H.O.P.S
Healing Opportunities
Provision Scheme

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY & PROCEDURES

HOPS Healing Opportunities

Registered Charity Number 1137794

Updated Feb 2025

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Part A Safeguarding Adults Policy

Introduction

HOPS supports individuals on the path to good health. We work only with adults. Focusing upon holistic therapies and group activities we support individuals who can be dealing with stress, emotional difficulties or other wellbeing concerns. Many of our beneficiaries are unpaid carers. The majority of adults HOPS is in contact with may not regularly be classed as adults at risk of harm. An adult at risk can be anyone over the age of eighteen, including service users, staff or volunteers (see the 'Definitions' section below). Whilst personal characteristics may make an individual more vulnerable i.e., disability and communication difficulties, it is the situation around an individual which may increase risk or place them at potential risk of harm. It is therefore vital to be open to the possibility that any adult may be at risk and that this can be temporary or on-going depending on the support and protective factors around them.

HOPS is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation, relevant national and local guidelines and by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe.

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HOPS is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates: the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any care setting.

Policy Statement

HOPS believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse and have the right to protection from all forms of abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or marital status.

HOPS is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all adults and recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect them from harm, abuse and exploitation. HOPS acknowledges its duty to act appropriately in the event of any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

HOPS is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

HOPS recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

Actions taken by HOPS will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

HOPS acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.

Context

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect adults in England.

Including: The Care Act 2014
Care and Support Statutory Guidance (especially chapter 14) 2014

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents.

Scope

This Safeguarding Adults Policy and associated procedures apply to anyone working on behalf of HOPS, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, freelance contractors and students.

All contractors and consultants are expected to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in this Safeguarding Adults Policy and associated procedures.

The Policy is to protect all of HOPS' direct beneficiaries (unpaid carers, adults experiencing difficult situations, older and isolated people) and also anyone HOPS comes into contact with through its work.

REVIEW DATE:
This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier as required and if a safeguarding incident occurs.

Purpose

This policy states what HOPS will do to minimise the risks, promote good practice and take necessary steps to ensure the safety of adults and adults at risk using our services.

This policy demonstrates the commitment of HOPS to safeguarding adults and to ensure that everyone involved in HOPS is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults;
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults;
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of adults is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take;
- some adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Commitments

We will seek to keep adults at risk safe by:

- valuing, listening to, and respecting them;
- ensuring everyone involved with HOPS is aware of the safeguarding adult procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult;
- appointing a nominated Safeguarding Adults lead, a deputy (where staffing allows) and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding;
- adopting safeguarding adult procedures and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- any concern that an adult is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with HOPS' Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently;
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers using safe recruitment practices, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk/fororganisations];
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice via e.g., team meetings, group work and one-to-one discussions;
- making sure that adults at risk know where to go for help if they have a concern;
- using our Safeguarding Adults at Risk procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know;
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately;
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise;
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place;

- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers and other adults treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Contact Details:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Susan Nolan
Deputy Safeguarding Lead:	no current appointment
Trustee Safeguarding Lead:	Margaret Grainger
This Policy was last reviewed on:	13th February 2025
Previous review date:	8th January 2024
Signature:	

PART B Safeguarding Adults Procedures

Introduction

Activities HOPS undertakes may involve working with adults at risk. This document seeks to provide a basic awareness of the potential abuse of adults and assists in helping to recognise abuse and thereafter to deal sensibly and sensitively with it. We must not forget that we also have a duty to safeguard ourselves and the organisation that we belong to. The core principles of equal opportunities and equality must apply to all persons with whom we come into contact regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Definitions and Forms of Abuse

Please note that throughout this document the following terms apply:

Safeguarding - is the protection of everyone's right to be safe and protected from abuse.

Abuse - is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance.

There are different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and different circumstances in which they may take place.

The Safeguarding Adults Legislation for England - Care Act 2014 defines categories of adult abuse and harm as follows.

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional/Psychological/Mental
- Neglect and acts of Omission
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational / Institutional
- Self-neglect
- Domestic Abuse (including coercive control)
- Modern slavery

Abuse can take place in any relationship and there are many contexts in which abuse might take place; e.g., Institutional abuse, Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, Sexual Exploitation, County Lines, Radicalisation, Hate Crime, Mate Crime, Cyber bullying, Scams.

Abuse or neglect could be carried out by:

- A spouse, partner or family member
- Neighbours or residents
- Friends, acquaintances or strangers

- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable
- Paid staff, professionals or volunteers providing care and support

Often the perpetrator is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and/or power.

