



## SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS ~ POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### LIFELINE HARROGATE'S COMMITMENT TO THE SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

Lifeline Harrogate is committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults locally. It has a zero tolerance policy to abuse, neglect or harm. We have a high level of commitment to safeguarding vulnerable adults and ensuring through multi-agency working that they are protected from any type of abuse, neglect or harm.

All volunteers will be given induction training on safeguarding and will be given this document to read.

All staff will need to take and pass the 'High Speed Training' ([www.highspeedtraining.co.uk](http://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk)) **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – Level 1** as part of their induction training.

Staff and volunteers at Lifeline are also encouraged to read the NYCC guidance at; <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults>

### WHO IS AT RISK OF ABUSE

Anyone could be at risk of abuse or neglect. A person may be more or less vulnerable at different times in their life.

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is:

- an adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs for care and support);
- experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

### DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Whatever the violation and whatever the reason, abuse cannot be condoned. Whilst there is no standard legal definition of adult abuse Lifeline Harrogate accepts the following definitions of 'abuse' and 'vulnerable person'.

#### What is meant by abuse?

- Abuse includes, the physical, emotional or financial maltreatment of a vulnerable adult.

- The abuse may or may not be repeated and is the violation by a person or persons who have power over the life of a vulnerable adult.
- It may occur in domiciliary or institutional settings and includes the abuse of a resident by a fellow resident.

### **Concern of abuse**

A concern of abuse is where a person or agency **suspects** that a person or persons have been abused, but they are **not certain** in their concern and they may or may not know who is doing the abusing.

### **TYPES OF ABUSE**

There are lots of different types of abuse, including:

- **Physical abuse** - someone being hit, slapped or kicked, being locked in a room or restrained inappropriately.
- **Sexual abuse** - someone being made to take part in sexual activity when they haven't given consent, or are not able to give consent.
- **Emotional or psychological abuse** - someone being shouted at, bullied, being made to feel frightened or pressurised into decisions.
- **Financial abuse** - stealing, fraud, withholding or misusing someone's money or possessions.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - includes not giving someone the care that they need.
- **Modern slavery** - human trafficking and forced labour.
- **Domestic abuse** - when abuse occurs between partners or by a family member.
- **Discriminatory abuse** - poor treatment or harassment because of someone's age, gender, sexuality, disability, race or religious belief.
- **Organisational abuse** - inflexible systems and routines in place that stop people making their own choices about their lifestyle; not considering a person's dietary requirements; inappropriate ways of addressing people.
- **Self neglect** is also a form of abuse. This is when someone chooses not to look after themselves. It might include not eating, or refusing help for their health or care needs and this has a significant effect on their wellbeing.

### **RECOGNISING ABUSE**

Abuse could be:

- Something that happens once, or something that happens several times
- Deliberate and intended
- Unintentional
- Random
- A result of negligence, indifference or a failure to protect
- Discriminatory behaviour
- A criminal offence
- Multiple

Abuse could be carried out by:

- Staff / Volunteers
- A bogus worker
- Someone in a position of trust
- Other clients and residents
- A Partner, Relatives and Carers
- Other Vulnerable People
- Strangers
- Other agency workers (statutory and non-statutory)

- It can also be done by more than one person

Possible indicators of current or past abuse are:

- Bruises and marks or an attempt to hide them
- Lack of appetite
- Over eating
- Depression
- Changed personal appearance
- Lack of, or changes to personal care (looking unclean all of a sudden) and hygiene
- Fear or avoidance of certain people, places and activities
- Increase in criminal activity
- High or unusual levels of anxiety
- Unexpected or sudden shifts in mood and behaviour
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or physical contact
- Sexualised behaviour and language
- Aggression, violence or threats towards others
- Substance or alcohol misuse
- Self harm
- Going missing
- Increase in confusion
- Requests to see the doctor or going to hospital
- Has an injury which is difficult to explain
- Requests for help
- Challenging behaviour
- Sleep disturbance
- Psychosomatic disorders e.g. stomach pains
- Medical conditions such as genital soreness or injury
- Emotional flatness
- Withdrawal
- Refusing to let people into the house
- Withdrawing from the service
- Overly compliant behaviour
- Finds money is missing

**Note: These are only indications and that you should take account of the particular circumstances of the vulnerable person.**

These procedures describe the response that should be made to any situation where there is knowledge or concern that a vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse or neglect.

