



1625 INDEPENDENT PEOPLE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This document is in two parts - Policy and Procedure.

PART ONE: POLICY

1 Introduction and principles

1.1 Scope

This Policy applies to the entire organisation: Board members, all paid staff (permanent, temporary and consultancy), those on work experience, students on placement, volunteers and service users. For the purposes of this document the term “**worker**” or “**staff**” applies to anyone engaged by the organisation to work with vulnerable adults, whether on a paid or voluntary basis. The term “**vulnerable adult**”, “**service user**” and “**young people**” are also interchangeable.

The Policy applies to the support and advice we will give to any service user, in any of our services, who may be considered to be a vulnerable adult and that is at risk of harm because they are or may be a victim of abuse. This includes responses to potential abuse that affect any other vulnerable adult that we may come into contact with in the course of our work.

In addition to abuse, the Policy includes reference to how we will support people, to prevent them from becoming radicalised and drawn into terrorism.

1.2 Our principles for safeguarding adults

We uphold the principle of the regional [Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy 2017](#) (agreed by Safeguarding Adults Board in BANES, Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Somerset, **Appendix 3**) that 'doing nothing is not an option - if we know or suspect that an adult at risk is being abused, we will do something about it and ensure our work is properly recorded', taking account of service user choices (control and consent) to ensure we avoid abusive or disrespectful practice when considering reporting it to the relevant local authority in a timely manner, appropriate to the level of urgency and risk.

This Policy draws a large part of its content and principles from the regional policy noted above, which reflects our responsibilities within the:

- [Care Act 2014](#) and;
- [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) and;

- [Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
- [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
- [Social Care Institute for Excellence, Adult Safeguarding: Sharing Information guidance 2015](#) (all **Appendix 3**).

We have also drawn on a range of other external local, regional and national practice guidance in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults (**Appendix 3**).

The principles for adult safeguarding are clearly laid out in legislation and guidance (as referenced), however, we consider it important to continually ensure that we relate these principles to our particular responsibilities, areas of service delivery and to the people with whom we work, which includes service users' significant others (other people in their lives or who surround them).

Our responses to safeguarding concerns will be personal to the individual. We recognise that adults sometimes have complex lives and interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances, so being safe is only one of the things they may want for themselves. We will work with individuals to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved and we will not advocate “safety” measures that do not take account of individual wellbeing.

Criminal investigations by the police take priority over all other enquiries, although we will continue to participate in any multi-agency approach that is agreed, to ensure that the interests and personal wishes of the adult are considered throughout, even if they do not wish to provide any evidence or support a prosecution. The welfare of the adult and others, including children, is paramount and requires continued risk assessment to ensure the outcome is in their interests and enhances their wellbeing.

From the:

- [Care Act 2014](#) and;
 - [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) and;
 - [Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
 - [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
 - [Social Care Institute for Excellence, Adult Safeguarding: Sharing Information guidance 2015](#);
 - Referenced through the regional [Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy 2017](#), we will adhere to the following 6 key principles, which will underpin all our work to safeguard adults:
- **Empowerment:** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent;
 - **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs;
 - **Proportionality:** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented;

- **Protection:** Support and representation for those in greatest need;
- **Partnership:** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse;
- **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

While the [Care Act 2014](#) and the [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) recognise the individuality of experience and that safeguarding takes place in a wider arena of different cultures, history and lifestyle, we consider it important to note that a range of social, historic, cultural and religious factors will impact upon the experience of and attitudes to safeguarding. This Policy and Procedure must be read alongside ***Independent People's Equality and Diversity Policy*** which provides some help in understanding how to navigate through these complexities.

To this end, we will ensure that:

Nobody receives an inferior response to an adult safeguarding issue due to their:

- Culture
 - Language
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership status
 - Pregnancy and maternity status
 - Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex (gender) or sexual orientation.
 - Criminal status (if unrelated)
 - HIV status
 - Housing status
 - Financial or economic status
- Nobody receives an inferior response to abuse, allegations of abuse and/or attendant safeguarding concerns on any of the above grounds due to misunderstandings, for example, because of cultural or religious factors leading to a permissiveness of abuse;
 - These issues are covered in our safeguarding training and managers are confident and equipped to support discussion and team learning in relation to them.

The response to safeguarding concerns must be personal to the individual. Making safeguarding personal means it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It engages the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control, as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

However, safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone including statutory, independent and voluntary agencies as well as every citizen. We will continually and proactively work together with all groups, especially statutory and voluntary sector partners; to prevent, minimise harm and respond swiftly and appropriately to abuse - using this Policy and Procedure as a guide. Just as local authorities are duty bound to cooperate with each of their relevant partners in safeguarding cases, we must (and will) also cooperate with the local authority - in the exercise of our functions relevant to care and support, including those to protect adults - section 6(7) of the [Care Act 2014](#) and section 15 of the [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#).

It is also incumbent upon our staff to not only have regard to their duties in relation to the vulnerable adults they come into contact with through the course of their work, but to also be vigilant about identifying and responding to adult safeguarding issues in all areas of their lives.

2. Statement of purpose (policy objectives)

Our Vision:

A world where all young people have a safe place and trusted adults to turn to and can access the opportunities they need.

Our Mission:

To prevent homelessness, keep young people safe and support them to be the best they can be.

Independent People works positively with young people and their families to promote wellbeing, self-worth, citizenship, independence and safety through our services. This Policy and Procedure demonstrates how we will recognise and deal with abuse when it occurs. However, we do everything we can to work proactively to reduce the risk both inside and outside the organisation and its services.

In line with the regional [Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy 2017](#) and, therefore, the [Care Act 2014](#) and [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#), the aims of our adult safeguarding work are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and to have control about how they want to live;
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life, wellbeing and independence for the adults concerned;
- Raise public awareness, so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding appropriately to abuse and

neglect. This includes work we do in educating and managing risk from young people who perpetrate or may potentially perpetrate abuse;

- Provide information and support, in accessible ways, to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of an adult, and;
- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

As part of Independent People's duty to safeguard adults, we ensure that staff are absolutely clear about their roles and responsibilities in regard to taking action within the scope of this Policy and Procedure.

3. Definitions

3.1 Vulnerable Adult

Local authorities have a statutory safeguarding duty under the [Care Act 2014](#) and [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) to carry out safeguarding enquiries on behalf of adults (aged over 18 years) who meet the following criteria:

- Have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), and;
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and;
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding enquiries carried out by local authorities on behalf of adults who do not fit the criteria outlined above (non-statutory) are *not* required by law, but they can do so at their own discretion. These enquiries would relate to an adult who:

- Is believed to be experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and;
- Does not have care and support needs (but might have just support needs). For example, these enquiries might be about a carer.

We recognise that there are likely to be particular safeguarding considerations in relation to adults with learning disabilities who, due to their impairment itself or to their experience of dependency and perhaps institutionalisation, may be especially vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and harm. We will ensure that this awareness is promoted through all staff learning and practice in relation to safeguarding - this includes working with perpetrators or people who may have potential to perpetrate abuse (if they are our service users).

