

## Safeguarding and Protecting Adults from Harm Policy

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### Policy Statement

Families Together is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all who use its service. We recognise that we have a responsibility to protect the welfare of adults at risk through our support for families and to ensure they are protected from harm. Families Together has no statutory remit or role to investigate but acknowledges a responsibility to pass on to the appropriate statutory agency concerns in relation to the safety or welfare of an adult at risk so that these concerns can be assessed.

### Definition of an Adult at Risk

A person aged 18 years or over who is receiving or may be in need of community care services and is or may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm or serious exploitation. This may include a person who:

- Is elderly or frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia, shows signs of acute psychosis, suicide, self harm, harm to others or homicide
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misused
- Is homeless.

In this context community care services includes all care services provided in any setting by any agency whether statutory, voluntary or community and therefore includes the services provided by Families Together.

## **Principles**

This policy and following procedures are based on the principle that all adults at risk in Families Together, irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to:

- Have their money, goods and possessions treated with respect and to receive equal protection for themselves and their property.
- Guidance and help in seeking assistance as a consequence of abuse.
- Be supported in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse and to know their wishes will only be over-ridden if it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others.
- Be supported in bringing a complaint under any existing complaint procedure.
- Be supported in reporting the circumstances of any abuse to independent bodies.
- Have alleged, suspected or confirmed cases of abuse that come to light through Families Together support dealt with as a priority.
- Receive appropriate support following abuse.

It is the responsibility of all within Families Together to report any concerns about abuse. When abuse of an adult needs to be reported each local authority will have its own system, resources and reporting procedures.

This may be a dedicated phone line or a specific social services team. Families Together should be familiar with local procedures in our area. Alternatively, adult abuse can be reported directly to the police.

All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of an adult at risk this policy and these procedures will be followed and information will be shared with the relevant agencies in order to protect them.

**Families Together will take all possible steps to ensure that adults with whom it works are kept safe through:**

- Clear procedure for the raising of concerns about an adult at risk
- Safe recruitment processes for all trustees, staff and volunteers including the obtaining of DBS or Access NI checks as appropriate

- Procedures to structure the management of an allegation of abuse against trustees, staff or volunteers
- Effective induction, training and support for trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure they are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and the related procedures
- Identified personnel to hold the strategic lead and designated safeguarding responsibilities for the safeguarding of adults at risk within Families Together
- Clear expectations of all trustees, staff and volunteers for sharing information.

### **Disclosure of Information**

- Families Together recognises the importance of sharing information to protect an adult at risk and normally any disclosure of confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the express permission of the person.
- Where it is considered necessary for the welfare and protection of an adult at risk, the person will be kept informed unless to do so would put his or her welfare and safety at risk of harm.
- In recognition of its commitment to pass on concerns, Families Together will maintain effective working partnerships with organisations working with adults at risk within the community and will maintain current information on and work within the requirements of the local procedures followed by statutory and voluntary agencies.

### **Procedure when there are concerns**

- a) If anyone who is associated with Families Together has concerns about the welfare of an adult at risk they must raise those concerns and inform the designated person **without delay**
- b) If an adult discloses that they are being, or have been abused this information must be taken seriously and the information must be passed to the designated person for dealing with their concerns without delay and in any event **within 24 hours** of the information coming to light
- c) The first priority should always be to protect the safety of all adults at risk and it is the responsibility of all within Families Together to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect
- d) The information regarding the concerns and the action taken will be recorded and passed to the relevant agencies. Written information will be passed to the respective agencies **within 7 working days**
- e) If an adult is at risk of immediate harm then the designated person will inform the appropriate agency without delay
- f) If the adult is not in immediate harm the information must be passed to the designated person who will respond as soon as possible but **within 24 hours**
- g) Failure to report concerns may lead to suspension pending investigation and for staff, disciplinary action
- h) If a member of staff, volunteer or trustee is alleged to have put the welfare or safety of an adult at risk, the designated person will inform the appropriate agency and cooperate fully with the authority in the manner in which the matter is dealt with including the immediate suspension of the person pending an investigation

## Supporting adults showing signs of Acute Psychosis/ Suicide/ Self-Harm/ Harm to Others or Homicide

### Procedure for Staff and Volunteers in an emergency situation

- Ensure the person is safe and stay with them.
- Contact a trusted person e.g., family member.
- Contact the Mental Health Crisis Team if you know the person is being supported by them Contact Adult Safeguarding Team.
- Contact their GP or Phone 999
- It is important to stay with the person until help arrives.
- Inform your line manager.

### Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

It is important that any concerns for the welfare of an adult at risk arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately to the designated person, or, if they are implicated in the concerns, to the strategic lead or a named trustee, and an incident form completed. Concerns about poor practice should also be reported to the designated person.

