



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy 2024

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Find us: The Glasshouse, 161 Old Ford Road, London, E2 9QB **Charity No:** 1116802



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Aims

It's Your Life helps vulnerable families to overcome marginalisation through innovative educational programmes and holistic support provided at our premises in The Glasshouse, schools in Tower Hamlets and within the home. The families and adults we support often have a range of complex needs, may live in extreme poverty and need in depth support to lift themselves and their families out of disadvantage in all its forms. This policy will ensure It's Your Life can safeguard adults with care and support their needs appropriately.

It's Your Life will not tolerate the abuse of adults in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding adults with care and support needs from harm.

This policy outlines the steps It's Your Life will make to safeguard an adult with care and support needs if they are deemed to be at risk or at risk. This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of It's Your Life in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting the adult's welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect.

It's Your Life will ensure that decisions made will allow adults to make their own choices and include them in any decision making. It's Your Life will also ensure that safe and effective working practices are in place.

This policy is intended to support staff and volunteers working within It's Your Life to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding adults. All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of It's Your Life to:

- have an overview of adult safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

This policy is based on:

- The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support statutory guidance
- London Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures
- Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Board's local procedures and appendices

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

Copies of this policy should be available within It's Your Life and It's Your Life will not tolerate the abuse of adults in the organisation and staff and volunteers should be made aware of how this policy can be accessed.

What does Safeguarding Adults mean?

'Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'

Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

It's Your Life adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work (See Care Act guidance)

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

It's Your Life will not tolerate the abuse of adults in staff and volunteers should ensure that their work reflects the principles above and ensure the adult with care and support needs is involved in their decisions and informed consent is obtained. It's Your Life should ensure that the safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk. Partners from the community should be involved in any safeguarding work in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. It's Your Life should be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

What is Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)?

MSP means a case should be person-led and outcome-focused. The individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

It's Your Life will not tolerate the abuse of adults and will ensure that adults are involved in their safeguarding arrangements and each individual is dealt with on a case by case basis. As adults may have different preferences, histories and life styles, the same process may not work for all.

Who do adult safeguarding duties apply to?

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to *any* adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

Who do I go to if I am concerned?

The named responsible person for safeguarding duties for It's Your Life is Jackie Barnes CEO (0203 754 0185 / jackie.barnes@itsyourlife.me.uk).

All staff and volunteers should contact Jackie Barnes for any concerns/queries they have in regards to safeguarding adults. A log of the concern must be kept.

Jackie Barnes will be responsible to make decisions about notifying adult social services if required and consider alternative actions, where necessary.

Jackie Barnes will also ensure that the safeguarding adults policies and procedures are in place and up to date. They will ensure a safe environment is promoted for staff and volunteers and adults accessing the service. Jackie Barnes will ensure they are up to date with their safeguarding adults training.

What should I do if I am concerned?

Staff and volunteers at It's Your Life who have any adult safeguarding concerns should:

1. Respond

- Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 for emergency services
- Get brief details about what has happened and what the adult would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation
- Seek consent from the adult to take action and to report the concern. Consider whether the adult may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. If you decide to act against their wishes or without their consent, you must record your decision and the reasons for this.

2. Report

- Name the person to whom staff/volunteers need to report any potential safeguarding concerns. This will usually be the organisation's designated safeguarding lead (see above)

3. Record

- It's Your Life has an incident form which can be obtained from a member of It's Your Life staff. It should be filled in and signed by the staff member concerned. As we are a small team and due to the holistic nature of our work this form is accessible to all staff and the completed form should be sent to Jackie Barnes.
- As far as possible, records should be written contemporaneously, dated and signed.
- Keep records about safeguarding concerns confidential and in a location where the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access should not be given to any unauthorised personal for accessing confidential information including the sharing of passwords. Please see the 'It's Your Life' Data Protection Policy for more information.

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4. Refer

In making a decision whether to refer or not, the designated safeguarding lead should take into account:

- (1) the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
- (2) whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
- (3) the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- (4) whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- (5) whether a crime has been committed

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the police if a crime has been committed and/or
- Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Hotline - 020 7364 6085
- relevant regulatory bodies such as Care Quality Commission, Ofsted, Charities commission
- service commissioning teams
- family/relatives as appropriate (seek advice from adult social services)

The designated safeguarding lead should keep a record of the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Staff and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.

As soon as Adult Social Services becomes involved, a 4-stage safeguarding adults process is followed. For more information about this 4-stage safeguarding adults process, refer to the London Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

What are your roles and responsibilities?

All staff, management, trustees and volunteers at It's Your Life are expected to report any concerns to the named person for safeguarding. If the allegation is against one of It's Your Life's members, volunteers, trustees or directors, seek advice from It's Your Life's safeguarding lead Jackie Barnes. If the allegation is against the safeguarding lead, seek advice from Tower Hamlet's Safeguarding Hotline - 020 7364 6085.