If the person staff are concerned about is aged under 18 years, they should refer to Independent People's separate ***Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedure*** which are part of Independent People's wider commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

3.2 Safeguarding

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.

'Wellbeing' is defined in Section 1 of the [Care Act 2014](#) and [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) as follows:

Wellbeing, in relation to an individual, means that individual's wellbeing, so far as relating to any of the following:

- (a) Personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect);
- (b) Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing;
- (c) Protection from abuse and neglect;
- (d) Control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over care and support or support provided to the individual and the way in which it is provided);
- (e) Participation in work, education, training or recreation;
- (f) Social and economic wellbeing;
- (g) Domestic, family and personal relationships;
- (h) Suitability of living accommodation;
- (i) The individual's contribution to society.

3.3 What is meant by abuse?

- Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons;
- It may be something that is done to the person or something not done when it should have been;
- It can be unintentional, but if a vulnerable adult is harmed this must be reported.

Patterns of Abuse

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and they may affect one person or more. Our staff should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm.

Abuse can happen anywhere, for example, in someone's own home, in a public place, in hospital, in a care home or in college. It can take place when an adult lives alone or with others. It can happen when a young adult is either part of gang culture, associated with or under pressure to associate with gangs.

Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and of what we now describe as organisational abuse. In order to see these patterns we expect our staff to record and appropriately share information.

3.4 Types of abuse

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern. It comprises of examples from the [Care Act 2014](#) and [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) and our own additions. What constitutes abuse or neglect can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered. Types of abuse include:

- **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions;
- **Domestic abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.

Clarification: The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence of abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological, sexual, financial and emotional.

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#). The offence closes a gap in the law around patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour during a relationship between intimate partners, former partners who still live together, or family members, sending a clear message that it is wrong to violate the trust of those closest to you, providing better protection to victims experiencing continuous abuse and allowing for earlier identification, intervention and prevention.

- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Sexual exploitation** involves exploitative situations and relationships where people receive ‘something’ (e.g. accommodation, alcohol, affection, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual activities. Key features include coercion and control, disclosures and retractions.
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks;
- **Dishonest befriending** – for the purpose of financial or other gain from a vulnerable person (this has become a prevalent crime towards people with learning difficulties and whilst colloquially termed a ‘mate crime’ is recognised as a form of hate crime);
- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;

- **Modern slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment;
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion;
- **Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation;
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Neglect can be intentional or unintentional and it is important to understand that being unintentional does not mean it is not abusive.

- **Self-neglect** – This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour, such as hoarding.

3.5 Hate crime

Hate crime is any criminal offence that is motivated by hostility or prejudice based upon the victim's disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity.

Hate crime can take many forms including:

- Physical attacks such as physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti and arson;
- Threat of attack including offensive letters, e-mails, abusive or obscene telephone calls, groups hanging around to intimidate and unfounded, malicious complaints;
- Verbal abuse, insults or harassment, taunting, offensive leaflets and posters, abusive gestures, dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes, and bullying at school or in the workplace;
- The use of electronic media to abuse, insult, taunt or harass.

In such cases, staff should also refer to Independent People's separate **Racial Harassment and Hate Crime Policy** and any safeguarding concern that is considered to be a hate crime should be reported to the local police.

3.6 Forced marriage

Forced marriage is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties is married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an *arranged* marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of their parents or a third party in identifying a spouse.

In a situation where there is concern that an adult at risk is being forced into a marriage they do not or cannot consent to, then staff should refer to the Safeguarding Adults process.

The police must always be contacted in such cases as urgent action may need to be taken.

3.7 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother, and/or death.

FGM is a criminal offence – it is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls and should be treated as such. It is illegal in England and Wales under the [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#). As amended by the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), the Act now includes:

- An offence of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM;
- Extra-territorial jurisdiction over offences of FGM committed abroad by UK nationals and those habitually (as well as permanently) resident in the UK;
- Lifelong anonymity for victims of FGM;
- FGM Protection Orders which can be used to protect girls at risk, and;
- A mandatory reporting duty which requires specified professionals to report known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police.

If any of the abuse noted in the sections above are perpetrated by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member of the vulnerable person, the abuse can also be considered to be Domestic Abuse. In such cases, staff should also refer to Independent People's separate ***Domestic Violence Policy (Young People)***.

3.8 Prevent: Radicalisation and terrorism

Definitions

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

“**Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas”

(HM Government **Prevent Strategy** 2011). **Please note:** HM Government issued '[Contest: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism](#)' in June 2018, which supersedes the Prevent Strategy, 2011.

We have a responsibility under the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) to incorporate the Government's Prevent Strategy into our policies and procedures, in order to; undertake our duties in preventing radicalisation and the process of drawing people into terrorism and terrorism related activities (including domestic extremism and non-violent extremism); to ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support, and; to work with and/or report to 'specified authorities' where people may be at risk of radicalisation. Vulnerable people, such as those with whom we work, can be a target for radicalisation and staff need to understand the risks involved and be trained to:

- Understand the Prevent Strategy and their role in it;
- Be able to use existing expertise and professional judgment to recognise the vulnerable individuals who may need support to be diverted away from what could be considered to be linked to terrorist activity, with reference to any local context;
- Be aware of the local safeguarding and referral mechanisms, agencies and/or people to contact for further specialist help, support and advice.

We have designated Prevent lead managers (in both Bristol and South Gloucestershire), whose role it is to act as points of contact within the organisation and who are trained to deliver WRAP Workshops to frontline staff. They also raise awareness of Prevent within the organisation, to ensure staff, Board members and volunteers understand the local risk of vulnerable people being drawn into terrorism and know how to refer individuals of concern for specialist support and help.

The organisation maintains close operational links with relevant multi-agency approaches to identify and support individuals who at risk of being drawn into terrorism, e.g. Channel, and makes use of the free online Home Office Prevent training modules.

Channel is a multi-agency programme which provides support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Channel provides a mechanism at an early stage, for assessing and supporting people who may be targeted / or radicalised by violent extremists (section 2 of the [Channel Duty Guidance 2015](#)).

4. Who abuses and neglects adults?

There can be abuse in any relationship, often occurring where the abuser is in a more powerful position than the person being abused – although the reality is often more complex and nuanced than this. The abuser may be more able than the person being abused or the abused person may be dependent on the abuser in some way.

Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- Spouses/partners;
- Other family members;
- Neighbours; Local residents;
- Friends; Acquaintances;
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse;

- Paid staff or professionals or volunteers;
- Strangers.

While our focus will generally be to recognise and prevent abuse of our service users and others, e.g. their children or partners who might be housed or staying with them, the nature of our services means that staff must also be vigilant about how abuse might be perpetrated by service users to others, for example:

- To other residents of multiple occupation housing;
- To neighbours or others within neighbourhoods who are vulnerable adults;
- To other family members.

5. Involving the adult in their safeguarding

Independent People involves our service users in all the assessment, planning and decision-making processes that relate to their individual safeguarding needs. We consider it vital that an individual is fully involved in every aspect of managing a safeguarding issue, as we understand how potentially overwhelming and complicated investigations can be.

