

Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Abuse Policy

Name	Reason for change	Date
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1. Introduction

The rights of adults at risk of abuse do not fall away because they are at risk. Everyone must be treated with respect so safeguarding rights to privacy, dignity, independence and choice.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to adults at risk of abuse. ***Any concern or suspicion of abuse should trigger a response in every case.***

2. Principles

Accountability:	accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding
Empowerment:	presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent
Partnership:	local solutions through services working with their communities
Prevention:	it is better to take action before harm occurs.
Proportionality:	proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to risk
Protection:	support and representation for those in greatest need

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, abuse is an act, or lack of appropriate action, which causes harm or distress and occurs within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust¹.

Abuse can:

- Be a crime
- Be perpetrated by anyone
- Be the result of neglect, omission or failure to act
- Be unintentional or a result of a lack of knowledge
- Consist of a single or repeated acts
- Occur in any relationship

Adults includes anyone aged 18 or over.

¹ Adapted from Action on Elder Abuse's definition

At risk includes those who are unable to take care of or protect themselves; and whose independence and well-being is at risk without support because they are vulnerable through:

- Age
- having a long-term limiting illness or condition
- being in an abusive relationship
- having a physical, learning or mental health disability
- frailty
- having been in care, prison or other institution

4. Roles & Responsibilities

Strategic Leads	Lead Board/Committee Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion safeguarding
	Director of Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • oversee policy • support operational leads
Operational Leads	AD, Housing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access resources
	Head of Community Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaise with relevant agencies • monitor referrals and outcomes • oversee procedure refer allegations to appropriate agency • representative on H&S Safeguarding Group • source of advice and support
Alerters	staff contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend training
	partners volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report concerns to an operational lead

5. Collaboration

Protecting adults at risk of abuse is complex. Assessment and action must almost always be in cooperation and collaboration with specialist or statutory agencies such as the Council, health professionals or the Police.

Staff in specialist support roles have contacts with lead link officers in relevant agencies. They will work to support anyone reporting concerns about a resident.

6. Confidentiality

The duty to share information can be as important as the duty to protect confidentiality.

Staff must respect confidentiality and not divulge information given in confidence unless justified by an assessed risk to the adult or to others.

7. Risk and Protection

Poplar HARCA will protect an individual's right to live independently and acknowledges that this can sometimes involve a degree of risk.

Choices should, wherever possible be respected. Where an individual chooses to accept a risk their wishes should be respected unless there is a doubt as to their capacity² to anticipate and understand it; or others would be at risk as a result of their decision.

8. Whistle Blowing

Poplar HARCA has a whistle-blowing policy which staff should refer to if they suspect a member of staff is involved in abuse, or has knowledge of abuse but has not disclosed it.

No matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is Poplar HARCA will respect and not penalise those who stand up for someone they suspect is being abused.

9. Duty of Candour

Poplar HARCA will inform individuals being provided with support if something goes wrong. We will apologise, be open and honest about what has happened, and provide what support we reasonably can to improve the situation.

10. Support for Staff

Support will be provided to staff who have reported, or are dealing with, incidents involving abuse.

11. Policy review

Policies are reviewed every 5 years or sooner if they no longer reflect best practice.

² Capacity in its legal sense i.e. relating to soundness of mind and an intelligent understanding and perception of actions

12. Appendix 1: Impact assessment

<p>How does the policy/procedure/strategy contribute to Poplar HARCA's aims?</p>	<p>Whilst not a statutory agency nor a specialist provider, we know that there are adults at risk of abuse in our community. Ensuring staff can identify those at risk of abuse, and take appropriate action, meets all aims.</p>
<p>Which group(s) of people benefit from the policy/procedure/strategy? If any group could be disadvantaged, what is the mitigation or justification?</p>	<p>This policy sets out how we will try to safeguard adults at risk of abuse – regardless of any other characteristic.</p>
<p>How have residents been involved in developing the policy/procedure/strategy? If they have not been involved, why not?</p>	<p>Our experience with, and feedback from, residents we have supported has informed this policy. We have also assessed it against the Safeguarding Toolkit.</p>
<p>How will the policy/procedure/strategy be monitored and measured? (e.g. performance indicators?)</p>	<p>We have trained staff and contractors on how to identify those at risk of abuse, and what to do if they have concerns. We hold regular casework reviews, and are represented on the LBTH Safeguarding Adults Board.</p>
<p>If any, what are the Value for Money implications?</p>	<p>Preventing abuse saves resource, time, and money. Most importantly, we are supporting adults at risk of abuse to live well and safely.</p>
<p>Will personal data be collected, stored, used or shared? If yes, a privacy impact assessment must be carried out.</p>	