



VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Date Implemented: June 2019

Review Date: May 2021

Signed: Denise Hartley
Chief Executive Officer

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Denise Hartley" in a cursive script.

1. Purpose of Adult Safeguarding policy.

Intact is committed to ensuring that all adult service users enjoy and benefit from their experience here. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all adults can participate in a safe environment, free from any form of abuse. It is intended to state our responsibilities in this respect and to clearly define the role of staff and volunteers in this process.

Intact is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use our services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. Intact staff and volunteers have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting people's health, well-being and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Intact recognises its contribution towards the **prevention, protection and support** of vulnerable adults who are at risk of harm, and have produced a range of working documents and procedures to address any incidents which may arise and training so that our representatives are knowledgeable and have the skills to address any incidents which may arise.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided below. Intact have a separate Child Protection Policy.

2. Definition of Safeguarding

Policy

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

A list of abuse and definitions include the following list: -

- **Physical** – Any intentional act causing injury or trauma to another person or animal by way of bodily contact.
- **Financial and Material abuse** – controlling a person's ability to acquire, use and maintain their own affairs including money, benefits, and possessions. This comprises theft, fraud, placing undue pressure on a person to take on a loan, change a will, or change an inheritance, denying funds / benefits for personal care, exploiting a person's assets or possessions, i.e. car, house and misuse of power of attorney.
- **Sexual** - Any behaviour of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent or understanding.
- **Psychological** – characterized by a person subjecting, or exposing, another person to behaviour that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder. It is often associated with situations of power imbalance in abusive relationships including bullying, gas lighting and abuse in the workplace.

- **Discrimination** – Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. It can be motivated because of age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, class, culture, language, race or ethnic origin. It can result from situations that exploit a person's vulnerability by treating the person in a way that excludes them from opportunities they should have as equal citizens.
- **Emotional abuse** – can include a range of actions such as controlling, monitoring, and isolating another person, intimidating, taking away rights, and privileges, blaming others actions and life events, blackmail and other similar actions.
- **Neglect** – Failure to provide necessary care, assistance, guidance or attention, or is reasonably likely to cause the person physical, mental or emotional harm or substantial damage to or loss of assets.

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone.

All adults working with or on behalf of vulnerable adults have a responsibility to protect vulnerable adults. The responsibilities of the designated lead for Safeguarding at Intact include: -

- Overseeing the implementation and the continued application of Intact's Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection Policies.
- Administering the record keeping associated with the Vulnerable Adults Policy,
- Ensuring that all people involved with Intact are aware of the Vulnerable Adults Policy and relevant codes of conduct.
- Promotion of vulnerable adult awareness at Intact
- Supporting staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults in the provision of appropriate training in vulnerable adults
- Ensuring that adults have someone to go to if they have a concern or need information on safeguarding.
- Referring when necessary safeguarding concerns/allegations of abuse to Social Services Department, the Police or the Intact Chair/Board Member in the case of allegations made against staff members or volunteers.

3. Categories of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, but can be broadly separated into five main categories:

1. Neglect
2. Physical abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Emotional abuse
5. Bullying and harassment

4. Signs and symptoms of Abuse

Neglect

Neglect occurs when someone fail to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. Examples of neglect include:

- Failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing
- Failing to protect a vulnerable adult from physical harm or danger
- Failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Refusing to give affection and attention

Because neglect is where failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, it is likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health or development. It can go unnoticed for a long time, yet have lasting and very damaging effects. This may make it difficult for them to make friends or socialise adequately. It is important to look for both physically and emotional indicators.

How to spot signs of Neglect: -

- An unkempt state (frequently dirty or smelly)
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress

Behavioural may include:

- Being tired all the time
- Frequently being late or not coming at all
- Having few friends
- Being left alone or unsupervised on a regular basis

How to spot signs of Physical Abuse: -

Physical abuse occurs when someone physically hurts or injures another person by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, biting, suffocating, drowning, or causing deliberate physical harm to them. Giving someone inappropriate drugs or alcohol constitutes physical abuse. An important indicator of physical abuse is when bruises or injuries are:

- Unexplained
- Untreated
- Inadequately treated (or where there are delays to treatment)
- On parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely (e.g. on the cheeks or thighs).

