Safeguarding Policy for Adults at Risk

This policy was adopted by STAFFORD SEW-DAYS on 1ST September 2025

Policy Statement

Stafford Sew-Days is committed to ensuring the protection of adults at risk.

Relevant legislation and guidance relating to the protection of adults at risk are reflected in this policy, including The Care Act 2014.

Who is an adult at risk:

The 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
- 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.

Designated person for safeguarding

The current designated safeguarding leads for Stafford Sew-Days is Wendy Ross-Constance.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- All adults at risk feel safe and valued
- All adults at risk, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- A **designated person for safeguarding** will be identified (as above) for all matters affecting adults at risk, and to identify appropriate training opportunities
- Everyone has a responsibility to report concerns to the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding

Dealing with cases of abuse

1. Definitions of abuse

Abuse may be defined as the wrongful application of power by someone in a dominant position. It involves an imbalance of power and exploitation without a full and informed consent. Abuse can take several different forms and may be a single act or repeated acts.

Please see Appendix 1 for a further breakdown of categories and types of abuse and Appendix 2 for a list of the potential signs of abuse

2. What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

1. If it is an emergency and someone is seriously hurt, or the abuser is still with the adult and they are immediate danger ring the police on 999. Otherwise you should report the concerns immediately to the designated person or to local services for advice.
2. Seek emergency medical attention if necessary.
3. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

3. Responding to an adult at risk making an allegation of abuse

- Stay calm, listen carefully to what is being said
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others-do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the adult at risk to continue at his/her own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Reassure the adult at risk that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Make the referral

Helpful statements to make

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the adult at risk says)
- Thank you for telling me
- Its not your fault
- I will help you.

Do not say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure that this is true?
- Why? Who? When? Where?
- Never make false promises.

Do

- Call for help if necessary from emergency services
- Ensure the person's safety
- Act within the individual's wishes, as far as possible
- Reassure them that they will be supported
- Report to the designated person as soon as possible

Do Not

- Promise not to tell anyone
- Act within the individual's wishes if it would put them or others at risk
- Be judgemental
- Contact the alleged perpetrator or anyone else in the allegation
- Touch or move anything/ contaminate evidence

4. What to do after an adult at risk has talked to you about abuse

1. Write down what they said as soon as possible afterwards, using the person's own words.

2. If it is an emergency and someone is seriously hurt, or the abuser is still with the adult and they are immediate danger ring the police on 999. Otherwise you should report your discussion with the designated person as soon as possible. If the designated person is implicated report to Social Services:

If the adult lives in Stoke
Telephone: 0800 561 0015 at any time

If the adult lives in Staffordshire
Telephone: 0345 604 2719 (Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm, Fridays 8:30am to 4:30pm, excluding Bank Holidays) or 0345 604 2886 at any other time.

Do not discuss with anyone else.

5. Recruitment and appointment of workers and volunteers

In recruiting and appointing workers Stafford Sew-Days will be responsible for the following:

- We will draw up the selection criteria and putting together a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience.
- All applicants should apply in writing and their application will cover their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience.
- We will make sure that we measure the application against the selection criteria.
- We will ask for photographic evidence to confirm the identity of the applicant e.g. their passport.
- We will request two written references from people who are not family members or friends.
- If relevant to the role we will ensure that our successful applicant has obtained the Enhanced DBS as required from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- We will include our safeguarding adults at risk policy in the induction process.

Appendix 1

Categories and Types of Abuse

Physical abuse
- Bodily assaults resulting in injuries e.g. hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions
- Bodily impairment e.g. malnutrition, dehydration, failure to thrive
- Medical/healthcare maltreatment

Sexual abuse
- Rape, incest, acts of indecency, sexual assault
- Sexual harassment or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting
- Sexual abuse might also include exposure to pornographic materials, being made to witness sexual acts and encompasses sexual harassment and non-contact abuse

Psychological/emotional abuse includes:
- Including threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, enforced isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- Humiliation
- Bullying, shouting, swearing

Neglect and acts of omission
- Including 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 – importantly, it may not always be clear in the case of an adult at risk, who is responsible for the neglect