We will always involve the adult from the beginning of a safeguarding case unless there are exceptional circumstances that would increase the risk of abuse were we to involve the victim. Discussion with the adult informs process and to some extent timescale of response.

The wishes of the individual are very important and attending to those wishes and preferred outcomes ensures a process that is about seeking to promote an adult's rights, as well as about protecting their physical safety and taking action to prevent the occurrence or reoccurrence of abuse or neglect. It enables the adult to understand both the risk of abuse and actions that she or he can take, or ask others to take, to mitigate that risk.

We will take account of the fact that an individual's right to safety needs to be balanced with other rights, such as rights to liberty and autonomy, and rights to family life. All vulnerable adults at risk of, or experiencing abuse or neglect, regardless of whether they have capacity or not, may not want highly intrusive help, such as the barring of a person from their home, or a person to be brought to justice or they may wish to be helped in less intrusive ways, such as through the provision of advice of the various options available to them and the risks and advantages of these various options.

A vulnerable adult's involvement in a safeguarding case may be supported by an independent advocate, especially if the adult has substantial difficulty in being involved in the process, is struggling to clearly understand the process or where there is no other suitable person to represent and support them (appointed by the local authority). Where an independent advocate is appointed we will work closely with them to ensure they are able to carry out their duties.

Mental capacity

People must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help before they are treated as not being able to make their own decisions.

When safeguarding concerns arise the mental capacity of the individuals involved – victims as well as those alleged to be responsible - is central to the assessment and decision-making processes. It is essential that in any level of safeguarding enquiry the mental capacity of those involved is clarified at the outset through a functional test - by professionals. However it is important to ensure that safeguarding decision-making and mental capacity best interests decision-making do not become confused. In essence this is because safeguarding procedures do not convey any authority to act on behalf of a person who may lack mental capacity. Any protective measures thought to be necessary for a person who lacks mental capacity to consent to them must be subjected to a robust consideration and follow the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) principles of acting in the person's best interests and using the principle of 'least restriction'.

If there is uncertainty about the capacity of a vulnerable adult, then the organisation's most senior safeguarding lead will be consulted immediately and they will advise on what action to take. All safeguarding activity with adults who lack capacity must be underpinned by the principles of the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#). All professionals and other staff are required to work in accordance with the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) and have regard to the relevant [Code of Practice](#) (last updated January 2016).

Where an adult is thought to lack capacity to make decisions about the risk they may be facing and their safeguarding plans, a range of options should be identified, shared and discussed with that individual (and with associated professionals as relevant), to enable the individual to remain as much in control of their life as possible. Wherever possible, the adult should be supported to recognise potential risks and to learn to manage them. Safeguarding plans should empower the adult as far as possible to make choices and to develop their own capability to respond to them, which may include discussions with them as to whether further enquiry is needed and what further action could be taken. Those discussions should take place with involved professionals to support individuals to enable them to understand what their options might be, especially in regard to their future safety and wellbeing, and to address how their wishes might best be realised.

Where an adult is found to lack capacity (by a professional agency qualified to make such an assessment) to make a decision, then any action taken or any decision made for or on their behalf must be made in their best interests by the designated professional. Assessments of capacity by involved professionals should be time and decision-specific. People's capacity may change over time.

Where there are disputes about a person's mental capacity or the best interests of an adult deemed to be at risk and these cannot be resolved locally, then advice will be sought from the organisation's most senior designated safeguarding lead.

6. Independent People's commitments

Independent People believes that all people - adults and children - are entitled to a life without exploitation or abuse.

In all our work, Independent People will take into consideration the sensitive issues that may arise when working with people of differing culture, language, age, disability, race,

religion or belief, sex (gender) or sexual orientation, gender reassignment, physical and mental abilities, marital or civil partnership status (see Section 1.2 above).

6.1 Independent People commit fully to:

- Following all principles and guidance set out within the regional [Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy 2017](#) and other relevant local, regional and national guidance or legislative updates (**Appendix 3**) and will continue to do so in any subsequent reviews of this Policy and Procedure (see Section 15 below). We are also committed to contributing, where possible and appropriate, to the development of regional and national policy and working principles;
- Ensuring that all staff, paid or unpaid, are conversant with Independent People's policies and procedures for safeguarding, including this Policy and Procedure;
- Working within the framework of safeguarding legislation, regulations and guidance;
- Ensuring that all staff understand the mandatory requirements within our safeguarding procedures, including the responsibility to respond to, comprehensively record and report concerns to an appropriate internal person and/or external agency at the right time;
- Ensuring that all Job Descriptions and Volunteer Role Descriptions reference safeguarding in the role's responsibilities in relation to this Policy and ensuring this Procedure is covered in full during staff induction;
- Ensuring that all Independent People's service users, significant others and external professionals have access this Policy and Procedure and any attendant policy documents;
- Ensuring that all Independent People's service users have access to awareness-raising work, discussion and support to understand safeguarding and its relationship to them - this includes educating perpetrators or people who have potential to perpetrate abuse (our service users only);
- Proactively safeguarding adults, so that the need for action to protect adults from abuse is reduced. Whilst making every attempt to ensure that the occurrence of abuse is prevented, we recognise that this will not always be possible, and so we will ensure that, where appropriate, an adult safeguarding referral is made at the earliest opportunity, particularly if there is urgency and/or a high level of actual or perceived risk;
- Proactively working with our service users who perpetrate abuse or may be at risk of doing so - to undertake risk assessments and risk management plans with them and other involved professionals and to continue to provide support whilst they remain in our service, recognising that they may also be vulnerable;
- Ensuring that all suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately and understood from the viewpoint of the victim;

- Consulting with and referring to Social Care teams and/or (in an emergency) the Police and/or our own managers and Designated Lead Professionals where concerns about possible abuse arise;
- Working with partner agencies to safeguard adults and giving every assistance to the local authority and police in carrying out their statutory duties;
- Ensuring that all staff can have access to advice and support from line managers through supervision and outside of supervision, as required, in safeguarding cases;
- Ensuring that all Independent People service users receive the advice and support that they need, including access to civil and criminal remedies, victim support services and advocacy services.

6.2 Independent People will uphold this statement of intent by having:

- **A clear senior management commitment** to the importance of safeguarding adults, with named Designated Senior Managers (see Section 7);
- **Clear priorities for safeguarding adults** within Independent People's policies, working practices and procedures, including the inter-relationship of these policies;
- **Clear lines of accountability** within the organisation and a named lead person who is responsible for safeguarding within the organisation (**Appendix 1**);
- **Recruitment and employment procedures** that fully take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of both children and adults, including DBS checks for all staff and volunteers, checking employment gaps and references, testing at interview (see Independent People's **Recruitment Policy**);
- **Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers**;
- **Appropriate and up-to-date training** for all staff (**Appendix 2**);
- **Appropriate induction** to ensure and that all staff, including temporary staff, students on placement (including work experience), volunteers who work with adults and our Board members are made aware of Independent People's arrangements for safeguarding adults and their responsibilities within those arrangements;
- **Policies and procedures for safeguarding adults** that are in accordance with the latest legislation and guidance;
- A **culture of listening** to and engaging in dialogue with young people (and others who report abuse) and taking account of those views in individual decisions and in the establishment or development of services;

- Whistleblowing policy shared with staff and service users (contained within Independent People's ***Concerns at Work Policy and Service User Handbook***);
- A ***Complaints Policy*** and procedure that is fully publicised and available to service users and stakeholders;
- A **culture** that enables issues about safeguarding to be addressed.

