

West Berkshire Mencap

Policy – Safeguarding adult service users from abuse.



Purpose

This document outlines the policy of West Berkshire Mencap towards the safeguarding of adults from abuse and the procedures to be followed when abuse either occurs or is suspected of occurring.

Introduction

Definition of abuse

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons” – No Secrets – Multi agency guidance on developing policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse.

Abuse can take many forms including:

Physical abuse:

- Hitting.
- Slapping.
- Kicking.
- Inappropriate restraint or sanctions.
- Force feeding.
- Misuse (or inappropriate withholding) of medication.
- Assault

Psychological abuse:

- Intimidation by word or deed.
- Humiliation.
- Harassment.
- Enforced social isolation (including cultural discrimination).
- Blaming, controlling, threats.
- Verbal abuse
- Cyber bullying
- Isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks
- Emotional abuse
- Threats of harm or abandonment
- Coercion

Discrimination

Abuse as an act of discrimination is when a person or group are treated less favourably based on their colour, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, status, gender reassignment etc.

Financial/material abuse:

- Theft
- Fraud
- Internet scamming
- Coercion in relation to an adult's financial affair or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- Misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Not labelling service users food resulting in wastage.
- Over spending money on shopping not required

Neglect and acts of omission:

- Inadequate care.
- Neglect of physical and emotional needs.
- Deprivation of food, clothing or medical attention.
- Denial of basic right to make informed choices.
- Failure to provide access to appropriate social, health or educational services.
- Preventing access to disability or communication support aids.
- Ignoring medical, emotional or physical needs.
- Failure to provide to access to appropriate health, care, and support or educational services.
- Neglect can occur because of lack of knowledge by the carer.

Sexual abuse:

- Unwanted physical and sexual contact.
- Intercourse with somebody who lacks the capacity to consent.
- Sexual assault / Rape
- Indecent exposure.
- Sexual harassment (verbal or physical).
- Displaying pornographic literature, videos or pictures on a mobile phone.
- Inappropriate use of sexual material.
- Gross indecency.
- Sexual photography
- Inappropriate looking or touching

Organisational abuse:

- Discouraging visits or the involvement of relatives or friends
- Run-down or overcrowded establishment
- Authoritarian management or rigid regimes
- Lack of leadership and supervision
- Insufficient staff or high turnover resulting in poor quality care

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- Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Lack of respect for dignity and privacy
- Failure to manage residents with abusive behaviour
- Not providing adequate food and drink, or assistance with eating
- Not offering choice or promoting independence
- Misuse of medication
- Failure to provide care with dentures, spectacles or hearing aids
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Failure to respond to abuse appropriately
- Interference with personal correspondence or communication
- Failure to respond to complaints

Domestic Violence:

Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse: so called honour based violence.

Modern Slavery and Child Trafficking:

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, and 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.

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

Children are trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labor in factories or agriculture
- criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Self-Neglect:

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. Repeated instances of poor care maybe an indication of more serious

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problems and of what describe as organisational abuse. In order to see patterns, it is important that information is shared appropriately and recorded.

Female Gender Mutilation - FGM:

Female Gender Mutilation is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15 years, most commonly before puberty starts.

The procedure is traditionally carried out by a woman with no medical training. Anaesthetics and antiseptic treatments are not generally used, and the practice is usually carried out using knives, scissors, scalpels or pieces of glass or razor blades. Girls maybe forcibly restrained.

FGM – is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to arrange to take a child abroad for FGM. If caught, offenders face a large fine and a prison sentence of up to 14 years.

FGM is extremely painful and a traumatic experience for girls and woman and leaves long term psychological effects.

Radicalisation:

Radicalization (or **radicalisation**) is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that (1) reject or undermine the status quo or (2) reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice. Please read our preventing radicalisation policy for more information.

Identifying an abuser

Anyone is capable of being an abuser and all West Berkshire Mencap staff should be aware of this. Abusers are likely to be:

- Another member of staff or volunteer.
- A family member.
- Another service user.
- Another professional not employed by West Berkshire Mencap.
- A member of the public.

Identifying Abuse

Abuse may be witnessed directly or you may be informed about it by the service user or another person (e.g. relative, other professional, other staff member, volunteer etc). Or you may suspect abuse.

There are a variety of indicators of abuse for example:

- Cuts and bruises.
- Dishevelled appearance.

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- Being withdrawn or tearful for no apparent reason.
- Overly or uncharacteristically defensive.
- Unexplained reactions towards particular individuals or settings.
- Frequent or regular visits to the GP or hospital.
- Frequent or irrational refusal to accept investigations or treatments for routine difficulties.
- Unexplained change in material circumstances (such as items disappearing or the service user being short of money for no obvious reason).
- Inconsistency of explanations or no explanation to changes in circumstance.
- Destruction of physical environment.
- Sleep disturbance.
- Chronic incontinence.
- Extreme physical and/or emotional dependence.
- Verbal abuse and aggression.
- Changes in personality.
- Obsessive behaviour.
- Wandering/absconding.
- Self harm.
- Use (or increased use) of alcohol or drugs.
- Mental illness.
- Stress.
- Chronic fatigue.

Service users may already be exhibiting some of these behaviours and this is not due to abuse, however if they develop them or there are significant changes to their behaviours abuse may be a reason or factor.

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Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras within Adult Services

Photographs will only be taken of service users with their or their parents'/ Carers permission. Only the West Berkshire Camera's or I pads will be used to take photographs. No staff, volunteers or visitors may use their mobile phones to take photographs. During working hours mobile phones will be locked away, there are phones available in case of emergencies

West Berkshire Mencap has a zero tolerance policy towards the abuse of service users.