Lifeline Harrogate staff and volunteers have an obligation to act as 'alerters' where abuse is suspected.

Alerting, or raising a concern about abuse means:

- Recognising signs of adult abuse
- Responding to disclosures
- Alerting Investigators
- Playing a part, where appropriate, to protect an adult/s which may include preserving evidence following an incident
- Recognising ongoing bad practice
- Collating and recording initial information

**As an alerter you are not being asked to verify or prove that information is true. You are being asked to log your concerns and report them to the appropriate authorities.**

Alerting is a necessary first step in the process of keeping people safe and empowering them for the future. Alerting through formal channels will enable a proper assessment or investigation to be carried forward.

### **DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE DO'S AND DON'Ts**

**If you are in a situation where someone starts to disclose abuse to you**

#### **DO**

- ensure the individual's immediate safety and that of others
- stay calm and try not to show shock
- LISTEN carefully rather than question directly
- show empathy
- be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed
- tell the person that :
  - they did right to tell you
  - you are treating this information seriously
  - it was not their fault
  - you must discuss with an appropriate manager
- - if they wish, contact will be made with the police and or social services
- - in certain circumstances the police and social services will be contacted without their consent, but that their wishes will be made clear throughout
- report to your manager
- write down as soon as possible and as far as you are able, what was said by the person disclosing
- ensure that information is noted in the case file

#### **DON'T**

- press the person for more details
- promise to keep 'secrets'
- make promises that you cannot keep
- be judgmental (e.g. why didn't you run away)
- be dismissive of what you are told
- pass on information to anyone who doesn't have a need to know i.e. do not gossip

### **MINIMISING AND PREVENTING ABUSE**

Lifeline Harrogate recognizes that all individuals have a right to live free from abuse in accordance with the principles of respect, dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality.

Lifeline Harrogate will review its Safeguarding Policies and Procedures at least annually to ensure that all relevant information is up to date and that staff, volunteers and residents are aware of the potential and indicators of abuse within the service.

Lifeline Harrogate will continue to achieve effective inter-agency working and information sharing to safeguard vulnerable adults and continue to embed adult safeguarding into all its working practices. Safeguarding Adults is linked to all Lifeline's other organizational policies.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Lifeline Harrogate partners with a wide variety of homeless agencies. Lifeline will always refer to the agencies individual assessment of risk first. Lifeline's referral form is clear as to our

eligibility criteria. All referrals are based on Risk to Self and Risk to Others. These issues will be explored with the applicable agencies and the individual applying.

All potential resident interviews are to be conducted by two members of staff. Ordinarily this will be with the CEO and the Senior Housing Manager (SHM) initially, and then with the SHM and the applicable Housing & Support Officer (HSO). Each will score the potential resident on a 'Decision to House' form to see if both parties independently agree as to the decision.

Where there is doubt as to the levels of risk that will be applicable that resident is to be scored on our Risk Assessment scale.

Once residents are housed weekly risk assessments are performed.

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

Although Lifeline Harrogate is a service where children neither live nor visit, clients may have access to children. The staff and volunteers at LIFELINE HARROGATE are, therefore, responsible for reporting any concerns regarding children. Information may be picked up through conversation, key working sessions etc. where there is a concern or suspicion that a child may be at risk this must be acted upon.

Please see the Safeguarding Children Policy.