The designated safeguarding adults lead should be responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and brief feedback to the person raising the original concern. Feedback should be given in a way that will not make the situation worse or breach the Data Protection Act. If the police are involved, they should be consulted prior to giving feedback to the referrer to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.

The local authority will decide on who will lead on a safeguarding enquiry should it progress to that stage. The named organisation should not conduct its own safeguarding enquiry unless instructed to do so by the local authority.

Staff and volunteers should ensure that the adult with care and support needs is involved at all stages of their safeguarding enquiry ensuring a person-centred approach is adopted.

Complaints procedure

It's Your Life promotes transparency and honesty when things go wrong. All staff and volunteers should apologise and be honest with service users and other relevant people when things go wrong.

If a staff or volunteer or any other member of the organisation is unhappy with It's Your Life's decision about the safeguarding concern, refer them to the 'It's Your Life' Complaints Policy.

It's Your Life is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation. Please see It's Your Life's Whistleblowing Policy for more information.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is to be used when decisions on behalf of those adults with care and support needs who are unable to make some decisions for themselves.

Refer to the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice>.

You will need to involve an advocate if the person lacks capacity to make decisions about the safeguarding concern.

Why is it important to take action?

It may be difficult for adults with care and support needs to protect themselves and to report abuse. They rely on you to help them.

Confidentiality and information sharing

It's Your Life expects all staff, volunteers, trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law, It's Your Life does not share information if not required.

It should however be noted that information should be shared with authorities if an adult is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm. Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference to preventing harm. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding see: <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/keymessages.asp>

Recruitment and selection

It's Your Life is committed to safe employment. Safe recruitment practices, such as Disclosure and Barring checks reduce the risk of exposing adults with care and support needs to people unsuitable to work with them. Refer to the council's guidance on Safer Recruitment.

Training, awareness raising and supervision

It's Your Life ensures that all staff and volunteers receive basic awareness training on safeguarding adults as they may come across adults with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse. Those adults may report things of concern to staff or volunteers who should be equipped with the basic knowledge around safeguarding adults and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and action is required. All staff and volunteers should be clear about the core values of It's Your Life and commitment to safeguarding adults.

It is also useful to discuss training with staff who have attended training sessions to ensure they are embedding this in practice.

Staff and volunteers may encounter concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children. For more information about children's safeguarding, refer to It's Your Life's 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy (2024)'.

Prevent

Radicalisation and extremism of adults with care and support needs is a form of emotional/psychological exploitation. Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through social media.

If staff are concerned that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of being radicalised and drawn into terrorism, they should treat it in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

For more information about Prevent see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Useful contacts

Jackie Barnes (CEO & Safeguarding Adults Lead)

Contact 020 3754 0185 email: jackie.barnes@itsyourlife.me.uk

If your concern relates to an adult at risk of harm or abuse, please contact the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Hotline on 020 7364 6085 email: adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Tower Hamlets Multi-Agency Support

- Phone: 020 7364 5006, Option 2 or 3
- Extension: 5606 / 5601 / 5358 / 7796 / 3342 / 7828 / 6469 / 3181
- Or email: MAST@towerhamlets.gov.uk

If you are a professional, please complete the [MAST request for support form](#)

Useful links

Care act- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

London Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures- <http://londonadass.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/LONDON-MULTI-AGENCY-ADULT-SAFEGUARDING-POLICY-AND-PROCEDURES.pdf>

Tower Hamlets council London Safeguarding adults policy and procedures- https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health_social_care/safeguarding_adults/Safeguarding_Adults_Board.aspx

Carer and support statutory guidance- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/506202/23902777_Care_Act_Book.pdf

Prevent- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Information sharing- <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/keymessages.asp>

Appendix 1

What are the types of safeguarding adults abuse?

The Care and Support statutory guidance sets out the 10 main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Domestic violence
- Modern Slavery
- Self-neglect

However, you should keep an open mind about what constitutes abuse or neglect as it can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered. For more information, read section 14.17 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

What are the possible signs of abuse?

