



Herts PCI CIC (HPCI) SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy Statement

Herts Parent Carer Involvement (HPCI) is committed to the protection and safety of any adults with care and support needs. We recognise that all such adults have the right to freedom from abuse. We maintain rigorous procedures for the protection of adults with care and support needs and expect all employees, volunteers, parent reps, or directors to take responsibility for following these procedures and complying with national and local authority Safeguarding Adults Board procedure and guidelines.

Definition of Adult with Care and Support Needs

Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2020 – updated June 2022) covers safeguarding adults in [Chapter 14](#).

The Social Care Institute for Excellence notes that ‘Adult with care and support needs’ is a term that covers a wide range of people, from those with a learning disability to those experiencing dementia - and may also include adults whose mental capacity fluctuates, such as those with mental health or substance misuse difficulties. This is in line with the terminology used in *Care and Support Statutory Guidance (CSSG)*.

The CSSG 2020 defines adult safeguarding as protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. The safeguarding duties apply to an adult (person who is aged 18 or over) 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

In addition to young people, aged 18 or over, HPCI will come into contact with parents and carers of children with SEND, who may themselves have care and support needs.



Aims of Adult Safeguarding

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned
- raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying, and responding to abuse and neglect
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect

Please see Appendix A of this document for definitions of abuse and neglect.

Six key principles underpinning all adult safeguarding work

The CSSG sets out 6 principles that apply to all sectors and settings and underpin all adult safeguarding:

1. **Empowerment:** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
2. **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
3. **Proportionality:** Taking the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
4. **Protection:** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
5. **Partnership:** Use local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.
6. **Accountability:** There is accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Making safeguarding personal

Making safeguarding personal means it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It engages the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing, and safety.



What steps will HPCI take to Safeguard Adults?

Directors and senior members of the organisation will:

- Ensure that all employees, directors, parent reps, and volunteers are recruited under Safer Recruitment Policy guidelines and that they accept responsibility for helping to prevent abuse of adults with care and support needs who access our services. A copy of this policy and procedures is given to all employees and others working or volunteering for HPCI during their induction. They must send an email to the Safeguarding DSL to confirm they have read and understood this policy and the “Safeguarding Children Policy.”
- Ensure all employees undertake appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training.
- Ensure that this policy is adhered to.
- Ensure all employees are subject to checks via the Disclosure and Barring Service where appropriate.
- Ensure that employees, directors, parent reps, and volunteers are aware of how to recognise signs of abuse.
- Recognise that special care is needed in dealing with parents whose age, inexperience, level of social understanding, or physical state puts them at risk of abuse.
- Ensure that the Whistleblowing Policy is communicated to all employees, directors, parent reps, and volunteers.
- Notify appropriate authorities in cases where an incident needs to be reported to other regulators such as the Disclosure and Barring Service.

When supporting parents/carers and safeguarding adults we will:

- Ensure all information, advice and resources are presented to them in a manner that they can access, and that takes account of any difficulties they may have
- Check that they have understood the information, advice, or resources we have given them. If they are unable to understand or we have concerns over their understanding, we will ensure another adult who is involved in their care also has access to the information, advice, or resources (with the consent of the adult with care and support needs, within the guidelines of our confidentiality policy).
- In HPCI group sessions or events we will actively promote an inclusive and positive environment and HPCI facilitators will ensure that adult safeguarding is central to the provision and accessibility of our service.

What will HPCI do if there is a concern about an adult with care and support needs?

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for HPCI to decide whether or not abuse of an adult with care and support needs has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns they may have through contact with the appropriate authority. The procedure

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to follow if any employee or volunteer has any concerns about adult safeguarding is set out in Appendix B. If it is appropriate for a concern to be raised with the appropriate authority, then the following contact details should be used.

For all HPCI services, if you have reason to believe an adult may be at risk of suffering abuse or neglect you should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for HPCI is the Rep Support Officer (Andrea Reid on **07871 337 399**).

If they are not available, contact Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Services by calling the customer service centre on **0300 123 4042** (lines open 24hrs)

If you have reason to believe an adult receiving mental health services in Hertfordshire may be at risk of suffering abuse or neglect then a safeguarding referral can be made to Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust on **0800 6444 101** and via the Adult Services Portal <https://hcsportal.hertfordshire.gov.uk/>

If there is an immediate risk to life or a serious injury or a serious crime has been committed the police must be contacted direct as set out below:

- **Immediate response;** For incidents concerning an adult where there is immediate danger to life, risk of injury or a crime being committed dial 999.
- **High;** For incidents taking place against an adult where there is NO immediate risk to life or property, but a police response is required as soon as practicable due to the seriousness of the incident and/or potential loss of evidence dial 101.
- **Routine;** For incidents that have taken place against an adult where that person wishes to report a crime, please dial 101 and specify that a crime has been committed and that person wishes to make a complaint of crime.
- The SAFA Team (see below) can be contacted directly on 01707 354556 for incidents committed against adults with care and support needs by persons in a position of trust (this includes family members who have a care responsibility). Please note that this is not a 24-hour service, if contact cannot be made, please dial 101.

