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Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This policy and its procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and people associated with Healthwatch Croydon (HWC).

This policy is intended to support staff and volunteers working within HWC. It provides guidance on what to do if there is a suspicion that an adult may be at risk of abuse or is being abused. HWC staff, volunteers, other service users, and other people must be alert and aware of the types of abuse that can occur and know what to do if they have concerns.

This policy does not replace, but is supplementary to, the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Policy & Procedures.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of HWC is the safeguarding coordinator for HWC and is responsible for implementing the policy and alerting the HWC Board to any requirement to review the policy.

What is safeguarding & who does it apply to?

Safeguarding is defined as ‘protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.’

It applies to adults, that is any person aged 18 or over who is or may be:

- i) in need of care and support services by reason of mental, physical or learning disability, age or illness and who
- ii) Is unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

The Care Act refers to ‘people with care and support needs’. All staff & volunteers that come into contact with people with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse and neglect should understand that safeguarding procedures apply to this group.

The preferred terminology is that safeguarding applies to “adults at risk”.¹

Adult safeguarding is about preventing and responding to concerns of abuse, harm or neglect. We should work together in partnership with adults so that they are:

- Safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect;
- Treated fairly and with dignity and respect;
- Protected when they need to be;
- Able to get the support, protection and services that they need.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;

¹ The use of the term ‘vulnerable’ is not popular as it may suggest that all people with care and support needs are vulnerable and attaches vulnerability to people rather than looking at the risks that face them. To rectify this, Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and others have used the term ‘adult at risk’. The definition of an adult at risk is not clearly or consistently agreed upon across sectors and terminology in the law is changing, in particular as a result of the Care Act. Local discussion and agreement is currently essential if frontline staff & volunteers are to understand the various definitions.

- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for those concerned;
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect;
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help adults understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern

Principles of Safeguarding:

The HWC policy and procedures are based on The Six Principles of Safeguarding that underpin adults safeguarding work. (London Multi Agency Safeguarding Policy and procedures, December 2015).

The principles are explained fully in Appendix 1.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse 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, or it may occur when a person with care and support needs are persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Categories of abuse

Currently these are defined in the London Multi Agency Safeguarding Policy and Procedures agreed on the 2nd December 2015.

Please see Appendix 2 for a full explanation of categories but the category list is reproduced here as a prompt to the range of abuse:

- Disability Hate Crime
- Discriminatory abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Financial or material abuse
- Forced marriage
- Hate Crime
- Honour-based violence
- Human trafficking
- Mate Crime
- Modern slavery
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Organisational abuse
- Physical abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Restraint

- Sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation

In addition the following behaviours could indicate a danger of abuse.

1. Radicalisation
2. Self-neglect
3. Hoarding

Please see Appendix 3 for a full description of these behaviours.

Who might carry out abuse?

Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- Spouses/partners
- Other family members
- Neighbours
- Friends
- Acquaintances
- Local residents
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse
- Paid staff or professionals, volunteers or strangers.

How might abuse be presented?

Apart from someone disclosing that they have been abused, i.e. by telling you they have been abused other indicators could include:

- Frequent mood changes
- Unusual eating patterns, i.e. always hungry or not wanting anything to eat
- Change of appearance
- Quiet and withdrawn - a loner
- Not wanting to join in
- Never wanting to go home
- Arguing/aggression towards others
- Tired and listless/always tired
- Inappropriate uses of sexual language
- Unexplained injuries
- Self Injury
- Untreated injuries
- Gives the impression of being unloved and unhappy
- Looking unkempt, dirty clothes etc
- Behaviour that is out of character
- Distrust of people around him/her

A vulnerable adult can experience abuse or be at risk, irrespective of social class, status, income, age, gender, sexuality, ability, race or cultural background.

In what settings might staff and volunteers come across abuse?

Abuse can happen anywhere, in someone's home, in a public place or where a person is receiving support or a service.

In carrying out visits people working with HWC may come across abuse:

- In 'care' settings where people live and receive personal care and/or need considerable support i.e. nursing homes, residential homes, hospital, housing associations, supported living etc.
- In colleges, within day care settings, in social groups and within families.

Informing service users that HWC has safeguarding obligations

HWC and anybody associated with providing a HWC service needs to ensure that in any setting or contact where a suspicion or allegation of abuse might arise there is a clear statement about safeguarding obligations.

This statement might be in written form and / or it could be made verbally at the start of a meeting or event.

Having such a statement "up front" reduces the anxiety that will be attached to reporting a concern abuse.

People using a HWC service or having contact with HWC staff or volunteers can be defined as "Service users".

1. Service users have the right to expect that sensitive information given in confidence will be handled in a confidential manner and will only be used for the purpose for which it was intended or on a need to know basis.
2. Therefore wherever possible information should not be released to others, either verbally or in writing, without their consent.
3. However, it should be made clear that if there is a reason to be concerned for the welfare of a vulnerable person then that information **must be** shared with someone who is in a position to take action or responsibility.

