

# **CHAT Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy**

## **Introduction**

*People who work with vulnerable adults may sometimes have concerns about their safety or wellbeing. CHAT accepts that they have a duty of care to protect vulnerable adults who receive a service from them.*

*This Policy also incorporates guidance from the Devon Multi-Agency Code of Practice for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse.*

*CHAT believes that all vulnerable adults have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. CHAT is committed to safeguarding from harm, all vulnerable adults using its services or involved in any of its activities, and to treat them with respect during their dealings with CHAT.*

## **Aim of the Policy**

The aims of the policy are to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within the scope of the policy
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all vulnerable adults are protected and respected
- Promote best practice in how employees and associated workers interact with vulnerable adults while providing CHAT's services
- Develop clear guidance and procedures for those employees working with vulnerable adults and ensure through training and support that they are aware of these and able to implement them
- Provide a framework for developing partnerships with appropriate external bodies e.g. Devon Local Safeguarding Adults Board, to ensure that the policy continues to reflect legal and best practice requirements in respect of the responsibility of care of vulnerable adults

## **Scope of the Policy**

The policy is in respect of CHAT's responsibility towards vulnerable adults defined for the purpose of this policy, as someone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental or other

disability, age or illness, and is unable to take care of him or herself or is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

The employees, volunteers, other workers of CHAT involved in the provision of CHAT's services but not employed by CHAT including agency workers, who have dealings with vulnerable adults, are required to act in a position of trust and to act responsibly and within the law.

This policy should also be used in conjunction with CHAT's:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

### **Review**

This policy and the guidance will be reviewed annually, or whenever there is a change in the related legislation, or when an incident occurs. This will help us ensure that these documents are up to date and fit for purpose.

### **Definition of abuse**

A person may abuse a vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. This could be physical, domestic, sexual, psychological, financial or material, modern slavery, discriminatory, organisational, neglect & acts of omission and self-neglect. **See appendix for further information of types of abuse.**

### **Responsibility for the implementation of this Policy**

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Coordinator of CHAT.

The trustees of CHAT are responsible for ensuring that CHAT has a policy, which adequately provides protection for vulnerable adults in receipt of its services and for the regular review of this policy in the light of changes to legislation e.g. Data Protection Act, or new legislation or regulation.

**The Coordinator** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that those people appointed to CHAT, whose normal duties involve supporting vulnerable adults, are screened via Disclosure & Barring Service at an enhanced level.
- Ensuring that all necessary procedures and practices are in place, to provide adequate protection both for vulnerable adults and also protection for the employees involved with them.
- Ensuring that staff, volunteers and other workers dealing with vulnerable adults, are adequately trained and aware of their responsibilities in this area.
- Ensuring that any evidence or complaint of abuse or lack of care is reported to the appropriate body e.g. Care Direct, Police.
- Ensuring that employees and others do not work with vulnerable adults without a DBS check unless accompanied at all times by an employee who has an Enhanced DBS check.
- Ensuring that proper records are kept of any incidents within the service and that these are held securely.
- Working with other associated agencies, to ensure the proper transfer of information relating to dealings with vulnerable adults, where necessary.
- Ensuring that recruitment procedures are robust and that information pertinent to working with vulnerable adults is obtained during the recruitment procedure.

**Employees** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are familiar with and understand the policies and procedures relating to their work with vulnerable adults.
- Treating all vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact while carrying out their work equally and with respect.
- Reporting to the Coordinator any concerns they may have about abuse or a lack of care in respect of vulnerable adults, either from other staff or carers.

**Volunteers and agency workers** are responsible for:

- Working with employees of CHAT, to the same standard in ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable adults, within their scope.
- Participating in any training or development opportunities offered to them to improve their knowledge of skills in this area.

## **Procedure**

If you suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused and they are in immediate physical danger ring 999 or 112 from a mobile to ensure immediate safety.

If there is no immediate danger inform the Coordinator or ring Care Direct on 0845 1551 007 as soon as possible. Care Direct operates 8am to 8pm weekdays and 9am to 1pm Saturdays. Urgent calls outside these hours can be made to the Emergency Duty Team on 0845 6000 388.

Remember, do not investigate or ask questions.  
Do record any information you are aware of and date and sign it.

## Appendix

Abuse can fall into the following categories:

### Physical

This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, giving the wrong (or no) medication, restraining someone or only letting them do certain things at certain times.

### Domestic

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse. It also covers so-called 'honour' based violence.

### Sexual

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, taking sexual photographs, making someone look at pornography or watch sexual acts, sexual assault or sexual acts the adult didn't consent to or was pressured into consenting.

### Psychological

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, depriving someone of contact with someone else, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, putting pressure on someone to do something, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

### Financial or material

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, putting pressure on someone about their financial arrangements (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions) or the misuse or stealing of property, possessions or benefits.

### Modern slavery

This covers slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.

### Discriminatory

This includes types of harassment or insults because of someone's race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

### Organisational

This includes neglect and poor care in an institution or care setting such as a hospital or care home, or if an organisation provides care in someone's home. The abuse can be a one-off incident or repeated, on-going ill treatment. The abuse can be through neglect or poor professional practice, which might be because of structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

### Neglect and acts of omission

This includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, or not giving someone what they need to help them live, such as medication, enough nutrition and heating.

### Self-neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour which shows that someone isn't caring for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.