7. Named leads for safeguarding

NAMED DESIGNATED SENIOR MANAGERS FOR SAFEGUARDING

Named Designated Senior Managers (also referred to as Professional Leads) for safeguarding adults within Independent People have been assigned based on their experience and authority to promote safeguarding practice and to challenge practice where necessary.

Names and contact details of Designated Managers are provided at Appendix 1.

All staff and volunteers will be made aware through induction, supervision and training of how to contact the named leads.

The named Designated Managers (Professional Leads) are responsible for:

- Supporting managers and workers to recognise the needs of vulnerable adults, including taking action to protect them from abuse;
- Ensuring that cases are being managed, addressed and reviewed;
- Working with statutory and voluntary agencies to promote good practice in the area of safeguarding and ensuring effective partnerships are in place;
- Developing a formal link between the local authority, the local Safeguarding Adults Board and our services to ensure co-operation and information sharing, and promote a clear understanding of accountability and procedures;
- Implementing quality assurance processes, with safeguarding a key part of the quality assurance process, including audit of:
 - Operational delivery - ensuring delivery is in line with this *Policy and Procedure*
 - Safeguarding logs and client files
 - Safeguarding induction and training plans
 - Frequency and quality of supervision, team meetings and group Reflective Practice and that learning from Reflective Practice informs the decisions and actions made in practice.

Designated Safeguarding Board member (Appendix 1)

The Designated Safeguarding Board member has leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements, including:

- Ensuring that Independent People has the systems, policies and procedures to safeguard vulnerable adults, staff and the organisation;

- Championing safeguarding across the Independent People Board;
- Responding to any allegations against senior staff.

Deputy Designated Leads

For each Designated Lead, at Senior Management Team and Board level, there is a deputy, should the lead not be available.

The details of the deputy are noted in **Appendix 1**.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Independent People is committed to working with partner agencies to safeguard adults in all local authority areas, in line with the recommendations of the [Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and the [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and the [Social Care Institute for Excellence, Adult Safeguarding: Sharing Information guidance 2015](#). Key agencies and people with responsibility for preventing abuse of adults include:

Alerters: Alerters could be Independent People's staff, workers in other organisations, or members of the public and who may discover or have information disclosed about alleged abuse and/or neglect.

Local authority: All safeguarding referrals should be made to the relevant local authority team responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults. This can be done either by telephone or online form, depending on the local authority and on the urgency of the case. The local authority may nominate a lead officer, assigned to work on the case with us.

Police: Referrals can also be made to the police - this should be considered for incidents where an element of urgency applies.

As a matter of course, we will report any crime that we are aware of to the police or ideally support the victim to do so.

Healthwatch: The 'consumer champion', operating at both local and national levels, in accordance with the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#). Healthwatch:

- Has the power to enter and view services;
- Influences how services are set up and commissioned by having a seat on the local health and wellbeing board;
- Produces reports which influence the way services are designed and delivered;
- Provides information, advice and support about local services;
- Passes recommendations to Healthwatch England.

Care Quality Commission (CQC): CQC inspect and regulate Care Homes and Domiciliary (Home Care) Services and protects the rights of people detained under the [Mental Health Act 1983, amended 2007](#).

They ensure that regulated care services are fit for purpose and provide safe, good quality care. CQC have powers under this act to take action if services are putting people

at risk of harm and, as such are key partners in any safeguarding plan to protect vulnerable people using care services.

Service commissioners: Local authority commissioning team contract out a range of housing related support services to people, including to Independent People. They have a duty to ensure that procedures are in place for preventing and responding to allegations of abuse and neglect, with regard to legislative and best practice guidance.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA): The local authority may instruct an IMCA to act on behalf of an adult who lacks capacity under the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) to make decisions about the safeguarding measures that the local authority proposes to take under the Act or under the [Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards](#). The role of the IMCA is to ensure that any measures taken to safeguard an adult who lacks capacity are taken in the person's best interests. This can be where the person lacks a family member, friend or advocate to speak on his/her behalf, or where the local authority reasonably believes there may be a potential conflict of interest for a family member or other supporter and wishes to gain a more independent view of what would be in their best interests.

9. Support for service users and staff

- 9.1** Independent People will ensure a planned approach to supporting victims of abuse, and ensure that they are supported at both the time of crisis and on an ongoing basis. Where we are unable to provide this support ourselves we will endeavour to refer service users to appropriate support agencies, including counselling and legal advice.
- 9.2** Independent People will ensure that parents using Independent People's services receive adequate and proactive support. Where we are unable to provide this support ourselves we will endeavour to refer service users to appropriate external support agencies.
- 9.3** Independent People acknowledges that abuse and safeguarding adults can be traumatic and emotionally draining. Support will be offered to staff through supervision with their line manager and where appropriate, through counselling.

All staff working for Independent People have access to counselling services, offering 24 hour telephone counselling and the opportunity for face to face counselling if required. In cases of abuse in which a whole team may have managed a traumatic event, we will discuss the benefits of providing 'whole team' counselling should it be required.

10. Conduct of staff

All workers must abide at all times by Independent People's "**Safeguarding Code of Conduct**" (**Appendix 4**) and Independent People's full **Code of Conduct**. If staff are found to be in breach of either the police and/or local authority may be involved, in addition to Independent People taking disciplinary action against its staff under our **Disciplinary Procedure** for action that may be considered as gross misconduct.

11. Allegations against staff and volunteers

11.1 Responding to allegations

All allegations or suspicions of abuse by a worker will be taken seriously.

Workers (staff, volunteers, students, work placements, Board members) hold a position of trust and a vulnerable adult at risk may be deterred from disclosing abuse out of a sense of loyalty, fear or other repercussions. All such allegations of abuse must be acted upon appropriately and immediately, in order to ensure the safety of both the person at risk and other service users.

Where there are concerns that a worker may have behaved inappropriately or where we receive information that may constitute an allegation, staff are required to report this to a Designated Manager as soon as possible, however trivial it may seem. If a Designated Manager or their deputy is unavailable or if the CEO or another senior manager is the subject of the allegation or concern, then the Chair of the Board must be contacted (**Appendix 1**).

Where there is an allegation that someone has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a vulnerable adult; and/or
- Behaved in a way that has placed a service user in a position of unacceptable risk; and/or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children or young people.

Independent People will ensure that the matter is responded to in a timely, thorough and effective manner, taking into consideration:

- Local authority procedures for dealing with allegations against staff; and
- Local Adult Safeguarding Board websites:
 - [Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board](#)
 - [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board](#);
- The need to report an incident to the police where is reason to believe a crime has occurred;
- Independent People's Personnel Policies and Procedures and employment law;
- Independent People's duty to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare;
- The need to treat any individual employee or volunteer fairly and provide them with support.