It is not a realistic expectation that HWC and anybody associated with providing a HWC service is responsible for deciding whether a vulnerable adult is capable of giving informed consent to the sharing of information.

What to do if you suspect abuse - all volunteers, staff & people associated with HWC

1. **You have a responsibility to report** - Always report concerns of suspected, alleged or witnessed abuse in line with the procedures identified in this policy promptly.
2. **You do not have a responsibility to investigate or decide** - The decision whether or not abuse has taken place is not up to HWC or anybody associated with providing a HWC service.

3. You do not have to decide whether the person is capable of giving consent to you raising the concern.

Please note: for tips on listening and responding to a vulnerable adult please see Appendix 4.

What to do if you suspect abuse - all volunteers, & people associated with HWC (excluding staff).

If you are a volunteer, or other service user at a HWC event or activity then report your concern to:

1. Your line manager if you have one and they are available;
2. The CEO HWC if action 1) not possible;
3. To a member of HWC paid staff if action 2) not possible;
4. To Social Services if 3) not possible;
5. To police if action 4) not possible.

What to do if you suspect abuse - staff

If you are the CEO or other paid member of staff who has the concern or who has received the concern:

1. Inform the CEO if available (& CEO will then inform social services)
2. If not report to social services or the police if social services is not contactable and you believe the situation is an emergency.

The CEO and HWC paid staff members who report to Social Services or Police need to include in the referral as far as the information is available:

- The date and time of the disclosure of abuse (Service Users often find 'time' a difficult concept - so record what they say but bear this in mind)
- The address where it happened
- Name or names of the people involved
- What took place and what was said
- Any further action taken (i.e. if allegation was made about a member of staff or volunteer have they been suspended)
- Do not assume that because the allegation has been reported that it is being processed. If you have any concerns of further details or need guidance call the Safeguarding adults line and/or the person who is leading on the investigation.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive and Chair of the Board of HWC Croydon are kept informed
- Action that will be taken by social services or police - include the name and department within Social Services to whom the allegation of abuse was reported

Confidentiality of name of person expressing concern

The name of the person expressing concern can be kept confidential, but due to the nature of the allegation, the alleged perpetrator may realise who it was who raised the concern. This is unavoidable but should not prevent a concern being raised. Some 'carers' may be very angry about the intervention but, if there is a conflict of interests, the need to protect the vulnerable adult must always come first.

HWC Key Commitments

HWC has made key commitments to:

- Provide staff and volunteers with training on safeguarding
- Respond without delay to the concerns of members of staff and others
- Use discretion combined with common sense in its approach.
- Respect confidentiality of all parties as appropriate.
- Deal with issues efficiently and sensitively.
- Attend the Safeguarding Adults Board

Staff Training

To support and put all necessary procedures of this policy into practice, HWC will ensure that all members of staff receive training which best befits their role. All members of staff will be made aware of the Safeguarding Policy as a standard part of the induction process. In addition, each member of staff will receive adult protection awareness training, which includes recognising abuse and the responsibility to report abuse, with updates as necessary, throughout their employment.

HWC associated policy & procedures.

- **DBS checks**
 - All volunteers, staff and Board members working with HWC Croydon are DBS checked
- **Whistleblowing**
 - All staff/volunteers and others with serious concerns about any aspect of their work are encouraged to come forward and voice those concerns. The Whistleblowing Policy has been designed to assist, encourage and enable employees to make serious concerns known within the within the organisation.

Reporting Concern - CEO, staff & volunteers

Report any concern that a vulnerable adult is not safe and this will include:

- Concern
- Suspicion
- An actual statement or allegation
- Witnessing an injury or a behavior

What you don't need to do and must not do

Whether you are HWC CEO, staff or a volunteer remember:

1. You are not having to decide whether or not abuse has taken place;
2. You are not having to decide whether an allegation is well founded or not;
3. It is not your job or responsibility to investigate;
4. It is not up to you whether this is an emergency or not;
5. It is not up to you to decide whether the person is capable of giving informed consent or not;
6. You will not tell any alleged perpetrator about you reporting your concern.

Reporting Concern -volunteers

What to do to raise a concern -volunteers

If you are a volunteer then report your concern to:

1. Your line manager if you have one and they are available;
2. The CEO HWC if action 1) not possible;
3. To a member of HWC paid staff if action 2) not possible;
4. To Social Services if 3) not possible;
5. To police if action 4) not possible.

Reporting Concern - staff

What to do to raise a concern - staff

If you are a paid member of staff who has the concern or who has received the concern:

1. Inform the CEO if available
2. If not report to social services
3. If social services is not contactable then the police

What to do to raise a concern - CEO

If you are the CEO who has the concern or who has received the concern:

1. Report to social services
2. If social services is not contactable then the police

Appendix 1 - Principles of safeguarding

The principles that underpin adults safeguarding work. (London Multi Agency Safeguarding Policy and procedures, December 2015).