Financial or material
- Including theft and fraud
- Exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

Discriminatory abuse
- Including racist, sexist, or based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Self-neglect
- Including failure to take care of own basic needs
- Neglecting care for personal hygiene and surroundings and hoarding

Modern Slavery
- Including slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, coercion, deception, and life of inhumane treatment

Organisational abuse
- Including denial of rights, denial of access to family, friends, Doctor, Solicitor, denial of access to money or information
- Neglect, poor care practice, threats of punishment, loss of personal possessions and evictions to ensure compliance, lack of choice of meal times, bed times due to the fact it makes it easier for the organisations

Domestic abuse
- Including threatening behaviour, intimidation, violence
- Between family members or those who are or have been intimate partners. Includes sexual, financial, emotional, physical and "honour based" violence

Appendix 2
Signs of Abuse

Physical abuse signs
Note: Some ageing processes can cause changes which are hard to distinguish from some aspects of physical assault e.g. skin bruising can occur very easily due to blood vessels becoming fragile.
• A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries
• Bruising in well protected areas, or clustered from repeated striking
• Finger marks
• Burns of unusual location or type
• Injuries found at different states of healing
• Injury shape similar to an object
• Injuries to head/face/scalp
• History of GP or agency hopping, or reluctance to seek help
• Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence
• Weight loss due to malnutrition, or rapid weight gain
• Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing
• Drowsiness due to too much medication, or lack of medication causing recurring crises/hospital admissions

Sexual abuse signs
• Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as 'It's a secret')
• Medical problems, e.g. Genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting
• Disturbed behaviour e.g. depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury, showing fear or aggression to one particular person, repeated or excessive masturbation, inappropriately seductive behaviour, loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down
• Behaviour of others towards the adult at risk

Psychological/emotional signs:
• Isolation
• Unkempt, unwashed, smell
• Over meticulous
• Inappropriately dressed
• Withdrawn, agitated, anxious not wanting to be touched
• Change in appetite
• Insomnia, or need for excessive sleep
• Tearfulness
• Unexplained paranoia, or excessive fears
• Low self esteem
• Confusion

Neglect signs
• Physical condition poor
• Clothing in poor condition
• Inadequate diet
• Untreated injuries or medical problems
• Failure to be given prescribed medication
• Poor personal hygiene

Financial or material signs
• Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills
• Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts
• Disparity between assets and satisfactory living conditions
• Extraordinary interest by family members and other people in the adult at risks assets

Discriminatory signs
- Lack of respect shown to an individual
- Signs of substandard service offered to an individual
- Exclusion from rights afforded to others, such as health, education, criminal justice

Self-neglect signs
- Not engaging with a network of support
- Unwilling or unable to meet necessary care to meet needs
- Unable to make reasonable and informed decisions due to mental disorder, illness or acquired brain injury
- Unable to protect themselves against exploitation or abuse
- Refusing essential support without which their health & safety needs cannot be met and the individual lacks the insight to recognise this

Modern slavery signs
- Signs of physical or psychological abuse, malnourished, withdrawn
- Not allowed independent travel
- Seem under the influence of others, reluctant to seek help
- Don’t interact with the neighbourhood
- Few or no personal belongings or document
- Avoid eye contact, appear frightened or hesitate to talk to strangers
- Living/working in the same place

Organisational signs
- Poor standards
- Inflexible routines
- Lack of personal belongings and stark or unhomely environment
- Deprived environmental surroundings and lack of stimuli
- Inappropriate physical intervention
- Inappropriate use of power
- Denial of visits by friends or family

Domestic abuse signs
- Signs can be the same as any type of abuse or neglect

Other signs of abuse
- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Sensory deprivation e.g. spectacles or hearing aid
- Denial of visitors or phone calls
- Failure to ensure privacy or personal dignity
- Lack of flexibility of choice e.g. bedtimes, choice of food
- Restricted access to toilet or bathing facilities
- Lack of personal clothing or possessions
- Controlling relationships between care staff and service users