Who will investigate?

In Hertfordshire it is the responsibility of Adult Care Services and Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust (as part of their delegated social care duties) to investigate allegations of possible or actual abuse.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has the lead responsibility for investigating any criminal offences committed against adults with care and support needs. A dedicated team of officers and staff specialise in safeguarding adults from abuse (SAFA). The SAFA investigation team deal with

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allegations of crime committed against an adult at risk by a person in a position of trust or someone with a responsibility of care – this includes family members.

Policy Awareness

We ensure that parent carers are aware that we follow our Safeguarding Adults Policy by displaying it on our website. We ensure that all parents and carers know how to complain about employee or volunteer action, which may include an allegation of abuse by displaying our Complaints Policy on our website. We follow the guidance of the Herts Safeguarding Adults Board when investigating any complaint of abuse by an employee or volunteer.

Approval and review schedule

This policy (and its appendices which form part of the policy), and procedures applies to HPCI and covers any activities we run as an organisation. We are committed to reviewing our policy and procedures on a regular basis and when there are significant changes in legislation or to our organisation.

This policy was approved at a meeting of the HPCI Board

Recorded in the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on:

24 November 2025

Frequency of review:

Every three years

Review due:

November 2028



Appendix A: Types of abuse and neglect

What is Abuse and neglect?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may be systematic and repeated or may consist of a single incident. Abuse is when a person or persons have caused harm, or may be likely to do so, to the physical, sexual, emotional, financial, or material wellbeing of an adult with care and support needs. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2020 define the categories of abuse and neglect. The main forms set out in the Statutory Guidance chapter 14 are not an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern:

- **physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate physical sanctions
- **domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, so called ‘honour’ based violence
- **sexual abuse** - including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure, sexual assault, sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting
- **psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber abuse, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks
- **financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, 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** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment
- **discriminatory abuse** – including harassment, slurs, or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion
- **organisational abuse** - 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.

- **neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating
- **self-neglect** – a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding
- **Domestic abuse** – The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse 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.

Recognising abuse

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 may be an indication of more serious problems and of what we now describe as organisational abuse. In order to see these patterns it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

Patterns of abuse vary and include:

- serial abuse, in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse
- long-term abuse, in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse
- opportunistic abuse, such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around

Who may be the abuser?

Anyone can perpetrate abuse or neglect, including: spouses/partners, other family members, neighbours, friends, acquaintances, local residents, people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse, paid staff or professionals and volunteers, strangers.

Where does abuse occur?

Abuse can happen anywhere: for example, in someone's own home, in a public place, in hospital, in a care home or in college. It can take place when an adult lives alone or with others.



Appendix B: Procedure to follow if there is a possible adult safeguarding concern

Anyone can witness or become aware of information suggesting that abuse and neglect is occurring. Regardless of how the safeguarding concern is identified, everyone should understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help and advice.

The Hertfordshire Safeguarding adult's procedure gives specific guidance to support the seven stages of a safeguarding enquiry. HPCI employees, directors, parent reps, and volunteers will only be directly involved in the first two stages of guidance. A full copy of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding adults at risk procedure can be found at:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/hertfordshire-safeguarding-adults-board/hertfordshire-safeguarding-adults-board.aspx

Stage one: having a concern

(This part of the procedure applies to all HPCI employees, directors, parent reps, and volunteers)

Responding to an adult with care and support needs who is making a disclosure

- assure them that you are taking them seriously
- listen carefully to what they are telling you, stay calm, get as clear a picture as you can, but avoid asking too many questions at this stage
- do not give promises of complete confidentiality
- ask the person what they would like to happen
- explain that you have a duty to tell your manager or other designated safeguarding lead within the organisation, and that the information may need to be shared with others who could have a part to play in protecting them
- reassure them that they will be involved in decisions about what will happen
- explain that you will try to take steps to protect them from further abuse or neglect
- provide support and information in a way that is most appropriate to them
- do not be judgemental or jump to conclusions
- report the concern to your manager in line with your safeguarding procedures
- make a record of the concern and action taken (see below)

Making a record

It is vital that a written record of any incident or allegation is made as soon as possible after the information is obtained. This record must include:

- date and time of the incident
- exactly what the adult at risk said, using their own words (their account) about the abuse and how it occurred or exactly what has been reported to you
- appearance and behaviour of the adult at risk

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- any injuries observed.