Empowerment	Adults are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with support and information.	I am consulted about the outcomes I want from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens
Prevention	Strategies are developed to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring	I am provided with information about what abuse is, how to recognise it and report it

Proportionate	A proportionate and least intrusive response is made balanced with the level of risk.	I am confident that the professionals will work in my interest and only get involved as much as needed
Protection	Adults are offered ways to protect themselves	I am provided with help and support to report abuse. I am supported to take part in the safeguarding process
Partnerships	Local solutions through services working together within their communities.	I am confident that information will be appropriately shared in a way that takes into account its personal and sensitive nature
Accountable	Accountability and transparency in delivering a safeguarding response.	I am clear about the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the solution to the problem.

Appendix 2 - Categories of abuse

Currently these are defined in the London Multi Agency Safeguarding Policy and Procedures agreed on the 2nd December 2015.

Disability Hate Crime	The Criminal Justice System defines a disability hate crime as any criminal offence, which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability. The Police monitor five strands of hate crime, Disability; Race; Religion; Sexual orientation; Transgender.
Discriminatory abuse	Discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment. Excluding a person from activities on the basis they are 'not liked' is also discriminatory abuse
Domestic abuse	The Home Office (March 2013) defines domestic abuse as: Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: Psychological; Physical; Sexual; Financial; Emotional. Domestic Abuse includes controlling and coercive behaviour.
Female genital mutilation (FGM)	Involves procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure has no health benefits for girls and women. The Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) xxxix makes it illegal to practise FGM in the UK or to take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in another country.
Financial or material abuse	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.
Forced marriage	Is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse. In a situation where there is concern that an adult is being forced into a marriage they do not or cannot consent to, there will be an overlap between action taken under the forced marriage provisions and the adult safeguarding process.
Hate Crime	The police define Hate Crime as 'any incident that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be racist, homophobic, transphobic or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability'. It should be noted that this definition is based on the perception of the victim or anyone else and is not reliant on evidence. In addition it includes incidents that do not constitute a criminal offence.
Honour-based violence	Will usually be a criminal offence, and referring to the police must always be considered. It has or may have been committed when families feel that dishonour has been brought to them. Women are

	<p>predominantly (but not exclusively) the victims and the violence is often committed with a degree of collusion from family members and/or the community. Some of these victims will contact the police or other organisations. However, many others are so isolated and controlled that they are unable to seek help.</p>
Human trafficking	<p>Is actively being used by Serious and Organised Crime Groups to make considerable amounts of money. This problem has a global reach covering a wide number of countries. It is run like a business with the supply of people and services to a customer, all for the purpose of making a profit. Traffickers exploit the social, cultural or financial vulnerability of the victim and place huge financial and ethical obligations on them. They control almost every aspect of the victim's life, with little regard for the victim's welfare and health. The Organised Crime Groups will continue to be involved in the trafficking of people, whilst there is still a supply of victims, a demand for the services they provide and a lack of information and intelligence on the groups and their activities.</p>
Mate Crime	<p>A 'mate crime' as defined by the 'Safety Net Project' is 'when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.' Mate crime is often difficult for police to investigate, due to its sometimes ambiguous nature, but should be reported to the police who will make a decision about whether or not a criminal offence has been committed. Mate Crime is carried out by someone the adult knows and often happens in private. In recent years there have been a number of Serious Case Reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were murdered or seriously harmed by people who purported to be their friend.</p>
Modern slavery	<p>Slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. - A person commits an offence if: The person holds another person in slavery or servitude and the circumstances are such that the person knows or ought to know that the other person is held in slavery or servitude, or</p>

	<p>- The person requires another person to perform forced or compulsory labour and the circumstances are such that the person knows or ought to know that the other person is being required to perform forced or compulsory labour.</p> <p>There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. Someone is in slavery if they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced to work - through mental or physical threat; • Owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse; • Dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'; • Physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement. <p>Contemporary slavery takes various forms and affects people of all ages, gender and races. Adults who are enslaved are not always subject to human trafficking.</p>
Neglect and acts of omission	<p>Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Neglect also includes a failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk for themselves.</p>
Organisational abuse	<p>Is the mistreatment, abuse or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in a setting or service where the adult lives or that they use. Such abuse violates the person's dignity and represents a lack of respect for their human rights. (See Working with Providers Section 5: Safeguarding - Provider Concerns)</p>
Physical abuse	<p>Physical abuse Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate</p>

