



JIGSAW - WORCESTERSHIRE MENTAL HEALTH RELATIVE AND CARER'S SUPPORT GROUP

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY STATEMENT NOVEMBER 2020

JIGSAW believes that it is always unacceptable for a vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all adults by a commitment to practice which protects them. (*Human Rights Act 1988, Equality Act 2010, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998*).

A vulnerable adult refers to a person aged 18 years or over who might be unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or serious exploitation because of a physical or mental disability, age or illness.

The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable adults. To this end, it is the responsibility of Trustees to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect and pass on their concerns to Sue Nichols, the Safeguarding Champion for JIGSAW.

JIGSAW works in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's Adult Protection Policy and Procedures. Trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe vulnerable adults who are at risk. This policy will enable Trustees to make informed and confident responses to specific protection issues.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedures

JIGSAW believes that it is always unacceptable for a vulnerable person to experience abuse of any kind and their safeguarding is the responsibility of the Trustees.

What is Abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any

relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The Department of Health in its 'No Secrets' report suggests the following as the main types of abuse: -

- **Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape and sexual assault; or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

JIGSAW also recognises:

- **Online abuse** – the use of the internet and other social networks such as Facebook and Twitter which causes exploitation, harassment or bullying to someone who lacks the capability to appreciate the danger.
- **Abuse by landline or mobile device or any electronic method of communication** - the use of which encourages someone to purchase goods or services of which amounts to cold calling or a scam where the recipient is incapable of appreciating the nature of the communication and the possible consequences.

What is Significant Harm?

Significant harm includes the impairment of physical, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Procedure in the Event of a Disclosure

It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse.

If the Trustees have any worries or concerns about the vulnerable adult, they have two options:

1. In the event of immediate threat to the safety of a vulnerable adult, contact the Worcestershire Social Care Access Services on 01905 768053 or call 999
2. In the event of more general concerns about a vulnerable adult e.g. welfare, care, safety; contact should be made with Sue Nichols, JIGSAW Safeguarding Champion on 0776 380 1217. She will contact the Adult Protection Team to discuss the concern and seek advice. (The Trustees of JIGSAW are all un-paid carers and are not qualified to deal with safeguarding issues).

The Safeguarding Champion will make a written record of the concerns and actions.

As part of this early enquiry stage, liaison will take place between the Safeguarding Champion and the concerned person. A decision on whether further action is necessary will be based on evidence presented.

If a referral is made to the Adult Protection Team, then there is a legal right to access information documented in accordance with JIGSAW's procedures. (See Jigsaw's Data Protection Policy.)

JIGSAW agrees to work in accordance with the requirements of the Disclosure & Barring Service.

What to do if a disclosure is made

1. If a person says that they **have been** abused
2. If a person says that they **are being** abused
3. If a Trustee suspects or witnesses abuse

THE MATTER MUST BE REPORTED DIRECTLY TO THE JIGSAW SAFEGUARDING CHAMPION WHO HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Listen calmly
- Believe what they say
- Tell them they were right to raise the concern
- Tell them it is not their fault
- Explain the areas of confidentiality and say that it is the Safeguarding Champion's responsibility to tell someone in authority in order to keep the individual safe. (This is a legal responsibility)
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the disclosure

THE SAFEGUARDING CHAMPION SHOULD NOT:

- Ask lots of questions, that is the responsibility of a worker who is trained in safeguarding issues.
- Ask leading questions
- Make promises to keep secrets (sometimes it will be necessary to break confidentially when a person who is being abused is at risk of significant harm).
- Express doubt about what they have heard. It takes enormous courage for a person to talk about abuse.
- Say things that might make the person feel responsible.

KEEP CALM AND DON'T PANIC

However, it is important that detailed written notes should be made within 24 hours.

- Try to write down the actual words used by the person reporting the abuse.
- The notes should include the date and time, who was present and what was said.
- The Safeguarding Champion must sign the written notes.
- The Safeguarding Champion must telephone and report the matter to the Adult Protection Team.
- A written record of the telephone call should be made including the date and time the call was made and the name and position of the person to whom the matter was reported.
- The Safeguarding Champion should request confirmation of the telephone call be made within 48 hours so there is a paper trail that can be followed.