Incidents of abuse may be one off or multiple and affect one person or more.

Adult at risk: An adult at risk is 'any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support' (Care Act 2014 [England]). This can include any adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or 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.

These adults for example may be:

- frail due to age, ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment, or a combination of these;
- have a learning disability;
- have a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment;
- have mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder;
- have a long-term illness/condition;
- users of substances or alcohol;
- unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

This list is not exhaustive.

How to Identify Abuse and What Action to Take

An adult may confide to a member of staff, volunteer or another participant that they are experiencing abuse inside or outside of the organisation's setting. Similarly, others may suspect that this is the case.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored.

The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present;
- person has belongings or money going missing;
- person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions;
- someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance for example does not wear suitable clothes or there is a deterioration in hygiene;
- a change in the behaviour or confidence of a person;
- self-harm;
- a fear of a particular group of people or individual;

- another person always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices;
- they may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e., a disclosure.

What to do following a disclosure

- You should listen attentively and let them know it was right to tell someone about their worries.
- Stay calm and make sure that the person feels safe and knows that they are not to blame for what has happened.
- Seek consent from the person concerned. If you feel that they do not have capacity to consent, you can act without consent but you must log your decision.
- Collect all available relevant facts and appropriate information.
- Make a written record of the concern – record as much detail as possible and as soon as possible after the disclosure, noting the exact words that may have been used to describe any abusive act or threats which will help those who will investigate the allegation.
- Tell the person involved what you are going to do about the concern and note any views that they may have regarding how they wish the matter to be dealt with.
- Tell only the people who need to know – such as your safeguarding officer.
- Consider the balance between listening to someone's wishes and needing to refer information where others may be at risk.
- Inform the person involved about the outcome of any process.
- Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the disclosure. This could make things a lot worse for the person.
- Seek advice before telling any other person implicated in the abuse about the conversation, you could be placing the person at further risk by doing so.

Whatever you feel when you hear a suspicion or allegation you must not:

- Appear shocked, disgusted or angry.
- Press the person for details; it is not your responsibility to conduct an investigation.
- Make comments or judgements other than to show sympathy and concern.
- Promise to keep it secret, as you have a duty to pass on information.
- Give the individual assurances that this type of incident will never happen again as such guarantees cannot be upheld.
- Contaminate evidence where an allegation of sexual assault has been made.
- Help anyone to bathe, wash, clothe or rearrange a room where an assault is alleged to have taken place.

Do not worry that you may be making things worse by reporting your concerns - few things are worse than allowing the abuse to continue.

If you discover that the person is physically injured and in need of immediate medical assistance, you must summon help by calling an Ambulance or the person's doctor. If the abuse amounts to a criminal assault, you must also consider contacting the Police.

Responding To Allegations or Suspicions & Reporting Concerns

There is a process for reporting and reacting to witnessed, suspected or alleged abuse and/or violation of the Safeguarding Policy.

If you have concerns, you must act - it is the duty of every citizen to take positive action.

If a person is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

- Refer the matter to HOPS' Safeguarding Adults Lead. This should be within 24 hours. They will inform the correct authorities, if necessary, who are trained to deal with this problem and will take responsibility for what happens next. This may not be direct action, but our information is always taken seriously.
- Where an allegation suggests a criminal offence may have been committed, then the police should be contacted immediately.
- If your concerns are about a person within HOPS to whom you would normally go to seek advice on this issue, contact Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board (details below).
- If the Safeguarding Adults Lead is not able to be contacted, go through Deputy or Trustee Safeguarding Lead. If neither available, then report to Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board (details below) or the Police.

- The HOPS Board should be informed immediately of any serious incident(s), and
- An annual report should be submitted to the Board to allow them to verify the effectiveness of this policy and procedures which includes:

    - data regarding any incidents, allegations or investigations;
    - where appropriate, a summary of actions undertaken and any outcomes if known;
    - lessons to be learnt where appropriate
    - summary data relating to Safeguarding training provided.

Do not worry that you may be mistaken. It is better to have discussed it with someone with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment.

Protecting Yourself and HOPS

It can be the case that people who pose no risk are sometimes vulnerable to accusations of abuse. Although this can and does occasionally happen, it is important to remember that it is an unusual occurrence and that by taking the steps outlined below you will do much to minimise any chances of becoming inappropriately accused.

