

National
Safeguarding Policy
Final

Nov 2022

..... is a member of Relationships Scotland

Policy Statement and Purpose

Relationships Scotland members are committed to keeping all children and adults who use their services safe and protected. All Relationships Scotland policies affecting children and young people are considered within the UNCRC (Incorporation Scotland) Bill and aim to promote and protect GIRFEC to give children and young people the highest level of protection possible. Relationships Scotland will review all policy and practice procedures through the application of our CRWIA.

Staff, sessional workers, volunteers and Board Trustees (*all are included in any reference to 'workers' in this document*) within Relationships Scotland Member Services have a key role to play in creating a positive and safe environment, including recognising possible signs of abuse or neglect and taking action to safeguard the individuals concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all workers understand their responsibilities and the principles and procedures they must follow where they have a concern for the safety or welfare of children or adults at risk of harm, who are known to the Service either directly or indirectly.

Relationships Scotland is committed to ensuring that all workers undertake training to gain a better awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Abuse and neglect can take many forms and Relationships Scotland will always consider the circumstances with every case being considered individually.

Appendix 1 – includes definitions of a child and an adult at risk

Appendix 2 – includes definitions of types of abuse

This policy guides workers to the relevant policies and practice procedures in all areas related to client risk, so that it is clear what the reporting process is if a person is concerned about a client. If concerned about a fellow worker then National Disciplinary or Complaints Policy will be used as appropriate.

The Relationships Scotland National Policies most associated with safeguarding are:

- Domestic Abuse
- Child Protection
- Adult Support & Protection
- Physical Interaction with Children
- Services for Children & Young People
- Working with Suicidal clients

Other National Policies may also be relevant, and workers should keep up to date with all National policies and procedures.

The Practice Procedures and Guidelines relating to Safeguarding are:

- Assessing, monitoring and managing risk including intake form – counselling
- Suicidal clients practice guidelines – counselling
- Intake screening and assessment for family mediators and guidance notes
- Domestic Abuse procedures for intake and mediation
- Standards and Practice Procedures for Supported Contact
- Standards and Practice Procedures for Supervised Contact

Responsibilities of Member Services

Member Services have a role in preventing harm and reducing the risk of abuse or neglect to adults and children by:

- raising awareness of safeguarding to ensure all workers can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- ensuring workers are aware of their responsibilities to familiarise themselves with this policy and associated procedures and support staff in accessing and attending training
- providing information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and how to raise a concern about the safety or well being of an adult or child
- acting within bounds of confidentiality before sharing information with another agency. Permission will be sought where possible but safeguarding of a child or adult at risk or if a crime has been committed overrides any need for consent
- responding appropriately when abuse has or is suspected to have occurred
- understanding how diversity, beliefs and the values of service users may influence the identification, prevention and response to safeguarding concerns
- ensuring Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) checks are undertaken as appropriate

Member Services will appoint a designated person who will be responsible for leading safeguarding in the organisation. In their absence a deputy should be available for workers to consult with.

The role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead are to ensure all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have concerns that an adult or child at risk may be experiencing or has experienced abuse or neglect.

Responsibilities of Workers

All workers have a responsibility to:

- participate in safeguarding training and maintain a current working knowledge of safeguarding
- remain alert at all times to the possibility of abuse or neglect
- always follow relevant safeguarding policies and procedures particularly if concerns are raised about the safety or welfare of an adult at risk or a child
- discuss any concerns about the welfare of any client or family member of a client with the Service Manager or their Line Manager or if unavailable go directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Responsibilities of Trustees

Trustees have a duty of care to help prevent risks to clients and to Relationships Scotland 's reputation. This includes:

- ensuring relevant policies and practice procedures are in place
- promoting good practice in order to prevent harm and abuse occurring
- ensuring any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse or a worker who is facing an allegation of abuse is supported.

Appendix 1

Definitions of an adult at risk and a child

Adults at risk are defined as someone aged 16 or over who meets all 3 of the following¹:

- 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.

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.

A Child

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18

¹ *Adult Support and Protection Policy & Procedure*. Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care 2008

Appendix 2

Definitions of Abuse

Abuse in Adults includes:

Definition: "Abuse is the harming of another individual usually by someone who is in a position of power, trust or authority over that individual. The harm may be physical, psychological or emotional or it may be directed at exploiting the vulnerability of the victim in more subtle ways (for example by denying access to people who can come to the aid of the victim, or through misuse or misappropriation of his or her financial resources). The threat or use of punishment is also a form of abuse and may be a criminal offence".

Adults can be at risk of one, or several of the following categories of abuse. The list is not exhaustive.

Physical

- hitting
- kicking
- inappropriate physical restraint
- force feeding, inappropriate sanctions The withholding of appropriate medication or over sedation

Emotional / Psychological / Social

- threat of harm or abandonment
- intimidation by word or deed
- humiliation
- harassment
- enforced social isolation or withdrawal from support networks
- verbal abuse
- racial abuse

Financial

Misuse and / or appropriation of monies, benefits and / or property including:

- theft
- fraud
- pressure in connection with wills/property/inheritance or financial transfer
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Deprivation of:

- Food
- Warmth
- Clothing
- Medical attention

Neglect of:

- Physical needs
- Emotional needs

Sexual Abuse - when adults at risk of harm are involved in sexual relationships or activities which they have not consented to, or that they cannot understand and are in a situation where they are being exploited or pressured into consenting

Abuse in children includes

Serious allegations may include but are not limited to:

- Aggressive or violent physical behaviour
 - Throwing or breaking objects
 - Personal injury
 - Pushing, hitting on the head or with an implement, spitting, scratching, kicking
 - Emotional intimidation
 - Threatening, frightening or terrorising verbally, written or by body language
 - Use of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - Physical neglect
 - Sexual maltreatment
 - Inappropriate touching, kissing or tickling

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts. People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be people in positions of trust, they may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.