

  The Yardley Great Trust Group	<p align="center">Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy</p> <p align="center">SAF-POL-02</p> <p align="center">Version: 4.0</p>
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<p>Review period: 2 years</p>	<p>Owned by: DCEO/Safeguarding Lead</p>
<p>Review date: March 2025</p>	<p>Authorised by: Board of Trustees</p>

Statement

SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group have high expectations of all young people regardless of whether they are service users or participants at services or if they are in services due to visiting relatives and family. At all times we will aim to protect the young people from harm or abuse. In our Young Peoples services specifically, we aim to provide the very best relationship-based support and will take every possible action to prevent abuse and will deal with it promptly and effectively if it occurs.

Aims of the policy

Safeguarding means protecting children, young people and adults at risk of harm or abuse. To uphold their right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. To promote their rights, dignity and wellbeing through professional, timely and proportionate safeguarding arrangements, including working effectively with other key agencies as necessary.

This policy sets out the key principles and practices that all staff and those working at SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group should be complying with in their safeguarding of children and young people.

The SJMT YP Services aim to provide vulnerable young people with positive, stable and consistent support. Young people are encouraged to take ownership of their own support which maintains engagement leading to positive outcomes and reducing the risk of significant harm.

Within this policy, any person under the age of 25 will be classed as a young person or people.

The UK legal definition of a child is any person up to the age of 18 years. As the trusts remit for working with young people includes those up to up to age 25, this document includes arrangements to protect adults using our young people's services and can be read in conjunction with the trusts Safeguarding Adults policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies of the Trust which relate to aspects of abuse or safeguarding, such as Professional Conduct, Whistleblowing, Equality and Diversity.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and workers of SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group including volunteers, students, honorary appointees, trainees, contractors, and temporary workers, including those working on a bank or agency contract. For ease of reference, all employees and workers who fall under these groups will be uniformly referred to as 'staff' in this document.

Information and processes

The 6 Safeguarding Principles

Empowerment - Presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent. People should be supported in making their own decisions and informed choices, including those related to risk and their own perceived vulnerability. If decisions are made without taking account of the victim's views this may infringe their human rights and jeopardise other qualities of life.

Protection - support and representation for those in greatest need.

Prevention - it is better to take action before harm occurs. Prevention of neglect, harm and abuse is a primary objective.

Proportionality - Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. Safeguarding must be built on proportionality and a consideration of people's human rights.

Partnership - local solutions through services working with their communities as communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

Accountability – safeguarding practice and arrangements should be accountable and transparent.

The 5R's Principles of the Procedures for safeguarding children and young people

The '5Rs' underpin our reporting procedures for young people, they are:

- **Recognise** concerns that a young person is being harmed or might be at risk of harm.
- **Respond** appropriately to a young person who is telling you what is happening to them.
- **Refer** the concerns, if appropriate, to children or adult social care MASH or the police.
- **Record** the concerns appropriately and any subsequent action taken; ensure there is no delay in passing on concerns. Nothing should prevent a fast response if it is required.
- **Resolution** and escalation – the Trusts has a responsibility to ensure that it follows up referrals made and takes further action if it considers appropriate protective action has not been taken.

Child welfare and protection legislation and guidance

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- HM Government (2015) Working Together to Safeguard Children & HM Government

(2015) What to do if you are worried a child may be being abused

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

Our approach

To provide young people with the best standard of safeguarding practice all staff must operate with the same agreed and common approach:

- That the welfare of the young person is paramount.
- All young people, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, should be able to participate in any activity in a safe environment and have equal right to protection.
- All staff and visitors must take reasonable steps safeguard young people. Taking all reasonable steps to protect young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- That all concerns, suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively, swiftly and appropriately.
- That all staff and volunteers, including self-employed contractors or partner employees or volunteers who work with young people, will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility and will be provided with guidance and training in good practice and child protection procedures where it is deemed relevant and appropriate.
- That young people should be listened to as well as given opportunities to assist in the development of safeguarding and child protection good practice
- To work in partnership with parents and carers, young people and other agencies to safeguard and protect all young people. We are aware that in some circumstances it may not be appropriate to engage with parents and carers to protect a young person at risk.
- SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group expects the relevant authorities work in a joined-up way with the trust and act on our concerns. If necessary, we will escalate our concerns until we are satisfied that they have been taken seriously.

Defensible decisions

The work of SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group is varied and diverse and involves working with young people in a variety of different ways and in a variety of different settings. Staff should, at all times, follow the practice guidance within this policy.

