

Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure

Who is covered by this policy?

All staff members, Trustees and Volunteers of Age UK Lewisham and Southwark (AUKLS).

What is covered by this policy?

This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of AUKLS in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting the welfare adults and in safeguarding them from abuse and neglect.

It outlines the steps that AUKLS will make to safeguard an adult with care and support needs if they are deemed to be at risk or at risk.

AUKLS's Safeguarding Adults procedures apply to all individuals we work with and have contact with.

This Policy and Procedure covers Safeguarding issues arising within AUKLS services as well as for when we might want to report a disclosure or concern given to us where AUKLS staff or volunteers are not directly involved. See the flowchart in Appendix 1 for a quick guide and Sections 2.1 and 2.2 for details of we manage these different types of Safeguarding issue.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding role and responsibilities, and how to proceed should they encounter a potential safeguarding incident.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of AUKLS to:

- have an overview of adult safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

General Principles

Age UK Lewisham and Southwark is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and accepts our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all adults we support in accordance with the Care Act 2014, and the amendments to it contained in the Health & Care Act 2022.

Age UK Lewisham and Southwark will not tolerate the abuse of adults in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding adults with care and support needs from harm.

Age UK Lewisham and Southwark will always try to ensure that decisions made will allow adults to make their own choices and include them in any decision making. Age UK Lewisham and Southwark will also ensure that safe and effective working practices are in place.

This policy is based on:

- The Care Act 2014, Health and Care Act 2022 and the Care and Support statutory guidance
- London Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures

Under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect.

Copies of this policy are available within Age UK Lewisham and Southwark. Staff and volunteers will be provided with copies of this policy during their induction and made aware of how this policy can be accessed.

All staff and volunteers (including Trustees) must complete recommended Safeguarding training during their induction, and this must be formally recorded via HR.

Responsibility

All staff and volunteers have responsibility to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all staff and volunteers to promote good practice by being excellent role models, contributing to discussions about safeguarding and positively involving people in developing safe practices.

We expect all staff to exhibit professional curiosity to explore and understand a situation by, for example, asking proactive questions and using critical thinking to form a holistic picture, challenge assumptions, and ensure the best possible outcomes.

Additional specific responsibilities

The CEO's responsibilities are to:

- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are accessible
- Ensure these procedures are compatible with COPSINS Shared Safeguarding Policy
- Ensure these procedures are followed, monitored and reviewed
- Take forward concerns about responses.

The CEO is the designated Lead Safeguarding Officer who has the responsibility to produce and disseminate guidance and resources to support the AUKLS Policy and Procedure.

Service managers' responsibilities are to:

- Ensure all staff and volunteers working within their teams are aware of these procedures
- Ensure all staff are following these procedures where required
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding cases are raised and followed up – including providing feedback to relevant colleagues, whilst keeping within the constraints of individuals' rights to privacy and AUKLS's Confidentiality Policy

What Is Safeguarding?

1.1 Safeguarding Adults

'Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances'.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse. An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

AUKLS adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

AUKLS will not tolerate the abuse of adults. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their work reflects the principles above and ensures that adults with care and support needs are involved in their decisions and informed consent is obtained whenever possible (See Appendix 1 for details of the Mental Capacity Act 2005). AUKLS should ensure that the safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk. AUKLS will be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

1.2 Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

MSP means a case should be person-led and outcome-focused. The individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

AUKLS will always do its best to ensure that adults are involved in their safeguarding arrangements and each individual is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. As adults may have different preferences, histories and lifestyles, the same process may not work for all.

The consent of the adult deemed to be at risk will normally be sought before information is shared, in line with the principles outlined above. In some cases, it may not be practical or safe to seek such consent, or the adult may lack capacity in relation to this issue. In these cases, a referral, or at least a discussion, may take place without active consent.

In some circumstances an adult with capacity may refuse consent but a referral is still made because it is deemed either that the risk of harm is so serious that the withholding of their consent isn't reasonable, or because another adult or child is at risk, or where there is an overriding public interest. An example of the latter would be an allegation of abuse made against a staff member of an agency providing personal care where the potential risk to other adults would outweigh the lack of consent. The reasons for a

referral without consent will be recorded carefully. AUKLS will seek the advice of the relevant Local Authority's Safeguarding team where there is doubt or concern about consent or capacity issues.

