

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policy Statement

Nidderdale Plus will not tolerate the abuse of adults at risk in any of its forms. In achieving these aims Nidderdale Plus will ensure:

- That all staff and volunteers have access to and are familiar with this Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy and procedures, and their responsibilities within it
- That all staff, trustees, and volunteers who require DBS checks undertake Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult training on a regular basis.
- Concerns or allegations of abuse are always taken seriously
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is used to make decisions on behalf of those adults at risk who are unable to make particular decisions for themselves
- There is a named lead person (the Designated Safeguarding Lead – DSL) to promote safeguarding awareness and practice within the organisation

This policy and its associated procedures have been developed to be consistent with the Safeguarding Adults Joint Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, and City of York, which can be referred to for additional guidance at <https://safeguardingadults.co.uk/>

Purpose of Policy

To ensure Nidderdale Plus can keep adults with whom it works safe, and to act appropriately with regards to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who come into contact with adults at risk through the course of their work.

What is 'Adult Safeguarding'?

- Protecting adults from abuse or neglect
- Protection of certain people who may be in vulnerable circumstances
- These are adults in need of care and support, who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, due to the actions (or lack of actions) of another person

Please watch the following Safeguarding Tips video: <https://vimeo.com/398761329>

(you may need to paste the link into your browser to open it).

All vulnerable adults have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. Nidderdale Plus is committed to safeguarding from harm all vulnerable adults using any of its services, and to treating them with respect.

Policy Definitions

Who is an 'Adult at risk'? For the purposes of this policy, an 'adult at risk of abuse or neglect' is an adult who is: aged 18 years or more, and

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

What is abuse? - Abuse can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual should always be considered. Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, and misuse of medication
- **Domestic abuse** - violence, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse
- **Sexual abuse** - includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts; 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 adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting
- **Emotional or Psychological abuse** - 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
- **Financial and material abuse** - theft, fraud, exploitation, 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 misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Modern 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.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse** - based on race, sex, disability, faith, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, hate crime
- **Organisational abuse** - neglect and poor practice within an institution or specific care setting or in relation to care provided in one's own home 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.
- **Self-neglect** - covers a wide range of behaviours, such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.

Nidderdale Plus Safeguarding Adult Procedures

Responding to an allegation/concern of abuse or neglect

Nidderdale Plus recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. Anyone who has contact with adults at risk and hears disclosures or allegations or has concerns about potential abuse or neglect has a duty to pass them on appropriately.

Responsibilities of all employees and volunteers

If any member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that abuse is or may be taking place, they have a responsibility to act on this information. It does not matter what their role is, doing nothing is not an option.

If a person discloses abuse to you directly, use the following principles to respond:

- Assure them that you are taking the concerns seriously
- Do not be judgmental or jump to conclusions
- Listen carefully to what they are telling you, stay calm, get as clear a picture as you can
- Use open ended questions
- Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions
- Explain that you have a duty to tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Reassure the person that they will be involved in decisions about them

Your responsibilities are:

1. To take action in an urgent situation to keep the person safe if possible.

- Is an urgent police presence required to keep someone safe? – **dial 999**
 - Does the person need urgent medical assistance, do they need an ambulance? – **dial 999**
2. If a crime has occurred, be aware of the need to preserve evidence.
 3. Always inform the DSL, even if it means that you keep the personal details of the vulnerable adult that you have been dealing with confidential, in line with their requests.
 4. Clearly record what you have witnessed or been told, record your responses and any actions taken.

If you are informed or become aware of possible abuse or neglect:

Take action to ensure the immediate safety and welfare of the adult at risk (and any other person at risk), and report your concerns to the DSL at the earliest opportunity.

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

Follow these steps if you are informed or become aware of possible abuse or neglect:

1. Gather information, including what the adult wants to happen now, and what changes they want to achieve from the support they could receive
2. Contact **Nidderdale Plus on 01423 714953 and ask for the DSL**. Make sure you have documented the incident and any actions you have taken.
3. All records must be passed to the DSL to deal with and store in appropriate, locked storage.

Every member of staff and volunteer has a responsibility to act on concerns of possible abuse and must inform the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Helen Flynn at Nidderdale Plus**. If any member of staff or volunteer has any concerns and are in any doubt, then they should speak with the **DSL** straight away.

The named person(s) for safeguarding concerns within **Nidderdale Plus**:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Helen Flynn (Executive Director)
Work Telephone number:	01423 714953
Mobile Number:	07789 173011
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Jackie Kerr (Safeguarding Trustee)
Mobile Number:	07778 783695

REMEMBER: If you suspect that someone is being abused and they are in immediate danger you should dial the Police on 999.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the trustees on an annual basis. A copy is available on our website, in our office and to our partner organisations, as required

Policy reviewed and updated February 2024