

Safeguarding Adults Policy

Policy Number	SP2
Title	Safeguarding Adults Policy
Approved by	Board of Trustees
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Author	Safeguarding Lead. Director of Adult Services

Version	Amendments	Date
0.0	None – Original draft	24 September 2018
1.1	3 year review- minor amendments following changes in legislation	16 th September, 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 The Board of Trustees of Autism Wessex is required by the Charity Commission to:

- Know their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding.
- Promote the well-being and welfare of the charity beneficiaries.
- Take reasonable steps to safeguard beneficiaries and to protect them from abuse or neglect.
- Take reasonable steps to protect staff, volunteers and those connected with the activities of the charity, from harm.
- Have adequate measures in place to assess and address safeguarding risks.
- Have adequate safeguarding policies and procedures appropriate for their charity's particular circumstances and which reflect both the law and best practice.
- Make sure that these policies and procedures are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Take responsibility for putting right anything that goes wrong in the charity.

1.2 This policy sets out the responsibilities of Autism Wessex to safeguard the welfare of adults at risk and has been developed in line with national and local legislation and guidance. The policy applies to all trustees and staff, senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students, working on behalf of the organisation.

1.3 The purpose of this policy is to protect adults at risk who receive services from Autism Wessex, and to provide all staff with a framework to fulfil their duties to safeguard adults at risk.

1.4 It is the position of Autism Wessex that no adult should ever experience abuse or neglect and the organisation holds the responsibility to safeguard all adults at risk and to take appropriate action when concerns are identified.

2. Duties

Staff and Volunteers

2.1 All Autism Wessex staff and volunteers, including trustees and school governors, have a duty to:

- Be alert to the possibility of adult abuse and neglect and be aware of local safeguarding policies and procedures.

- Attend mandatory safeguarding adults training, as appropriate to their role and responsibilities.
- Keep accurate records in respect of adult service users, appropriate to their role, when there are concerns regarding the welfare of adults at risk.
- Report concerns regarding adults at risk who are suffering abuse, or who may be at risk of harm, to statutory agencies, i.e. Adult Social Care, safeguarding, Care quality Commission (CQC) or the Police, when appropriate to do so.
- Share relevant information with other professionals and other agencies regarding adults at risk who are suffering abuse, or who may be at risk of harm.
- Share relevant information with other professionals and other agencies, regarding adult service users who may pose a risk of harm to others.
- Report concerns to senior management and or the Charity Safeguarding Lead, regarding any Autism Wessex staff or volunteers who may have harmed an adult at risk, who may pose a risk of harm to adults at risk, who may have committed an offence against an adult at risk, or who may be unsuitable to work with adults at risk.
- Seek and follow advice from the Charity Safeguarding Lead when in doubt regarding any of the above duties.

The Chief Executive

2.2 The Chief Executive holds a duty to ensure that a suitable infrastructure is in place to enable effective implementation of safeguarding adult policies and procedures and that suitable safeguarding adults training is implemented. The Chief Executive should also ensure that the organisation participates in Safeguarding Adult Reviews, or Domestic Homicide Reviews, when required to do so.

The Safeguarding Lead

2.3 The Charity Safeguarding Lead holds the responsibility to offer advice to the Chief Executive and Senior Managers on safeguarding issues and provides assurance to the Board of Trustees that all necessary measures and arrangements are in place to safeguard adults at risk in the organisation.

2.4 The Charity Safeguarding Lead (CSL) is also responsible for:

- Promoting good professional practice.
- Ensuring that advice and support is available to all staff in relation to safeguarding adult's issues.
- Ensuring that a safeguarding audit is undertaken and learning disseminated.
- Ensuring that safeguarding incidents are reviewed and any appropriate actions taken.
- Ensure that learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews, or Domestic Homicide Reviews is disseminated.

The Director of Human Resources

2.5 The Director of Human Resources hold the responsibility to:

- Ensure that safe staff recruitment practices are in place, to protect service users.
- Ensure that procedures are followed in respect of any staff or volunteers who:
 - May have harmed an adult at risk
 - May pose a risk of harm to adults at risk
 - May have committed an offence against an adult at risk
 - May be unsuitable to work with adults at risk and are referred, as required, to the Police or the Local Authority.

Managers

2.6 All managers hold a duty to:

- Ensure that their staff are aware of and comply with local safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensure that their staff fulfil their duties, whilst paying due regard to the safety and welfare of adults at risk at all times.

- Ensure that their staff attend relevant safeguarding adults training,
- Provide safeguarding advice and support to their teams and opportunities for discussion during supervision sessions,
- Submit safeguarding incident notifications to the Charity Safeguarding Lead or Associate Leads, as required.
- Submit notifications to CQC, in respect of allegations of abuse, as per CQC regulations.