However, the trusts do recognise that suitably qualified, trained and experienced staff may have to make decisions and judgments in the moment whilst working with young people.

Any decision made should be defensible, meaning that the decision withstands the scrutiny of hindsight, is proportionate and balances potential risks. Any decision made does not have to be 'correct' but staff should be able to justify their decision and be open and honest about their rationale.

Good practice

Good practice safeguards young people and reduces the risk of significant harm. It also protects the trust and individual staff from allegations.

All staff should adhere to the following principles and actions:

- When individual staff are involved in activities with just one young person ensure that the lone working policy is applied, and relevant risks are considered
- If staff are visitors to a young person's home, school, college or other settings the meeting place and time should be agreed in advance with the young person
- Adopt a compassionate approach to participation with young people based upon acceptance, curiosity and empathy; promote fairness, comfort and deal positively and pro-actively with bullying, harassment or any other inappropriate behaviour
- Treat all young people equally and with respect, dignity, warmth, empathy, and listen to their wishes and feelings.
- Always put the welfare of the young person first.
- Only use the mobile phone and electronic device supplied by the trust when working with young people
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with young people. Under the Sexual offences Act (2003) it is against the law for a person in a position of trust to engage in a relationship with a young person. (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a young person even if the young person is over the age of consent).
- In some limited circumstances staff working directly with a young person may feel it is appropriate to offer physical comfort e.g. if a young person is very upset. This should be done with verbal consent, be age appropriate, trauma informed and respectful of personal space e.g. a short hug or positive touch on hand or arm.
- Behave in a calm, positive, supportive, honest, and encouraging way with young people
- Value and take seriously the contributions of young people, actively involving them in the planning of participation opportunities whenever possible

- Use safeguarding procedures to report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures made by a young person or staff member. This includes any suspicions about grooming behaviour where an adult is deliberately befriending a young person at risk
- Staff should ensure that the focus of your relationship with a child or young person always remains professional
- Ensure that if in line with your duties you are required to spend time alone with a young person that colleagues know where you will be, how long you intend to be and the purpose of the meeting
- Respect a young person's right to privacy but never agree to keep any information relating to the harm of young person confidential
- Ensure that dangerous or otherwise unacceptable behaviour like bullying by young people are challenged and addressed. Any disrespectful behaviour from one young person to another, however subtle, should be challenged.
- All staff, especially those working directly with young people, should be aware that young people can develop infatuations (a crush) towards adults working with them. If employees believe this is happening they should inform their line manager to seek support and respond to the situation in a way that maintains the dignity of all concerned.

Alongside this we will fulfil our commitment to safeguarding young people by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting young people participating in activities and services
- Ensuring suitable staff, volunteers, trustees are recruited to work with young people by adopting safe recruitment processes
- Provide effective management through induction, supervision, appraisal and support
- Provide staff, volunteers and trustees with training appropriate to their safeguarding role and responsibility
- Establish assigned roles including assigned operational and strategic safeguarding roles
- Monitor and review our safeguarding practice and draw on lessons learnt to improve practice
- Make the policy available to young people via our website and an easy-to-read format

Poor practice

All staff should not:

- Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child regardless of age of consent. This would constitute a breach of a position of trust and is never acceptable even if the child is above the age of consent.
- Swear or make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory, or sexually suggestive comments in front of young people
- Engage in or allow any provocative games or challenges involving young people e.g. truth or dare, initiation ceremonies, spin the bottle
- Gossip about young people
- Be overly friendly with young people, show favouritism

- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Discuss details of your own personal relationships in front of young people
- Reduce a young person to tears as a form of control or use any form of coercive behaviour management that does prioritise the wellbeing of the young person
- Smoke or vape in front of young people
- Do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves
- Accept or condone behaviour by a young person that is morally or legally wrong, even if the behaviour did not happen during participation at SJMT e.g. shop lifting
- Work or carry out any form of visit under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, unreported, or otherwise not acted upon
- Photograph or film young people without prior consent
- Broadcast or show any audio or visual materials that has inappropriate content for young people.
- Invite or allow a young person met through work to your home, even in a crisis situation
- Share a room with a young person or stay overnight with a young person, even in a crisis situation
- Arrange to meet or contact a child outside of your role at the trust

Communication with children and young people

The focus of SJMT's work with young people is relationship based. This means we aim to build consistent and stable relationships with young that are not issue based or time lead. The trust recognises that for young people text messages, email and social media are an invaluable resource for doing this.

Whilst text message and social media can be seen as informal or casual ways of communicating, the trust expects all staff to apply the highest possible standards of professionalism when communicating in this way. This is to safeguard themselves and the young people they are communicating with.

