

Safeguarding Adults Policy

Contents Page 1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Legal and Regulatory Framework	1
3.0	Scope	1
4.0	Policy Statement	3
5.0	Partnership Approach	3
6.0	Confidentiality	4
7.0	Training and Support	5
8.0	Monitoring and Evaluation	5

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The following Policy sets out Blossom Projects approach to the Safeguarding of Adults

2.0 LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

See Appendix 7 – The Legal Framework

3.0 SCOPE

The Policy applies to all staff who work with Vulnerable Adults as outlined in the definition below.

Definitions

Who is a 'vulnerable adult'?

Definition of a vulnerable adult

Service users defined as 'vulnerable adults' are potentially at risk and are protected via legislation. A useful definition of a **vulnerable adult** is derived from the *Care Standards Act 2000* which states that a vulnerable adult is a person:

- a) To whom accommodation and nursing or personal care is provided in a care home;
- b) To whom personal care is provided in their own home under arrangements made by a domiciliary care agency; or
- c) To whom prescribed services are provided by an independent hospital, independent clinic, independent medical agency or National Health Service body.

- d) To whom support, care or accommodation is provided by an individual (not being a relative of that adult) under the terms of an agreement between that individual and a person.

Blossom Project recognises that all its service users may be vulnerable and open to abuse and that Blossom Project has a duty to protect their interests.

These definitions are broadly based and include any person for whom support is being provided. The definitions are being developed further as a result of the passing of the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006'.

This vulnerability may be due to a range of issues, such as service users who have low self-esteem/lack of power, which can be due to social exclusion through:

- disability including learning disability
- mental health needs
- sensory impairment
- age-related infirmity or frailty
- current/past alcohol or drug misuse
- offending history
- long term homelessness/living on the streets
- domestic violence
- ongoing discrimination/abuse due to ethnicity, immigration status, gender, sexuality, religion, culture, etc.

Abuse

A wide range of behaviours may be considered abusive:

- Abuse may be carried out deliberately, or through negligence or ignorance.
- The abuse may involve a single incident, or multiple incidents.
- It may happen to one person in a continuing relationship, or in a service context to more than one person at a time.
- Blossom Project will try to look beyond a single incident or breach of standards to find out if there are underlying dynamics which are abusive.
- For a detailed list of types of abuse, please see [Appendix 3: Recognising Abuse](#).

A short list of different types of abuse is given below. Forms of abuse may include:

- Physical abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological/emotional abuse
- Financial/material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Social abuse
- Institutional abuse

Abuse can occur in any context, whether the vulnerable adult lives in their own home, in a residential care home, sheltered housing, or a shared supported housing environment. Although people who perpetrate abuse are often well known to the victims, almost any person who is in direct contact with a vulnerable person could pose a risk to them.

4.0 POLICY STATEMENT

BLOSSOM PROJECT believes that every adult accessing BLOSSOM PROJECT'S services has the right to live free from abuse. Abuse is a violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons.

BLOSSOM PROJECT understands that it must have procedures in place for the health and safety and protection of vulnerable service users. The primary responsibility of BLOSSOM PROJECT is to prevent abuse from happening where possible, and where this fails, to make sure that there are robust measures in place to deal with incidents of abuse and learn from any such events.

5.0 PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

General

Staff and managers respect the service user's right to self-determination, and follow the guidelines on self-determination and capacity.

People using the service and/or their representatives are made aware of what abuse is and the safeguards in place for their protection should they need them. Access to external agencies or advocacy services is actively promoted.

The service has an open culture where individuals feel safe and supported to share any concerns in relation to their protection and safety.

Service users are actively involved in reviewing the policies and procedures. Minutes or other records of the review process demonstrate participation.

Staff work within the inter-agency policies and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults.

Risk and Protection

BLOSSOM PROJECT will act in a way that supports the rights of the service user to lead an independent life based on self-determination and personal choice.

We understand that there will be cases where a service user may be unable to make their own decisions and/or to protect themselves, their assets and bodily integrity.