### **SAFEGUARDING ROLES WITHIN LIFELINE HARROGATE**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Nominated staff</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
Alerter	All employees All volunteers	07801 695105
Responder	<b>Manager:</b> Carl Good – CEO <b>Service Manager:</b> Deborah Anderson – Senior Housing Manager	07801 695105 07474 889927

The person with responsibility for updating Lifeline Harrogate Internal Policies and Procedures is Carl Good, CEO.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALERTERS**

- Take immediate steps to safeguard life and limb of the Vulnerable Adult, this may involve emergency first aid.
- Contact the Emergency Services if the Vulnerable Adult appears to be in immediate danger of harm or others are at risk or there is evidence of a criminal act. You should not put yourself at risk in these situations.
- Notify your line manager/supervisor immediately (within one working day). Tell your manager what has happened and discuss with them what action to take.
- Your line manager will be responsible for referral onto other agencies as required.
- Decide with your manager how best to discuss your concerns with the alleged victim. Decide with your manager how to seek consent from the alleged victim for any subsequent steps that you think are necessary. With consent from the alleged victim you may involve close relatives who have an interest.

- Report to a more senior level within the organisation if **it is suspected that your line manager/supervisor is involved**. You should refer to Lifeline Harrogate's 'whistle blowing' policy. This would involve an approach to David Collett, Lifeline's Chair of Trustees. His number is 07528 227028 or to email him at davidj.collett@btinternet.com.
- Remember you may have to report directly to the Police or Social Services.
- Whilst involved with suspected abuse of a vulnerable adult/s dialogue with Service Manager and/or Manager should be ongoing and the following points will need to be constantly borne in mind:
  - the level of the individual/s capacity to be involved in decision making;
  - whether a referral to the police or social services is appropriate
  - whether a doctor or emergency services need to be called.
- Record and date your concerns and actions (see later notes on recording practice)

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPONDERS (ALERTING MANAGER/ SERVICE MANAGER)**

- Find out from the alerter what has happened and discuss what action to take. Discuss whether the incident(s)/disclosure or allegation is to be reported to the police and or social services for investigation.
- Decide with the alerter how best to discuss their concerns with the alleged victim. Decide with the alerter how to seek consent from the alleged victim for any subsequent steps that you think are necessary
- As the Service Manager or Manager you will be responsible for referral onto other agencies as required, e.g. the Police, Social Services etc.
- Make referral to Social Services if the Vulnerable Adult is competent and consents to referral/ does not have the capacity to decide or is not the only person affected and others are at risk.
- Report to the Police if a Criminal Offence is suspected or sexual abuse is suspected.
- If no referral to the police or social services is made – develop a support network and keep it under review. Help the Vulnerable adult to access appropriate services.
- Always maintain a confidential record of all events, actions taken and the reasons for them.
- Maintain ongoing dialogue with Alerter and Vulnerable Adult. Let them know what actions you are taking and why.

### **REPORTING ABUSE**

All clients are made aware of different types of abuse on admission to the Lifeline charity, including what to do if they are concerned about abuse, either for themselves or for others.

Staff and volunteers all have a **duty of care** to report any allegations or suspicions of abuse to the Manager or Service Manager as soon as possible, and must do so even if the resident



is reluctant for them to do this, or asks them not to do so. The resident must be made aware that the member of staff or volunteer is not able to maintain information regarded alleged abuse a secret.

There will be occasions when a member of staff is unable to go directly to the Manager or Service Manager because that manager may be implicated in the allegations. In such situations, members of staff or volunteers should refer to the Whistleblowing Procedures.