Some allegations will involve abuse to a vulnerable adult and, in such circumstances, a safeguarding alert will be required and the police may need to be informed.

Other issues, such as those related to practice that is below expected standards of behaviour, will need to be addressed through the organisation's internal processes, such as supervision, training, complaints, capability and disciplinary procedures.

It is vital that even apparently less serious concerns are followed up and addressed.

11.2 Responsibility for alerting

Where an allegation of abuse or neglect involves the practice or conduct of an employee, volunteer or anyone else in a work-like position within the organisation, then an alert is necessary. The vulnerable adult at risk may also need particular support and reassurance when disclosing such concerns or allegations.

Where the actions of an employee or volunteer have been alleged to be abusive, the consent of the vulnerable adult is not required. It would be best practice, however, to inform the vulnerable adult as to how the issues are to be addressed and that a safeguarding alert is being made, unless to do so may place them or any other party at additional risk. The service user should be advised of our duty to act on the concerns and should not, in any way, be made to feel responsible for subsequent actions or decisions.

11.3 Reporting process

The Designated Manager will contact the local authority safeguarding team **WITHIN 1 WORKING DAY** of receiving the report of an allegation.

Independent People will then follow the advice and guidance of the local authority in the management of all allegations.

If Independent People removes an individual worker (paid or unpaid) from work or would have had the person not left their role first, then because the person poses a risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults we will refer the issue to the Disclosure and Barring Service in line with statutory guidance (WTSC, 2018).

The procedure to be followed are explained in detail in Section 8 of the Procedure section of this policy.

11.4 Support for staff subject to allegations

The police and other relevant agencies should always be consulted before informing a person who is the subject of allegations, as the staff member's action may possibly require a criminal investigation.

Independent People will ensure that local authority teams and/or the police are given all assistance in pursuing any investigation in accordance with relevant law and safeguarding procedures.

Staff subject to allegations of abuse will be offered as much support as is possible without compromising the investigation or its outcome. Staff will be provided with support from the organisation throughout the investigation process and will be helped to understand the concerns expressed and the processes being operated. They will be

clearly informed of the outcome of any investigation and the implications for disciplinary or related processes.

If the person is suspended, Independent People will make arrangements to keep the individual informed about developments in the workplace. If the person is a member of a union or professional association, they should be advised to contact that body at the outset.

11.5 Concerns about abuse or suspected abuse of vulnerable adults living in temporary accommodation and supported housing

Vulnerable adults that receive support from Independent People may be placed in a range of accommodation types. This includes hostels and supported housing.

Independent People workers must report any concerns about the abuse or suspected abuse of young people in line with this document and, if they are a child, the ***Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy***.

12. Working with translation and interpreting services

Translation and interpreting services will be provided where required. This is to ensure we communicate effectively with vulnerable adults and their families effectively, for example where spoken English is not their first language, where deaf people are reliant on British Sign Language to communicate or where written documentation needs to be clearly understood such as in Braille.

Family, friends or involved professionals should not be used to translate or interpret, but professionals can be used to arrange appointments and establish communication needs. Children should never be used as interpreters.

By using external, professional translation and interpreting services, we can ensure they are independent of the family and will translate exactly what is said or written by and to each party.

Interpreters should have an in date DBS check and consideration should be given to the gender, culture, race and age of the interpreter.

Where necessary, we will work in partnership with the police and local authority safeguarding teams to ensure arrangements are in place for all relevant documents and information to be translated into an accessible format, which the vulnerable adult and their family can clearly understand.

13. Information sharing and confidentiality

We will record and store information on secure (confidential) internal systems, to which only nominated staff have access. We will only share information with those who have a right to it, e.g. Social Worker, and we will only share information via approved secure means.

As a general rule Independent People will only disclose information that identifies the service user with that person's consent. Consent should be sought from the individual thought to be experiencing or reporting abuse/neglect if he/she has capacity (see Section 5 above). However staff may not do so if this would:

- Place the alleged victim at increased risk of significant/serious harm;
- Place a third party at risk of harm;
- Prejudice the prevention or detection of a serious crime.

Staff must seek the approval of their line manager or other designated manager before disclosing any information without the consent of the service user, unless it is an emergency and someone is in immediate harm's way. For further information refer to the Independent People's **Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy**.

When sharing information, Independent People takes into account:

- [Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
- [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
- The [Social Care Institute for Excellence, Adult Safeguarding: Sharing Information guidance 2015](#) recommended by [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board](#) (**Appendix 3**).

These documents serve to guide us on sharing information not just about victims, but also prisoners and perpetrators of abuse. They provide information about how we should share information with other agencies, for example, the Police, other professionals, a local authority designated safeguarding lead, the Disclosure and Barring Service and service commissioners.

14. Making our policy available

This Policy will be made available to all staff (on Independent People's server) and in paper copies held in each team, as will a range of resources referenced in this document.

The Policy will be made available to all service users and they will be made aware of our commitment to safeguarding, the meaning of abuse and how to report any concerns or abuse through information contained in the **Service User Handbook**. These publications also contain useful information on staying safe.

The Policy will be made available to families of service users either on request or in any case where a safeguarding investigation has been opened by the organisation.

Further documentation, including flowcharts, guidance and information are available via local authority safeguarding adults websites (**Appendices 1 and 3**).

All Independent People computer equipment, whether accessible to staff or young people, have desk top icons installed to direct them to the South West Child Protection Procedures and local Safeguarding Adults websites.

15. Policy development and review

Independent People is committed to ensuring that we deliver the best practice we can, to ensure that we continually improve our practice of safeguarding vulnerable adults. We ensure that all of our policies and procedures are both live working and developing documents. This Policy and Procedure will be updated as follows:

- Through an annual review process, that is ratified at Board level;
- As and when legislation and/or regional or national policy or guidance change;
- As local structures for the governance of safeguarding and/or local practice recommendations or guidance change;
- Through our own organisational learning, as we deal with issues of adult or children's safeguarding that we judge either not to be covered in this document or that raise the need for clarification.

PART TWO: PROCEDURE

1. WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Remember that whilst hearing allegations of abuse and reporting your concerns is not always easy it is your duty to report your concerns in line with this Procedure and it may be considered a disciplinary offence not to do so. It is not for staff to second-guess the outcome of an internal or statutory investigation, when deciding whether or not to share your concerns.

However, you should always explain that you will always treat service users with dignity, aim to involve them throughout the process and have respect for their wishes so they retain control, where possible and that any decisions taken are intended to be in their best interests at all times.

Reference may also be made to Independent People's **Concerns at Work Policy** (whistleblowing), as appropriate, and this Policy and Procedure and whistleblowing information should also be shared with anyone else that requests it.

When recording, storing or sharing confidential and sensitive information you must always do this on or via secure, approved systems. You should always take care when printing written confidential information or viewing information on a computer, ensuring it remains in your possession at all times and/or is not visible to anyone that does not have the right to see it and that it is destroyed securely at the earliest opportunity (see Independent People's **Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy**).