Bruising may be more or less noticeable on people with different skin tones or from different racial groups. You need to be alert to the following physical indicators:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises that reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping, grabbing, pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds

Physical abuse may not always be apparent from bruises, fractures or physical signs. Behavioural indicators, particularly when there are changes in behaviour, can also indicate that abuse is happening. This might be evident in the following behaviours:

- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Fear of going home (e.g. after a training session)
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Covering arms and legs when hot (e.g. during hard physical activity or hot weather)
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour

How to spot signs of Sexual Abuse: -

Sexual abuse occurs when adults exploit others to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling. Showing vulnerable adults pornographic material (e.g. books, videos, pictures) also constitutes sexual abuse.

Adults may tell you either directly or indirectly that they are being sexually abused. This will have taken enormous courage on their part because it is likely that they will have been threatened by the abuser about what will happen if they tell, and/or will be aware and very frightened of the potential consequences (e.g. the abuser going to prison). In all cases, they will tell you because they want the abuse to stop. Therefore, it is very important that you listen to them and take them seriously.

Physical signs of Sexual Abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Bruising or bleeding near the genital area
- A sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy

If you suspect or become aware of such indicators **it is inappropriate for you to check them out yourself**. In these circumstances, always refer them to a medical expert.

Behavioural indicators of sexual abuse may include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn)
- Apparent fear of someone
- Having nightmares
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Substance or drug abuse

How to spot signs of Emotional Abuse: -

People who have suffered neglect, physical or sexual abuse will also have suffered some level of emotional abuse. People of all ages can be emotionally abused in a number of ways, such as through:

- Imposing inappropriate expectations on them.
- Making them feel worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Making them feel frightened or in danger
- Shouting at, threatening or taunting them
- Overprotecting them or, conversely, failing to give them the love and affection they need.

Emotional abuse is perhaps the most difficult of all forms of abuse to measure. Often, people who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled, or because they receive little or no love, affection or attention from family or carers.

Physical indicators may include:

- Not attending appointments or sessions, or not wanting to go home.
- Withdrawing from groups they previously attended
- Not wanting to be late leaving and having someone waiting for them.
- Having mobile phones removed / broken.
- Always on the phone and looking nervous.

Behavioural indicators may include:

- Going quiet when the person causing harm comes into the room.
- Poor sleep, feeling tired.
- Excessive worrying
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. hair twisting, rocking)
- Being unable or unwilling to take part in other activities.
- Excessive fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders, stuttering, and being self-critical.
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Bursts of anger / upset.

How to spot signs of Bullying and Harassment:-

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can be **verbal, written or physical** and can include actions such as physical assaults, name-calling, sarcasm, racist taunts, threats, gestures and unwanted physical contact, graffiti, stealing or hiding personal items. Bullying can even occur via the Internet.

Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons (e.g. being overweight or smaller than everyone else, having a disability, belonging to a different race, faith or culture). The effects of bullying may be invisible, but can leave lasting emotional scars. The bully is not always obvious to others and the victim often keeps quiet.

Harassment is closely associated with aspects of bullying and occurs when an individual feels that they are subject to behaviour from others that is unacceptable to them. Such behaviour could include simple name-calling or an action that is designed to annoy, upset or worry another person. In some cases, it may develop into an identifiable pattern of bullying; in other more subtle cases, it may take the form of random acts – again designed to upset others.

The damage inflicted by bullying and harassment is frequently underestimated. It can cause considerable distress, to the extent that it affects health and development or, in extreme cases, causes significant harm (including self-harm). There are a number of signs that may indicate that a person is being bullied:

Physical indicators may include:

- Stomach-aches or headaches
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Scratching or bruising
- Bingeing (e.g. on food, cigarettes or alcohol)
- A shortage of money
- Frequent loss of possessions

Behavioural indicators may include:

- Reduced concentration
- Becoming withdrawn or depressed
- Being emotionally up and down (e.g. tearful)

5. Recruitment

Intact has a responsibility to ensure that the protection of all vulnerable adults are upheld whilst using Intact's services, and are able to act as a supporter should a vulnerable adult disclose a safeguarding incident which has occurred away from the Intact centre but wish to tell someone.