The record should be factual. However, if the record does contain opinion or assessment, it should be clearly stated as such and be backed up by factual evidence. Information from another person should be clearly attributed to them.

This information should then be shared immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Andrea Reid, Rep Support Officer

Work telephone number: 07871 337 399

If they are not available, the employee / director / parent rep / volunteer should contact:

Hertfordshire Adult Social Services: 0300 123 4042

If you have reason to believe an adult receiving mental health services in Hertfordshire or who has an urgent mental health problem may be at risk of suffering abuse or neglect, then a safeguarding referral can be made to:

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) on

Freephone 0800 6444 101 or

NHS 111 and select option 2 for mental health services

Any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is possible. Any safeguarding matter affecting the CIC should be brought to the attention of the Operations Lead. This can be done anonymously in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy if necessary.

Stage two: raising a concern

(This part of the procedure applies to HPCI Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Speaking to the adult with care and support needs about the concern

It may be appropriate for the DSL to speak to the adult about a safeguarding concern that has been raised. To do this, the DSL should consider:

- getting their views on what has happened and what they want done about it
- giving information about the safeguarding adults process and how that could help to make them safer
- explaining how they will be kept informed
- identifying communication needs, personal care arrangements, and access requests
- discussing what could be done to ensure their safety

Speaking to the person alleged to have caused harm



The safeguarding concern should not be discussed with the person alleged to have caused harm, unless the immediate welfare of the adult with care and support needs makes this unavoidable. However, if they are an employee and an immediate decision has to be made to suspend them, the person has a right to know in broad terms what allegations or concerns have been made about them.

Allegations against an employee, director, parent rep, or volunteer

As well as deciding whether or not to refer the issue for an investigation under the safeguarding adults' procedures the DSL must also decide whether to follow other relevant organisational reporting procedures. Where a concern indicates that an employee or volunteer may have caused harm, referral to the organisation's disciplinary procedures should also be considered. However, any interviews with the adult with care and support needs, the person who may have caused harm or witnesses should be agreed as part of the strategy discussion, particularly where there may be a criminal investigation. While the investigating team or the police may suggest an employee / volunteer is removed from working with an adult who is at risk of abuse, it is the responsibility of HPCI to address this and take any subsequent action.

Factors to consider when raising a concern

The following should be considered:

- the mental capacity of an adult with care and support needs to make decisions about their own safety. Remember to assume capacity unless there is evidence to the contrary (capacity can be undermined by the experience of abuse and where the person is being exploited, coerced, groomed, or subjected to undue influence or duress)
- the vulnerability of the adult with care and support needs
- the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect
- the impact on the individual
- the risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving the person causing the harm

Deciding whether or not to raise a concern

A concern should be raised when:

- there is a concern that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of being abused or neglected, and are at risk of significant harm
- the adult with care and support needs has capacity to make decisions about their own safety and wants this to happen



- the adult with care and support needs has been assessed as not having capacity to make a decision about their own safety, but a decision has been made in their best interests to make a referral
- a crime has been or may have been committed against an adult with care and support needs without mental capacity to report a crime and a 'best interests' decision is made
- the abuse or neglect has been caused by an employee or a volunteer
- other people or children are at risk from the person causing the harm
- the concern is about organisational or systemic abuse
- the person causing the harm is also an adult with care and support needs

Making a decision not to raise a concern

If the adult with care and support needs has capacity and does not consent to a concern being raised and there are no public or vital interest considerations, they should be given information about where to get help if they change their mind or if the abuse or neglect continues and they subsequently want support to promote their safety. The worker/organisation must be clear that the decision to withhold consent is not made under undue influence, coercion, or intimidation. A record must be made of the concern, the adult's decision and of the decision not to refer, with reasons. A record should also be made of what information they were given. It is recommended that organisations have a separate part of the adult's file or record that is clearly labelled 'safeguarding.'

Making a decision to raise a concern without consent

Where there is an overriding public interest or vital interest, or if gaining consent would put the adult at further risk, a concern must be raised but the lack of consent and the reason for it must be explicit. This includes situations where:

- other people or children could be at risk from the person causing harm
- it is necessary to prevent crime
- there is a high risk to the health and safety of the adult with care and support needs
- the person lacks capacity to consent

The adult with care and support needs would normally be informed of the decision to refer and the reasons, unless telling them would jeopardise their safety or the safety of others. If the adult is assessed as not having mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety and to consent to a referral being made, the DSL must make a decision in their best interests in accordance with the guidance set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.