If the concern raised is regarding children, or if the concern is such (e.g. domestic abuse) that it will impact on any children at the same address, the matter will be discussed with the relevant Local Authority. If it is felt there is immediate danger the police should be contacted. Please see our Safeguarding Children Policy for further information about Safeguarding incidents involving children.

1.3 Who do adult safeguarding duties apply to?

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

Procedure

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to ensure that any concerns arising from situations they observe, allegations (reports from third parties) or disclosures (reports from someone about themselves) relating to potential abuse are reported to their line manager and CEO within 12 hours, even if they are unsure whether the concern is justified.

If the CEO is not available, then a report should be made to any of the Senior Management Team. If it is after 5pm, the weekend or bank holiday you should ring the Safeguarding Lead (CEO).

If there is an immediate and urgent risk to personal safety, it should contact appropriate emergency services.

We have different procedures for if the concern is relation to the actions or inactions of someone external to AUKLS or if the concern is relating to the action or non-action of an employee or volunteer of AUKLS. See 2.1 and 2.2 for details.

2.1 Reporting and responding to a concern raised against an Age UK Lewisham and Southwark staff member, volunteer or service

A concern might arise from:

- Something you observe (for example: bruises, a marked change in behaviour etc)
- An allegation that is made (for example you are told that someone has behaved inappropriately or put a client or colleague at risk)
- A disclosure where a client tells you something about themselves or their circumstances that lead you to believe that they are being abused or are at risk of abuse

A key role of frontline staff and volunteers is to RECOGNISE, RESPOND, RECORD AND REPORT.

2.1.1 If you observe something that causes you concern (e.g. a bruise or burn), you should ask the client what happened, unless to ask would be inappropriate or cause further distress (e.g. if other people were present, or if the person had severe dementia)

2.1.2 You should record exactly what you have seen / been told at your earliest opportunity and report it to your line manager and the CEO within one working day.

2.1.3 If someone makes an allegation to you about yourself or another member of staff or volunteer, listen carefully and explain that you will need to pass these concerns to the CEO. Reassure them that their concerns will be taken seriously. If the allegation is made by a family member or a worker from another agency – take their name and contact details and assure them a manager from AUKLS will contact them as soon as possible. Pass the information to your line manager and the CEO as soon as possible, and within 12 hours.

2.1.4 If a client makes an allegation of poor practice or abuse about another worker, follow the instructions for disclosure below.

If someone discloses potential or actual abuse to you:

- Try not to show shock or disbelief
- Don't interrupt someone who is freely recalling significant events, allow them to tell you whatever they want to share
- Listen carefully and reflect back what you are being told to ensure you have correctly grasped what is being said
- Reassure the person that they are right to share this information with you; show empathy with them
- Don't make promises to keep secrets – explain carefully that what they have said is worrying and that you have to share that with your line manager

- Do not ask leading questions, (eg 'So was it Peter who did that?') or attempt to 'investigate' in any way
- Don't make judgements
- Do not contact the alleged abuser
- Don't share this information with anyone other than your line manager
- As soon as you can, write down an account of your conversation, try to use the words / phrases that the person used. Sign and date your record
- Take up the opportunity for a debrief with your line manager / another manager; it can be profoundly upsetting to hear someone disclose abuse and it is not something you can discuss with other people

If the person is injured or you judge that they are at immediate risk of serious harm – ring 999.

2.1.5 If a member of staff or a volunteer believes that their line manager is involved in, or colluding with, any potential abuse, they should raise their concern with the CEO. Staff and volunteers raising genuine concerns about colleagues or managers within AUKLS will be supported and their job/role will be unaffected by such action. Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy for more detail.

If the CEO is potentially implicated in any potential safeguarding investigation or if it is felt that a concern has not been dealt with appropriately, it should be raised with the Chair or Vice Chair of Trustees for investigation. (The procedure undertaken by the Trustees would be that as laid out in the Complaints Policy).

2.1.6 Where the concern is one of potential discrimination or the undermining of choice within AUKLS's services it should be reported to the CEO. An investigation of the facts will then follow to decide if any action is required.

2.2 Reporting and responding to a safeguarding concern raised which is not directly related to AUKLS staff, volunteers or services

2.2.1 If you become aware that a person is potentially at risk as a result of neglect, abuse or poor practice, you must report this to your line manager and the AUKLS CEO.

