture, religion, ability, or choice of sexual partner. Not providing a person with the food, clothing, skin care, washing arrangements or worship that they require.

4.7 **Neglect and acts of omission** - Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health and social care or educational services, e.g. failing to make sure that someone's eyes, ears, teeth and feet are checked regularly, the withholding of essentials, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating and information re sexual and reproductive health. It includes careless as well as deliberately poor care - for example, withholding assistance to use the toilet, not changing continence pads or failure to keep a vulnerable person warm and comfortable.

4.8 **Violation of rights** – Preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions, for example.

4.9 **Institutional abuse** – This can occur in any setting where things are arranged to suit staff instead of the user of the service, so it can even occur in someone's own home. It includes things like failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure or respect privacy or dignity.

Procedures

5. Reporting Procedures

5.1 It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicious must be taken seriously.

5.2 Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the {CHAIR / DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD} as soon as possible. If not available contact the Norfolk Adult Social Services Department on **0344 800 8020**.

5.3 Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

5.4 In emergency situations (e.g. where there is risk to life or occurrence of severe physical injury) the emergency services must be contacted

5.5 Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

5.6 A full written record shall be made as soon as possible as to the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This must include information in relation to the date, time and place of where the alleged abuse happened. Your name and the names of anyone else present, plus the name of the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused along with a description of any injuries observed.

5.7 Appendix 1 – Incident Report Form, can be used to provide a written account of the alleged abuse

6. Responding appropriately to an allegation of abuse

6.1 In the event of an incident or disclosure

DO

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Assess whether the emergency services are required and if needed call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
- Ensure notation of date, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Follow correct procedure
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation

DO NOT

- Confront the alleged abuser

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- Be judgemental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation – think confidentiality
- Ask leading questions
- Assume information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic

6.2 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. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies

6.3 There is a legal duty to disclose certain illegal acts to the appropriate authorities.

7. Disclosure and Barring Service

7.1 CLENCHWARTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST ensures that all staff and volunteers working directly with vulnerable adults will be DBS checked before commencing work.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 The Trustees of CLENCHWARTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST are responsible for monitoring the safeguarding of the staff and volunteers working for them, and ensuring procedures are in place to identify and deal with any safeguarding issues that arise.

8.2 Staff and volunteers of CLENCHWARTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and report any suspicions they might have concerning adult abuse to the {CHAIR / DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD} or Adult Social Services on 0344 800 8020

9. Contacts

9.1	Chair of the Trustees	-	Rob Lucas 07770562651
	Designated Safeguarding Lead	-	Caroline Coates 07585381602
	Adult Social Services	-	0344 800 8020

10. Associated legislation



- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Mental Health Act 1983
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998 & 2008
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Appendix 1

CLENCHWARTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST - POVA Incident Report Form

Name of vulnerable adult:

Address:

Telephone:

Briefly describe what happened (include times and dates):

Names and contacts of witnesses:

Name of person completing form:

Date:

Name of Manager responsible for investigation:

Date:

Action taken