

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Evergreen Care UK is fully committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults and believes that it is always unacceptable for anyone to experience any kind of abuse.

1. Aims of the Policy

- To safeguard clients, staff and volunteers from all forms of abuse.
- Do all it can to protect those supported, assisted, served, and cared for from abuse at all times. In the event that it is discovered, identified or in receipt of a disclosure of abuse ECUK will take prompt and appropriate action as guided by this policy document, the procedures and further guidance offered by the local Safeguarding Authority and the Charity Commission.
- Is committed to exercising due diligence and a duty of care in upholding national legislation, and Charity Commission counsel on adult Safeguarding.
- Is committed to training and developing awareness amongst employees and volunteers of the potential, the indicators of abuse, the correct response and procedure to follow when abuse is suspected.
- Ensuring that the team feel confident in correct safeguarding policy and practice as supported by the principles below.
- A Safeguarding Officer will be appointed (currently the Chief Executive).

2. Definitions

2.1 Definition of Vulnerable Adult (Care Act 2014).

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

2.2 Main types of abuse (Care Act 2014).

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological and Emotional
- Finance or material
- Discriminatory
- Organisational and Institutional
- Neglect and acts of Omission
- Spiritual
- Self-Neglect
- Modern Slavery

3.Roles and responsibilities of Trustees, Staff and Volunteers

3.1 TRUSTEES are responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy and guidelines are implemented.
- Ensuring that ECUK takes reasonable and practical steps to protect all people who come into contact with the Charity.
- Monitoring incidents to ensure that best practice is adopted.
- Ensuring that proper support and supervision is available to all staff and volunteers in the event of an incident occurring.

3.2 The Chief Executive, who is the designated Safeguarding Officer, is responsible for:

- Ensuring on behalf of the Trustees that this policy is implemented.
- Informing and discussing with the Chair any concerns about the welfare of Adults at Risk.
- If appropriate, reporting concerns to the Council and/or to the Police.
- Providing support and supervision for other staff.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive adequate instruction and training on the implementation of this policy.

3.3 Other staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Reporting concerns about adults at risk to the Chief Executive either directly or via their line manager.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers whom they supervise receive adequate instruction on the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that all concerns reported to them are not prompted but recorded in writing.
- Advising the person reporting the information that it cannot be kept secret but stating to whom it will be passed, and that it will be kept confidential.
- Advising the person reporting the information that any information written and recorded should be kept securely.
- Informing the person reporting the information that progress of the case cannot be shared with them.

4. Reporting Procedures/Guidelines for all Staff and Volunteers

4.1 Any staff member or volunteer who has concerns about an adult at risk should report it to their supervisor or line manager who should immediately notify the Chief Executive.

4.2 Individuals may report suspected abuse to the Council's 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk' service if they have concerns that are not being sufficiently addressed internally or are urgent.

4.3 If it is suspected that the supervisor, line manager, staff member or volunteer is involved in the abuse, it should be reported direct to the Chief Executive. If it is suspected that the Chief Executive was involved in the abuse it should be reported to another manager or the Chair of Trustees.

4.4 If someone reports to a staff member or volunteer that there has been, or if the staff member or volunteer suspects that there may have been instances of abuse they should:

- If possible, ensure the victim of the alleged abuse is safe.
- Check that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged.
- Preserve evidence.
- Report to line Manager.
- Say what you have seen.
- Make accurate record.

The line manager should report the allegation to the Chief Executive as soon as possible. They will discuss the situation with the staff member or volunteer making the report and their line manager.

The Chief Executive will make a decision in consultation with the line manager about whether or not a referral should be made about the concerns and will contact the Safeguarding Officer at the London Borough of Bexley for advice if required. They will make a written record of their decision and the reasons for it and will also discuss it with the person who has made the report and their line manager.

4.5 Where a referral should be made the Chief Executive will contact:

- The London Borough of Bexley Safeguarding Adults at Risk Service (Tel: 0208 303 7777).
- The Emergency Duty Service out of hours (Tel:0208 303 7171)
- The Police in emergencies.
- The Chief Executive will decide whether the Trustees need to be informed of his/her decision.

4.6 All written information regarding an allegation of abuse will be uploaded into a secure folder on ECUK's system in line with GDPR and with restricted access to that folder.

4.7 If a decision is taken not to report concerns about someone at that time, the situation will be kept under review by the Chief Executive, who will keep in close contact with the staff member or volunteer involved with the client.

5. Mental Capacity

5.1 ECUK recognises that service users who lack mental capacity are particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitations. We will follow the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 which has 5 key principles:

1. A presumption of mental capacity.
2. The rights for individuals to be supported to make their own decisions.
3. The individual retains the right to make 'eccentric or unwise' choices.
4. All decisions should be made in the person's best interest
5. Using the least restrictive intervention.

6.Action to Safeguard Vulnerable Adults

6.1 ECUK recognises that it is important to remain focussed on outcomes rather than just the process of safeguarding. The Outcomes should be to:

- Promote well-being and prevent abuse and neglect from happening in the first place.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone who may be or has been subject to abuse or neglect.
- To take action against those responsible for abuse or neglect taking place.
- Learn lessons and make changes that could prevent similar abuse or neglect happening to other people (e.g. through learning and development programmes for staff).

7.Safeguarding Principles

7.1 The following principles, regulations and legislation guide ECUK in safeguarding adults receiving its care and support:

- Empowerment - presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention - it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality-proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection - support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnerships - local solutions through services working with their communities.
- Accountability - accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

7.2 ECUK will not tolerate any kind of abuse, unlawful discrimination or restraint towards anyone, nor neglect, failure to provide agreed care and support, degrading treatment, disproportionate restraint, and any deprivation of liberty.

7.3 ECUK will keep the interest of service users, staff and volunteers at the centre of any safeguarding activity.

7.4 Where possible, the organisation will keep the wishes of service users, staff and volunteers at the centre of any safeguarding activity. ECUK will involve service users in decision-making and investigation of abuse.

7.5 ECUK will ensure service users are aware of safeguarding policies and procedures. The Charity will ensure all staff and volunteers understand their role in relation to safeguarding. This will include appropriate training and ensure staff and volunteers are competent in helping to prevent, recognising and taking action on abuse.

7.6 There will be a culture of openness, so that staff, volunteers and service users can raise their concerns, and know that they will be listened to, without worrying that something bad will happen as a result.

7.7 Individuals against whom an allegation has been made have the right to fair and unbiased treatment and to be kept fully informed.

8. Recruitment and placement of Staff and Volunteers

ECUK will follow the recruitment policy with regard to references, DBS disclosures and requirements to check against barred lists for working with vulnerable adults. On-going supervision and appraisal will be provided to staff.

9. Summary

9.1 ECUK will always aim for the very best quality of care and will not be satisfied with anything that falls short of this. We will take every possible action to prevent abuse and to deal with it as promptly and effectively as possible if it occurs.

This policy was approved by Evergreen Care UK as follows: 25 th Sept. 2017 – 13 th September 2022	
Approver: Board of Trustees	Date Ratified: 12 April 2022
Executive Leadership Team Owner: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Date of Review: 5 April 2022
Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed annually. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.	

Reviewed: July 2023