

Policies and Procedures

Adult Safeguarding



Policy Aim

This policy aims to keep adults being supported by us safe. We believe that everyone has the right to live their lives free from abuse.

We are committed to;

- Ensuring that any allegations or suspicions of abuse are dealt with appropriately and that the person experiencing abuse is supported;
- Ensuring that our staff fully understand their duty to act and are trained to recognise and respond effectively to signs of potential abuse;
- Providing services in a way that minimises the risk of abuse/neglect from occurring.

This policy applies to all KEYFORT staff.

Policy definitions

We all have a duty to safeguard any **adults at risk** who use our services or who we come into contact with. Adults at risk are defined as;

- Individuals aged over 18 years old and;
- Have a need for care and support (whether or not these are currently being met) and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse/neglect and;
- As a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from the risk of or the experience of abuse/neglect;

Abuse/neglect can be defined as *harm that is caused by anyone who has power over another person*, this can include but is not limited to: family members, friends, unpaid carers and health or social care workers.

Abuse/neglect can be a single or repeated act. It can also be deliberate acts or done unknowingly. Abuse/neglect can happen anywhere – in people's own homes, in hospitals, in residential settings etc.

Abuse/neglect can take many forms including;

Discriminatory – harassment, bullying, isolation, neglect or denial of access to services/treatment because of someone's race, gender, age, disability, religion or sexual orientation. This includes any form of hate crime.

Domestic – includes controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner/family member. This can include psychological/emotional, physical, sexual, financial, 'honour based' violence, forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM).

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Financial – includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, exploitation, coercion in relation to financial affairs including wills, property, inheritance or the misuse of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Individuals who have been coerced, deceived and forced into slavery, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Neglect – includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failing to provide access to health care, support or educational services, withholding the necessities of life e.g. medication, nutrition, heating.

Organisational/Institutional – neglect or poor practice within an institution or care setting. This can be one off incidents to ongoing ill treatment. This can be as a result of neglect or poor professional practices due to the structure, policies or processes within an organisation.

Physical – includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, misuse of medication, restraint or physical sanctions.

Psychological – includes threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidating, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, unreasonable/unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

Sexual – includes rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, indecent exposure, sexual photography, subjecting someone to pornography with coercion or without the persons consent. Sexual exploitation e.g. offering something such as food, gifts, drugs, friendship, accommodation etc in exchange for performing sexual acts.

Self-Neglect – when a person neglects to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings, an inability to provide the things necessary to maintain physical and mental health and safety e.g. essential food, clothing, shelter or medical care. Also includes hoarding.

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Key Roles and Responsibilities

We have an appointed individuals who are responsible for leading safeguarding adults within the organisation. In their absence the Directors are available for staff to contact. The designated Adult Safeguarding Leads for KEYFORT are;

Abigail Toon (CQC Operations Manager)

atoon@keyfortgroup.co.uk

01914911735

Outside of office hours safeguarding concerns must be reported to regional On Call Managers who will then inform the necessary Safeguarding Lead/ Senior Manager.

On Call North East: 07525 917600

On Call North West: 07891 217301

Our Adult Safeguarding Lead is responsible for;

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this policy and are trained in recognising and responding to signs/symptoms/concerns/suspicious of abuse or neglect;
- Ensuring that any reported concerns or suspicions of abuse/neglect are acted upon, clearly recorded and reported to the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Teams and the Care Quality Commission (CQC);
- Following up on any safeguarding referrals to ensure the issues have been addressed;
- Manage/oversee any investigations involving allegations of abuse/neglect made against our staff members;
- Review the effectiveness of relevant KEYFORT practices and policies in relation to safeguarding referrals;
- Ensuring staff working with people who have experienced abuse/neglect are well supported and receive appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring staff reporting concerns/suspicious of abuse or neglect are supported and protected under our whistleblowing and confidentiality policies.

