



## Safeguarding Policy – Adults at Risk

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The overall purpose of Change Please is to end homelessness. We give those experiencing homelessness a chance to turn their lives around and build firm foundations for a fulfilling future by giving them a living wage job, housing support, and onwards employment Change Please takes all forms of abuse and domestic abuse seriously.
- 1.2 Change Please also provides support for all of those who use our services. As part of our work, we involve people in fundraising activities and invite our corporate donors into our services, so all teams need to know our principles of safeguarding.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 This safeguarding policy demonstrates the Change Please commitment to the overall safety and welfare of any an adult at risk for who we provide services. The purpose of this policy is to protect any adult at risk using our services from any harm.
- 2.2 This policy will provide **all** staff, trustees, volunteers and apprentices with a framework and process for recognising, responding, reporting and recording any concerns about an adult at risk. It also intends to ensure that in the event of a concern about an adult at risk, the relevant statutory authorities are involved in an appropriate and timely manner, following local and national safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 2.3 As part of the Change Please commitment to managing risk and ensuring adequate safeguarding of all of those who use our services, we will:
  - ensure we have appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all trustees, volunteers, and beneficiaries
  - checks that people are suitable to act in their roles
  - ensure we know how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner

- have a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant agencies as soon as concerns are suspected or identified
- sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed
- follow statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to our organisation
- be quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations
- ensure we do not ignore harm or downplay failures
- have a balanced trustee board and do not let one trustee dominate the work of the organisation by ensuring trustees work together
- make sure protecting people from harm is central to our culture
- ensure we have enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/trustees for safeguarding and protecting people
- conduct periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures, and practice

### **3. Audience**

- 3.1 Change Please works directly with adults at risk, and provide support through, but not limited to:
- Health (including mental health)
  - Learning and development
  - Housing Support
  - Volunteering and onward employment
  - Immigration support
  - Advocacy
  - CV writing and interview skills
- 3.2 Any of our personnel from any department could have an adult at risk and can disclose a safeguarding concern.
- 3.3 Effective safeguarding is evident when a good liaison is established and maintained between our own personnel and our specialist agencies. If Change Please personnel become aware of other non-supported adults at risk through the course of their duties, they will proactively work to bring these safeguarding issues to the attention of local support services. The term 'personnel' in this policy is taken to include paid or volunteer staff, trustees, or apprentices.
- 3.4 This safeguarding policy is intended to apply to the following:
- people who benefit from the work of our organisation including adults at risk
  - staff (including contractors and temps)
  - volunteers
  - other people who encounter our organisation through its work (including external visitors and partner organisations)
- 3.5 This policy should form part of every induction for new staff or volunteers and for any service users of Change Please who go on to become volunteers or paid staff.
- 3.6 This policy should be used by donors and fundraising teams to ensure their activities working with adults at risk operate safely.
- 3.7 Trustees have clear oversight of how safeguarding and protecting adults at risk from harm are managed within Change Please. This means that they monitor our performance, not just using



statistics, but with supporting information, such as qualitative reports. This will help them to understand common themes, identify risks and gaps so we can ensure they are addressed appropriately.

## 4. Reporting

- 4.1 Change Please ensures that safe, appropriate, and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to all Change Please personnel.
- 4.2 Change Please personnel can report safeguarding concerns to [safeguarding@changeplease.org](mailto:safeguarding@changeplease.org) where a designated individual will coordinate the appropriate action.
- 4.3 Change Please will act on reports of safeguarding issue, whether online or in person, including:
  - sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation
  - criminal exploitation
  - a charity's culture, which may allow poor behaviour and poor accountability
  - people abusing a position of trust they hold within a charity
  - bullying or harassment
  - health and safety
  - commercial exploitation
  - cyber abuse
  - discrimination on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010
  - people targeting your charity
  - data breaches, including those under General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
  - negligent treatment
  - domestic abuse
  - self-neglect
  - physical or emotional abuse
  - extremism and radicalisation
  - forced marriage
  - modern slavery
  - human trafficking
  - female genital mutilation

## 5. Terminology & Definitions

- 5.1 The term **safeguarding** embeds practices throughout the organisation to make sure that adults at risk are protected wherever possible.
- 5.2 **Abuse** is an act of oppression and injustice, exploitation, and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture. It can take a number of forms, including, but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Psychological/Emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse (see FR03 Supports in Vulnerable Circumstances Policy for financial specific concerns).
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Exploitation

### 5.3 Definition of adults at risk

5.3.1 An adult at risk is a person aged 18 years who requires care and support needs; and 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 the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

### 5.4 Duty of Care

5.4.1 The legal definition of Duty of Care is an obligation to:

- Always act in the best interest of individuals and others
- Not act or fail to act in a way that results in harm
- Act within your competence and not take on anything you do not believe you can safely do.

### 5.5 Significant harm

5.5.1 There is no defined criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Change Please will take the initiative to make its own judgement in most cases, however, weight is given to any opinion of what constitutes significant harm from local governments and other local authorities.

### 5.6 Domestic Violence and Abuse

5.6.1 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.

## 5.7 **Forced Marriage and so-called 'honour-based' violence**

- 5.7.1 A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning difficulties, cannot) consent to the marriage and where duress is used. 'Duress' includes psychological, sexual, financial, or emotional pressure and physical violence.
- 5.7.2 So-called 'honour'-based violence is an incident or crime "which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and or the community." 'Honour' can be the motivation, excuse, or justification behind a range of violence against mainly women and girls and in some cases men and boys.

