



Safeguarding Service Users from the Harmful Actions and Behaviour of Other Service Users Policy

Policy Statement

This policy describes this care service's approach to the safeguarding of its residents from abuse or harm from the actions and behavior of other residents. It should be read and used in association with a range of other policies designed to make sure that every resident is safe from abuse from any source and the risks of their coming to harm are kept to the minimum and well managed.

The key policy is that for Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse or Harm. Other relevant policies, which might need to be followed in situations involving resident on resident abuse or harm are:

- Safeguarding from Bullying, Harassment, Exploitation and other Forms of Social Abuse
- Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse and Harm: Rights, Risk and Restraint
- Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse and Harm: Physical Interventions and Restraint
- Professional Boundaries
- Safeguarding Service Users who are at Significant Risk of Harm
- Complaints

As with all safeguarding policies the central aim of this policy is to set out for all relevant parties the:

- principles and values underlying this care home's approach to the safeguarding of its service users
- ways in which the home does this
- steps taken to avoid abuse/harm taking place
- actions taken to deal with abuse/harm if it occurs.

Principles

1. This home is firmly committed to the idea that service users must be safeguarded from all forms of abuse/harm. It recognises that it must at all times protect its service users and identify and deal with specific instances of abuse/harm if they occur.
2. It aims to foster an open and trusting communication structure so that staff, service users and others feel able to discuss their concerns with someone who can take action to address their concerns. It tries to make sure that all residents know to whom they may turn for advice and action if they become aware or suspect that abuse/harm is occurring.
3. The care home is always aiming for the very best quality of care and will not be satisfied with anything that falls short of this. It takes every possible action to prevent abuse/harm and to deal with it as promptly and effectively as possible if it occurs.
4. The policy and accompanying procedures are produced in line with the local safeguarding adult's authority's' guidance and procedures and Care Quality Commission (CQC) guidance about legal compliance.
5. The care service recognises that service users who lack mental capacity are particularly vulnerable to abuse/harm and exploitation, but also might be the unintended perpetrators of abuse or harm to other service users (amongst others). It is accordingly mindful of the need to follow the principles and practice guidance that has accompanied the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in all cases.
6. These apply particularly to investigations of possible abuse/harm in which it is important to seek means of ascertaining the experiences and views of any victim or indeed alleged perpetrator who might lack capacity, eg by seeking the services of independent advocates.

General Approach

1. The care service recognises that the actions and behavior of some of the home's residents can cause or distress or harm to other residents. This is inevitable in any communal setting and will become more likely where residents have physical and mental health conditions that can have an effect on their behavior and relationships.
2. The care service also recognises that individuals can experience distress and harm from other residents in many ways eg from racist and verbal abuse, people bullying, harassment, wandering into their room uninvited at odd times, physical aggression and violence, unwanted sexual advances, pestering and other forms of sexual abuse etc. It also recognises that individuals' tolerance of others' behavior will vary according to their attitudes towards and relationships with one another.
3. The home therefore works on the basis that it will treat any sign of emotional distress (as well as of physical harm) on the part of one resident that appears to be caused by the another resident as possible abuse that will need to be reported, followed up,

inquired into and if necessary fully investigated in line with the home's general safeguarding policy and procedures.

4. Action will be taken irrespective of whether a formal complaint, allegation or observed event or incident has taken place or not, though the process will depend very much on individual circumstances and the views and wishes of the distressed individual concerned. In line with this approach all staff are expected to report for follow up, whenever an individual resident shows signs of distress that could be caused by abuse or being harmed by another or other residents.
5. [Clearly where there has been a formal complaint or allegation or an observed incident (including anywhere staff have been required to intervene) the main safeguarding policy will be followed and should lead to action taken in line with local safeguarding adults' authority advice and guidance].

Prevention

In line with its general approach to the prevention of abuse or harm, the home is committed to taking all possible steps to prevent abuse or harm of residents from other residents by:

1. setting out and making widely known the procedures for responding to suspicions or evidence of abuse or harm
2. incorporating material relevant to abuse or harm into staff training at all levels
3. maintaining vigilance concerning the possibility of abuse or harm of service users from other residents
4. encouraging among staff, service users and all other stakeholders a climate of openness and awareness that makes it possible to pass on concerns about behavior that might be abusive or that might lead to abuse or harm
5. thoroughly assessing all risks to residents from the abusive behavior of other residents, including any that might arise from an individual's lack of insight or capacity to understand the harm being done
6. taking appropriate actions to minimise the risks of abuse of service users by other service users by understanding and dealing appropriately with any form of aggression or behavior that is likely to lead to another resident being distressed or harmed as a result of their behavior
7. helping service users as far as possible to avoid or control situations or relationships that would make them vulnerable to abuse or harm.

Procedures for When Abuse Has Occurred or is Alleged to Have Occurred

1. If significant abuse or harm is clearly occurring, eg from violent behavior or sexual misconduct, or is alleged to have occurred or a complaint has been made, the home will follow the procedures laid out in the corresponding section of the Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse or Harm policy and its Complaints procedure. The actions taken in relation to the individual concerned will then depend on the outcomes of the ensuing processes.
2. In many instances where the distress experienced, or perpetrating acts are not sufficiently serious to require formal investigation (though might become so if the acts were allowed to go unchecked) the home will develop an appropriate intervention plan to assess the causes and eliminate if possible or minimise the harm being experienced. The actions to be taken are then included on the care plans of all parties involved and monitored and reviewed accordingly.
3. In instances where there might be mutual abuse or harm being committed the home will try to resolve the difficulties constructively. In appropriate instances it might attempt some form of mediation or arrange for the parties to receive mediation from an outside agency.
4. The management of the home will always consider carefully the impact of any act of resident on resident abuse or patterns of behaviour that are causing distress and harm to other residents or might be putting them at risk. In doing so it is always prepared to consult all those affected directly and indirectly by the behaviour in question and to take professional advice, including from the local safeguarding adults authority.
5. In cases where there is evidence that other service users and staff might be experiencing or are at serious risk of harm from the abusive behaviour of another service user the home will need to consider if the perpetrator has breached their terms and conditions of residence or contract and might need to be given notice (in some case working through the person's representatives) to leave.
6. The management of the home will evaluate the abusive behaviour of residents in line with: the home's registration status; its resources for meeting the needs of people who present such challenges; the impact such challenging behaviour might be having on the well-being of other residents. It will arrive at any decision to give notice in a proportionate and fair way, taking all possible factors into account.

Training

All staff are trained to recognise abuse/harm from and to other service users.

Staff receive further training to ensure that they are familiar with the local authority's "safeguarding of adults at risk of harm" policies and procedures.

Signed: _____

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