

The purpose of this policy:

- This policy, produced in accordance with Back Up's values, below, aims to provide protection for adults who receive and deliver Back Up's services.
- It provides volunteers and staff with guidance and procedures they should adopt if they suspect an adult is at risk of harm.

Who is this policy for?

- Primarily this policy is for Back Up volunteers who work with service users. It is also relevant for trustees, staff and any other persons working for Back Up, on a temporary or permanent basis, paid or unpaid.

Driven by the needs of people with spinal cord injury, we are **passionate** about transforming lives. Through **challenge** and **fun** we open up possibilities; to develop, achieve and get the most out of life. We **respect** individuality and embrace diversity. We strive for quality and **excellence** in all we do.

Back Up has a responsibility to act when an adult may be at risk of significant harm:

Back Up will endeavour to safeguard the individual by valuing, listening to and respecting them. Back Up will provide on-going support to the individual and support them to make decisions based on choices available to them.

In accordance with Back Up's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy, and the Mental Capacity Act (2005), Back Up may share concerns with agencies who need to know, for example a GP, social services, or a mental health team. Back Up may also be in contact with the individual's local safeguarding board. In extreme cases, Back Up may be in contact with emergency services. In all cases Back Up will aim to contact other agencies with the person's full knowledge and permission. Only in circumstances where someone is at serious risk of harm will information be passed to a third party where consent has not been given.

Under the Child Protection Policy, if there are concerns about the welfare of a child under the care of an adult whose safety is at risk, Back Up has a duty to inform the statutory bodies regardless of whether the adult carers for the child consents.

Back Up's safeguarding team:

Ella Provan, safeguarding officer for under 18s:

ella@backuptrust.org.uk / 020 8875 6764

Polly Nabarro, safeguarding officer for adults:

polly@backuptrust.org.uk / 020 8875 6721 / 07738 276 722

Polly is on call out of hours, available on her mobile.

Persons at risk:

Under the Care Act 2014 and associated documents, someone is at greater risk of abuse and neglect if they have care and support needs and are unable to protect themselves.

People at greater risk may:

- Be older in age,
- Have a physical disability, learning difficulty, or sensory impairment,
- Have mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder,
- Have a long-term health condition,
- Misuse substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their management of day-to-day living.

Safe recruitment:

Back Up's role in safeguarding the welfare of staff, volunteers and service users includes recruiting staff and volunteers safely and ensuring all necessary checks are made. Back Up also have a duty to provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

What is my role in safeguarding service users?

It is always unacceptable for anyone to suffer abuse of any kind, and everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, has the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

At Back Up we have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of those who provide or receive Back Up's services and we work, where possible, to stop harm from occurring. This includes someone harming themselves, being harmed by someone else, or if they are at risk of either.

As a Back Up volunteer or staff member it is your duty to look out for signs of abuse and any risk to someone's safety. You must report all concerns to the Back Up staff or the Back Up safeguarding team.

What to look out for:

- Signs of abuse; types of abuse include physical, financial, sexual, neglectful (including self-neglect), verbal, psychological (including emotional abuse), or discriminatory,
- Suicidal thoughts or plans, or indication someone has engaged in self-harm or risk taking behaviours with the intent of harming themselves.

Abuse and neglect can occur anywhere, for example in the home or a public place, in hospital or a day centre, in a college or care home. The cause of harm and abuse may similarly be wide ranging, for example harm caused unintentionally by an unsupported carer; neglect caused by staff, abuse from a family member or friend. Abuse can be intentional, or caused by recklessness.

Top Tips

If someone discloses something concerning it can be difficult to handle:

- Try to stay calm,
- Don't do anything that makes you uncomfortable,
- Pause a call or step out of a conversation for a break,
- Don't promise to keep secrets,
- Be clear that you are going to report the concern to Back Up.

Back Up will provide you with on-going support and, where possible, inform you of action taken.

I have a concern for someone's welfare, what do I do?

If you are concerned about a situation, for example someone has disclosed something to you or you have a gut feeling something isn't right, follow the three **Rs**:

- You **RECOGNISED** an issue,
- **RECORD** it as accurately as possible, and
- **REPORT** it to a member of Back Up staff and/or the Back Up safeguarding team asap.

Support for you:

After exposure to something concerning, feeling anxious about someone's welfare is normal. It's important you share how you feel; Be in contact with a Back Up staff member, the safeguarding team, a mentoring supervisor, or a family member or friend. **If you are seeking support outside of Back Up please don't share anything identifiable or specific details about the situation.**

People can feel guilty after passing on a safeguarding concern; they might feel they have shared personal information inappropriately. In fact, as stated in Back Up's Confidentiality Policy, it is the duty of all those involved with Back Up to pass on any concerns about someone's welfare. Service users are made aware of the Back Up confidentiality policy when they agree to receive support services from Back Up, for example they sign up to a Back Up course or to receive mentoring.

Back Up are committed to reviewing policy and practice every three years, or sooner in the light of changes to activities or changes to the external policy environment / good practice guidance.

Contact the safeguarding team on 020 8875 1805 or safeguarding@backuptrust.org.uk