2. IMMEDIATE PROTECTIVE ACTION

- Ensure that the person subject to alleged abuse is safe and supported before proceeding with any other action;
- Ensure they receive any medical attention required - calling emergency services as required;
- In certain circumstances it will be necessary to take immediate action to protect the vulnerable adult by calling the police and/or by suspending a member of staff (see Section 8 below).

3. WHEN AND HOW TO CONTACT THE POLICE

Direct calls to the police should be reserved for:

- Incidents of assault and violence or;
- Where another crime is in progress in which an element of urgency applies or'
- When you cannot stop an incident that is currently happening or think it will re-occur or;
- Where the immediate attendance of a police officer is necessary, such as where someone is acting suspiciously and obviously about to commit a crime

In these cases you should call **999**.

If in doubt, ask yourself:

- Will a delay have a disastrous effect on the incident I am reporting?
- Will someone's life be at risk?
- Will more damage be caused?
- Will an offender escape?
- Will evidence be lost?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes: Ring **999**.

If you determine that there is no emergency and you believe a crime has been committed call the police on **101**. Make a note of any log number you are given and include it in any adult safeguarding referral.

4. PRESERVING EVIDENCE AND GATHERING INFORMATION

Be aware that in certain situations medical or other evidence will be needed. You may need to lock rooms or ensure that equipment and documents are secured appropriately, so that evidence cannot be tampered with. If there has been physical or sexual assault you should not clear up, move things, wash people or their possessions, e.g. bedding or clothing, before you report the incident and have taken the advice of the police.

Remember to:

- Stay calm and try not to show if you are shocked;
- Listen carefully and be sympathetic, you do not need to press the person for lots of detail, indeed taking a full written statement from the person at this point could be too stressful and jeopardise any future police investigation;
- Tell the person they have done the right thing in telling you and that the abuse is not their fault;
- Tell the person that you are treating what they said seriously and that you will be talking to someone responsible about it, e.g. at least your manager;
- Tell them that you will do your best to support them;
- Clarify with them the nature of the abuse and establish if it needs an urgent response. If so, keep them as calm as possible until the police arrive;
- Make sure that everything you do keeps the person safe for now
 - For example, if you contact or question the alleged abuser you may be placing the vulnerable adult at risk.

Follow information sharing protocols - only share the person's information with the people who need to know. Observe confidentiality of all concerned at all times, as appropriate.

Decisions about who needs to know and what needs to be known should be taken on a case by case basis. **BUT** if a person is experiencing life threatening abuse or abuse likely to lead to serious mental or physical harm or a child or other vulnerable adult is also at risk, then the vulnerable person's wishes for the matter not to be reported may be overridden.

Principles of confidentiality designed to safeguard and promote the interests of an adult should not be confused with those designed to protect the interests of the organisation and must never be allowed to conflict with the welfare of an adult.

Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy and it is inappropriate to give assurances of absolute confidentiality. It may be that the person you are seeking to protect asks you not to do or say anything at all, although they say they are being abused. Whilst respecting this it is important that you **MUST** share it with a responsible person, which must at least include your manager, but assure them that you are listening to them and will let the responsible person know that they want nothing more to happen.

Always explain to a person if you are sharing information without their consent and why.

5. IF A CHILD (NOT VULNERABLE ADULT) IS BEING HARMED OR IS AT RISK OF HARM

Staff must be aware that in situations where there is a concern that an adult at risk is or could be being abused or neglected and there are children in the same household, they too could be at risk.

If there are concerns about abuse or neglect of children and young people under the age of 18 the matter must be responded to immediately in line with Independent People's ***Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures***, the [South West Child Protection Procedures](#), and Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines and protocols.

6. RECORDING AND REPORTING YOUR CONCERNS

All staff have a responsibility to consult with their line manager or a **Designated Manager** (see **Appendix 1**) when they have concerns about the safety of a vulnerable adult. Even if a case has been reported to the police, it will still need to be reported internally and to the local authority, regardless of any action we are taking ourselves.

If you urgently need to make a safeguarding referral see **Appendix 1** for up to date contact details and details of what you will need to report.

Whatever the source of the information you have received it must be treated seriously, checked, recorded (in a Safeguarding Log) and, in all cases, shared with your manager or Designated Manager - this includes any work that you or anyone else may need to do to support or manage risk from perpetrators or potential perpetrators (where this is in our control). You have a duty to note factual, timely and concise records. Whenever a complaint or allegation of abuse is made, all staff must keep clear and accurate records which include what follow up actions we will be taking or have taken and when. Records should also include a summary of past incidents, concerns, risks and patterns, as appropriate. All records must include case closure reasons.

All care agencies and professions equally share the responsibility for the identification of abuse and for ensuring appropriate action is taken. If you consider that a person may lack mental capacity to make decisions to keep themselves or others safe, please refer to

Section 6 in the Policy above and seek advice from the **Designated Manager (see Appendix 1)**.

If you are uncomfortable contacting your line manager or any other manager with detail of an allegation please follow Independent People's **Concerns at Work Policy**.

DISCUSSION WITH YOUR MANAGER

The following questions will help you and your manager decide what to do next:

- What is your concern?
- How long have you been concerned?
- Who else has concerns?
- What do you think could be happening to the vulnerable adult?

List a range of possible things that could be happening, rather than jumping to one conclusion:

- How could you find out whether each of these possibilities is true?
- What information do you have already?
- What have you already done to address your concerns?
- Have you discussed your concerns with the vulnerable adult
- If yes - what did they say?
- If no - why not?
- What would be the possible impact on the vulnerable adult?

Your manager should question you about the reasons for your concerns.

Possible evidence of abuse should be considered in relation to the situation in which it occurred and the person's history. You should check our own records for additional information which might help show whether the concern is likely to indicate abuse or the risk of abuse. This could include information about what interventions have been previously offered to the young person and their outcomes.

Following consultation with your line manager a decision will be reached on how to proceed. This will include deciding whether, when and how any concerns will be discussed with the young person whether a referral to the local authority is necessary.

If concerns remain following the discussion you (or your manager) could contact someone in another agency and discuss the situation (without mentioning the person's name). You or your manager may also seek advice from the relevant safeguarding adults team prior to a decision on how to proceed.

NO LONGER HAS CONCERNS

If you and your manager decide that there is no reason to be concerned or that the vulnerable adult's needs can be met by Independent People alone, you should continue to provide services as before, or additional services from Independent People and partner agencies as required.

Decisions made should be clearly recorded on case records, giving a clear explanation why a referral to the relevant safeguarding adults team was not made.

6.1 HOW TO REPORT YOUR CONCERNS

When it is time for you to report your allegation you will be expected to give relevant details of the person you seek to protect.