2.2.2 Make a note of what the person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable.

- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.
- Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.

2.2.3 Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times, this information must only be shared with your AUKLS Line Manager and CEO and the local authorities' Safeguarding teams and others on a need-to-know basis.

2.2.4 If the risk is clear then you should raise your concerns with the relevant local Council's Safeguarding team (depending on the borough where the person at risk lives). Contact details for the AUKLS CEO and the local Councils' Safeguarding teams are in Section 5], below, with links to the boroughs' referral forms that should be used whenever possible. Follow the guidance from each local Authority (see Section 5, below, for details).

Lewisham Councils accepts safeguarding alerts via email. Please use emails (in addition to phone calls if these are necessary) so that we can keep a record of the reports, and ensure that you copy your line manager and the CEO into all safeguarding emails.

Southwark Council have recently introduced an online referral form, through which all safeguarding reports should be made. After completing a form, you should save a PDF copy. This needs to be sent to the AUKLS Designated Safeguarding Lead as you no longer need to email to the OPPD team. Please ensure a copy of the form is kept on the individual's record on Charitylog.

2.2.5 It is important when considering your concern that you also consider the needs and wishes of the person at risk, taking into account the nature of the alert. More information on this is given in Appendix 1

2.2.6 As long as it does not increase the risk to the individual, you should explain to them that it is your duty to share your concern with your line manager and potentially with the local Council Safeguarding teams.

2.2.7 If the matter is urgent and relates to the immediate safety of an adult at risk then contact the police immediately.

3. Confidential Record Keeping for Safeguarding Adult cases

All concerns and any discussions about a safeguarding case must be recorded.

All reports must be copied to the CEO. These will be kept securely by the CEO in a restricted folder. Hard copies must be shredded. Only the CEO and line manager as appropriate will have access to these records.

4. Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

Policy updated: February 2026

Review date: February 2027

Version Control: V11.0

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Serious Incident Reporting Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Recruitment of Ex Offenders Policy
- Lone Working Procedure

5. Contact Details:

Age UK Lewisham and Southwark Safeguarding Lead

Chris Price

Chief Executive Officer

Email: chris.price@ageuklands.org.uk

Telephone: 07931 717897

London Borough of Lewisham Safeguarding

Email: gateway@lewisham.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8314 7777

The Lewisham Safeguarding referral form can be found at:

[Lewisham Safeguarding Form](#)

London Borough of Southwark Safeguarding

Email: OPPDContaktteam@southwark.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7525 3324

Southwark Safeguarding referrals should be made via their online portal at:

