

HEALTHWATCH DONCASTER SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Policy statement

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that any safeguarding concerns or issues identified or shared with Healthwatch Doncaster staff and/or volunteers are appropriately and promptly addressed
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults at risk

1.2 Safeguarding adults refers to the shared Borough-wide procedure that works to protect adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

1.3 All Staff have a duty to report abuse or neglect that they have witnessed or that they suspect.

2. What is Adult Abuse?

2.1 Some adults are less able to protect themselves than others, and some have difficulty making their wishes and feelings known. This may make them vulnerable to abuse; within the Safeguarding Adults policy a Vulnerable Adult is defined as someone 18 years of age or over:

- who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness ...and
- is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation

2.2 Abuse is defined as: 'a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons' Abuse may be:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Emotional
- Financial
- Discriminatory
- Institutional

2.3 Abuse can be a single act or may continue over a long period. It can be unintentional or deliberate, but will result in harm to the victim, either physically, emotionally or in its effect on the person's wellbeing or development.

2.4 The definitions used here come from the Department of Health's guidance document 'No secrets'. The overall work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is also governed by the document 'Safeguarding Adults' which was produced by the Association of Directors of Social Services.

3. Local Procedure

3.1 The following are the steps to take when a resident or patient is thought to have suffered abuse or neglect or there has been an incident of abuse:

- All incidents of abuse or suspected incidents of abuse must be reported to the designated person in charge – Andrew Goodall – andrew.goodall@healthwatchdoncaster.org.uk 07834 686855
- All allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and with an open mind
- All those making a complaint or allegations must be taken seriously. Comments will be treated confidentially – but contents may be shared if they or others are at risk.
- If the person making a complaint is a resident, they must be reassured and every step taken to give them protection from reprisals or intimidation.
- If the person raising the complaint is a member of staff, they should be given support.
- All parties will be kept informed as appropriate
- If an injury has occurred, the person in charge must treat appropriately with either first aid or call for medical assistance

4. Reporting incidents

4.1 Staff and volunteers who recognise a safeguarding concern should:

1. Take action to keep the person safe if possible.
Consider:
 - Is an urgent police presence required to keep someone safe? If so, call 999
 - Does the person need urgent medical assistance / do they need an ambulance? If so, call 999
2. If a crime has occurred, be aware of the need to preserve evidence
3. If emergency action as calling 999 is not required, always inform the lead or nearest staff member or lead volunteer. You cannot keep the safeguarding information secret, even if the person asks you to. The staff and lead volunteers will have the contact information for both advise and reporting.

4. Clearly record what you have witnessed or been told, record your responses and any actions taken. Volunteers will be supported by staff and/or lead volunteer to record the concern or raise the alert.

4.2 Role of the staff or lead volunteer:

1. Consider if there are any actions you can take to keep the person at risk safe
2. Does anyone need urgent medical attention? Do you need to call an ambulance?
3. Is an urgent police presence required to keep someone safe?
4. If a crime has occurred, consider the need to report the incident to the police and be aware of the need to preserve evidence
5. Consider if a safeguarding concern should be raised with the local authority:
6. Do you feel abuse or neglect has taken place, or there is a risk of abuse or neglect?
7. Consider, wherever practicable, the person's wishes about raising a safeguarding concern with the local authority.

4.3 It is important wherever possible to involve the person at risk about decisions affecting them. If possible or practical, talk to them about their need for support and get their consent to raise a safeguarding concern. Usually the concern will be raised with adult social care. In some circumstances it may be necessary to raise a safeguarding concern, for example if you believe a serious crime is taking place even if the person does not wish for this to happen. Any such decision should be proportional to the risk for example:

- It is in the public interest e.g. there is also a risk to others, a member of staff or volunteer is involved, or the abuse has occurred on property owned or managed by an organisation with a responsibility to provide care.
- The person lacks mental capacity to consent and it is in the person's best interests. The person is subject to coercion or undue influence, to extent that they are unable to give consent. If the person appears to be at risk of serious harm or distress you may need to make a safeguarding alert even if the person has not consented to this.
- If the person does not want an alert raised consider what support and/or advice you could provide.

- Clearly record what you have witnessed or been told and any decisions you have made.

4.4 The incident must then also be reported to either:

Police: For any concerns which may involve a crime, these should be reported to the Police on 0114 220 2020. You must mention that the incident has involved a vulnerable adult.

Or

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council: For any other concerns, refer directly to the Council's Adult Contact Team on **01302 737391** (Between 08:30 & 17:00 Monday – Friday) or email adultcontactteam@doncaster.gov.uk

Out of these hours shown above, refer to Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council's Emergency Social Services Team on **01302 796000**

5. Preserving evidence

- 5.1 The scene of the incident or alleged abuse may be subject to an investigation. Any evidence should be preserved in order to facilitate that investigation.

6. Education and training

- 6.1 An online awareness training course is available for all working in health and Social care in Doncaster at: <http://doncaster.learningpool.com>

7. Further Advice on Safeguarding

- 7.1 Further information and advice on safeguarding vulnerable adults can be obtained by contacting the Safeguarding Unit at the Council on adultprotection-admin@doncaster.gov.uk

Telephone: 01302 736296

Address: Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

www.doncaster.gov.uk/sections/socialcareforadults/safeguardingadults