

# **SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK**

for the use and guidance of Friends in

## **Hertford & Hitchin Area & Local Quaker Meetings**

### *Appendix 2*

## **VULNERABLE ADULTS, SPECIAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES**

This appendix has been added to the Safeguarding Handbook to strengthen provision for the safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults. It outlines a procedure, and gives further information and advice gathered from several sources.

**PROCEDURE:** The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an Adult is In Need of Protection:

### **SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, FINANCIAL OR OTHER ABUSE**

If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury, or symptom of sexual abuse, or there are concerns about other forms of abuse, the Designated Friend will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and right to lead an independent life.
- Consult the Area Meeting Safeguarding Coordinator and decide who should take further action
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact Hertfordshire County Council Adult Social Services on their 24/7 phone at **0300 123 4042**

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 5 states:

*'No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'.*

### What do we mean by “Vulnerable Adult”?

*(In legal and other documents the phrase “**vulnerable adult**” is sometimes replaced by “**adult at risk**” or “**adult with care and support needs**”)*

The Care Act of 2014 states that an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect if the person:

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

More specifically this could apply to:

- disabled people who have physical or sensory impairments
- people who have learning difficulties
- people who experience mental ill health
- some older people depending on individual circumstances
- people experiencing feeling of vulnerability

The following factors may also increase the potential for people to be vulnerable: low self-esteem, social exclusion, drug or alcohol misuse, offending history, homelessness, domestic violence, and discrimination or harassment on the grounds of ethnicity, immigration status, and sexuality. The vulnerability may be a permanent or a temporary condition.

The Care Act requires local authorities to establish Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs), which will include at least the local authority, police, and the NHS, to oversee safeguarding of adults in their areas, and local authorities must see that allegations about care of adults are investigated. The Hertfordshire SAB has an informative website (go to [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) and enter "HSAB" in the search box).

### Supporting those affected by abuse

Meetings are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and offering support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the meeting. This support is provided by Safeguarding Coordinators and Designated Friends.

## What do we mean by “abuse”?

Abuse is the violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse might be unintentional, the important factor is whether the person is harmed or not. Examples of types of abuse are:

<b>Physical Abuse</b>	can include any form of assault, over-medication, restraint or poor manual handling practice.
<b>Domestic Abuse/Violence</b>	including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	can include rape and any sexual act which was not actively consented to or the person did not have the capacity to understand.
<b>Psychological/Emotional Abuse</b>	can include threats, intimidation, coercion, harassment.
<b>Financial abuse</b>	can include theft, borrowing money without repayment and any pressure in connection with wills or property, possessions or benefits.
<b>Modern Slavery</b>	encompasses 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.
<b>Neglect</b>	can include ignoring medical or physical needs, not providing access to appropriate health or social care, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate food, water and heating.
<b>Discriminatory Abuse</b>	includes all forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment based on a person’s disability, ethnic origin, gender or sexuality, this is often called <b>hate crime</b> .
<b>Organisational Abuse</b>	including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range 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
<b>Self-Neglect</b>	this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Abuse of vulnerable adults may also include **Forced Marriage**, **Female Genital Mutilation**, **Spiritual Abuse**, and **Radicalisation** and other forms of **Exploitation**.

Any of these forms of abuse can be either deliberate or the result of ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. If a person is being abused in one way they are often also being abused in other ways.

### **Abuse can happen in any setting:**

- At home.
- In sheltered housing.
- In supported living settings.
- At day centres and other day services.
- In care homes.
- In hospitals.
- Wherever people are dependent on the care of others for their well-being.

Abuse happens to people in all sections of society.

### **Recognising possible abuse**

Members and attenders are not expected to diagnose abuse but we need to be aware, recognise and be alert to signs that all is not well with an adult. Possible indicators are:

- Full or partial (hints) disclosure
- Frequent or unexplained minor injuries or bruising
- Signs of depression or stress which may happen suddenly or gradually emerge
- Neglected personal care
- Weight loss
- Dramatic change of behavior /personality – this can happen very suddenly and unexpectedly and is often associated with fear
- Confusion
- Persistent financial hardship
- Denial that anything is wrong and an emphasis that all is extremely well
- Seeking help from numerous sources/people – this may be a direct request for help or attention seeking behavior
- Acceptance or resignation of a situation as being part of being old and/or disabled
- Deference or submission to a suspected abuser
- Not getting to medical appointments

## **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the Meeting is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults, the Local Meeting should supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but the Meeting must, in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

These individuals should not work with children and vulnerable adults.

Quaker Life must be informed if a sex offender is found to be part of a Meeting's community. The precise nature of the boundaries will be negotiated and recorded by the Local Meeting Safeguarding Coordinator, Convenor of Local Meeting Children's Committee, an Overseer, the clerk and the Offender. The Area Meeting Safeguarding Coordinator and the Safeguarding Coordinator at Britain Yearly Meeting (Quaker Life) should be informed of any decisions made.

## **Special Needs and Disabilities**

Any child, young person or vulnerable adult attending an activity who has a special need or disability may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility (e.g. use of sign language and assistance in going to the toilet).

They may behave in a non-age appropriate way.

- Ask the child, young person or vulnerable adult attending the activity, and parents or carers how their needs can be met, ensuring all workers involved with them are aware of their expectations. This includes the number of helpers needed to assist for a specific activity to prevent injury. Some of these needs may be more easily met than others, so be realistic. A family may ask for changes to enable easier access to the building (ensure you meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act). Listen, and give feedback to the person, family or carer as to what can or cannot be achieved and the reasons why.
- Ideally ensure that a helper of the same gender is able to assist if they need help with toileting, but again discuss with the person, their family or carer to discuss their preference and your ability to provide this. Generally, once discussed, these issues can be agreed upon.
- Make buildings accessible (e.g. ramps, toilets for the disabled and hearing loop system) and encourage integration within the group.
- Developing appropriate disability awareness including the use of different forms of communication (e.g. sign language) and language etiquette.

## Effective Listening

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else, listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is appropriate help to communicate

## Helpful Responses

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you find someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

## Don't Say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

## Domestic Violence

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse (2013) is:

‘any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality’.

*(Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents, whether directly related, in-laws or step-family.)*

In 2004 the Government’s definition of domestic violence was extended to include acts perpetrated by extended family members as well as intimate partners.

Consequently, acts such as forced marriage and other so-called ‘honour crimes’, which can include abduction and homicide, can now come under the definition of domestic violence. Many of these acts are committed against children. (Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) 6.21)

The Serious Crime Act 2015 created a new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships, dealing with ongoing situations with threats of violence, or a substantial adverse effect on day-to-day activities.