The Manager or Service Manager will complete an inter-agency alert/referral form as per the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults multi agency policy and procedure. Copies are kept in the office and can also be downloaded from:

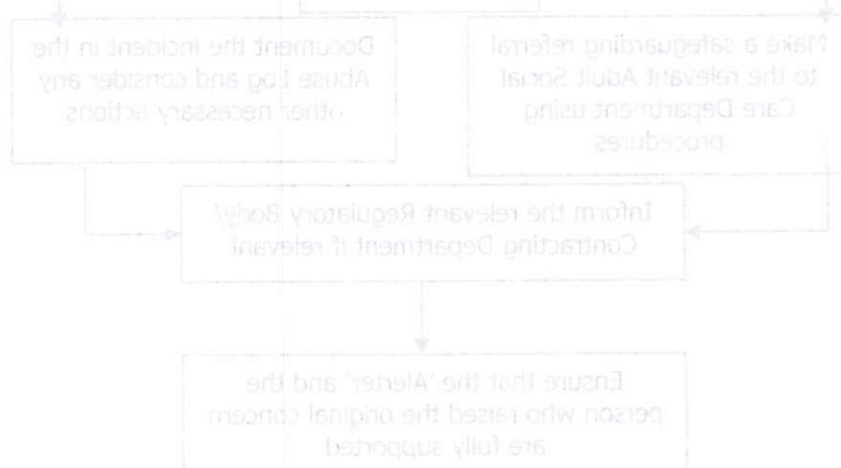
Service providers in the statutory, voluntary or independent sectors should use the [https://www.cravenc.gov.uk/media/4337/item\\_13 - appendix a part i inter-agency safeguarding adults concerns form -oct 2015.pdf](https://www.cravenc.gov.uk/media/4337/item_13_-_appendix_a_part_i_inter-agency_safeguarding_adults_concerns_form_-_oct_2015.pdf) to report abuse.

You should then send the completed form as a confidential document to: North Yorkshire County Council, Customer Services Centre, County Hall, Racecourse Lane, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8AD.

### **Note the emergency advice from NYCC**

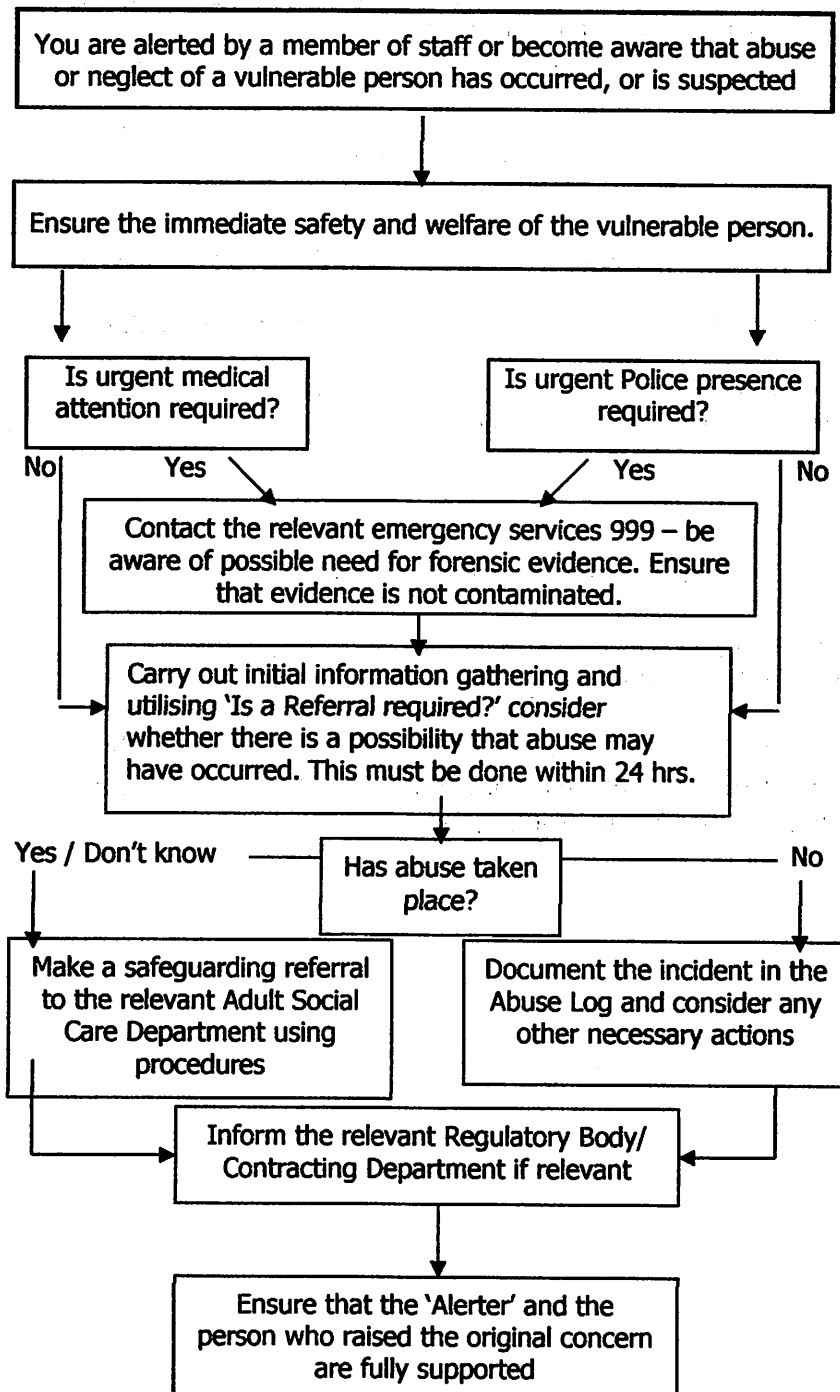
If you or the person you are concerned about is in danger and immediate action is required, you should ring the emergency services on **999**.

