

## Safeguarding Policy

### Contact details for reporting

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact details</b> (Name, telephone number and/or email)
Gain Support Ltd	Catherine Gain 07446 834337 catherine@gainsupport.uk
Police - non emergency	101
Local Authority Adult Social Care team	01926 412080
Local NHS Safeguarding contact	Tracy Redgate 07793 661 723

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## Purpose

1. Making sure that you and the person that you care for stays safe is vitally important. People need to feel and be safe to enable them to stay as independent as possible for as long as possible.
2. Everybody, whether considered vulnerable or not, should be able to participate in everyday life within enjoyable and safe environments protected from harm.
3. Safeguarding does not mean that all potential risks are removed from an individual. Positive or appropriate risk taking can greatly enhance individuals' lives and within appropriate boundaries this should be encouraged.
4. This policy lays out how to protect yourself, those you work with and any other individuals who you may interact with. It lays out what steps you should take if you believe someone is being abused or is at risk from harm.
5. This policy should be used in partnership with the policies and procedures of any relevant agencies in the local area and specifically those of the Local Authority. Your Local Authority should be able to provide copies of their documents to you.

## Scope of this document

1. This document applies to everyone you work with, yourself and any employees you have.
2. You should promote the safeguarding of individuals; especially those that might be considered vulnerable to everyone you come into contact with.



## Definitions and types of abuse

1. Abuse has been defined as: *“Abuse is mistreatment by any other person or persons that violates a person’s human and civil rights. The abuse can vary, from treating someone with disrespect in a way that significantly affects the person’s quality of life, to causing actual physical or mental suffering<sup>1</sup>”*. Abuse may occur as a one-off occurrence or it may be a regular feature of a relationship.
2. People, including the person harmed, may be unaware that abuse is being carried out and this may make it difficult to detect.
3. In many cases, the abuse will be considered a criminal offence
4. The main forms of abuse are as follows, but this should not be considered a complete list:
  - **Physical Abuse** – Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking and misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions
  - **Sexual Abuse** – Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable person has not consented to, could not consent to or has been pressured in to consenting to. Exposure to pornographic images and being made to witness sexual acts are also included, as are harassment and non-contact abuse – such as photographing individuals without their permission.
  - **Psychological Abuse** - Including emotional abuse, blackmail, threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, verbal abuse, isolation, depriving them of normal activities or contact.
  - **Financial or Material Abuse** - Including theft, fraud, extortion or unlawfully gaining access to someone’s funds or possessions.
  - **Neglect and Acts of Omission** - Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate food and heating.
  - **Professional Abuse** - Including when a professional takes advantage of their client's trust, does not act in their best interests, does not keep professional boundaries, or exploits their vulnerability. This also includes the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes or poor practice or neglect in services.
  - **Multiple or Institutional Abuse** - Including the mistreatment of people brought about by poor or inadequate care or support, or systematic poor practice that affects the whole care setting.
  - **Discriminatory Abuse** - Including racism, sexism, discrimination based on a person's disability, or when someone is treated differently or picked on because something about them is different, for example their clothes, religion or age.



## How to spot abuse

1. You may witness the abuse of an individual or it may be that someone tells you they are being harmed. If so **you should immediately report this using the details on the front of this policy document.**
2. There are likely to be signs that someone could be being abused and these may differ depending on the type of abuse that may be occurring. Individual signs alone may not be a sign of abuse and the examples given below may not cover the signs that the individual in question is displaying.
3. **In all cases, if you suspect abuse may be occurring, you should report this as soon as possible using the details on the front of this policy document.**
4. Some examples of signs individuals may be suffering abuse:
  - Have injuries that are at different of stages of healing or injuries that cannot be explained
  - Behave in a way that suggests they're afraid of the perpetrator, for example changes in attitude when that individual is mentioned or present
  - Episodes of low self-esteem, emotional withdrawal, sleep disturbance or unexplained fear
  - Have unexplained weight changes or other physical changes including poor hygiene
  - Have a sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy
  - Have dirty clothing/bedding or inadequate or inappropriate clothing
  - Have insufficient food in the house or be suffering from malnutrition
  - Have unpaid bills, a sudden loss of assets or unexplained problems in maintaining their standard of living or paying bills
  - Have increased levels of confusion, anxiety and a lack of confidence or a decreased ability to communicate
5. It may be that you suspect that someone is committing abuse because of behaviours they display, for instance being evasive about their responsibilities, demonstrating poor professional practice, being inconsiderate or disrespectful of factors such as race, age, gender or sexuality of an individual, demonstrating overly controlling behaviour or taking unprofessional interest in the financial affairs of others.
6. **In all cases, if you suspect abuse may be occurring, you should report this as soon as possible using the details on the front of this policy document.**



## Who to notify

It is not the individual's responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred or not; many Local Authorities have dedicated safeguarding teams to investigate abuse issues and you should be able to find their contact details from the Local Authority website. If you can't, then the Adult Social Care team should be able to help you. Many people are worried that they have got it wrong, that there is no abuse, or the abuse is not serious enough to report - don't hesitate, do report it. Local teams are used to carrying out safeguarding investigations, and are trained to do it in a sensitive and supportive manner.