Below are broad guidelines for doing this:

- The decision to use text messaging/social media/email should not be made by a member of staff in isolation and should be discussed and agreed with the relevant Senior Manager. This will ensure that SJMT safeguarding expectations and requirements can be clarified and an undertaking given by the person to comply with them.
- The young people's mobile phone numbers should be stored in either a locked secure cabinet, or on an electronic system which is password protected, with access only available to the relevant staff
- The content should relate solely to service activity or event. Messages should reflect the professional relationship between the member of staff and the young person. Messages, mobile phones and social media must never be used in any other way.
- Observe the same behaviours and conduct as if speaking with young people face to face – be professional and offer respect, dignity, warmth, and empathy

- Ask yourself before sending a text message – Could this message be misunderstood or misinterpreted by the young person?
- Only certain staff who are permitted to text messages to young people should do so
- Ensure there is always a record of any conversations had over text message or social media, staff should never delete any messages or use any delivery option that means there is no record of the message. If a young person does this, it should be discussed with the young person and an alternative record of these messages should be kept.

All staff with authority to use text message and social media to communicate with young people should not:

- Use Snapchat or any other social media platform that has not been agreed by senior management to communicate with a young person
- Disclose any non public information or confidential information about SJMT
- Use text messages or social media to gossip with a young person or have a conversation that does not have a clear work purpose or rationale
- Avoid the use of GIFs and memes that could be misinterpreted by a young person or seen as unprofessional
- Seek to befriend a young person via text message or online for any reason
- Ask to become an online friend/contact or accept a friend/contact request from a young person on social media whilst using a personal social network account
- Engage in the exchange of self-generated images with a young person that could be interpreted as inappropriate in any way
- Use SJMT mobile phones/social networks or other technology for any other purpose than what is expressly set out in SJMT policy and procedure

Responding to concerns about a young person at risk of harm (non-emergency)

- Consult immediately with the DCEO/Safeguarding Lead
- Make a record of what was said and done using the safeguarding incident report form and pass this onto the DCEO within 24 hours
- The DCEO and service manager will determine what action is needed.
- The DCEO must consider if consent has been obtained/is required to share concern with other agencies.
- Any referrals to statutory services must be made by the DCEO unless it is decided that it's more appropriate for the service manager to complete and report back
- Referrals to statutory agencies should be made within 48 hours of a concern being identified and feedback sort on follow up within 3 days

Responding to concerns about a young person at risk of harm (emergency)

In an emergency situation where a child or adult has been seriously hurt is at imminent risk of harm staff should

- Dial 999 and ask for required emergency service
- Inform the DCEO/Safeguarding Lead
- Complete a safeguarding incident form

Direct disclosure of abuse by a young person

Sometimes a young person may make a direct disclosure of abuse – the following guidelines should be followed.

Do:

- Be accessible and receptive
- Listen carefully
- Take it seriously
- Reassure the young person
- Explain what will happen next

Don't:

- React with strong emotions
- Jump to conclusions
- Say you will keep it a secret
- Ask leading questions
- Make promises
- Stop the young person from talking

Allegations against an SJMT Employee

If a young person makes an allegation about an SJMT or Yardley Great Trust Group employee, it is essential that both the staff member and service user are treated fairly and respectfully. The Trusts has a duty to investigate all allegations, and this will be done via the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Should a member of staff be under investigation it will be determined based on risk to themselves, others, and what role they do whether the employee will be removed from their role temporarily, related to another role or formally suspended from duties pending investigation.

If an employee receives allegations from a young person about a colleague it is essential that they follow the same processes as they would with any other safeguarding and that they record, report, and keep confidentiality accordingly.

Potential Media Interest

A safeguarding case or allegation may be of interest to the media and may also be spread via social media and it is essential that no member of staff at SJMT or Yardley Great Trust engages with this at any point of an allegation, investigation or conclusion.

Staff must never answer any questions about an individual, allegation or safeguarding via the phone/email/social media to an unknown source and must always verify who they are discussing with.

Staff should refer any media interest or social media posts regarding SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group business to the CEO or DCEO to manage.

Multi-Agency Working and Information Sharing

Statutory guidance for working with young people stresses the importance of service users having the opportunity to access early help and support to avoid child or adult protection intervention. This will often involve a multi-agency approach that includes good information sharing and clear procedures for escalating safeguarding concerns. Also, it includes robust staff training that keeps staff well informed and up to date with local legislation and services.