	physical sanctions.
Psychological abuse	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.
Restraint	<p>Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions. In extreme circumstances unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint may constitute a criminal offence. Someone is using restraint if they use force, or threaten to use force, to make someone do something they are resisting, or where an adult's freedom of movement is restricted, whether they are resisting or not.</p> <p>Restraint covers a wide range of actions. It includes the use of active or passive means to ensure that the person concerned does something, or does not do something they want to do, for example, the use of key pads to prevent people from going where they want from a closed environment.</p>
Sexual abuse	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.
Sexual exploitation	Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where adults at risk (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. It affects men as well as women. People who are sexually exploited do not always perceive that they are being exploited. In all cases those exploiting the adult have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength, and/or economic or other resources. There is a distinct inequality in the relationship. Signs to look out for are not being able to speak to the adult alone, observation of the

	adult seeking approval from the exploiter to respond and the person exploiting the adult answering for them and making decisions without consulting them.
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Appendix 3 - Other behaviours that could indicate a danger of abuse.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is comparable to other forms of exploitation, such as grooming and Child Sexual Exploitation. The aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

Self-neglect

There is no single operational definition of self-neglect however, the Care Act makes clear it comes within the statutory definition of abuse or neglect, if the individual concerned has care and support needs and is unable to protect him or herself.

It is defined as ' a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding'.

Skills for Care provided a framework for research into self-neglect identifying three distinct areas that are characteristic of self neglect:

- Lack of self-care - this includes neglect of one's personal hygiene, nutrition and hydration, or health, to an extent that may endanger safety or wellbeing;
- Lack of care of one's environment - this includes situations that may lead to domestic squalor or elevated levels of risk in the domestic environment (e.g., health or fire risks caused by hoarding);
- Refusal of assistance that might alleviate these issues. This might include, for example, refusal of care services in either their home or a care environment or of health assessments or interventions, even if previously agreed, which could potentially improve self-care or care of one's environment.

Self-neglect is a behavioural condition in which an individual neglects to attend to their basic needs such as personal hygiene, or tending appropriately to any medical conditions, or keeping their environment safe to carry out what is seen as usual activities of daily living. It can occur as a result of mental health issues, personality disorders, substance abuse, dementia, advancing age, social isolation, and cognitive

impairment or through personal choice. It can be triggered by trauma and significant life events. Self-neglect is an issue that affects people from all backgrounds.

Hoarding

Hoarding does not fall under adult safeguarding but might be considered as safeguarding in the wider sense under the umbrella of prevention which is in the remit of the Safeguarding Adults Board. Most people associate hoarding with the acquisition of items with an associated inability to discard things that have little or no value (in the opinions of others) to the point where it interferes with use of living space or activities of daily living.

Compulsive hoarding (more accurately described as ‘hoarding disorder’) is a pattern of behaviour characterised by the excessive acquisition of and inability or unwillingness to discard large quantities of objects that cover the living areas of the home and cause significant distress. Compulsive hoarders may be conscious of their irrational behaviour but the emotional attachment to the hoarded objects far exceeds the motivation to discard the items. Hoarding can include new items that are purchased e.g. food items, refuse and animals. Many hoarders may be well-presented to the outside world, appearing to cope with other aspects of their life quite well, giving no indication of what is going on behind closed doors.

Compulsive hoarding behaviour has been associated with health risks, impaired functioning, economic burden, and adverse effects on friends and family members.

When clinically significant enough to impair functioning, hoarding can prevent typical uses of space, enough so that it can limit activities such as cooking, cleaning, moving through the house and sleeping. It could also potentially put the adult and others at risk of causing fires. The London Fire Brigade advocates prevention strategies.

Appendix 4 – tips on listening & receiving concern from a service user

- Ensure that you listen carefully to the individual.
- If the person is non-verbal you may have concerns about their behaviour or actions - make a note of these.
- Reassure the person and minimise any distress that appears to be affecting him/her
- If appropriate, explain your position to them and explain what may happen in words or gestures that are calm and sensitive to their level of understanding
- When writing down what he/she says, **do not elaborate or try to make sense of what you are told, always write down just what the person says and do not make any judgements about what you ‘think he/she said’** or include your ‘ideas’ on what he/she is saying or trying to convey. These notes will be important if the suspected abuse is investigated and could be used as evidence.

- **Never question the Service User, just listen - it is not your role to carry out the investigation**

Do not:

- Stop someone who is freely recalling significant events, as they may not tell anyone again.
- Promise to keep secrets, instead explain the information will only be passed to those who “need to know”.
- Make promises that you cannot keep, such as “this will not happen to you again”.
- Contact the alleged the perpetrator or those who are alleged to have caused the harm or anyone who might be in touch with them.
- Be judgmental, eg “why did you not tell them to stop and go away”.
- Tell anybody who does not need to know i.e. gossip.

Contacts

**The CEO at HWC Croydon on: 020 8663 5648
Adult abuse reporting line on: 0208 726 6500**

Referrals to Social Services can be made online via the council website using a link