Where there are allegations of abuse or concerns about poor practice of staff or volunteers there may be three strands of investigation as follows:

1. Adult at risk protection investigation (externally led)
2. Criminal investigation (externally led by the Police Authority)
3. A disciplinary investigation (internally led)

It may be that the employee will be suspended with pay during an investigation or a volunteer asked to cease volunteering pending the outcome of the investigation.

### Designated Safeguarding Personnel

Families Together has appointed:

**Amanda Jacques (01379 678552 or 07540 282074) to take the strategic lead responsibility and Kathryn Sansom (07938 915602) to act as named trustee with the following designated persons identified:**

Kerry Agricole	01379 678552 or 07415 690130	
Charlotte Deacon	01379 678552 or 07925 137481	
Hannah Edwards	01379 678552 or 07563 029195	
Karen Hubbuck	01379 678552 or 07395 796279	
Holly Maddox	01379 678552 or 07565 219274	
Aimee Mills	01379 678552 or 07925 138384	
Kate Owen	01379 678552 or 07565 219288	
Jo Pearson	01379 678552 or 07933 801871	Deputy Lead
Vickie Stone	01379 678552 or 07754 764477	
Julie Sullivan	01379 678552 or 07927 322506	
Helen Thorby	01379 678552 or 07563 029117	Deputy Lead
Honor Warner	01379 678552 or 07415 689087	
Stephen Wort	01379 678552 or 07925 138386	

### Retention of Records

A factual, dated and signed/initialled record of concerns about an adult at risk in a family supported will be kept, in line with Families Together record keeping and procedures. Records kept by employees about adults at risk should only include contacts made, referrals made including date, time, and reason, and referral agency.

This policy will be reviewed annually and more frequently if **appropriate**.

Signed by Chair	<i>C. Read</i>
Date	August 2023
Review Date	August 2024

### What to do if you have a safeguarding concern

#### Flowchart One

Volunteer, Staff member or Trustee has a safeguarding concern about a child, or a child makes a disclosure of possible abuse



Inform the Designated Safeguarding Person, or in their absence the Strategic Safeguarding lead. In the case of a disclosure make it clear you cannot keep the information confidential.



If necessary the Designated Safeguarding Person makes contact with local children's social care for advice

#### Flowchart Two

Concern/allegation about a volunteer, trustee or member of staff or someone working on Families Together's Start's behalf abusing a child



Inform Designated safeguarding person, or in their absence the Strategic Safeguarding lead unless the allegation is about this person, in which case inform most senior member of staff/trustee not implicated



The person to whom this information has been given makes contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and guidance  
**Suffolk County Council – Customer First 0808 800 4005 anytime**

## **Appendix 2 –Types & Signs of Abuse**

### **Self-neglect**

This covers a wide range of behaviour, but it can be broadly defined as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. An example of self-neglect is behaviour such as hoarding.

### **Modern Slavery**

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

### **Domestic Abuse**

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is abuse that centers on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

### **Organisational**

This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. Organisational abuse can range from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be

through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

### **Physical**

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.

### **Sexual**

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

### **Financial or Material**

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. It can also include the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

### **Neglect and Acts of Omission**

This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

### **Emotional or Psychological**

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

### **Cyber Bullying**

Cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online, or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages. It can also involve using online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating, or isolating another person. It includes various different types of bullying, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special education needs and disabilities. The main difference is that, instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology as a means to do it.

## **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

### **Definition**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

### **Reporting**

FGM is illegal. If it is 'known' a case of FGM has taken place, then the Police must be notified immediately via the non-emergency number - 101.

**It is a personal duty which requires the individual who has become aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred.** Volunteers will be supported by their coordinator or the Safeguarding Lead.

**The Safeguarding Lead must be informed.**

If there is a belief there is a risk of FGM social care services must be notified immediately. Suffolk County Council, Customer First – 0808 800 4005

## **Forced Marriage**

### **Definition**

A forced marriage is illegal in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one where one or both people do not or cannot give consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into marriage.

### **Reporting**

If there is a belief there is a risk of a forced marriage, contact Suffolk County Council- Customer First by following the procedures shown on the flow chart in this policy or dial 999 in an emergency.

## **Mate Crime**

“Mate crime” is when “vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them” (Safety Network Project, ARC). It may not be an illegal act, but it still has a negative effect on the individual. A mate crime is carried out by someone the adult knows, and it often happens in private. In recent years there have been a number of Serious Care Reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were seriously harmed, or even murdered, by people who purported to be their friend.

## **Radicalisation**

The aim of radicalisation is to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals to the legitimacy of a cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.