The Trusts recognises that the sharing of information within the safeguarding arena can be complex – the following guidelines promote best practice with young people:

- Share with consent but don't let no consent prevent sharing – Data Protection is not a barrier to sharing information about safeguarding
- Seek advice from appropriate professionals
- Always consider the safety of a young person or adult at risk (e.g. would telling foster carer put the young person at further risk?)
- Ensure what is shared is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure
- Keep accurate records of what has been shared and the reason why its been shared

All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard young people at risk. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise any child or adult that they will keep information confidential when it concerns safeguarding.

In the case of child protection, it is best practice to get consent to share information if possible as long as it will not increase the risk of harm to the young person. If anyone is unsure about this, they should speak to the Safeguarding Lead or have a conversation with children's social care MASH to seek further advice.

Managers have a responsibility to:-

- check and review safeguarding reports, evaluate risks, consider action taken/recommended to safeguard adults concerned, engage in multiagency working as appropriate, monitor casework and outcomes.
- support the delivery of the best possible care and support services.
- encourage a culture and ethos for the organisation which is hostile to any sort of abuse.
- produce and update policies and procedures to combat abuse.
- operate personnel policies which identify, appropriately deal with and if necessary exclude from practice potential or actual abusers in accordance with the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006/DBS system.
- provide staff with advice and training on abuse and protection as may be required.

- ensure staff can effectively address issues of abuse and support service users.
- ensure any evidence of abuse is reported and investigated speedily and sympathetically with Safeguarding Alerts to Local Councils as necessary.
- implement improvements to procedures if an investigation into abuse reveals deficiencies in the way in which the organisation operates.
- ensure there is effective collaboration with all other relevant agencies in combating abuse and improving the protection of service users and that Local Authority reporting procedures are followed.
- ensure that any urgent concerns have been reported to the relevant authorities, including the Local Council safeguarding team by phone and/or by the appropriate Alert Form, and if necessary the Police, without delay.
- Investigate any allegations of wrong-doing by members of staff.

Mental Capacity

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides the legal framework for acting and making decisions on behalf of individuals who lack the mental capacity to make particular decisions for themselves.

It provides clear guidelines for carers and professionals about who can take decisions in which situations. Any decision or action taken on behalf of someone who lacks capacity must be taken in their best interests. It makes it a criminal offence of neglect or ill-treatment of a person who lacks capacity.

Case Studies and the use of images

Consent

SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group can only tell a child's story or take photographs or recordings of them when we have a clear written record of informed consent.

- If a young person is under 18, we need informed consent from both the child and a parent or adult with parental responsibility, or the local authority for children in care.
- If the young person is 18 or over they do not need anyone to consent on their behalf but they still need to give their own informed consent.
- Informed consent means that we need to explain: how the case study will be used; for what purpose it will be used; when and where it will be used (including the impact of publishing material online) and to discuss what potential impacts publication of the story or image may have on the subject either now or in the future. The written consent should be a record of a face-to-face conversation – especially where there are language or literacy barriers.
- Signed consent forms must be dated. Ordinarily images will be used on an ongoing basis to promote the work of the charity

Anonymity

- The Trusts standard practice is to protect the identities of all children and young people we have supported. This means that all names in a case study and photographs should be changed and the trust should also change details that could reveal a child's identity – especially details of where they live or can be found.
- The Trust should always consider the potential impact on a child in allowing us to use their information or their image. We never tell a child's story or use their photograph if doing so might cause the child harm. Even if their identity is protected, we should be careful that our portrayal of a child doesn't cause emotional harm or damage the child's relationships with anyone.

Declaration

Declaration I, the undersigned, have read the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy of SJMT and Yardley Great Trust Group and undertake to take all necessary steps to ensure that I adhere to it.

Signed:

Name

Position at the Trust

Date

Appendix

TYPES AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Domestic Abuse – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.

The Home Office definition of domestic abuse is:-

- an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse.
- by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality,
- includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence; female genital mutilation; forced marriage. Age range extended down to 16.
- Physical abuse

Possible indicators of physical abuse can include:-

- No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened
- Injuries are inconsistent with the person’s lifestyle
- Bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps • Frequent injuries
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour
- Signs of malnutrition
- Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse can include:-

- Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Foreign bodies in genital or rectal openings
- Infections, unexplained genital discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- The uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude

- Incontinence not related to any medical diagnosis
- Self-harming
- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance
- Excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships
- Reluctance to be alone with a known individual

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Possible indicators of psychological or emotional abuse can include:-

- An air of silence when a certain person is present
- Withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person
- Insomnia
- Low self-esteem
- Uncooperative and aggressive behaviour
- A change of appetite, weight loss/gain
- Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger
- Apparent false claims by a paid or unpaid carer to attract unnecessary treatment

