



NATIONAL POLICY on Adult Support and Protection

May 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

Protected Adults

In February 2011, the Scottish Government introduced the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme), which delivers on the provisions outlined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007. The scheme aims to ensure that those who have regular contact with protected adults through paid and unpaid work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour and replaces enhanced disclosures checks.

Workers (including counsellors and mediators) are **NOT** eligible to join the PVG scheme in relation to protected adults **UNLESS** they are working on a specific project that deals with a particular vulnerable group (for example a project targeting those suffering domestic abuse or adults with a disability).

Adults at Risk of Harm

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 was introduced to make provision for protecting adults who are unable to safeguard their own interests and are at risk of harm, or self harm including neglect.

Anyone who works for a Relationships Scotland member may from time to time have contact with an adult at risk of harm and there is a duty to act swiftly and appropriately if there are suspicions or allegations of abuse to a such an adult. All workers are expected to be aware of what constitutes an adult at risk of harm.

2 PROTECTION OF ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM POLICY STATEMENT

Every adult whether classed as “at risk of harm” or not who accesses the services of a Relationships Scotland member has a right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be supported in an environment where they can fully participate and in the decision making processes that affect them, their children and other family members.

Relationships Scotland members aim to ensure that all their services are delivered in a manner which protects adults at risk of harm and that concern over an adult’s welfare or safety including possible abuse, is managed in a manner which reflects and supports the aims of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007¹.

3 DEFINITION OF AN ADULT AT RISK OF HARM

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act defines an “*adult at risk*” as someone aged 16 or over who:-

- is unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests; and
- is at risk of harm (either from another person’s behaviour or from their own behaviour); and
- because they have a disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than other adults.

¹ http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2007/asp_20070010_en_1

It is important to stress that all three elements of this definition must be met. The presence of a particular condition does not automatically mean an adult is an “adult at risk”. Someone could have a disability but be able to safeguard their well being etc.²

The term harm covers all harmful behaviour, for example:

- another person’s conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed physically or psychologically , or
 - there is unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (for example theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion), or
 - the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes or is likely to cause) self-harm.
- ”

² *Adult Support and Protection Policy & Procedure*. Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care 2008