Recognised Good Practice

To ensure that you protect adults at risk from harm and protect yourself from false allegations, you must adopt a personal code of conduct. A code of conduct, at its simplest, is a list of key principles of good practice. The following list should form the basis of your code. Learn these principles and add to them as appropriate:

- Respect all individuals
- Place the safety and wellbeing of at risk persons first
- Always work in an open environment - avoid private locations
- Always try and ensure that you are never alone with an at risk person
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with at risk persons
- Make sure that any allegations or suspicions are recorded and acted upon

Do not:

- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay
- Touch a person in an intrusive or sexual manner
- Make sexually suggestive comments, even as a joke
- Do things of a personal nature for an adult, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes

Responsibilities & Roles

The HOPS Board has overall responsibility to ensure the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy; and there are designated individuals to whom people can talk about safeguarding matters.

In normal circumstances the Safeguarding Adults Lead will be the Manager. When staffing allows, a Deputy will be designated. In the absence of the Lead or a Deputy, refer to the Trustee Safeguarding Lead

The responsibilities of the HOPS Manager include:

- promoting awareness and implementation of the policy throughout the organisation;
- monitoring implementation of the policy and reporting annually to the Board;
- maintaining knowledge of best practice and statutory requirements;
- reporting information, as appropriate to relevant bodies.

The Safeguarding Adults Lead is the point of contact for other members of staff, volunteers, participants, and for other organisations such as Social Services, the Police, or the Local Authority if a problem relating to abuse should arise.

The Safeguarding Adults Lead will liaise with the appropriate authorities if a complaint about possible abuse is made.

The name and contact details of the Safeguarding Adults Lead should be given to existing and new members of staff.

It is important to note that the Safeguarding Adults Lead is not an expert and is not there to sit in judgement on anybody - their principle task is to ensure that adults get the support and protection they need and deserve, and to act as a link to the professional caring agencies.

HOPS will maintain open lines of communication where understanding abuse and listening and responding to concerns are the main priority. HOPS will create an atmosphere of support and encouragement for those who feel it necessary to report concerns. HOPS will continue to promote a positive environment for giving and receiving feedback.

In addition to formal Performance Review meetings, staff may utilise regular one to one meetings to discuss general safeguarding matters with the manager. These meetings will allow the manager to provide ongoing support and monitoring to those staff who work directly with vulnerable individuals. Should staff have concerns which they do not feel able to discuss with the manager, they may speak with one of HOPS's designated individuals.

Recording And Sharing Information

Information about concerns of abuse includes personal data. It is therefore important to be clear as to the grounds for processing and sharing information about concerns of abuse.

Processing information includes record keeping. Records relating to safeguarding concerns must be accurate and relevant. They must be stored confidentially with access only to those with a need to know.

Sharing information, with the right people, is central to good practice in safeguarding adults. However, information sharing must only ever be with those with a 'need to know'.

This does NOT automatically include the persons spouse, partner, adult, child, unpaid or paid carer. Information should only be shared with family and friends and/or carers with the consent of the adult or if the adult does not have capacity to make that decision and family/ friends/ carers need to know in order to help keep the person safe.

The purpose of Data Protection legislation is not to prevent information sharing but to ensure personal information is only shared appropriately. Data protection legislation allows information sharing within an organisation. For example:

> Anyone who has a concern about harm can make a report to an appropriate person within the same organisation.

There are also many situations in which it is perfectly legal to share information about adult safeguarding concerns outside the organisation. Importantly personal information can be shared with the consent of the adult concerned. However, the adult may not always want information to be shared. This may be because they fear repercussions from the person causing harm or are scared that they will lose control of their situation to statutory bodies or because they feel stupid or embarrassed. Their wishes should be respected unless there are over-riding reasons for sharing information.

The circumstances when we need to share information without the adult's consent include those where:

- it is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e. it might put them or the person making contact at further risk;
- you believe they or someone else is at risk, including children;
- you believe the adult is being coerced or is under duress;
- it is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report that a serious crime has been committed;
- the adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them;
- the person causing harm has care and support needs.

When information is shared without the consent of the adult this must be explained to them, when it is safe to do so, and any further actions should still fully include them.

If you are in doubt as to whether to share information seek advice e.g., seek legal advice and/or contact the Local Authority and explain the situation without giving personal details about the person at risk or the person causing harm.

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons to share or not share information.

Our Work with Third Party Organisations Or Individuals

Wherever possible, HOPS will encourage individuals to adhere to the high safeguarding standards it expects. However, this policy acknowledges that these individuals and their actions fall outside of HOPS's direct control. Whilst partner organisations are not directly covered by this policy, identification and selection of partner organisations will include appropriate due diligence checks to enable partner organisations to undertake an effective and robust approach to safeguarding and the protection of vulnerable individuals. Where an assessment of a partner organisation's safeguarding policy and practice identifies weaknesses, a risk assessment should be undertaken before taking decisions on the implications to the (potential) partner relationship.