You should report as much information as possible, but **do not delay**. You must pass on the following details (where known) and refer to the relevant local authority reporting process as detailed in **Appendix 1** below:

- Name and date of birth of victim and why they are considered to be vulnerable;
- Whether consent to share information has been provided;
- Circumstances and type of the abuse (including location), where the victim lives and with whom;
- Services the victim receive and from whom, including other named professionals if known;
- Who is providing the information to you;
- Who was the person or persons suspected or implicated in the abuse and their relationship to the victim if known and, if they are one of our service users, what we are doing to support them and manage the risk;
- Your concerns and the reasons for those concerns, including if there is a risk of further harm to the victim or other people may be at risk of harm.

If you do not have all this information and the situation is urgent **do not delay**, report it first. There should be no delay in reporting serious concerns.

If you are quoting someone else then be sure this is clear when reporting - it is important that the initial referral is clear, so try to use the person's own words.

Ensure all records are signed and dated.

Ensure that all responses are recorded in the Safeguarding Log, including full details and roles/responsibilities of any designated local authority officers or staff and/or other professionals involved, including the police.

The information we share will be treated in the strictest confidence within the limits of the law, which requires that the police are informed where there is serious risk to life or information about a crime is discovered.

There is a lot of information to impart when you hear about safeguarding concerns, so unless it is an absolute emergency, taking notes will show the person that you are taking them seriously, are trying to get it right and not panicking because of their disclosure.

7. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

A Safeguarding Adults referral will be given high priority if it indicates that there is a risk to an individual's physical, emotional or mental wellbeing and is considered a critical or

substantial risk to independence under section 42 of the [Care Act 2014](#) and the [Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(revised 2016\)](#) eligibility criteria.

The local authority has a duty to co-ordinate the interagency response to safeguarding adults referrals and will consult with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the police, and other relevant agencies where this is appropriate.

If an investigation takes place, the local authority may designate a lead officer to respond to the allegations and/or convene a strategy discussion to decide the best way to investigate the allegation(s) or we may be invited to a multi-agency conference or multi-agency public protection arrangement (MAPPA) meeting. A team manager or Designated Manager will be the coordinating manager responsible for ensuring that the allegation is dealt with properly, and they attend any relevant meetings, with involved staff accompanying as appropriate.

If it is determined that an individual may require support from an independent advocate, especially if the adult has substantial difficulty in understanding the process or being involved in it, then relevant staff or managers should support this relationship.

In the extremely rare likelihood that we may be invited by a local Safeguarding Adults Board to participate in a Safeguarding Adult Review for cases of serious abuse or neglect, the most senior designated safeguarding lead within the organisation will coordinate organisational involvement.

8. Allegations against members of staff or volunteers

An allegation may relate to any person who works with vulnerable adults they support in their role, who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a vulnerable adult or may have harmed a vulnerable adult; and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a vulnerable adult; and/or
- Behaved towards a vulnerable adult or adults in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Such allegations are distinct from a general concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint.

The procedure for dealing with allegations against staff may also include the following and, therefore, must also be adhered to:

- If there are concerns about the person's behaviour towards their own children or children unrelated to their employment or voluntary work and there has been a recommendation from a strategy discussion that consideration should be given to the risk posed to children and young people they work with;
- When an allegation is made about abuse that took place some time ago and the accused person may still be working with or have contact with children and young people.

If you have a concern that a worker may have behaved inappropriately or you have received information that may constitute an allegation, you should:

- **Report it to a Designated Manager** as soon as possible, however trivial it may seem;
- If for some reason the Designated Managers are not available, or if the CEO or another senior manager is the subject of the allegation or concern, then the Chair of the Board should be contacted (**see Appendix 1 for contact details**);
- Make a signed and dated written record of your concerns, observations or the information you have received to pass on to the Designated Senior Manager or Board member;
- Maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst an allegation is being considered or investigated and follow local information sharing protocols.

You should not:

- Attempt to deal with the situation yourself;
- Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents;
- Keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality;
- Take any action that might undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents or carers.

The Designated Manager will contact the relevant local authority safeguarding adults team **WITHIN 1 WORKING DAY** of receiving the report of an allegation.

Referral to the safeguarding adults team should not be delayed in order to gather further information, nor should any action be taken that might undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing or interviewing the alleged perpetrator, prior to contacting the safeguarding adults team.

The safeguarding adults team will provide advice and guidance and be involved in the management and oversight of all allegations, as well as liaising with the Designated Senior Manager, all other parties and monitoring the progress of all cases. They will advise on further action that needs to be taken and will liaise with police or relevant local authority teams, where they are or may need to be involved.

In all cases when allegations or serious concerns about staff or volunteers have been referred directly to the police or local authority teams, the safeguarding adults team should be informed within one working day by the police force's designated officer or relevant local authority team being informed.

Consideration of allegations against staff may include up to 3 elements:

- Enquiries and assessment by local authority teams about whether a vulnerable adult is in need of protection or in need of services;
- Police investigation of possible criminal offences;

- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual, which could initially include suspension from duty.

9. PROFESSIONAL DISAGREEMENTS

- 9.1** If, following a safeguarding referral, the relevant worker and their line manager are dissatisfied with the local authority's proposed action or decision not to investigate, they must discuss this with the Designated Manager.
- 9.2** The Designated Manager will then advise on further action in line with the Local Safeguarding Board's Procedure for Dealing with Professional Disagreements in relation to safeguarding children.
- 9.3** This action may involve the Designated Manager discussing the case with the relevant manager in the safeguarding adults team.
- 9.4** Staff must be aware that problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard vulnerable adults.
- 9.5** Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion.

10. KEEPING PEOPLE INFORMED AND CLOSING CASES

Where a service user has disclosed information about abuse or the risk of abuse the relevant Independent People manager/worker should ensure, as far as they are able to, that the "discloser" is kept informed about what will happen next. This will help to re-assure them about what to expect.

All workers who continue to have a role in a safeguarding case should keep themselves and other professionals involved and informed throughout, to the point that the case is concluded and/or handed over to other professionals or the police.

Once a case has been fully investigated, prescribed actions have been undertaken and the safeguarding issue has been resolved, open safeguarding logs will be authorised for closure by the relevant team manager or Designated Manager.

A decision will be made about what information is shared with the individual adult, the alleged/proven perpetrator (if they are one of our service users) and involved professionals in regard to the resolution of the case - and who will share it. This includes any information that needs to be shared with others (who need to know) if any individual or group of individuals continue to pose a threat to other people.

Finally, the relevant manager will, as required, complete a written record of the investigation and outcome and share it, including any lessons learned that may need to be adopted by the organisation, with relevant internal managers and senior managers and external professionals - to enable suitable practice, policy or other changes to be made.

Appendix 1: CONTACT DETAILS FOR ADULT SAFEGUARDING.

