

Changing Faces

Safeguarding Adults Policy

1. Policy Commitment

Changing Faces believes that everyone has the right to protection from abuse and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of people engaged in the breadth of its activities. An 'adult' is defined as anyone aged 18+ years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or 16+ years in Scotland.

All staff and volunteers at Changing Faces have a responsibility for safeguarding, including promoting the wellbeing of adults at risk of harm, along with a duty of care to identify and respond to potential risks and disclosures of abuse or harm, including self-harm, suicide and self-neglect. All Changing Faces staff and volunteers accept and understand their responsibilities, according to their role.

This policy outlines Changing Faces' responsibilities for safeguarding adults in line with government and multi-agency safeguarding procedures and markers of good practice at both strategic and operational levels and supports the ethos that 'safeguarding is everyone's business'.

Changing Faces also recognises that adults at risk are at particular risk of abuse within society and is committed to ensuring that these groups are protected whilst in receipt of our services or participating in our work.

We seek to make safeguarding personal – and work alongside adults at risk in a way that has a positive impact on people's lives. In addition to the safeguarding principles, it is important to remember that adults have different preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyles. Safeguarding should be person-led and outcome-focused. Professionals should endeavour to engage the person in conversations about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation to enhance their involvement, choice and control and improve their quality of life, wellbeing and safety. The wishes of clients will be sought and considered in all safeguarding activity and all action taken will have the interests of clients at its heart.

Any suspicions or allegations of abuse or risk will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately in collaboration with the adult at risk themselves.

There are occasions when fulfilling our duty of care means breaching confidentiality in order to prevent harm or intervene on behalf of an adult at risk. This decision will be taken, with the involvement of the adult at risk concerned, by the Safeguarding Team, by contacting an appropriate third party authority.

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Many of our staff and volunteers have contact with people who may be distressed or anxious. The charity undertakes to provide a safe environment for its staff and volunteers and clients.

2. Reporting a Safeguarding Concern or Incident

To report a safeguarding concern, for a quick guide, refer to the **Safeguarding Flowchart & Reporting Protocols**

Full details of the procedures are in the **Safeguarding Adult Procedures and Suicide, Self-Harm and Self-Neglect Procedures**

In any life-threatening situation, an ambulance (and/or the police if necessary) should be called immediately. Then inform the Safeguarding Lead and CEO of the action taken as soon as possible.

3. Policy Scope

Safeguarding covers any concern about possible abuse, neglect, self-harm or suicidal behaviour.

This document outlines the statutory guidelines and the principles underpinning our Safeguarding Adults Policy, including reference to the appropriate legislation. Additionally, this document references the processes for recruiting.

Safeguarding incorporates **prevention, empowerment and protection** to enable adults who are in circumstances that make them at risk of abuse and harm to retain independence, wellbeing and choice, and to access their right to a life free from abuse and neglect.

4. Key Concepts and Legislation: Safeguarding Adults at Risk

For the purposes of the Changing Faces policy documents and procedures Adults at Risk and Protected Adults will be defined as 'Adults at Risk'. At Changing Faces, the general premise is that all adults in touch with services are considered to be 'at risk'.

In **England**, 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 / or support.

In **Wales**, an adult at risk is a person who is aged 18 or over who:

- (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect,

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

In **Northern Ireland**, an adult at risk is defined as a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- (a) personal characteristics and/or
- (b) life circumstances

In **Scotland**, an adult at risk is defined as someone who is aged 16 years or over who:

- (a) are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests; and
- (b) are at risk of harm; and
- (c) because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

The key legislation is as follows:

England: The Care Act, 2014

Wales: Working together to safeguarding people (2021) is the statutory guidance in relation to Part 7 of the Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, 2014. The Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Practice Guides (Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, 2019) provides a common set of child and adult protection procedures and practice guides for every safeguarding board in Wales.

Northern Ireland has no specific legislation related to safeguarding adults. The Adult Safeguarding Policy for Northern Ireland 'Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership' was published in July 2015. In April 2021, the Department of Health began a public consultation to inform the development of an Adult Protection Bill.

Scotland: The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. This is further supported by the Adult Support and Protection Improvement Plan 2019-2022.

Statutory responsibility:

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Each local authority holds the lead responsibility for the coordination of all safeguarding concerns. The contact information for how to report a safeguarding concern can be found easily online on the local authority's website.

Local authorities work together with NHS services and trusts, the police, probation services and young offender institutions to protect children and adults from abuse and neglect and fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

5. Staff and Volunteer Safer Recruitment

Changing Faces has procedures in place to ensure that all reasonable checks are made before appointing an individual to a position of trust, or where they are likely to come into contact with children or adults at risk. Changing Faces fully complies with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice and Disclosure Scotland Code of Practice. This is in line with The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

It is a requirement that those seeking employment or to volunteer with or around vulnerable groups will need to disclose any current involvement with protection agencies (such as the Police) before taking up a position with Changing Faces.

Similarly, if any existing member of staff or a volunteer is charged with a criminal offence or becomes aware that they are being investigated by a protection agency, then it must be disclosed immediately to the Safeguarding Lead and the Chief Executive, who will inform the Safeguarding Trustee.

To prevent abuse by staff and volunteers (People in Positions of Trust):

- All staff and volunteers responsible for delivering care or working alone with adults at risk are required to have an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scotland (PVG) check carried out on behalf of Changing Faces.
- All staff and volunteers are required to read all Changing Faces Policies and Procedures and sign the Safeguarding Policy Sign Off Sheet to say they have read, understood and will comply with these. All staff and volunteers are required to refresh this each year.
- All staff and volunteers will receive Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role.
- Changing Faces Safeguarding Team are qualified and experienced in working with children and vulnerable adults and are required to maintain an up-to-date understanding of the issues as part of their professional role.
- The Safeguarding Lead of the Board of Trustees has received safeguarding training and regularly updates their knowledge with latest best practice.

To report a suspicion of abuse by a staff member or volunteer – please refer to the Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

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6. Policy review

Changing Faces is committed to reviewing safeguarding policy and practice at regular intervals, especially in light of any changes in legislation affecting or updating the law.

Any substantive changes are presented for approval by the Board of Trustees.

Last Review: October 2023

Next Review: October 2024

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Version: 5	October 2023
Ratified by Audit and Risk Committee	October 2023
Ratified by Board Members	October 2023
Next Review date:	October 2024
Expiry date:	October 2024
Lead Executive/Director:	Head of Services / CEO
Name of originator/author:	Alan Dennett. Director Care First Consultancy Midlands Ltd.
Target audience:	Board Members, all staff and volunteers at Changing Faces

Version History:

Version	Date	Summary of changes /actions
V1 - draft	23/10/18	Updated in line with National Guidance & Legislation Care Act (2014)
V1 Final	30.11.18	Recommendations from Audit Committee
V2 – draft	16.3.2020	Updated as part of Changing Faces Policy for Policies
V2 – Final	24.3.2020	Approved by the Audit and Risk Committee
V3 - draft	01/04/2021	No substantial change
V3 - final	29/04/2021	Approved by the Audit and Risk Committee
V4 - draft	08/03/2022	No substantial change
V4 - final	23/03/2022	Approved by the Audit and Risk Committee
V5 - draft	October 2023	No substantial change - consent moved to Services Manual
V5 - final	October 2023	Approved by the Audit and Risk Committee / Board