HOPS will continue to require high safeguarding standards throughout the partnership agreement. In cases where these standards are found to fall below an acceptable level, HOPS may take action to terminate the partnership agreement.

Education and Training

Staff who will have direct contact with adults at risk will be fully trained in HOPS's policies and procedures and will be provided with clear guidelines on who to contact in the event of any concerns.

The Policy will be communicated to new staff as part of their induction.

All staff with regular contact with adults at risk are expected to take part in safeguarding awareness training in order to help staff to:

- analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure that their practice is likely to protect them against false allegations;
- recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse;
- respond to concerns expressed;
- work safely and effectively with adults at risk.

Internal refreshers for staff and volunteers will be carried out every 12 months, or sooner if required. This will be at Team meetings.

External refresher training will be provided every 2 years.

Vetting and Criminal Records Checks

Criminal records checks enable HOPS to ensure that people aged 16 or over have nothing on their record that makes them unsuitable to work or volunteer in roles that have contact with adults at risk.

There is overwhelming evidence to show that only a small percentage of incidents of abuse are reported and, of these, only a proportion results in the conviction of the abuser. Therefore, trying to ascertain whether a person has any convictions for relevant offences does not necessarily prevent abuse.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) determine eligible roles for checks. The Safeguarding Adults Lead and the Trustee Safeguarding Lead will use DBS guidance to assess which roles (staff and volunteers) within HOPS require criminal record checks. Also see HOPS' Safer Recruitment Policy.

Contacts

In the event of the need to query or report any incident or matter covered by this policy, staff should first contact the CEO of HOPS / Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead or the Trustee Safeguarding Lead.

Implementation of Policy

This Policy was first adopted as of 11th July 2019. No part of this Policy shall have retroactive effect and shall thus apply only to matters occurring on or after this date.

Previous revisions: January 2020; 27th May 2021; 2nd March 2023; 8th January 2024

Policy and procedures in current version adopted: 13th February 2025

This Policy has been approved & authorised by HOPS trustees and signed on their behalf:

Name: Susan Nolan

Position: CEO

Date: 13th February 2025

Signature:

Appendix A Procedure for Dealing with Safeguarding Issues

This procedure for the reporting of Safeguarding issues should be used in conjunction with the HOPS Safeguarding Policy.

- A concern, suspicion or allegation that an individual is at risk or is experiencing harm, abuse or neglect is raised.
- If the situation is an emergency and the individual is in immediate risk, the person receiving the concern should contact the Police (using 101 or 999).
- The concern raised (and any emergency action taken), should be passed to the HOPS Designated Safeguarding Lead or the HOPS Trustee Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity. This should be within 24 hours
- The HOPS Designated Safeguarding Lead will review the information and any action taken by the person reporting the concern.
- The HOPS Designated Safeguarding Lead may seek advice from the Adult Safeguarding Team. Any actions agreed concerning the allegations will be implemented.
- All person(s) involved in the reporting process will be asked to write an accurate record of the potential safeguarding issue following good practice as soon as possible.
- If appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete and submit a Safeguarding Adults Concern (SAC) Form.
- The safeguarding incident will be recorded in the Safeguarding Log and reported to the Board of trustees.
- If the concerns are about a person within HOPS to whom you would normally go to seek advice on this issue, contact Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board.

Appendix B Safeguarding Contact Information

Agency	Contact details	Additional information
HOPS Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead	Susan Nolan, CEO Telephone: 07807739743	
HOPS Trustee Safeguarding Lead	Margaret Grainger, Trustee Telephone: 07742498161	
Police	Either 101 or 999	
Safeguarding Adults Team	Tel: 0191 520 5552 Email: HealthandWellbeing@sunderland.gov.uk Safeguarding concerns and procedures - Sunderland City Council	24 hour
Adult Social Care	0191 520 5552	Offer confidential help and advice on all safeguarding issues.
Safeguarding Adults Concern (SAC) Form	Online form to be accessed directly via the Sunderland City Council website Safeguarding concerns and procedures - Sunderland City Council to ensure the most recent form is completed and submitted. Otherwise, the use of outdated documentation will slow the process of raising the concern.	The form must be sent using a 7 Zip (Sunderland City Councils preferred encryption solution.). **Never** send the SAC form without encryption. Alternatively fax to 0191-5531688. Confirmation of receipt will be sent. If not received, check and resend information if needed.