1. Designated Senior Managers (Safeguarding Leads) within Independent People.

Operations Director: Dawn Taylor

- Address: 1625 Independent People, Kingsley Hall, 59 Old Market Street, Bristol, BS2 0ER.
- Telephone: 0117 317 8800
- Work mobile: 07525 910 908
- dawn.taylor@1625ip.co.uk

Or in their absence - Chief Executive: Dom Wood

- Address as above
- Work mobile: 07531820 242]
- dom.wood@1625ip.co.uk

2. Designated Board member for safeguarding

- Julia Clarke
lady.berkeley@btinternet.com Mobile phone: 07803 614 290
- **Or in their absence - Chair of the Board, Nick Hooper**
Please contact 0117 317 8800 for contact details

3. PREVENT leadership within Independent People:

Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Karen Clark, Team Manager

karen.clark@1625ip.co.uk Work mobile: 07984 576 305

4. EXTERNAL REPORTING

In an emergency - ring 999	
South Gloucestershire Council Adult Care Telephone only: 01454 868 007 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) 01454 615 165 (out of hours/weekends) Website link	Bristol City Council Care Direct Use the online form to report suspected adult abuse if nobody's health or safety is in immediate danger: Website link or Call Care Direct on 0117 922 2700 (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

	or call out of hours/weekends on 01454 615 165
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Other local authorities:

- **Bath and North East Somerset**
 - Tel: 01225 396 000
 - [Website link](#)

- **North Somerset Council**
 - Tel: 01275 88 88 01
 - Email care.connect@n-somerset.gov.uk
 - [Website link](#)

- **Somerset County Council**
 - Tel: 0300 123 2224
 - Email adults@somerset.gov.uk
 - [Website link](#)

- **Out of hours telephone for all of the above authorities - 01454 615 165**

Appendix 2: Safeguarding adults training commitment

- All staff, managers, members of the SMT and Board members receive specific and detailed safeguarding induction training on commencement of their role (whilst awaiting a place on relevant safeguarding training);
- All relevant front line staff, managers and members of the SMT complete appropriate safeguarding and associated training (Child Protection, SAF, Domestic Violence Awareness, Sexual Violence & Exploitation, WRAP - Prevent Awareness) as documented in Independent People's ***Training and Development Policy***;
- Managers or specialist workers cascade information from advanced training courses to relevant staff as appropriate, including to notify staff about legislative or policy changes;
- We monitor safeguarding through our specific safeguarding training plan, which provides us with an organisational view of all safeguarding training attended or planned - to ensure that all relevant people have attended or are booked to attend, at the earliest available date, on initial, advanced or refresher safeguarding training as required for their role.

Appendix 3: Safeguarding resources used in the writing of this Policy and for use by staff

Relevant sections of information and guidance provided by [Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board](#)

Relevant sections of information and guidance provided by [South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board](#)

The regional [Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy 2017](#) (Bristol, BANES, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Somerset)

[Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#)

[Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#) and;
[South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Information Sharing Policy](#)

[Social Care Institute for Excellence, Adult Safeguarding: Sharing Information guidance 2015](#), as recommended by South Gloucestershire Council

[Section 2 of the Channel Guidance 2015](#)

[Adult Safeguarding practice questions. SCIE \(updated July 2018\)](#)

Guidance for providers on developing internal audit adult Safeguarding policies and procedures. Department of Health, LGA and ADASS (August 2014)

Adult Safeguarding self-assessment checklist against the Care Act statutory guidance for housing and housing support providers, Housing and Safeguarding Adults Alliance (November 2014)

Appendix 4: Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Staff should also refer to section 9 of the above Policy.

1. Every service user should be treated equally and with dignity, with their safety and wellbeing central to each worker's relationship with them.
2. All staff are required to be conversant with and follow Independent People's **Concerns at Work Policy** (Whistleblowing).
3. Where there are any concerns that a colleague may have behaved inappropriately or where we receive information that may constitute an allegation, all staff are required to report this to a Designated Safeguarding Manager as soon as possible, however trivial. This includes reporting concerns about colleagues from other organisations.
4. Workers should not enter into a close relationships - social, physical, emotional or sexual - or form relationships with any service user outside of the range of our service specification. Workers should not take service users to their homes, give out their personal telephone numbers or email addresses or connect with them via any social media sites (unless expressly authorised to do so) or befriend service users using personal online accounts, including e-mail, chat rooms and social networking sites.
5. Any inappropriate behaviour towards workers by a service user should be recorded and reported, and if this behaviour was witnessed by other staff, the witness (es) should also record and report what they witnessed.
6. Workers should avoid giving lifts to service users except to assist in the provision of housing and support services or as part of organised activities.
7. Staff must never threaten or physically punish service users in their care. Any use of corporal punishment is not permitted. This may be a criminal matter for the police and will be viewed as a disciplinary matter and may be considered as gross misconduct. The term corporal punishment should be taken to include:
 - Any application of force as a punishment; slapping; throwing missiles; rough handling;
 - Punching or pushing in the heat of the moment in response to violence from young people.

It does not prevent a worker from taking necessary physical intervention (restraint), where any other course of action is likely to fail, to avert the immediate and serious danger of personal injury to a young person, the worker or another person. If any form of restraint is carried out in an individual situation, it must be evident that without such action, injury would occur to the adult or others.

Before considering any type of restraint, all other possible alternatives must have been explored in order to manage the behaviour and only the least restrictive and least detrimental should have been employed. Any restraint will be commensurate with the risk involved and would only be used as a short-term measure.

Staff should not forcibly touch anyone without reference to the guidance provided in safe restraint training, which they must have attended, in order that restraint is administered within the clear boundaries of such training and practice.

8. Staff are required to follow clear procedures to prevent themselves or others from personal benefit when working with service users.

Independent People is not a specialist financial advice or welfare rights agency and it is outside of workers' professional role to provide such a level of advice to service users on their finances. However, we need to recognise that, as part of their support role, staff inevitably find that money is an important issue in people's lives and need to be able to offer basic budgeting, benefits and debt advice to service users. Where there is a need for specific, detailed professional financial advice, service users will be referred to an appropriate internal or external service.

To ensure appropriate accountability, details of all interactions in relation to finance, e.g. budgeting, debt, benefits, are recorded by staff in detail and discussed through the supervision process.

All staff are required to account fully for any monies paid to Independent People or handled by Independent People's staff on behalf of a service user, for example, individual grants. Staff must follow the relevant financial procedures when handling or accounting for any monies held by Independent People or Independent People's workers on behalf of a service user.

9. Staff must never take on the role of Lasting Power of Attorney for a service user and if requested to do so, should discuss the situation with their line manager immediately, so that appropriate support and advice can be provided to the service user. ;
10. Gifts offered or given to staff by service users (or vice versa) must be reported to the line manager, so that a decision can be made on how the gift, or offer of a gift, should be dealt with.
11. All allegations or suspicions of abuse, including inappropriate behaviour, inappropriate relationships or corporal punishment by a worker (paid or otherwise) will be taken seriously and treated carefully and fairly in accordance with our Safeguarding Children and Young People and Safeguarding Adults Policies, the South West Child Protection Procedures and the Safeguarding Adults Multi-agency Policy and, where appropriate, reported to the police as potential or actual criminal activity.
12. Inappropriate behaviour or relationships with any service user outside the boundaries of our service specifications, including the list above is likely to additionally result in a disciplinary investigation being undertaken and may be considered as gross misconduct.

Last updated 21/09/18

Review Date 29/3/19

**Approved by Board:
Nick Hooper
Chair of Board**

**Approved by Chief Executive:
Dom Wood
Chief Executive**