- Task descriptions for specific roles both paid and unpaid within Intact should be drawn up by the Intact CEO, in consultation with other paid members of staff and the Trustees.
- The application form and interview stage will ask questions about an individual's criminal record and any disclosure information should be passed directly in a sealed envelope to the Intact CEO.
- A minimum of 2 references will be sought stating explicitly that the applicant is being considered for a position that involves paid or voluntary work with children and vulnerable people, and seek views on their suitability for such a role
- Following an interview, any offer of a position either voluntary or paid will be subject to clearance by the Disclosure and Barring Service. In order to fulfil this requirement, it will be necessary for the applicant to provide identification which may include Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate and any other evidence of a change in name, passport or photo driving licence to the Intact.
- The induction period will include a discussion about Adult and child Safeguarding and date or access for online training for safeguarding will be provided.
- Newly appointed staff/volunteers should serve a probationary period. The length may vary according to the seniority of the position. An experienced member of staff should act as a mentor to the new applicant.

Roles and responsibilities of staff

Intact has key people within the organisation who have responsibilities to address instances of safeguarding.

- The CEO Denise Hartley has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Intact Centre has an effective Safeguarding policy which is fit for purpose.
- The CEO will ensure that the policy is taken to the Personnel and Policy Sub Committee for review and ratification
- The CEO will ensure that there are provisions made for training and supporting staff in their role as appointed safeguarding representatives to be competent.
- Allocated staff members Helen Dixon, Stephanie Lees-Pinson and Debra Fitzsimmons as safeguarding representatives at the Intact centre.
- Allocated staff will undertake appropriate training to attain a good level of competence on dealing with safeguarding issues.
- Allocated staff will ensure that safeguarding remains on the agenda of staff meetings, and promotes the need for continuous Safeguarding training for staff and volunteers on an annual basis.
- Allocated staff will be involved in arranging and delivering training to the staff team and volunteering using a range of methods, i.e. face to face, online, training. Etc.

6. Training for staff and volunteers

Intact is dedicated to encouraging self-improvement in both its staff and volunteers therefore, Intact will provide annual training for all its staff and volunteers. Safeguarding training will be provided using the following methods: - Lancashire County council online courses, taught sessions with an approved external Safeguarding trainer, an experienced internal staff member will peer teach to the staff team and volunteers.

- All Intact staff and volunteers who intend to work with children and vulnerable adults will have to attend annual safeguarding sessions. [See methods above]
- Training will be provided annually or for new volunteers and staff, on current safeguarding issues and Intact's policy. [See Methods]
- If staff and volunteers have any concerns or queries about safeguarding, they will inform the Chief Executive Officer.
- Individuals' task descriptions will include the person to whom they will be accountable for their work, the person whose work they will supervise, if any, a description of the work they will undertake with children/vulnerable adults with reference to any written guidelines produced for safeguarding their welfare, their duty to prevent abuse of all children/ vulnerable adults they have contact with, and reference to action to be taken if abuse is discovered or disclosed.
- Two members of staff [Helen Dixon and Steph Lees-Pinson] have PTLLS qualifications, and will lead delivery of bi annual training in safeguarding. Bi annual training will be online, or with an approved external trainer.

7 Reporting Procedures

Supporting people when concerns are raised about abuse or neglect can be very difficult and distressing for everyone involved. Deciding what's the right thing to do can also be stressful, particularly if the person you are concerned about is reluctant to accept support.

Intact has provided a template for recording all interactions which must be completed using facts, dated, and signed as an accurate account of what happened. See reporting document.

8. Confidentiality

Everyone involved must have a clear understanding of confidentiality in regards to Safeguarding adults, this must be outlined in any training given and must be adhered to and must always have the greater good of the person who has disclosed at the centre of who you share sensitive information with.

The key message is to take appropriate action.