## 5.8 **Female Genital Mutilation**

- 5.8.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or any other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- 5.8.2 **Breast ironing** is a practise whereby the breasts of girls typically aged 8-16 are pounded using tools such as spatulas, grinding stones, hot stones, and hammers to delay the appearance of puberty.

## 5.9 **Prevent**

- 5.9.1 Places a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

## 5.10 **Mental Capacity**

- 5.10.1 'Mental capacity' means a person's ability to decide about some aspect of their lives. It does not matter if other people would not agree with the decision, but it does require the person to understand a situation and understand what will happen if they take a particular decision about it. This could range from the day-to-day choices of what to wear or eat to more difficult choices about housing, medical treatment, or personal finances. The five key principles of the Mental Capacity Act are:

- Every adult has the right to make their own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise. This means that it must not be assumed someone cannot decide for themselves just because they have a particular medical condition or disability, or because they lack capacity in other areas.
- People must be supported as much as possible to make their own decisions before anyone concludes that they cannot do so. This means that every effort should be made to encourage and support the person to make the decision for himself/herself. If a lack of capacity is established, it is still important that the person is involved as far as possible in making decisions.



- People have the right to make what others might regard as unwise or eccentric decisions. Everyone has their own values, beliefs and preferences which may not be the same as those of other people. People cannot be treated as lacking capacity for that reason.
- Anything done for or on behalf of a person who lacks mental capacity must be done in their best interests.
- Anything done for, or on behalf of, people without capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms. This means that when anything is done to, or for, a person who lacks capacity the option that is in their best interests and which interferes the least with their rights and freedom of action must be chosen.

## **6. Risk Factors**

- 6.1 The categories of abuse listed above in 4.3 may all present within Change Please services.
- 6.2 Adults at risk who are referred to Change Please or staff, trustees, volunteers, and apprentices of Change Please may have a history of harm or abuse. They may have been looked after by the local authority or been in youth offending institutions. They may be substance misusers, engaged in criminal activity or they may have a learning or mental health disability. Other factors may make them highly dependent and vulnerable to harm.
- 6.3 Adults at risk, staff, trustees, volunteers, and apprentices may be vulnerable to bullying or may be involved in abusive relationships either within or outside of Change Please. They are also vulnerable to other forms of harm such as gang membership, serious youth violence and violent extremism. There may be historical abuse, sexual exploitation, forced marriage or 'honour based' violence.

## **7. Legislation**

- 7.1 Change Please has a responsibility to abide by all relevant UK legislation and guidance. This policy and accompanying procedure have been developed with current statute, guidance, and Local Authority procedures in mind. As such and in compliance to legislation, Change Please will ensure all staff, trustees, volunteers, and apprentices are sufficiently trained and provided with the skills, tools, knowledge, and confidence to act in accordance with our safeguarding duties and responsibilities.
- 7.2 All personnel will attend safeguarding training and will be made aware of their responsibility to comply with current legislation and guidance and any new relevant legislation as it is implemented.
- 7.3 All staff, trustees, volunteers, and apprentices are expected to undertake refresher and or update training, workshops, briefings and/or seminars as and when directed by senior management.



## 8. Commitment to equity and inclusion

8.1 Change Please is committed to creating an organisation where people flourish. By establishing trust and challenging with bias, both conscious and unconscious; we are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and transparency in all our day-to-day actions endorsing inclusive process, practice, and culture. We want Change Please to be a welcoming environment where individual difference is celebrated in the spaces where we live and work.

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<b>Related policies and/or procedures:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safeguarding Policy – Adults at Risk</li><li>• Domestic Abuse Policy</li><li>• Anti-Social Behavior Policy</li><li>• Managing and Reporting Incidents Policy</li><li>• Whistle Blowing Policy</li><li>• Recruitment and Selection Policy</li><li>• Code of Conduct</li><li>• Data Protection Policy</li><li>• Computer and Internet Policy</li><li>• Complaints Policy</li></ul>

<p><b>Legislation or regulatory guidance that impact on this policy:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care Act 2014</li> <li>• Care and Support Statutory Guidance under the</li> <li>• Care Act 2014</li> <li>• Children Acts 1989 and 2004</li> <li>• Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000</li> <li>• Safeguarding Disabled Children Act 2009</li> <li>• Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006</li> <li>• Children and Young Persons Act 2008</li> <li>• Drug Trafficking Act 1994</li> <li>• Data Protection Act 2018</li> <li>• Education Act 2002</li> <li>• Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• Homelessness Act 2002</li> <li>• Housing Acts 1996 and 2004</li> <li>• Human Rights Act 1998</li> <li>• UNCRC 1989</li> <li>• Mental Capacity Act 2005</li> <li>• Protection from Harassment Act 1997</li> <li>• Sexual Offences Act 2003</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behavior, Crime and Policing Act 2014</li> <li>• Modern Slavery Act 2015</li> <li>• Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 / Serious Crimes Act 2015</li> <li>• Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015</li> <li>• Children and Social Work Act 2017</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working together to Safeguard Children 2018</li> <li>• Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020</li> <li>• What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015</li> <li>• LA policy and procedure for safeguarding young people or adults</li> <li>• Local Safeguarding Partnership/Board</li> <li>• GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018</li> </ul>
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