3. Safeguarding Processes

- 3.1. Staff are required to participate in all safeguarding processes when there are concerns regarding the welfare of an adult at risk, including Section 42 Enquiries, Enquiry Planning Meetings, Enquiry Review Meetings, Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) meetings and any legal proceedings, when required. Advice can be sought from the Charity Safeguarding Lead regarding these processes.

4. Information Sharing

- 4.1 Information sharing is vital to safeguarding adults at risk. A key factor identified in many Safeguarding Adult Reviews has been a failure by practitioners to record information, to share it, to understand its significance and then take appropriate action.
- 4.2 All colleagues are required to cooperate with requests from Adult Social Care agents, or the police, to share information regarding adults at risk and their families, when there are concerns about the welfare of an adult at risk.

5. Staff Support and Supervision

- 5.1 Advice to staff regarding safeguarding issues is available from the CSL and senior managers and may also be sought from Adult Social Care team in the relevant local authority.
- 5.2 Managers are required to provide an opportunity for discussion about safeguarding issues during supervision sessions, to promote best practice and to offer support to practitioners, as involvement in safeguarding issues can impact on team members.

6. Safe Recruitment

- 6.1 Autism Wessex works to a recruitment policy which reflects national safer recruitment guidelines and Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. All employees undergo enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks.

7. Allegations against Staff

- 7.1 The charity has a Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy, which details the actions to be taken when there is an allegation or concern regarding any member of staff or volunteer who has contact with children and young people in their work or activities.
- 7.2 The statutory Duty of Candour places a requirement on providers of health and adult social care to be open with people and their families when there are failings or things go wrong. Providers should establish the duty throughout their organisations, ensuring that honesty and transparency are the norm in every organisation registered by the CQC. <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulation-20-duty-candour>

8. Procedures to be followed in Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

- 8.1 The procedure to be followed in responding to safeguarding concerns is at [Appendix 1](#); this is supported by the flowchart at [Appendix 2](#).

9. Associated Documentation

- 9.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole multi-agency Safeguarding Adults [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#)
- [Somerset Safeguarding Adults multi-agency Policy](#) and [Guidance for Safeguarding Adults in Somerset](#)
- [4LSAB MULTI-AGENCY POLICY, PROCESS AND GUIDANCE Covering the four Local Safeguarding Adults Boards of Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth](#)
- The Charity's Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy
- The Charity's Recruitment Policy

10. Appendices:

1. [Responding to safeguarding adult concerns](#)
2. [Flowchart: what do if you are concerned about the welfare of an adult](#)
3. [Legal framework](#)
4. [Definitions](#)

Appendix 1

Response to Safeguarding Concerns

- A member of staff who becomes aware of information indicating harm or risk of harm to an adult at risk, (including when an adult discloses something of concern), holds a duty to take appropriate action immediately, as any delay could increase the risk of harm to the adult at risk.
- Should information be disclosed to staff indicating harm or risk of harm to an adult at risk, or they disclose something of concern, they should listen to what they say and not make assumptions.
- Any information must be clearly documented by staff and any disclosures should be documented in the individual's own words. Staff should not ask leading questions as this could prejudice any formal investigation.
- If the adult at risk is in immediate danger, or in need of immediate medical attention, action should be taken to ensure their safety and wellbeing, including urgent medical assistance.
- If appropriate, staff should make a referral, or seek advice from Adult Social Care immediately. A referral should be made by telephone to the Adult Social Care team in the local authority area where the abuse has taken place and should be followed up in writing within 48 hours where appropriate.
- Consent to the referral should be sought from the person supported, if they have the capacity to do so, under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA), 2005. Where the individual has consent and refuses to consent to a referral, further advice should be sought from the Autism Wessex Safeguarding Lead.
- Adult Social Care should respond to the referrer within 1 working day, with the planned course of action. If this does not happen, staff should follow up the referral within 3 working days. Staff should not assume action has been taken without confirmation.
- The police should be called immediately if it is believed that a serious crime has taken place.
- In cases involving suspected physical or sexual assault, care must be taken to preserve evidence.
- When in doubt, staff should seek advice from the Charity Safeguarding Lead and follow this advice immediately.
- Staff should document clearly all of their concerns, discussions, advice given and any action taken in the records of the service user.
- Staff should follow the safeguarding recording systems that are in place within that service, completing the safeguarding timeline of events in chronological order.

Escalation of Concerns

Any member of staff who has raised a concern about a safeguarding adult issue and is concerned that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately, must follow this up as a priority.

