



**SAFEGUARDING
&
VULNERABLE PEOPLE
POLICY**

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Approved date: 06/03/2017

Review date: 06/03/2019

Approved by:

PRINCIPLES

Aspire Ryde operate on the principle most of our service users are to some degree vulnerable and may be in need of the protective intervention procedures outlined in section three.

If an allegation or disclosure is made concerning a member of staff or volunteer the appropriate measures to take are included in the whistleblowing policy and are in addition to the procedures as laid out later in this document. Aspire is committed to equal opportunity and justice for all. All team members, service users, learners, residents and visitors have the right to live free from harassment, intimidation, exploitation or abuse.

This Policy is to make explicit the roles and responsibilities of staff, volunteers and service users working and engaging with vulnerable people.

This policy is only effective with appropriate training and continued development of staff and volunteers.

INFORMATION SHARING

Aspire will share relevant information with any appropriate agency and this is seen as a vital tool in the protection of vulnerable person. If abuse is alleged, discovered or suspected it will be made clear that all such information will be passed to others on a "need to know" basis. The vulnerable person involved should be advised and the reasons explained for doing so.

In some circumstances information may be shared without the consent of the service user. Where this is or has been done staff need to ensure that clear documented reasons are given. Such reasons may include:-

- Risk of significant harm to the service user
- Potential risk of harm to others
- It is necessary for prevention of crime or disorder
- Service user lacks mental capacity to make an informed decision
- The alleged abuse is a staff member or volunteer worker with access to other vulnerable people.

The information to be shared should only be relevant to the situation, investigation or to protect the vulnerable person or other vulnerable people who may be at risk of harm.

DEFINITIONS

Harassment

- contact such as touching, patting, assault or gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour;
- unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, insults, jokes and banter;
- offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, electronic images, isolation or non co-operation and exclusion from social activities.
- unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature or behaviour of a hostile or offensive nature based on gender ... It can be physical, verbal or non-verbal.
- unwanted behaviour of a hostile or offensive nature based on race or ethnic origin by a person of one racial or ethnic origin against another person or people of another ethnic origin ... includes assaults of any kind, written or verbal threats or insults, ridicule of an individual on cultural grounds, racist jokes, and damage to property, the display of offensive graffiti.
- threatening or offensive behaviour by a person of one religious background against another individual because of their beliefs and/or practices.
- threatening or intimidating behaviour towards a person because that person has a disability. The term disability can mean physical or mental disability, emotional behavioural or learning difficulties.
- [Unacceptable behaviour based on] assumptions about health, lifestyles or gossip and innuendo, which may undermine the dignity of those affected.

Bullying

- persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable which undermines their self confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress. This behaviour can be directed at individuals one at a time or groups of individuals.
- Intimidation and aggression
- Blocking promotion of staff development opportunities
- Disparaging comments or remarks, often in front of others
- Isolating certain individuals and limiting consultation on important issues

Vulnerability

Vulnerability is not a rigid concept, and can apply to a wide range of needs and situations. It must not be assumed that concepts such as age, disability or gender automatically mean that an individual is vulnerable.

Some clients are under 18 years old, and are also vulnerable in that they may be unable to prevent themselves becoming harmed or exploited. There may be different times and situations when a person is more vulnerable than others and there may also be conflicting views (including the person themselves) as to the vulnerability of a person. Each situation must, therefore, be assessed on an individual basis.

TYPES OF ABUSE

For the purposes of this policy the following definition of abuse applies. For the purposes of good management, abuse is behaviour not constituting harassment or bullying. Given that:

- Abuse is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes him or her harm, endangers their life or violates their human and civil rights. It concerns the misuse of power, trust, respect, control and/or authority.
- Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, spiritual, financial, discriminatory, or neglect.
- Abuse may be a single or repeated act over time. It may occur as a result of failure to undertake action or appropriate care task.
- Abuse may be perpetrated by an individual, a group or an organisation.
- Abuse can occur in any relationship.

'No Secrets' suggests that the categories of Abuse include:

- Discriminatory
- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological (also known as emotional)
- Financial or material
- Neglect
- Institutional Abuse.

This is a series of rules, behaviour or action by staff group which, whether intended or not, causes distress and or harm to an individual or group.

Sexual Abuse

The involvement of people in sexual activities which either;

- They cannot give their consent,
- They do not want,
- They cannot understand, or ;
- Takes place where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority.