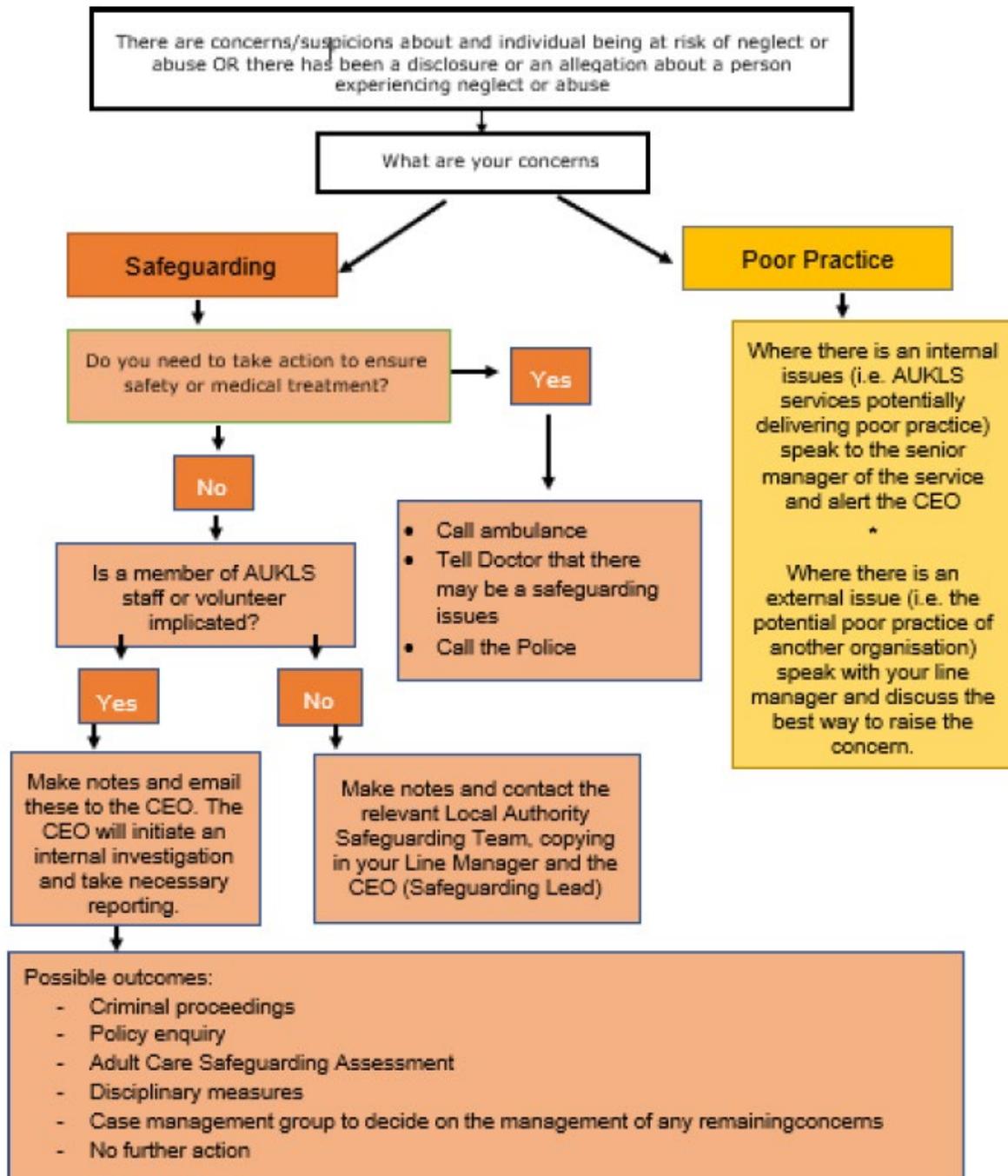
<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/adult-social-care/report-abuse-or-neglect-adult>

You can find a direct link to the form here: [Make a professional safeguarding referral | Southwark Council](#)

6. Review date

This policy will be reviewed by the trustees annually, or sooner in the event of legislative changes or revised policies and best practice.

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Adults Flowchart



Appendix 1: Useful Links

Legislation and Government Initiatives

Sexual Offences Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

The Sexual Offences Act introduced a number of new offences concerning vulnerable adults and children. www.opsi.gov.uk

Mental Capacity Act 2005

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/introduction>

Its general principle is that everybody has capacity unless it is proved otherwise, that they should be supported to make their own decisions, that anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests and there should be least restrictive intervention.

www.dca.gov.uk

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Introduced the new Vetting and Barring Scheme and the role of the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The Act places a statutory duty on all those working with vulnerable groups to register and undergo an advanced vetting process with criminal sanctions for non-compliance.

www.opsi.gov.uk

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dh-mental-capacity-act-2005-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards>

Introduced into the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and came into force in April 2009. Designed to provide appropriate safeguards for vulnerable people who have a mental disorder and lack the capacity to consent to the arrangements made for their care or treatment, and who may be deprived of their liberty in their best interests in order to protect them from harm.

Disclosure & Barring Service 2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

Criminal record checks: guidance for employers - How employers or organisations can request criminal records checks on potential employees from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service

The Care Act 2014 – statutory guidance

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/introduction/enacted>

The Care Act introduces new responsibilities for local authorities. It also has major implications for adult care and support providers, people who use services, carers and advocates. It replaces No Secrets and puts adult safeguarding on a statutory footing.

Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014

<http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/5852661/Making+Safeguarding+Personal+-+Guide+2014/4213d016-2732-40d4-bbc0-d0d8639ef0df>



This guide is intended to support councils and their partners to develop outcomes-focused, person-centred safeguarding practice.

Health and Care Act 2022

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/31/contents>

The Health and Care Act 2022 enhanced safeguarding by creating the Health Service Safety Investigation Body (HSSIB) to learn from incidents, requiring Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to report on child safeguarding, and clarifying information sharing for child protection. It also aimed to streamline care to improve the safety of both children and adults by focusing on joined-up working, and creating a new framework for Safeguarding Adults in Health and Social Care