Where there is professional disagreement between different agencies relating to the safeguarding of adults at risk, each Local Safeguarding Adults Board has produced a mechanism for practitioners and agencies to resolve these differences, when they cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between practitioners at front line level. These processes should be followed by Autism Wessex staff in cases where agreement cannot be reached with front-line practitioners from Adult Social Care, or other agencies. Advice and support with this process should be sought from the CSL if required.

In Dorset, Bournemouth & Poole; [Appendix 22 of the Dorset, Bournemouth & Poole Safeguarding Adults Procedures](#): Guidance re dealing with disputes and conflict of opinion, should be followed.

In Somerset; [Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Escalation Process](#) should be followed.

For concerns involving Autism Wessex staff, including poor professional practice, staff should seek support from line managers, or the CSL.

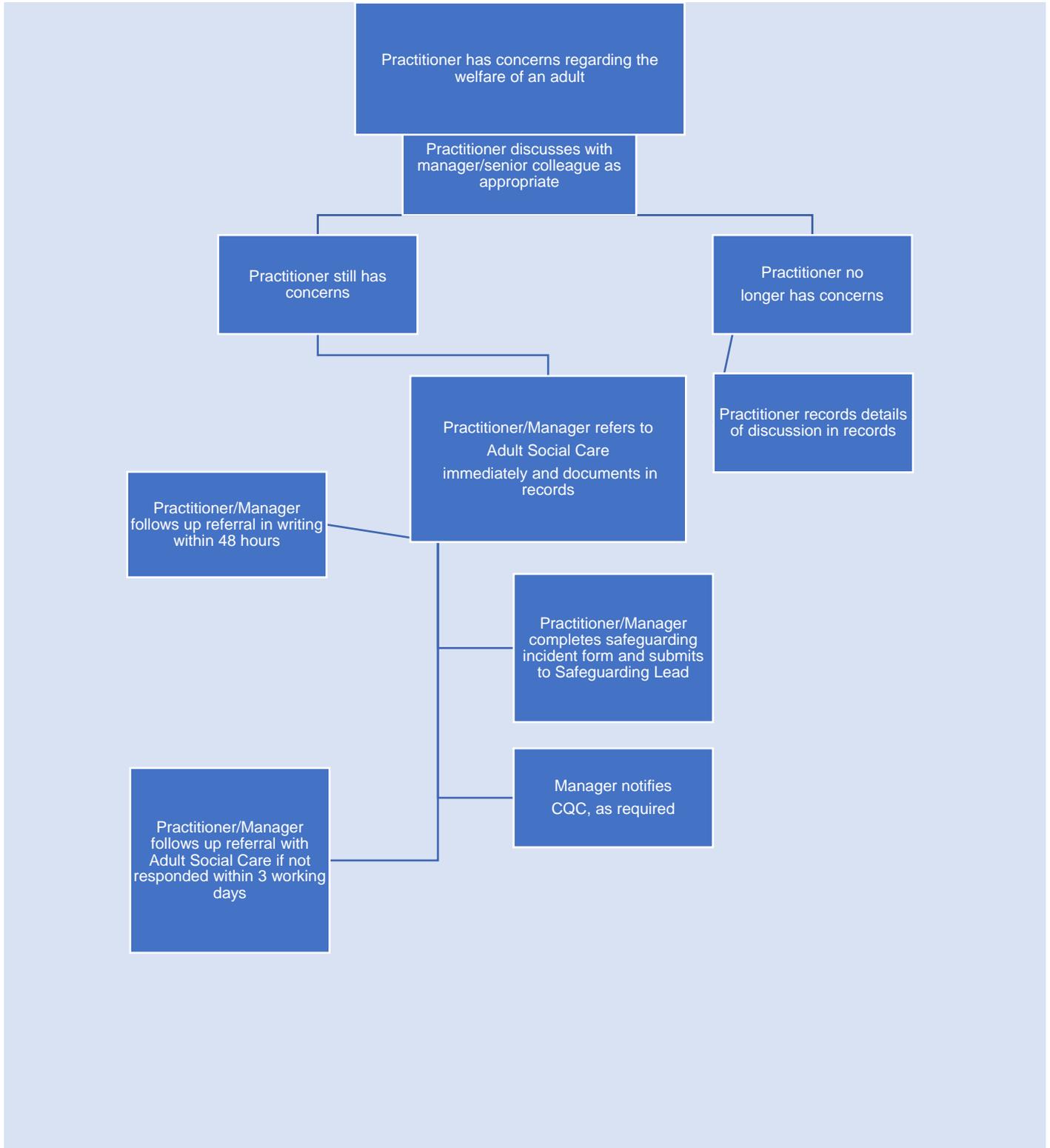
Record Keeping

Record keeping is an integral part of good practice, and is essential to the provision of safe and effective care. Records should be factual, accurate, clear, concise and completed at the time, they should differentiate between fact, observation and opinion and any third-party information should be correctly attributed. Unnecessary abbreviations, jargon and meaningless phrases should be avoided.

