



Mind in Haringey

Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure

Date: September 2015

1: Introduction

Mind in Haringey Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy follows guidelines set out by Haringey's Local Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures 2010, which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Mind in Haringey is committed to supporting the right of adults at risk to be protected from abuse, and committed to making sure all staff and volunteers work together, in line with the Haringey Local Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures 2010, and act promptly when dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

We think that:

Safeguarding is everyone's business – Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We will work together to prevent and minimise abuse. If we have concerns that someone is being abused, our loyalty to the vulnerable person comes before any other loyalties we may have, including but not limited to: our group; other service users; our colleagues; the vulnerable person's friends and family.

Doing nothing is not an option – If we know or suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, we will do something about it and ensure that our actions are properly recorded. We will always act within the boundaries of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

2: What is a vulnerable person?

The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who:

- is receiving or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness
- AND is unable to take care of him / herself
- OR is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation

3: A vulnerable person may fall into any one of the following groups:

- older and frail people
- people with any of the following conditions:
 - a mental health need
 - a learning difficulty
 - a physical impairment
 - a sensory impairment;
- people who are substance or alcohol dependent

- family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.

4: What is abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people. Abuse may be single or repeated acts.

It can be:

Physical – for example: hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining, giving the wrong medication.

Psychological and emotional – for example: shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse.

Financial – including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, and/or pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.

Sexual – such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent – this can occur in any relationship.

Discriminatory – including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks.

Institutional – the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping, and liaising with other providers of care.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical or physical care needs. These can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable person: for example, where a person is deprived of food, heat, clothing, comfort or essential medication, or failing to provide access to appropriate health or social care services.

5: How Might We Notice Abuse?

Concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:

- a. A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult.

- b. A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
- c. An observation of the behaviour of the vulnerable adult by the volunteer, member of staff or carer.

6: Our Commitment

In order to support vulnerable adults who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse, Mind in Haringey is committed to:

- Identifying the abuse of vulnerable adults where it is occurring.
- Responding effectively to any circumstances giving grounds for concern, including but not limited to formal complaints being made or anxiety being expressed.
- Ensuring the active participation of individuals, families, groups and communities wherever possible and appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the extent of abuse on vulnerable adults and its impact on them.
- Promoting and supporting work designed to reduce abuse and the fear of abuse as experienced by vulnerable adults.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices for protecting vulnerable adults are working.
- Making sure our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with currently accepted good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring our procedures are in line with the Haringey local Safeguarding Procedures.

7.Prevention and Confidentiality

All staff and volunteers are required to provide a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service certificate and two references before they will have direct contact with vulnerable adults or their carers. All staff and volunteers are requested to read Mind in Haringey's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure, and the Haringey Local Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures 2010, and will be requested to attend safeguarding training.

Mind in Haringey will work with vulnerable adults in a way that meets all the aspects of confidentiality in our different policies, but where abuse to a vulnerable person is

alleged, suspected, reported, or concerns are raised, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedure must be followed. The confidentiality of the vulnerable person will be respected wherever possible and their consent obtained before sharing information.

The vulnerable person should be made aware that staff cannot ignore issues around abuse and that steps will be taken to deal with them in as sensitive a manner as possible.

The welfare of the individual is paramount.

8. The Procedure in Detail

If you think abuse has or may have occurred:

Act immediately

It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a vulnerable adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to:

Make Safe

Deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence.

Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm. If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed.

This may include suspending the member(s) of staff or volunteer. The staff member or volunteer is also entitled to support at this stage. Please refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Inform

Tell your line manager immediately or the Chief Executive if your line manager is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation.

Contact the police if it is thought a crime has been committed.

Record

Record details of the allegation as soon as possible somewhere that can be kept secure. Include:

- a. The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident, what the vulnerable adult said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.
- b. The appearance and behaviour of the victim.
- c. Any injuries observed.

9: It is the responsibility of the line manager or Chief Executive to:

1. Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.
2. Deal with any immediate needs:
 - Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe.
 - Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged.
 - Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost.
 - If the alleged perpetrator is also a vulnerable adult, ensure that a member of staff is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
3. Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.
4. Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding adults procedures i.e. meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedure. If at all uncertain a referral should be made to the Haringey Safeguarding Team (Tel: 01225 396 000).
5. Address issues of consent and confidentiality.
6. A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised wherever:
 - A crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.
 - There is a suspicion that an abuse has taken place.
 - The allegation involves a member of staff or paid carer.
 - Other vulnerable adults are at risk.
 - The alleged perpetrator is a vulnerable adult, therefore they are unsure if abuse has taken place.

7. Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must still be recorded, with the record including the reason(s) for the decision not to refer. The Haringey Safeguarding Team must be informed that an alert has been considered.

10. Bringing the concern to the attention of Haringey Local safeguarding board

The referral stage involves bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of Haringey's local safeguarding board .

Any individual who has been alerted to the possibility of abuse having occurred or being likely to occur should make a referral.

Safeguarding Adults Referral and Advice Line (office hours)	020 8489 1400
Safeguarding Adults Referral and Advice Line (out of hours)	020 8489 000
Community Safety Unit (24 hours)	020 8345 1939
Police - Criminal Investigation Department (CID) (evenings and weekends)	020 8345 0832

If the **danger is immediate**, always call the police on their emergency number: **999**

If you or the person you are concerned about is not being mistreated (but you or they still have needs to address) you can make a referral to Adult Social Care via the Integrated Access Team.

To make a referral to the Safeguarding Adults Team, please download and complete the [Safeguarding Adults Alert Form \(Word, 109KB\)](#).¹

The person making the referral should ideally have the following information available; however, the lack of any of this information should not delay the referral:

- **The name of the vulnerable adult**
- **Their date of birth and age**
- **Their address and telephone number**

¹ http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/safeguarding_alert_form_final.doc

- **Why the adult is considered vulnerable**
- **Whether consent has been obtained for the referral, and if not, why not e.g. the vulnerable adult lacks mental capacity or there is an over-riding public interest (e.g. where other vulnerable adults are at risk)**
- **Whether there are any concerns or doubts about the mental capacity of the vulnerable adult**
- **Whether the police are aware of the allegation**
- **Whether a police investigation is underway**