9. Guidelines for Staff

If approached by a vulnerable adult wanting to talk about concerns or possible abuse:

- Do not panic – react calmly so as not to upset the person reporting abuse
- Acknowledge that what they are doing is difficult, but that they are right to confide in you
- Reassure them that they are not to blame
- Make sure that, from the outset, you can understand what they are saying
- Be honest straight away and tell them you cannot make promises that you will not be able to keep.
- Do not promise that you will keep the conversation a secret. Explain that you will need to involve other people and that you will need to write things down.
- Listen and believe them, take them seriously
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show
- Keep any questions to a minimum, but clarify any facts or words that you do not understand – do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Avoid closed questions (i.e. questions which invite yes/no answers)
- Do not probe for more information than is offered
- Encourage them to use their own words
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser

The Vulnerable Adult has the right:

- To be made aware of this policy
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- To be involved in any process as appropriate
- To receive information about the outcome

10. Dealing with allegations towards staff and volunteers.

Staff and Volunteers have a duty to behave in a responsible and respectful manner, which does not cause unreasonable upset or offence. Despite putting in lots of measures into Intact's recruitment and selection processes, members of staff or a volunteer, could be accused of an abuse allegation.

Take these actions if you receive an abuse allegation related to staff or a volunteer.

- Take it seriously and keep an open mind
- Do not investigate anything yourself
- Do not promise to keep this confidential
- Make a written record of the conversation, keeping to the facts.
- You must contact the safeguarding officers Helen, Steph or Debbie straight away. Contact Details are: Helen.Dixon@intact-preston.org.uk; Stephanie.LPinson@intact-preston.org.uk; Debra.Fitzsimmons@intact-preston.org.uk; You can also contact them on 01772-760760. If you feel this line of reporting is compromised then report concerns directly to Denise Hartley the CEO on 01772 760760 or email Denise.Hartley@intact-preston.org.uk

If you feel that this is also a line you are unable to pursue contact Bill Shannon who is the Chair of the Trustees. Bill_shannon@msn.com or 07768 – 596820

- Please see the list for external contacts if you feel that you are unable to tell anyone at the centre.
- Doing nothing is not an option.

Key issues to note:

- Priority should be given to resolving the matter as soon as possible (within one month)
- Staff should not be automatically suspended. Consideration will be made where there is substantial evidence where a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm
- Allegations found to be unfounded or malicious should be removed from personnel records

11. General reporting and support

Please speak to Helen Dixon, Steph Lees-Pinson or Debra Fitzsimmons who will act as the safeguarding officers at Intact, and share your concerns, and agree a plan of action. If you are not sure what to do you can always follow these steps.

- Make sure you read the safeguarding policy and that you are familiar with it.
- Know who you should be talking to about your concerns [Helen or Steph]
- Remember that this situation could lead to a criminal investigation and you must not do anything to jeopardise an investigation.

DO

- Stay calm
- Provide a listening ear and an open mind
- Be reassuring, and make sure the person sharing the information knows that this is the right thing to do
- Keep notes and make sure you report this to the safeguarding officer on site who will decide to take things next

DON'T

- Make promises to keep the information secret, you must share this as you have a duty to report this incident
- Don't make the person tell someone else again, as the person may be formally interviewed and repetition of the story can be troubling to the person
- Never make suggestions about how the incident may have happened
- Never write your own theories, stick to the facts of the conversation.

It is important that you listen to the person without judgement, tell the safeguarding officer [Helen or Steph] and record the incident using the attached form.

The safeguarding officer/s will report a safeguarding concern:

Emergency number 5-8pm and weekends 0300 123 6722.

- Contact adult social care, tel: 01904 555111 (office hours) or fax 01904 554055
- Hearing impaired customers can use the text facility 07534 437804
- Out of hours, tel: 01609 780780

If you're not sure what to do our adult social care team can give you advice.

To report a crime:

- ***In an emergency, contact the police, tel: 999***
- If the person is not in immediate danger, contact the police, tel: 101

Useful contacts:

- Adult social care team: 0300 123 6720. Emergency duty team (out of office hours): Call 0300 123 6722.
- Police protection unit: Call 0845 125 35 45. If it is an emergency: Call 999.
- The Lancashire Safeguarding Adult Board
- By telephone: Police Welfare / Safeguarding is 01772 614 444.
- By email: lsab@lancashire.gov.uk
- By post: Room D37/40, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD