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| Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures |
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1. **Aim**

**Safeguarding is everyone’s business.** Asian Elders’ Resource Centre (AERC) believes that it is always unacceptable for adults, to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all adults at risk in line with The Care Act (2014). The aim of this policy is to ensure that AERC safeguards the welfare of adults, who may be at risk and are able to recognise the signs and respond appropriately to allegations of abuse. We aim to achieve this by ensuring that AERC complies with statutory and local guidance for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk by creating a safe environment**.**

# 2. Scope of this policy

This policy and procedure applies to all Asian Elders’ Resource Centre staff, volunteers and visitors whose work brings them into contact with adults, that may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

**3. Legislative Framework**

**Adults**

The Care Act (2014) and corresponding guidance (Department of Health, 2014) is new legislation about care and support for adults in England. The Care Act outlines key principles for supporting adults who have been or are at risk of abuse or neglect and; provides a framework for local authorities and partner organisations for making safeguarding enquiries.

**4. Asian Elders Resource Centre safeguarding objective**

Our objective is to keep adults, at risk safe by:

* Preventing abuse and neglect wherever possible
* Supporting adults, in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
* Taking all safeguarding enquiries seriously and acting upon them.
* Raising awareness about what abuse is, how to stay safe and how to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of an adult.
* In safeguarding adults, we will always consider the best interests of the individual at risk in line with The Mental Capacity Act (MCA, 2005) and corresponding Code of Practice(sections 16 & 17 for further detail)
* All staff and volunteers are obliged by The Care Act (2014) to share information or concerns they may have in relation to harm or neglect being caused to an adult, at risk.

***Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility’: for services to be effective AERC should play their full part.***

**5. Definitions (Adult)**

**What is Safeguarding?**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

**Who is an adult at risk?**

Guidance issued under The Care Act 2014 which supersedes the No Secrets guidance (2000) states that:

*“.. safeguarding duties apply to an adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs) is experiencing, or 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?**

Some staff may be particularly well-placed to spot abuse and neglect, as in many cases they may be the only individuals with whom the adult has contact. The adult may say or do things that hint that all is not well. It may come in the form of a complaint, a call for a police response, an expression of concern, or as part of a disclosure during an assessment. Regardless of how the safeguarding concern is identified, everyone should understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help, support and advice. It is vital that professionals, staff volunteers and members of the public are vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves.

*The Care Act 2014* defines the following areas of abuse and neglect; they are not exhaustive but are a guide to behaviour that may lead to a safeguarding enquiry. This includes:

* Physical abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Financial or material abuse
* Psychological and/or Emotional abuse
* Neglect and acts of omission
* Self-neglect
* Discriminatory Abuse
* Domestic abuse

**6. Key Principles for adult safeguarding**

There are a number of principles underpinning the work we carry out with adults and Asian Elders’ Resource Centreis guided by the following principles set out in *The Care Act 2014*:

* Empowerment
* Protection
* Prevention
* Proportionality
* Partnership
* Accountability

**7. What to do if you are concerned about an Adult**

Where staff have concerns about the safety of an adult, they are duty bound to report these concerns to the Centre Manager in the first instance. The Centre Manager will then decide if referral to external agencies (inc Local Authority Safeguarding Teams) is required. Should these concerns involve the Centre Manager, staff and volunteers should refer to the organisations Whistle Blowing Policy, however this should not delay in following the Local Authority Safeguarding policies and procedures.

Please refer to section 10 for further advice on information sharing.

All staff should ensure that they assist the police or Social Services with investigations as and when required. In the event that someone is clearly at risk of immediate harm then it is appropriate for the reporting member of staff to ring the emergency number (999) to inform the relevant emergency service (as appropriate). The management team must be alerted as soon as is practicably possible in such circumstances.

It is important that the adult is supported throughout the process by the staff member:

* Remaining calm, not showing shock/disbelief and listening carefully
* Not asking detailed or leading questions
* Ensuring that any emergency action needed has been taken to ensure immediate safety of the adult
* Giving the person appropriate contact details so that they can report any further issues or ask any questions that may arise

**Procedure for raising concerns and reporting**

Please see appendices 2 & 3 and follow Local Authority policy and procedures in respect of:

Adult - <https://www.bolton.gov.uk/safeguarding-protecting-adults/safeguarding-adults-risk>

**8. Safe Recruitment**

Asian Elders Resource Centre have appropriate systems and procedures in place to ensure the safe recruitment of all staff and volunteers within the organisation who come into contact with adults. This should include requirements set out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

**9. Sharing information**

Sharing information is an essential part of effective safeguarding practice. It allows multiple staff and/or agencies to build a complete picture of a situation where one individual or agency would be unable to do so. Often it is only when information from a number of sources is shared that it becomes clear that an adult, is at risk of harm. This then enables early intervention and prevention work to be carried out.

Confidentiality and consent are two key issues, confidential information is information which is personal, sensitive, not already lawfully in the public domain, and shared in confidence or the reasonable expectation of confidence .Confidential information may be shared with the consent of the person who provided it or to whom it relates.

However, before applying consent when sharing confidential information the following circumstances should be considered (consent not required):

* If there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe that an adult, is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, or of causing significant harm to themselves or others,

Data Protection legislation supports this and makes sure information can be shared ‘legally.’ It is therefore important when sharing personal / confidential information the law is applied. Consent is just one of the legal bases.

The failure to share information can put individual’s life at risk.

For additional guidance click on the link below:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf>

**10. Allegations against staff and volunteers**

Adults can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any and every setting. All allegations of abuse or maltreatment of adults by an employee, agency worker, independent contractor or volunteer will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the Bolton Safeguarding Adult Board (BSAB) procedures accessed at:

the Bolton Safeguarding Adult Board (BSAB) procedures accessed at: <https://www.bolton.gov.uk/homepage/131/bolton-safeguarding-adults-board>

Actions may involve the immediate suspension of the staff member while the investigation is carried out.

**11. Whistleblowing**

Asian Elders Resource Centre recognises that it is important to build a culture that allows staff to feel comfortable about sharing information, in confidence and with a lead person, regarding concerns about quality of care or a colleague’s behaviour.

**12. Training and supervision**

All Asian Elders Resource Centre staff and volunteers receive mandatory training on joining the organisation; this includes safeguarding adults training, including training on recognising signs of abuse; duty of reporting; their role in responding to suspected abuse; risk assessment and management. Safeguarding training for Adults, is refreshed every three years for ALL staff and volunteers.

Asian Elders Resource Centreare committed to ensuring that all staff who have contact with adults at risk receive an appropriate level of supervision and support.

**13. Safeguarding Lead**

The Safeguarding Lead for Asian Elders Resource Centre is: Centre Manager: Shabeen Rehman on 01204-651123/07939801612 email Shabeen@aercbolton.co.uk and has day to day responsibility for safeguarding across AERC.. The honourable officers of the Board are overall responsible for Safeguarding issues.

**14. Safeguarding statement**

. **Safeguarding statement for** Asian Elders’ Resource Centre

Asian Elders’ Resource Centre believes that it is unacceptable for anyone to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguarding the welfare of all adults, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Abuse of adults at risk, may be perpetrated by a wide range of people including relatives, family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people and strangers.

It is not always obvious when someone is being abused, there may be specific signs or your instincts may tell you something is wrong. Abuse is never acceptable in any circumstances and everyone has the right to be safe. Safeguarding adults, is everyone’s business.

Working in partnership with the community and safeguarding authorities Asian Elders ‘Resource Centre aims to make sure that adults at risk using its services are listened to and protected from abuse. AERC staff must report all incidents or concerns they have relating to the wellbeing of an adult at risk.

Members of the public who have concerns should follow guidance offered by their local Adult Safeguarding Board.

If you wish to notify or log a safeguarding concern about an adult at risk, accessing AERC you can contact the Local Safeguarding Teams, see section 18 for contact details.

**15. Useful Local Safeguarding contact details**

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| **Service Safeguarding Lead**  | **Service Area** | **Contact** |
| Bolton Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team | Office hours, Mon-Fri for Adult safeguarding concerns | 01204 337000 |
| Bolton Local Authority Emergency Duty Team | Out-of-hours and weekends (for both adult & child safeguarding concerns) | 01204 337777 |

**16. References and other relevant legislation and guidance**

Human Rights Act (1998) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/pdfs/ukpga_19980042_en.pdf>

Mental Health Act (2007) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/12/pdfs/ukpga_20070012_en.pdf>

Data Protection Act (1998) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/pdfs/ukpga_19980029_en.pdf>

Adult Safeguarding: Roles and Competencies for Health Care Staff. Intercollegiate document (2018).

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-007069>

Relationships & Sexuality in Adult Social Care Services<https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20190221-Relationships-and-sexuality-in-social-care-PUBLICATION.pdf>

The Care Act 2014

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

The Care Act 2014 guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/366104/43380_23902777_Care_Act_Book.pdf>

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

Skills for Care – Codes of Practice

<http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Standards/Codes-of-practice/Codes-of-practice.aspx>

Equality Act (2010) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf>

**18. Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Adult Process**

Safeguarding Concern identified by {INSERT PROVIDER NAME} in relation

Safeguarding Concern identified by Asian Elders Resource Centre in relation to an adult at risk.

Safeguarding concern is phoned through to the Safeguarding Adult Team (SAT) on 01204 337000 or 01204 332032 (professional line).

**Timescale: Immediately**

If the concern meets the threshold for a safeguarding enquiry the duty worker will complete the contact document on liquid logic or give advice on an alternative cause of action**.**

**Decision Making: 24 hours**

Safeguarding

**Not Safeguarding**

**Options:**

* Safeguarding Adult Team **(SAT)** leads on the enquiry

Named worker identified from the Safeguarding Team to support with the safeguarding enquiry.

Alternative course of action may be followed i.e. undertake root cause analysis, review risk assessment, refer to other service etc.

**Strategy Meeting/Discussion** (within 5 days).

 Role and responsibility for the safeguarding enquiry agreed, including engagement with the adult/representative (MSP). Consider Advocacy and agree referral to the Harm Free Panel if appropriate.

NB. Individual worker making contact with the SAT will record this decision within the service user’s case notes.

**Who to contact in Adult Social Care:**

* Safeguarding Adults Enquiry Team

*(Mon to Fri 9am -5pmTel****: 01204 337000*)**

* *(Out of hours Tel:****01204 337777***

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If you wish to notify or log a safeguarding concern about an adult at risk, young person or child accessingAERC you can contact the Local Safeguarding Teams, see section 18 for contact details.

**safeguardingadults@bolton.co.uk**

**Staff should update their knowledge by accessing regular training and be familiar with local safeguarding policies, including those of Bolton Safeguarding Adults Board.**

* Safeguardingadults@bolton.gov.uk

 **22. Appendix 3 – Safeguarding Children Process - Practitioners’ Quick**