



## Safeguarding against abuse and neglect

### Why do we need this policy?

You have a right to friendships and other kinds of relationships with people. These are essential for everyone's health and well-being and are usually positive experiences. However there are sometimes risks associated with being in relationships, including the risk of abuse or neglect, so sometimes this has to be balanced with your right to expect to be safe, and to be protected and safeguarded from harm. Creative Choices ensures that its workers are alert to the possibility of abuse and neglect and can take action to safeguard you and/or other people if necessary.

**Abuse** is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Forms of mistreatment or abuse can include:

- Physical abuse including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanction;
- Sexual abuse including rape, sexual assault, sexual innuendos, sexual activity or viewing sexually explicit materials, to which the person has not given consent;
- Psychological or emotional abuse including threats of harm or abandonment, isolation, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- Financial or material abuse including theft, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills or property or inheritance, or financial transactions, or 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 the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating;
- Discriminatory abuse including abuse that is racist, sexist, homophobic, or based on disability or age, or other form of harassment, slurs or similar treatment;
- Institutional abuse is mistreatment or abuse by regime or the individuals within an institution;

Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts.

**Neglect** is the failure to meet someone's basic physical or psychological needs, for example, not giving someone enough to eat, withholding medication, or not giving them the attention or support they need to keep them safe.

Abuse or neglect can take place anywhere.

## **How will this happen?**

**In all areas there will be a locally-agreed, multi-agency policy and procedure for 'Safeguarding Adults'. This will always be followed and the guidance in this document is therefore in addition to this local procedure. Local information is available for people in this service to read alongside this policy.**

To reduce the risk of abuse or neglect, one of the most important things we can do is give you information about what is or is not appropriate in different sorts of relationships and situations. We will support you to be in control of your life and to have the power to say 'no' when you want to.

If you are in a situation of actual or potential abuse or neglect we will help you to understand what is happening and to get information about what you can do to stop the abuse or neglect or to reduce harm. If you do not have the capacity to give consent to the relationship or to make informed decisions about this, we will work with your family and/or representative and/or other professionals to make sure decisions and actions are taken in your best interests and in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005/Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 Code of Practice. There is more information about this in our policy on Making choices and decisions.

Information about you is not generally shared with other people without your agreement. However, in certain very particular circumstances, when it is essential for your own health or safety or welfare, or of others, we may have to share information without your permission. There is more information about this in our policy on Confidentiality. We will tell you if we have to share information about you with other people (unless this puts you at even greater risk) and the reasons for this.

Whenever we have concerns about possible abuse or neglect we will follow the local multi-agency 'Safeguarding Adults' procedure. The extent and type of information-gathering or investigation will depend on the assessed risks to you and other people, your own wishes about this and decisions taken within the local 'Safeguarding Adults' procedure. In all cases careful records will be kept of the process, information gathered and decisions and outcomes. You will be kept informed about what is happening throughout this process (unless this puts you at even greater risk) and about the outcomes.

If workers become aware of an incident of abuse or are concerned about the possibility of abuse, they will use their judgement to take any action that is immediately required to protect you and/or meet your immediate needs for assistance and support. This may involve calling the emergency services if you need immediate assistance. They will report the matter to the manager straight away or, if it is out of office hours, to the Social Services Department and/or the Emergency Duty Team.

The manager will take responsibility for making a referral to the local multi-agency 'Safeguarding Adults' contact. The manager will also take responsibility for informing any other relevant health or social care authorities (including Care Quality Commission/Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales/Care Inspectorate for Scotland/RQIA for Northern Ireland) to find out if they wish to be involved in investigating the matter and whether and how they are kept updated. The police will always be informed if a crime has been committed and the health or safety or welfare of other vulnerable adults or children is at risk. Any internal investigation will be co-ordinated with a police investigation or other forms of 'Safeguarding Adults' investigations, when required.

The manager will work internally and with other professionals to ensure that the local multi-agency 'Safeguarding Adults' procedure is followed. This will include making sure that:

- you are safe;
- the risks to you are properly assessed;
- issues around consent, capacity and confidentiality are considered;
- medical attention is obtained, if necessary;
- a decision is made about whether to inform the police;
- any forensic evidence is kept, if necessary;
- any risks to other vulnerable adults or children are evaluated, and further action taken if necessary;
- your family/representative is informed, if appropriate and you agree;
- your rights to information, advocacy and support are met;
- a plan is put in place to safeguard you in the future.

We will take positive action to safeguard you through our procedures for assessment of your needs and for completing your personal plan. If any risks to your safety are identified a risk assessment and risk management plan will be completed and regularly reviewed. This will also happen if your own behaviour results in risk of abuse to other people.

We will also take positive action to safeguard you through our recruitment and training of workers and volunteers. They will be selected carefully with references and other necessary safety checks followed up before they begin working for this service. Soon after joining the service they will receive training and/or information on:

- the different types of abuse;
- how to recognise actual or potential abuse or neglect;
- how to respond if you or someone else tells them about abuse or neglect;
- the local procedures for raising a concern about abuse or neglect;
- what they should do if they witness or suspect, or are told about abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult or a child;
- how to work in ways that protect themselves against allegations of abuse.

This aspect of their work will continue to be developed and monitored through supervision, review and ongoing training

If an allegation of abuse is made about a worker, the manager will make sure that:

- a decision is made about whether she/he should continue with their work during the investigation;
- their right to information, advocacy and support are met;
- a referral is made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), when appropriate;
- if the allegation is upheld, the service's disciplinary procedure will be followed.

The service keeps a record of any allegations of abuse or neglect which is available for inspection by the Care Quality Commission/Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales/Care Inspectorate for Scotland/RQIA for Northern Ireland

**See these other policies, procedures and documents for further information on:**

- Assessment of needs
- Personal Plan
- Individual planning and review
- Communication
- Safe friendships and relationships
- Risk assessment and risk management
- Making choices and decisions
- Confidentiality
- Health and safety
- Recruitment of workers and managers in the service
- Working with volunteers
- Whistle blowing
- Personal care
- Management of people's money, valuables and financial affairs
- Restrictive physical intervention
- Deprivation of liberty
- Key holding and entering and leaving a person's home
- Being missing from the service
- Working with people who challenge services
- Harassment and bullying
- Supporting people with medication
- Disciplinary procedure (for workers and managers in the service)
- Record keeping
- Learning and development
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005/Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000