It is the responsibility of **all** our staff to report any concerns/suspicious or disclosures of potential abuse/ neglect.

6 Safeguarding Principles

Our staff will adhere to the 6 underlying safeguarding principles at all times as outlined by The Care Act 2014;

- 1) **Empowerment:** people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- 2) **Prevention:** it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- 3) **Proportionality:** Working towards the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.



- 4) **Protection:** support and representation for those in greatest need.
- 5) **Partnership:** local solutions through services working with their communities – communities have a duty in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- 6) **Accountability:** Being accountable and transparent in safeguarding practices.

Preventing Abuse/Neglect

We have a number of policies and practices that contribute to minimising the risk of abuse/neglect taking place, these include but are not limited to;

- Adult Safeguarding Training for all staff, as part of induction training and then annually refreshed.
- Pre-employment checks, including DBS checks and references, completed before new employees have contact with people we support.
- Safeguarding discussed during staff supervisions, appraisals and team meetings.
- Ensuring all stakeholders have a copy of the policy.
- Training and competency policy.
- Complaints, compliments and feedback policy.
- Consent Policy.
- Medication policy and procedures.
- Financial Protection policy.
- Health and Safety policy and procedures.
- Incident – Accident Reporting policy and procedures.
- On Call policy and service.
- Professional Relationships policy and training.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Recruitment and Selection policy and procedures.
- Disclosure of Offences policy.
- Whistleblowing policy.
- Confidentiality policy.

Recognising potential abuse/neglect

All of our staff receive training in Safeguarding Adults which includes recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse. These can vary depending on the individual, the circumstances and the type of abuse being experienced so symptoms can include but are not limited to;

- The person becoming withdrawn, unusually emotional, experiencing low mood or unexplained changes in their behaviour, this could include aggression.
- The person appearing confused, fearful, avoiding specific people or circumstances.
- Unexplained bruises or injuries, unexplained weight loss.
- Appearing unkempt, untreated medical problems.
- Unexplained changes to sleeping patterns.

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- Unexplained issues with continence, injuries to genital area, contracting sexually transmitted diseases.
- Unexplained shortage of money/ inability to pay bills, unusual spending or bank activity, valuable items going missing.
- Concerning reliance on a particular person e.g. having to check with someone before they agree to do something.
- Not having ready/independent access to own money, phone, possessions.
- Person becoming socially isolated.

Closed Cultures

A closed culture raises the safeguarding risk for the person being supported and the supporting team. It is a poor culture which raises the risk of harm and abuse and imposes on Human Rights. They reduce the quality of care being provided to the person being supported. They can be intentional, or unintentional but always remain detrimental. People with learning disabilities, autism or who have high levels of cognitive need are most at risk.

Closed cultures can appear if;

- People are unable to access their communities
- There is poor leadership
- Staff lack the right skills, training and experience to support people
- There is a lack of positive engagement between staff, families and health professionals.
- People do not have an opportunity to speak up for themselves, with and without support of others.

We are committed to minimising any risks of closed cultures. They are unacceptable. All policies and procedures are designed to reduce the risk of closed cultures occurring.

If a member of staff feels a closed culture has developed within the support they work in, or they are concerned there is a closed culture developing. They must report this to their manager as soon as practically possible.

Safeguarding Adults Procedure

Responding to abuse/neglect

We recognise it has a duty to act on any reports or suspicions of abuse, we will ensure that all staff, people being supported and their next of kin is provided with a copy of this policy.

We will also ensure that the person receiving support and care understands the procedure and is involved and consulted throughout the process.

How to respond if someone being supported discloses an allegation of abuse/neglect;

- Reassure the person
- Listen to what they are saying
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Tell the person that the information will be treated seriously
- Do NOT start to investigate or ask detailed/probing questions
- Do NOT promise to keep the information secret
- Contact On Call to inform them of the allegation and for support, advice and guidance
- Record what they have told you/witnessed as soon as possible on an Accident-Incident Reporting form and forward to On Call as soon as possible.