In an emergency, if you think the person being abused is at risk of harm and needs immediate protection, call the police on 999. Try and remove the person from immediate danger if you can, but you should not put yourself in danger.

1. If you witness abuse of an individual you should:
  - Secure any medical assistance required, either First Aid or by calling 999.
  - Call the police, using the 999 emergency number.
  - If it is appropriate and safe to do so, remove the abused person from the scene of the abuse.
  - At an appropriate time make a written record of the incident.
  - If the individual is not in immediate danger then contact your local Adult Social Care team. Professionals have a duty to act on any situations where the abuse of a vulnerable adult is suspected, so your concerns will be acted upon quickly.
  
2. If someone tells you they have been abused you should:
  - React calmly and take what they say seriously.
  - Re-assure the alleged victim that they were right to tell you and that they are not to blame.
  - Tell them that you will keep the information they give you confidential, but that you may have to give other people details at some point.
  - Take careful notes of what the individual tells you – be careful to listen and record them exactly in their own words.
  - Inform the General Manager who will advise on how to take the matter forward. Use the contact details at the front of this document.



## Confidentiality

When dealing with issues of abuse, you may be asked to keep certain information confidential. However, since the consequences of abuse have legal ramifications, it is possible you may have to disclose what you have been told. As such, it is good practice to indicate you will keep information given to you as confidential as is possible, but that you will need to report the alleged abuse and that this may mean you have to give other people the details at some point.

## Recording events

Making and retaining records is an important part of all stages of safeguarding processes. It is not your responsibility to investigate whether abuse has occurred, but ensuring that you have recorded any evidence will benefit any investigation that is carried out. You should also be aware that the individual you have spoken with has the right to ask to see what has been recorded.

When recording what people are telling you, aim to record the following:

- The known details of the individual including name, date of birth, address and contact details.
- Whether these are the concerns of the person you are talking to or those of someone else.
- The details of where the interview/conversation took place.
- What happened – be sure to record this in the individual's own words and include as much detail as you can.
- Details of anyone else who may have witnessed abuse.

## Support for those reporting abuse

Speaking about and reporting abusive behaviour is not easy for people to do. As such, you will need to reassure individuals that they have done the correct thing in informing you of such behaviour. You should:

- React calmly and take what they say seriously.
- Re-assure the individual that they were right to tell you and that they are not to blame.
- Take careful notes of what the individual tells you – be careful to listen and record them in their own words.
- Tell them that you will keep the information they give you confidential, but that you may have to give other people details at some point.
- Make sure that that individual is protected from any possible further abuse occurring and from any reprisals or intimidation.
- Let them know that you will inform them of any action you take regarding this and that you will let them know of any outcomes from these actions.

Employees and volunteers who speak out, known as 'whistleblowing', against their employers/managers/directors in these circumstances are protected by law from being discriminated against under The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

## Sources of advice and support

Organisation	Contact details
<p><b>Action on Elder Abuse (AEA)</b> Works to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable older adults. It offers a UK-wide helpline, open every weekday from 9am to 5pm.</p>	<p>UK helpline: 080 8808 8141 (free phone) Website: <a href="http://www.elderabuse.org.uk">www.elderabuse.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk">enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Public Concern at Work (PCaW)</b> Public Concern at Work is an independent charity working to promote a new approach to 'whistleblowing' in the public interest.</p>	<p>Helpline: 020 7404 6609 Website: <a href="http://www.pcaw.co.uk/help_individ/helpline.html">www.pcaw.co.uk/help_individ/helpline.html</a> Email: <a href="mailto:helpline@pcaw.co.uk">helpline@pcaw.co.uk</a></p>
<p><b>The Relatives and Residents Association</b> Gives advice and support to older people in care homes and their relatives and friends.</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.relres.org">www.relres.org</a> Advice line: 020 7359 8136 (Mon–Fri 9.30am–4.30pm)</p>
<p><b>Victim Support</b> Victim Support is the independent charity for victims and witnesses of crime in England and Wales. It has offices across England and Wales, including a National Centre in London.</p>	<p>Victim Support line: 0845 30 30 900 Typetalk: 18001 0845 30 30 900 Website: <a href="http://www.victimsupport.org.uk">www.victimsupport.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Women's Aid</b> A national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. Supports a network of over 500 domestic and sexual violence services across the UK.</p>	<p>National Domestic Violence helpline: 0808 2000 247 (Free phone Mon–Sun 24 hours) Website: <a href="http://www.womensaid.org.uk">www.womensaid.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Ann Craft Trust</b> The trust aims to protect adults and children with learning difficulties from abuse. It offers information and advice, peer group support, training seminars and workshops. It is possible to become a member of the organisation and receive quarterly newsletters.</p>	<p>General Enquiries: 01159 515 400 Email: <a href="mailto:ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk">ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.anncrafttrust.org">www.anncrafttrust.org</a></p>