Abuse and neglect can be difficult to spot. You should be alert to the following possible signs of abuse and neglect:

- Depression, self-harm or suicide attempts
- Difficulty making friends
- Fear or anxiety
- The person looks dirty or is not dressed properly,
- The person never seems to have money,
- The person has an injury that is difficult to explain (such as bruises, finger marks, 'non-accidental' injury, neck, shoulders, chest and arms),
- The person has signs of a pressure ulcer,
- The person is experiencing insomnia
- The person seems frightened, or frightened of physical contact.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- The person is withdrawn, changes in behaviour

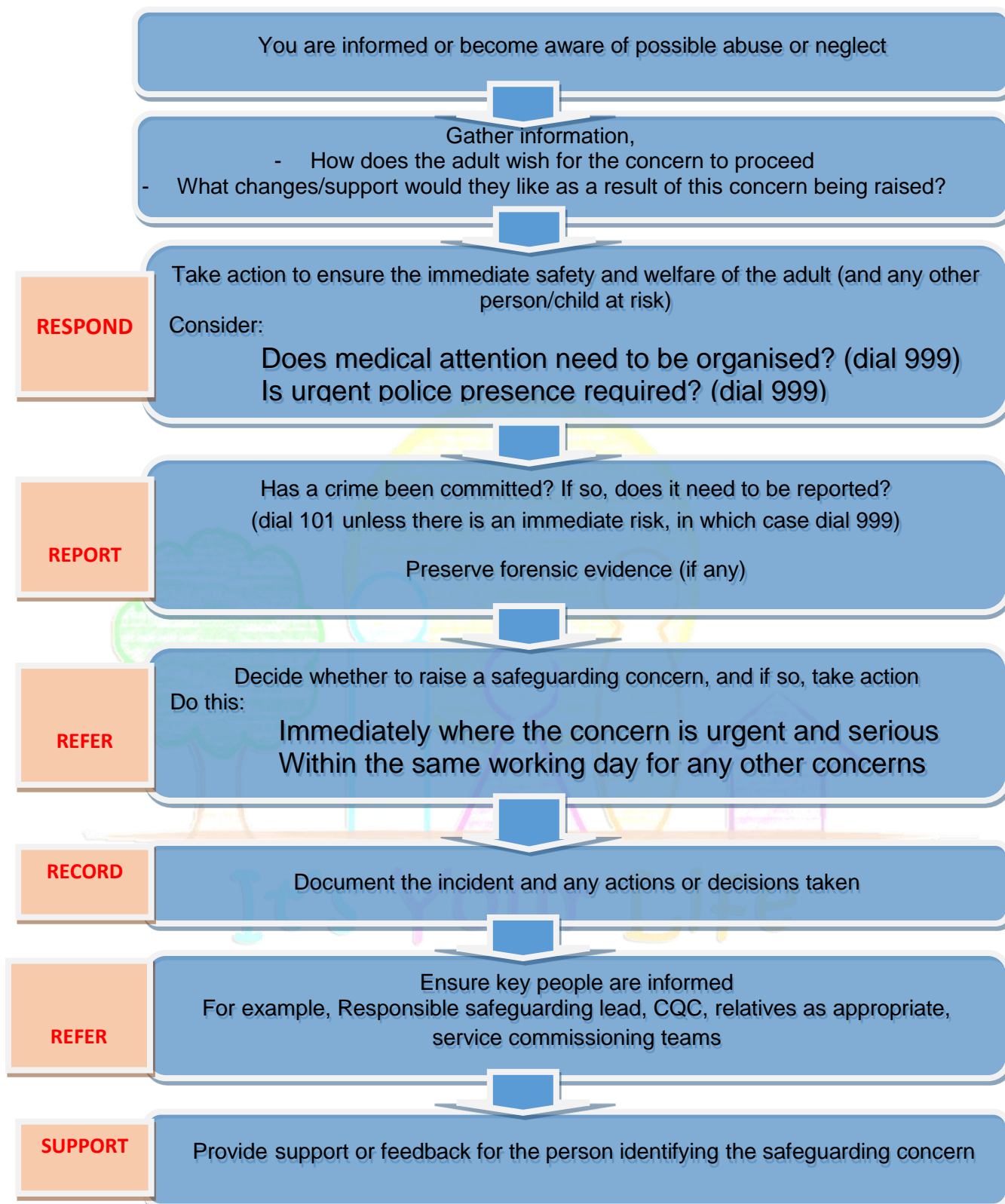
You should ask the person if you are unsure about their well-being as there may be other explanations to the above presentation.

Who abuses and neglects adults?

Abuse can happen anywhere, even in somebody's own home. Most often abuse takes place by others who are in a position of trust and power. It can take place whether an adult lives alone or with others. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- partners;
- other family members;
- neighbours;
- friends;
- acquaintances;
- local residents;
- people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse;
- paid staff or professionals; and
- volunteers and strangers

Raising a safeguarding concern



With thanks and acknowledgements to West and North Yorkshire and York regional Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures from which this flowchart has been adopted.
<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/Documents/health-care-advice/adult-services/safeguarding/safeguarding-adults-from-abuse/summary-guide-policy-procedures.pdf>

This Policy will be reviewed and updated by the 'It's Your Life' trustees every two years.

Signed: D. Lewis

Name: David Lewis (Chair of Trustees)

Date:16/10/2024

Next Review: November 2026