If you witness the abuse

- If the service user is at risk of harm or injury the staff member should intervene to prevent this from happening.
- If to do so would put you at risk, then you should contact 999 immediately.
- You should then support the service user as soon as is possible, provide the emergency services with all available information and contact your line manager.

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- If a crime has been committed (or you suspect that a crime has been committed) then you must contact the police. Try to ensure that you do not tamper with evidence.
- If the service user is not in immediate risk of harm or injury you should intervene to stop the abuse continuing unless to do so would increase the chances of an escalation.
- If no crime has been committed, then reassure your service user and report the incident to your manager.
- If staff members are unsure for any reason or a manager also needs support with a safeguarding concern, then the following staff in West Berkshire Mencap can be contacted as designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding officers:

Safeguarding Officer Michelle Greenfield – YCS – 01635 778125
Safeguarding Lead Jane Hall – Adult Services 07810877276
Over all Safeguarding WBM – Sara Vaughan - 07426353354

- If for whatever reason you are unable to inform your manager (or if the manager is the perpetrator of the abuse) you should contact the Chief Executive of West Berkshire Mencap. If you are unable to contact the CEO and the abuse or alleged abuse occurred in West Berkshire then you should contact the Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator at West Berkshire Council as follows:

Adults

Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator (Safeguarding Adults Team)
Tel: 01635 519056

Email: SafeguardingAdults@westberks.gov.uk

West Berkshire Council
Tel: 01635 503050

Out of Hours contact the Emergency Duty Team
Tel: 01344 786543

- If the abuse or alleged abuse occurred within another local authority area other than West Berkshire, then the report must be made to that local authority e.g. in Hampshire call 0845 603 5630 (out of hours call 0845 600 4555)
- At the appropriate time ensure that you write a full report of the incident using the Incident Report form. This form should be as factual and detailed as possible and should be sent to the relevant local authority safeguarding team.
- If the funding authority for the client is different to the authority where the incident occurred and where the incident report will have been sent, then the funding authority should also be notified as a matter of courtesy
- CQC (telephone number 03000 616161) should be informed as soon as practicable by management of the situation and be kept updated.

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If abuse is reported to you by a service user

- Remain calm.
- Listen very carefully to what is being told to you.
- Reassure the individual that their concerns are being taken seriously.
- Inform them that you will need to tell your manager, unless the manager is the alleged perpetrator of the abuse, in which case tell them that you will inform the Chief Executive of West Berkshire Mencap or the Local Authority.
- If the service user says that they don't want the abuse reported, then explain that this is not possible but that they will be protected and supported.
- If there is any allegation that a crime has been committed, then contact the police.
- Be aware of the possibility of forensic evidence being gathered if a crime has been committed, ensure you protect this evidence by not disturbing it in any way.
- If the service user is alleging assault, then wait for the police to arrive before assisting them with changing clothes or personal care such as showering.
- At the appropriate time ensure you write a full report of the incident.

If the abuse is reported to you by a third party

A third party could be another service user, a family member, another member of staff, a volunteer or even a member of the general public.

- Ensure the person giving you the information that their concerns will be taken seriously.
- Tell the person that you have to inform your manager about their concerns.
- If they then wish to withdraw the allegation or ask you not to tell your manager explain that you cannot do this but that (wherever possible) confidentiality will be ensured.
- Report the allegation of abuse to either your manager, Chief Executive or Local Authority.
- Ensure you write a report of the allegation.

If you suspect abuse

- You may suspect a service user has been abused or is suffering from on-going abuse but have not witnessed anything or been told about it.
- Report your concerns to your manager.
- Ensure you write down your concerns logging the dates/times.

Remember any member of staff who suspects that abuse is occurring has an obligation to report it to their manager. Failure to report abuse has the potential to be a disciplinary matter.

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Manager's responsibility

- On receiving a report of abuse or allegation of abuse managers should first check whether Safeguarding Procedures be used, applying the Berkshire Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Adults which are located at http://www.proceduresonline.com/berks_adult_sg/index.htm
- Irrespective of whether the abuse or allegation is a reportable Safeguarding issue the manager should inform the CEO of West Berkshire Mencap.
- If the incident is reportable (after consultation with the CEO) or the CEO is not available and the abuse or alleged abuse occurred in West Berkshire then you should contact the Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator at West Berkshire Council as follows :

Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator (Safeguarding Adults Team)
Tel: 01635 519056

Email: SafeguardingAdults@westberks.gov.uk

West Berkshire Council – Adult Social Care - Tel: 01635 503050
Out of Hours contact the Emergency Duty Team - Tel: 01344 786 543

- If the abuse or alleged abuse occurred within another local authority area other than West Berkshire, then the report must be made to that local authority e.g. in Hampshire call 0845 603 5630 (out of hours call 0845 600 4555)
If in doubt or if appropriate they should contact either the Independent Safeguarding Authority on 0300 123 1111 or the Care Quality Commission on 03000 616161.
- If a crime has been committed or suspected and if the police have not already been contacted, the Manager should contact them.
- Irrespective of whether the Safeguarding Procedure is to be followed or not the Manager should undertake a full investigation either through the required safeguarding procedures or, if the alleged abuse has been committed by an employee, through West Berkshire Mencap's Disciplinary Procedure.

REMEMBER

- Follow procedures.
- Remain calm.
- Ensure immediate safety of service user.
- If necessary, contact emergency services.
- Preserve any evidence.
- Report and record using the reporting a disclosure of alleged abuse form.

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