All concerns, discussions, advice given and any action taken in respect of concerns regarding the welfare of an adult at risk should be clearly documented. All referrals and correspondence should be saved in the adult's records.

Autism Wessex

What to do if you are concerned about the welfare of an adult



Legal Framework

[The Care Act \(2014\)](#)

[The Health & Social Care Act \(2015\)](#)

The Mental Health Acts ([1983](#) & [2007](#))

[The Mental Capacity Act \(2005\)](#)

[Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards \(Liberty Protection Safeguards – MCA Amendment Bill 2018\)](#)

[The Serious Crime Act \(2015\)](#)

[The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(2015\)](#)

[The Modern Slavery Act \(2015\)](#)

[The Charity Commission Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities, 2017.](#)

[The Care Quality Commission \(CQC\) Regulations for service providers and managers: Regulation 13: Safeguarding service users from abuse and improper treatment.](#)

The Sexual Offences Act, 2003

DEFINITIONS

Term	Descriptor
An adult at risk	<p>Applies to an adult who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has care and support needs, and • Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and • Is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs
Making safeguarding personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Care Act 2014 makes this statutory for safeguarding adults • Facilitates a person-centred approach to safeguarding • Establish what the service user wants regarding risk management and the outcomes they want to be achieved • Benefits include service users empowered to protect themselves • Service users gain the outcomes that they want, person put before the process • Quicker resolution to concerns that have been raised • People have the right to make capacitated unwise decisions • Need to ask the service user for their views on raising a concern unless by doing so the risk of harm to them or others would be increased
Physical abuse	<p>Non-accidental harm to the body includes inappropriate restraint or physical interventions including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.</p>
Domestic violence	<p>Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; 'honour' based violence.) The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is; any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological • Physical • Sexual • Financial • Emotional
Controlling Behaviour	<p>Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.</p>
Coercive Behaviour	<p>Is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim?</p>

Forced Marriage

Although forcing someone into a marriage and/or luring someone overseas for the purpose of marriage is a criminal offence, the civil route and the use of 'Forced Marriage Protection Orders' is still available. These can be used as an alternative to entering the criminal justice system. It may be that perpetrators will automatically be prosecuted where it is overwhelmingly in the public interest to do so, however victims should be able to choose how they want to be assisted.

Exploitation by radicalisation

The Home Office leads on the anti-terrorism PREVENT strategy, of which CHANNEL is part (refer to www.gov.uk for information). This aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting extremism. All local organisations' have a role to play in safeguarding people who meet the criteria. Contact should be made with the local Police regarding any individuals identified who present concern regarding violent extremism.

Sexual Abuse

Refers to - rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting or does not have the mental capacity to consent.

Sexual exploitation

The term "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. It may be very important in specific cases to be clear about the context in which concerns about sexual exploitation arise. Some individuals may have been groomed as children or young people, whilst others may be engaged as sex workers so are at risk because they are threatened or coerced, have drug dependencies and/or mental health needs. People with learning disabilities may be led into harm because of perceptions they are being offered friendships.

Psychological abuse

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern Slavery

Includes human trafficking, forced labour and debt bondage, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, domestic servitude, descent-based slavery, child labour, slavery in supply chains, and forced and early marriage.

Human Trafficking

The definition of human trafficking is the illegal movement of people through force, fraud or deception with the intention of exploiting them, typically for the purposes of forced labour or sexual exploitation.

Discriminatory abuse

Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Internet/cyberbullying

Can be defined as the use of technology, and particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately hurt, upset, harass or embarrass someone else. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with the technology offering the bully another route for harassing their victim, or can be simply without motive.

Cyberbullying can occur using practically any form of connected media, from nasty text and image messages using mobile phones, to unkind blog and social networking posts, or emails and instant messages, to malicious websites created solely for the purpose of intimidating an individual or virtual abuse during an online multiplayer game.

Organisational abuse

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may be a one off incident or on-going ill-treatment. It can refer to neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission

Includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, equipment, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Self-neglect and hoarding

This includes a broad spectrum of behaviour. The Statutory Guidance defines self-neglect as: "a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding". Self-neglect is recognised as the failure or unwillingness by an individual to meet their own basic care needs required to maintain health. It should be noted that self-neglect or hoarding may well not prompt a Section 42 Enquiry. An assessment should be made on a case by case basis. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on an adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.