This includes relationships, which create unequal power, or situations characterised by intimidation, coercion or exploitation. Sexual abuse includes rape, buggery, and situations where the perpetrator touches the abused person's body (e.g. breasts, buttocks, genital area), exposes his/her genitals (possibly encouraging the abused person to touch them), coerces the abused person into participating in or watching pornographic videos or photographs.

Psychological Abuse

Intentional, or/and unintentional use of behaviour that causes mental or physical harm to a person. It is behaviour that creates isolation and over dependence and which results in the denial of a person's human and civil rights including choice, opinion, privacy, dignity, sexual orientation, spiritual, religious and cultural beliefs. This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, excessive criticism and isolation/ withdrawal from services or support networks.

Financial Abuse

The deliberate denial of access to an adult's money, property or possessions or the extortion of such through verbal, physical and emotional threats and exploitation of a person's financial situation.

This includes the withholding of money or the unauthorised or improper use of a person's money or property, usually to the disadvantage of the person to whom it belongs. It also includes persuading a vulnerable person to enter into a financial transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent.

Neglect

It involves the failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when that person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk. This involves the withholding of the necessities of life and includes failure to provide food, shelter, clothing, heating, medical care, hygiene, personal, social and emotional care.

Discriminatory Abuse

This policy must be viewed in relation to the duties, principles and values as embodied in anti-discriminatory legislation. This includes the Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

It is behaviour, both intentional and unintentional, that is motivated by discriminatory and oppressive attitudes towards an adult based on, race, gender, cultural background, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age. It is behaviour that exploits and excludes them, for example, from opportunities of education, health, justice, social status and protection.

Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse is coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The target experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal experience. This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of scripture or the authority of leadership or penitential discipline to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, suggestion that the abuser has a "divine appointment", intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, isolation from others, especially those external to the abuse context.

ASSESSMENT

Abuse often occurs when a vulnerable person is faced with a set of circumstances where there is potential for harm. The presence of one or more of these factors does not automatically imply that abuse will follow, but may increase the likelihood. The following are therefore to be considered predictive factors.

Factors affecting the Individual:

- poor communication or communication difficulties,
- history of minor injuries,
- physical and /or emotional dependence on others,
- mental health needs,
- rejection of help,
- aggression,
- self-harming behaviour,
- high level of dependency on others to meet their support needs,
- history of repeatedly making allegations of abuse,
- substance misuse,
- previous history of violent relationships within the family or social networks.

Discriminatory Indicators

- unequal treatment
- verbal abuse
- inappropriate use of language
- slurs
- harassment
- deliberate exclusion

Physical Abuse Indicators

- Injuries that are not explained satisfactorily
- Person exhibiting untypical self harm
- Unexplained bruising
- Unexplained burns
- Unexplained, or inappropriately explained, fractures at various stages of healing, to any part of the body
- Unexplained cuts or scratches
- Medical problems that go unattended
- Person flinches at physical contact
- Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of particular people
- Person asks not to be hurt
- Person may repeat what perpetrator has said, e.g. "shut up or I'll hit you"
- Person wears clothes that cover all parts of their body or specific parts of their body

Sexual Abuse Factors

- Person discloses, either fully or partially, that sexual abuse is occurring or has occurred in the past
- Person appears unusually subdued, withdrawn or has poor concentration
- Person exhibits significant change in sexual behaviour or outlook
- Person's underclothing is torn, stained or bloody
- A woman who lacks the mental capacity to consent to sexual intercourse becomes pregnant

Psychological Abuse Indicators

- Untypical ambivalence, deference, passivity or resignation
- Person appears anxious or withdrawn, especially in the presence of the alleged perpetrator
- Person exhibits low self esteem
- Person rejects their own cultural background and/or racial origin
- Untypical changes in behaviour, e.g. sleep disturbance
- Person is not allowed visitors/phone calls
- Person is locked in a room/in their home

Financial Abuse Indicators

- Lack of money especially after benefit day
- Inadequately explained inability to pay bills
- Disparity between income and living conditions

- Recent acquaintances expressing sudden or disproportionate interest in the person and their money
- Person has guaranteed high benefit income
- Person is unable to administer their own money due to lack of capacity/numeracy skills
- Person is dependent on other people to administer money

Neglect Indicators

- Person has inadequate heating and/or lighting
- Person's physical condition/appearance is poor
- Person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss, is dehydrated
- Person is not afforded appropriate privacy or dignity
- Callers/visitors are refused access to the person
- Person is exposed to unacceptable risk

Institutional Abuse Indicators

- no flexibility in bed time and/or deliberate waking
- lack of personal clothing and possessions
- illegal confinement or restriction
- inappropriate use of power or control
- people referred to or spoken to with disrespect
- inflexible services based on needs of provider rather than the person receiving the services
- undue or inappropriate physical interventions

Be aware that every other category of abuse will almost inevitably involve elements of psychological abuse. Signs of psychological abuse may well be indicative of other forms of abuse taking place.