If you witness abuse, or abuse has just taken place;

- Keep yourself and others safe
- Call an Ambulance if required or seek appropriate medical attention
- Call the Police if you think a crime may have been committed
- Preserve any evidence e.g. do not tidy or clean up and discourage the victim from changing their clothes or washing
- Contact On Call to inform them of the incident and for support, advice and guidance
- Record what happened on an Accident-Incident Reporting form and forward to On Call as soon as possible.

If you have a concern/suspicion that abuse/neglect may be taking place;

- Write down your concerns, include details of any incidents you are concerned about or any other potential evidence.
- Contact the Support Co-ordinator who oversees the persons support to report and discuss your concerns and forward them your written concerns.

If you have a concern/suspicion about or witness a staff member committing abuse/neglect;

- Do NOT confront the staff member, take steps to ensure the person being abused is safe, keep yourself and others safe.
- Follow the steps outlined above – where possible we will act in a way that will maintain the confidentiality of the person reporting concerns, staff can refer to our Whistleblowing policy for more information.

What happens next?

The On Call Manager/ Support Co-ordinator must ensure that everyone involved is safe and not in any immediate danger. They should also ensure that if needed an ambulance has been called/medical attention has been sought and/or the police contacted.

The On Call Manager/Support Coordinator must document exactly what the staff member has reported on an Accident-Incident reporting form.

If the concern is about a member of staff the On Call Manager must contact of the Adult Safeguarding Lead, or a Senior Manager to decide what steps need to be taken to protect people. This will include assessing whether the staff member needs to be suspended from duty pending an investigation into the allegations/ concerns raised.

Seeking consent

Where possible the On Call Manager/Support Coordinator must then seek the alleged victims consent to report the concern to their Local Authority Safeguarding Team. Unless there is good reason to override this consent, for example if others may also be at risk of abuse/neglect or the person lacks the capacity to give informed consent to a referral being made.

If the person lacks the capacity to give informed consent or there is a risk to others the On Call Manager must ensure the alleged victim is aware that concerns have been raised and that these are being referred to their Local Authority. This can be done through support staff familiar with the person.

If the On Call Manager is unsure of how to seek consent, whether the person has capacity to consent or whether the concern needs reported without consent they should contact the Adult Safeguarding Lead or a Senior Manager.

Making a safeguarding adults referral

Once all of the above have been completed the On Call Manager should link in with our Adult Safeguarding Lead or a Senior Manager for advice/guidance about when and how to make a safeguarding referral/alert.

It is the Adult Safeguarding Lead/Senior Managers responsibility to make a Safeguarding Adults Referral or Alert to the alleged victim's local authority safeguarding team. This must be done as soon as possible, generally this can be done in office hours the next working day. However, for serious safeguarding concerns where

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someone's support and care needs are at risk of not being met this may mean making a referral/alert outside of office hours e.g. during evenings and weekends.

Please see appendix 1 for a list of local authority safeguarding teams contact details.

Different local authorities have different reporting procedures so the On Call Manager should initially make contact via telephone and follow the phone operators guidance. Some local authorities will record the phone call as the alert, others will ask for a Safeguarding Adults Referral or Alert form to be completed and returned. The phone operator will email the On Call Manager this form. It should be completed within any timescales the phone operator gives or immediately and returned without delay.

It is then the Local Authorities duty to investigate and each local authority will follow a process to assess, investigate and act upon safeguarding referrals/alerts. If the incident has been reported to the Police, they will lead any criminal investigation and work with the local authority. It is our duty to engage with the Police and Local Authority, follow any instructions they give and provide any information requested. This may include written reports and face to face interviews.

Managing an allegation made against a KEYFORT staff member

We will ensure that any allegations made against members of staff are dealt with quickly with safety.

Where a member of staff is alleged to have committed a criminal offence the Police will be informed.