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or appropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Some of the potential indicators of financial abuse can include:

- change in living conditions;
- lack of heating, clothing or food;
- Missing personal possessions;
- failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person
- inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money/unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle;
- unexplained withdrawals from an account;
- unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents;
- the recent addition of authorised signers on a client or donor's signature card sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents.
- the person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative or the family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person;
- Power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity, or failure to register an LPA after

the person has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so;

Where the abuse is by someone who has the authority to manage an adult's money, the relevant body should be informed, for example, the Office of the Public Guardian for deputies and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in relation to appointees.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse can include:-

- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- Expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety
- The support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Possible indicators of institutional abuse can include:-

- Lack of flexibility and choice for adults using the service
- Inadequate staffing levels
- People being hungry or dehydrated
- Poor standards of care Lack of personal clothing and possessions and communal use of personal items
- Lack of adequate procedures
- Poor record-keeping and missing documents
- Absence of visitors
- Few social, recreational and educational activities
- Public discussion of personal matters or unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet

- Absence of individual care and support plans which assess needs and risks and the care and support required
- Lack of management overview and support.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Possible indicators of neglect and acts of omission can include:-

- Poor environment – dirty or unhygienic
- Poor physical condition and/or personal hygiene
- Pressure sores or ulcers
- Malnutrition or unexplained weight loss
- Untreated injuries and medical problems
- Inconsistent or reluctant contact with medical and social care organisations
- Accumulation of untaken medication
- Uncharacteristic failure to engage in social interaction
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding, substance abuse, risky behaviour, failure to take prescribed medication, nutritional deficiency, poor personal hygiene.

Each case is individual but there are some approaches that may help to support people who neglect themselves or their environment and have difficulty with protecting themselves by controlling their own behaviour:

- early intervention to prevent behaviour becoming entrenched
- a multi-agency approach
- use of effective screening tools that assist clinicians in identifying capabilities and risks
- sensitive and comprehensive assessment, including consideration of mental capacity
- relationship-based working – 'sensitivity and gentle persistence'
- support with routine daily living tasks.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm.

Some indicators of possible or actual Abuse can include the following:

Physical.

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, hand marks.
- Loss of hair in clumps, abrasions to the scalp.
- Unexplained fractures, burns or scalding.
- Delays in reporting injuries.
- Vague or implausible explanations.
- Multiple injuries, history of past injuries – especially falls.

Neglect.

- Debilitation through malnutrition or dehydration.
- Unexplained weight loss.
- Poor hygiene, unkempt, dirty appearance and clothes or very unclean surroundings.
- Evidence of excessive hoarding
- Inappropriate dress.
- Poor healing/sores.
- Poor skin condition, low resistance to illness and disease.
- Inadequate heating or lighting.
- Despite needs, only inconsistent or reluctant contact with health and social care services.

Emotional/Psychological/Discriminatory abuse.

- Fearfulness.
- Mood changes, depression, irritability and unhappiness.
- Low self esteem.
- Changes in sleep and appetite patterns.
- Withdrawn and self-isolating behaviour.
- Restricted movement or denial of access to aids, equipment.
- Feelings of exclusion from activities due person's background.

Financial abuse.

- Unexpected loss of money. Inability to pay bills, lack of heating/food.
- Sudden withdrawal of money.

- Sudden disappearance of possessions.
- Loss of financial documents such as pension book, bank cards, cheque books, bank and building society books.
- Acquaintances or family expressing sudden or disproportionate interest in the adult and their financial circumstances.

Sexual abuse.

- Unexplained difficulty in walking.
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person.
- Sudden change in behaviour.
- Uncharacteristic sexually explicit behaviour.

Other behavioural indicators that abuse may be occurring can include:

- Overly compliant.
- Overly watchful.
- Acting out aggressive, destructive, irritable or hostile behaviour.
- Being detached or appearing not to care.
- Distrust.
- Complaints of pain or discomfort with no apparent medical reason.
- Displays of unhappiness in a specific environment.
- Fear, anxiety, severe agitation displayed without an identifiable cause.
- Self mutilation.
- Increase in obsessive or ritualistic behaviour.
- Increased visits to the toilet for no apparent reason.

Service users could be particularly vulnerable due to factors such as:-

Age.

Illness.

Mental health issues.

Lack of mental capacity.

Sensory impairments.

Learning disabilities.

Learning difficulties.

Physical disabilities.

Alcohol or drugs substance misuse