BLOSSOM PROJECT acknowledges that individuals' rights to independent lives will sometimes involve a degree of risk and will ensure that the risk is recognised, understood by all and minimised whenever possible. Where an individual chooses to accept this risk, we will respect their wishes within the context of their capacity to anticipate and understand the risk.

We will make sure that we take into account the privacy, dignity, independence and choice of our service user when deciding on appropriate action in investigations into alleged abuse. We will ensure that the service user is fully supported and has access to all the relevant information to help them make an informed decision about possible follow-up action.

We will make sure that action can only be taken in the absence of consent from the service user if:

- The service user or others are in physical danger, or
- The service user lacks capacity as defined by the Mental Capacity Act 2005
- BLOSSOM PROJECT recognises that some instances of abuse constitute a criminal offence and in this case, the vulnerable adult is entitled to the protection of the law in the same way as any other person. Criminal offences include: physical or psychological assault, rape, theft, fraud, and race or gender discrimination.

Working with Service Users and their Families and Carers

BLOSSOM PROJECT staff will strive to work in partnership with families and carers; however, our primary responsibility is with the service user.

Prevention and dealing with incidents of abuse

The primary responsibility of BLOSSOM PROJECT is to prevent abuse from happening where possible, and where this fails, to make sure that there are robust measures in place to deal with incidents of abuse. Ways in which we can do this include:

- Making sure staff are aware of abuse, including being aware of indicators and of different types of abuse.
- Making sure staff are sufficiently skilled at responding to concerns of abuse.
- Making sure that robust policies and procedures are in place to deal with allegations/concerns of abuse, that staff understand these policies and procedures, and that they are being followed.
- Making sure that breaches of policy and procedure are dealt with.
- Working in partnership with other agencies, such as social services and the police.
- Reporting cases of suspected abuse to the Director of Services, who has the responsibility of monitoring these.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are DBS checked and that referrals are made to police; local Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) Board; Independent Barring Board (IBB); Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Social Services as required.
- Learning from how we respond to incidents of abuse to improve our working practices, policy and procedure, and training.

6.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

BLOSSOM PROJECT 's confidentiality policy and procedure will be followed in all cases when we receive information about abuse/alleged abuse of one of our service users.

Where the possible perpetrator is a BLOSSOM PROJECT staff member, confidentiality will be respected in line with the BLOSSOM PROJECT Whistle Blowing policy and procedure. If a staff member receives information about a concern/allegation of abuse where another staff member is the subject of the allegation, they will not disclose this to staff members other than their line manager.

7.0 TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The safeguarding vulnerable adult policy, procedure and guidelines are explained in the staff induction, and staff sign to agree that they have been explained to them and that they understand them.

Training in the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and dealing with challenging behaviour is part of BLOSSOM PROJECT's rolling training programme, and all new support staff will receive training within their first six months. Records are kept to show that staff have attended this training. Knowledge and understanding in this area is constantly checked at team meetings and during supervision sessions. Individual staff are also trained to respond appropriately to physical and verbal aggression.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Training incorporates:

- Awareness of what constitutes abuse.
- How to recognise abuse.
- The process to follow in case of an incident/disclosure.
- Working with other agencies to protect vulnerable adults.
- BLOSSOM PROJECT has policies and procedures in place to ensure staff are supported, and their training needs are identified through regular supervision and appraisal. Records show that the supervision and appraisal standards are being met.

8.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Quarterly reports incorporating details of any reports of suspected or reported incidents of abuse of vulnerable adults are completed by Managers.

Senior Managers will review how incidents have been managed at least quarterly. Senior Managers review whether:

- The incident has been dealt with in accordance with the policy and procedure.
- Any follow-up action is needed with regard to the staff or service users concerned.

- There are any 'learning points' or good practice that could be shared within BLOSSOM PROJECT.
- There are any barriers to Service Users or other stakeholders reporting POVA incidents.
- Any further training needs have been identified.
- The prevention of adult abuse policy and procedure, or any related policy and procedure (e.g. incident management) need to be reviewed.
- If Senior Managers agree that there need to be changes to the training programme or to policy and procedure this will be referred to the Policy Implementation Group (PIG).

The Director of Services will review the training:

- In response to changes in legislation.
- In response to good practice from other agencies.