

## 28 SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### POLICY

28.1 Abuse is 'a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It is a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes alarm or distress to an older person'.

28.2 There are many types of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, neglect or acts of omission, discriminatory abuse, and institutional abuse.

28.3 Those that are vulnerable include 'A person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or abuse' (Department of Health, *No Secrets*, 2000).

28.4 Age UK Waltham Forest:

(a) recognises that a significant number of older people are at risk of abuse; and that abuse can take place in a person's own home, in the home of a carer or a family member, where day care is provided, within any form of residential or nursing care, including hospitals, and on public transport, or in the street.

(b) acknowledges that staff, other service users, relatives, visitors, and/or members of the public can perpetrate abuse.

(c) will not tolerate any form of abuse and believes that all older people should be able to live in an environment, which is safe from abuse.

(d) believes, that in all situations everyone is entitled to

- privacy;
- be treated with dignity;
- lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so;
- choose how they lead their lives;
- the protection of the law; and
- have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

(e) will aim to respond actively to any situation where abuse is suspected in a positive and constructive way, by:

- **Caring** – ensuring that staff and volunteers are committed to developing a positive relationship with the individual, actively listening to their concerns and being sensitive to their needs.
- **Following effective procedures** – ensuring that staff and volunteers are fully aware of, and follow the correct procedures and are encouraged to seek further advice and guidance at every stage of the process. The implementation of the procedures should result in prompt, timely and appropriate action.
- **Enabling** – ensuring that the individual's wishes are respected and that the individual is given all the support and information possible to assist them in making decisions about possible action to be taken.

- **Influencing** – when working with external agencies, reiterating the needs and wishes of the individual and maintaining an effective network of contacts and professional relationships to ensure that the process is handled in a co-ordinated and sensitive manner.
- **Innovating** – reviewing current systems and work practises, asking challenging questions, generating options for action, exploring a wide range of alternatives, and considering how best to deal with each situation as it arises.

## PROCEDURE

28.5 When a client discloses a safeguarding issue, you should follow these steps:

- Ensure as far as possible that the client is safe.
- If there is a risk of injury or a crime taking place, ring 999.
- Report the issue as soon as possible to either Chris Bateson (the Safeguarding Champion) or Emma Tozer (Chief Executive).
- Make clear, factual notes (including dates and times) and keep them on file.

Thereafter, the most senior Age UK staff member available should

- Contact LBWF Safeguarding Adults Team either via Waltham Forest Direct on 020 8496 3000, or [safeadults@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:safeadults@walthamforest.gov.uk).
- If applicable, complete Waltham Forest Adult Safeguarding Partnership's Safeguarding Adults Alert form (see Resources, below).

28.6 Please note that the Safeguarding Adults Team will conduct initial investigations and keep the referrer informed; and will convene strategy meetings limited to those who need to know and can contribute to the decision making process. Further case conferences may follow if appropriate, and include the adult at risk.

## RESOURCES

28.7 The LBWF 'Reporting harm against an adult at risk' page, which can be accessed here:

[https://portal.walthamforest.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?mode=fill&consentMessage=yes&form\\_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-ed2335f7-158d-4299-b273-8f5e86538222/AF-Stage-6d11e6c3-1671-47cd-9c4d-3f4c9de9a56f/definition.json&process=1&process\\_uri=sandbox-processes://AF-Process-ed2335f7-158d-4299-b273-8f5e86538222&process\\_id=AF-Process-ed2335f7-158d-4299-b273-8f5e86538222&noLoginPrompt=1](https://portal.walthamforest.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?mode=fill&consentMessage=yes&form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-ed2335f7-158d-4299-b273-8f5e86538222/AF-Stage-6d11e6c3-1671-47cd-9c4d-3f4c9de9a56f/definition.json&process=1&process_uri=sandbox-processes://AF-Process-ed2335f7-158d-4299-b273-8f5e86538222&process_id=AF-Process-ed2335f7-158d-4299-b273-8f5e86538222&noLoginPrompt=1)

contains a good deal of useful information, including the Safeguarding Adults Alert form previously mentioned, and is regularly updated.

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