The safety of the people we support and staff is our main priority, therefore a decision will be made about the level of risk posed and whether it is safe for the alleged perpetrator to continue in their role or any other role within the service while the allegations are investigated. If it is deemed that the risk cannot be managed and there is no other suitable role the alleged perpetrator could undertake while the investigation is ongoing, they will be suspended from work duties.

We will then initiate internal disciplinary investigations, with permission from and in coordination with any external bodies involved in the safeguarding investigation (e.g. the Police/Local Authority).

Please see our Whistleblowing Policy for more information.

Recording and managing confidential information

We are committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible, information about safeguarding concerns/incidents will only be shared with those who need to know. Please see our confidentiality policy for more information.

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Any incidents/concerns/allegations of abuse or neglect should be recorded on an Incident Accident Report form. The information recorded must be factual, recording what has been said or observed. Staff must not report opinions or assumptions.

Staff should use initials and role descriptions to identify the people involved. Wherever possible Incident Accident Reports should be completed electronically and emailed to the On Call Manager, Support Co-ordinator or Adult Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and within a maximum of 24 hours of the incident taking place. Staff should then delete any copies from their personal computer/electronic device.

Forms will then be saved onto our internal computer system where access will be restricted in compliance with confidentiality. If forms need to be shared externally any identifying, personal details must be removed/anonymised before it is shared.

If you are concerned that KEYFORT aren't responding appropriately to a Safeguarding concern you've raised.

We take safeguarding very seriously and will always act upon concerns raised, however if for any reason you do not think appropriate action has been taken please contact one of our Adult Safeguarding Lead or a Senior Manager.

If you are still concerned or believe that there are safeguarding issues within KEYFORT itself you can report a concern directly to the relevant local authority – this could be the local authority where an alleged victim lives or the local authority where the office, you're concerned about is based. Alternatively, you can also contact the Care Quality Commissioner. Please see appendix 1 for contact details.

Summary

- All staff must attend regular training in Adult Safeguarding and ensure they are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to report any concerns.
- Staff must report any safeguarding concern or disclosure to the On Call Manager, KEYFORT's Adult Safeguarding Lead, a Support Co-ordinator or a Senior Manager.
- Staff must not promise to keep safeguarding disclosures or concerns 'secret' – they must be reported.

Appendix 1 – Useful Contacts

Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Teams

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Local Authority	Contact Number –Office Hours	Contact Number – Out of hours
Allerdale and Copeland	01900 706301	01228 526690
South (Barrow In Furness)	03003032704	01228 526690
Bradford	01274 431077	01274 431010
Carlisle and Eden	03003033249	01228 526690
West Cumbria	03003033589	01228 526690
Darlington	01325 406111	01642 524552
Durham	03000 267 979	03000 267 979
Gateshead	0191 433 7033	0191 433 7033
Hartlepool	01429 523 390	08702 402 994
Liverpool	0151 233 3800	0151 233 3800
Lancashire	0300 123 6720	0300 123 6722
Middlesbrough	01642 726004	08702402994
Newcastle	0191 2788377 (8am-5pm)	0191 2787878
North Tyneside	0191 643 2777	0191 200 6800
Northumberland	01670 536 400	0345 600 5252
Redcar & Cleveland	01642 771 500	08702 402 994
South Lakeland	01539 713378	01228 526690
South Tyneside	0191 4246000	0191 4562093
Stockton	01642 527764	08702 402994
Sunderland	0191 5205552	0191 5281990
York	01904 555111	01609 780780

KEYFORT Office Hours contacts:

All offices – 0191 491 1735

KEYFORT out of hours, On Call Manager contacts:

North East Specialist Support - 07525 917600

North West Specialist Support - 07891 217301

Emergency Services; 999 (urgent, life threatening, immediate risk of harm)

Police (non urgent): 101 asking for Local Area Police Station or Protecting Vulnerable Persons (PVP) Team.

Medical advice/attention (non urgent): 111