If you or the person you are concerned about is not in immediate danger, you should ring our customer services centre on **01609 780780**. This includes outside of office hours. The Minicom number is 01609 779838.



**Process for Referral**

This chart should not be used in isolation and reference must be made to the relevant written procedure:





### **PRACTICE NOTES ON RECORDING**

Alerters should be prepared to provide as much as possible of the following information as possible.

- Details of the alleged victim (name, address, age, ethnic origin, gender, religion , type of accommodation, family circumstances, support networks, physical health, any communication difficulties)
- Your job title and involvement
- Substance of the incident, disclosure, suspicion or allegation
- Details of care givers
- Details of alleged abuser and current whereabouts and likely movements within the next 24hours (if known)
- Whether the alleged abuser cares for any other vulnerable adults or children, including their own or others' children and if there are thought to be any other people at risk
- Details of any specific incidents e.g. dates, times, injuries, witnesses, evidence such as bruising
- Background of any previous concerns
- Awareness or not / consent or not by the alleged victim or alleged abuser
- Records of any immediate action taken by staff in Lifeline Harrogate .

Records should be treated as strictly confidential and their contents should be disclosed only to the Manager or Service Manager.

Records should include any allegations or disclosures made by a victim of abuse in their own words where possible. However, such information should not be gathered in the form of an interrogation, any such statements may be required by the police, if a subsequent police investigation is made.

### **AFTER REPORTING**

Being involved in the reporting of a case of abuse can be a potentially traumatic experience for staff members and volunteers. Anyone who is involved in such cases will be attend a debriefing session and supervision within 24 hours of the case. Depending on the severity of the situation and the affect on the staff and volunteers referrals may be made for longer term support.

**Lifeline (Harrogate) Limited will revise and review this policy at least annually.**

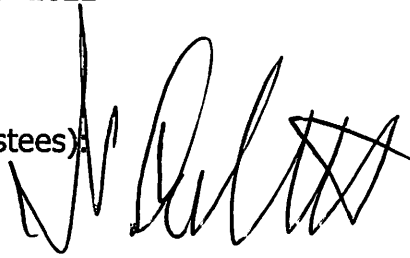
Approved at Trustees meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Review date: October/November 2022

Signature (on behalf of the Trustees):

Date:

4/11/2021



Signature (Manager - CEO):

Date:

4/11/21



Signature (Service Manager - SHM):

Date:

4/11/21