ALERTING OTHERS IN ASPIRE TO SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE/NEGLECT

Any staff member or volunteer who is told of, or suspects, the abuse/neglect of any vulnerable person should follow the whistleblowing procedure. Staff and volunteers who alert others in good faith will receive the full support of Aspire for their actions.

If there is any doubt the informant should contact the CEO/Project Leader who is the lead person responsible for Vulnerable People within the Aspire.

PROCEDURE

In determining how serious or extensive abuse must be to justify intervention a useful starting point can be found in "Who Decides?" (Ministry of Justice Guidelines) Building on the concept of "significant harm" introduced in The Children Act, the Law Commission suggested that:

“Harm should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical) but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health, and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development”.

The seriousness or extent of abuse is often not clear when anxiety is first expressed. It is important, therefore, when considering the appropriateness of intervention, to approach reports of incidents or allegations with an open mind. In making any assessment of seriousness, the following factors need to be considered:

- The capacity and wishes of the service user
- The vulnerability of the service user
- The nature and extent of the abuse
- The length of time it has been occurring.
- The impact on the individual and the risk of repeated or increasingly serious behaviour
- The contact the alleged perpetrator may have with other vulnerable adults or children.

Abuse can occur within any relationship and is often perpetrated by a person well known to the victim rather than by strangers.

If abuse is witnessed, alleged or disclosed the following procedure must be followed. At any stage, a team member may consult the Project Leader/CEO if they are in any doubt how to proceed – or indeed, if they are not sure that abuse has occurred.

- 1) Make a written record. Never promise confidentiality (see Guidelines for Professional Boundaries). Record all relevant facts, as you would any other incident.
- 2) Discuss the incident and your report with your Project Leader/CEO.
- 3) Determine whether social services need to be called. Where the suspected abused is under 18 years old, social services must be called. If in doubt, call for advice in confidence.

- 4) Determine whether the police need to be called.
- 5) Take the necessary steps to ensure a continuing duty of care to the victim, or alleged victim. Consider throughout the rights of the alleged perpetrator.
- 6) Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a resident has been abusing others, a notice to quit should be issued, unless there are substantial reasons to believe that abuse will not continue.

In all cases full and detailed records should be kept and filed in a confidential section of the service users support file.

See appendix 2 for flowchart.

APPENDIX 1 – Aspire Ryde – Our Vision, Mission & Values

Our vision and values capture in words the spirit of Aspire Ryde and what we stand for. They guide our decisions, actions and behaviours of all our people, they are evidenced in our customers and users experience of the services that we deliver everyday and drive our performance and growth.

Vision

A society where our spirit inspires all to work towards achieving their true potential, working with others to create a place, community where everyone can belong, contribute and thrive.

Mission

To offer exceptional facilities & services for the community we work with and show God's working Love in the community.

Values

We are a Christian based organization that seeks to serve and accept people just as they are, to celebrate that they are unique and amazing. To encourage them to realize their own potential and assist in releasing or unlocking that potential for their own benefit and that of the community,

We want people to feel that they belong and are cared for as they become part of the team as they make a difference, encouraging and supporting others in what they do.

We seek people who share these values to join our team and help us to realise our vision

We value diversity and want all people to be treated with respect. Indeed we are proud of our diverse team and expect all team members at all levels to respect our values, culture and identity.

Our Guiding Principles

Openness
Trust
Ambition
Motivation
Belief
Inspiration
Integrity
Empowering
Quality
Teamwork
Responsibility
Can-do Attitude

Proverbs 3:16

Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans

Proverbs 16:9

In their hearts human beings plan their course , but the Lord establishes their steps.

Proverbs 4:18

The path of righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

APPENDIX 2 FLOWCHART

ASPIRE RYDE

VULNERABLE PERSON PROTECTION FLOW CHART

