

# Safeguarding Adults Policy & Procedures

## The purpose of this policy:

This policy is produced in accordance with Back Up's values aims to provide protection for adults who receive and deliver Back Up's services. The policy is designed to ensure that our staff and volunteers can respond to any concerns in a consistent manner.

All people that have contact with our service users should take all reasonable measures to minimize the risk of harm to the welfare of children and adults at risk. Where concerns are identified they must take appropriate action to address these concerns. This is the policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults, the child protection policy can be found [here](#) For a hard copy version please contact a member of Back Up's Safeguarding Team.

## Who is this policy for?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We recognise that all adults and children have a basic right to live free from abuse and neglect and we will support our service users to achieve this right. We also recognise that our services users have a right to make decisions about their lives and so we always seek to work with them to enable this to happen.

We provide a range of services including; courses, wheelchair skills, telephone support, education inclusion, U'18s courses and mentoring to people who may be vulnerable or at risk of abuse because of a range of factors. We have a duty to comply with both our statutory responsibilities and with our partner local and health authority safeguarding procedures.

## Our Mission Statement

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.

## Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up using law and guidance that seeks to protect vulnerable adults:

- [The Care Act 2014](#)
- [Making Safeguarding Personal toolkit](#) (LGA)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [The Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

## Definitions

**Safeguarding adults** is defined as protecting an adults' right to live in safety free from abuse and neglect.

**Abuse** is any action that violates a person's human or civil rights. It can take many forms and involve a number of factors. It can occur anywhere and the abuser could be a stranger, a carer, a family member or someone else in a position of trust.

An **adult at risk** is defined as anyone aged 18 years or over; Who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

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

The vulnerability of the adult is related to how able they are to make and exercise their own informed choices free from duress, pressure or undue influence of any sort and to protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation. It is important to note that people with mental capacity can be vulnerable and therefore considered to be an 'adult at risk'.

## Principles

There are six key principles within the Care Act 2014 that inform the ways in which we, as professionals and other staff work with adults and children. It is important to note that a safeguarding concern may arise from a range of sources and the action we take will depend on the individual person's circumstances.

**Empowerment** – people being supported, provided with information and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent

**Prevention** – it is better to take action before harm occurs

**Proportionality** – a proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented

**Protection** – support and representation for those in greatest need

**Partnership** – local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect

**Accountability** – transparency in delivering safeguarding

## Responsibilities

- All members of staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report in a timely way any concerns or suspicion that someone is at risk to a member of the Back Up Safeguarding Team. 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.
- The Board are ultimately accountable for how safeguarding is managed, and they delegate operational responsibility to the Leadership Team.
- The Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that effective safeguarding systems are in place which meet our statutory obligation, minimize risk to service users and manage any reported incidents appropriately.
- Within the Leadership Team the designated safeguarding officer is the Head of Services. Their role is to ensure that staff and volunteers can recognise safeguarding concerns and know how to report them.
- There will always be two members of staff that are Safeguarding leads and able to give advice to any member of staff on safeguarding. These leads are Charlie Fraser (Mentoring & Family Manager), Ella Provan (U'18s Service Manager)
- Ella Provan, designated safeguarding officer for under 18s:
  - ella@backuptrust.org.uk / 020 8875 6764
- Charlie Fraser, designated safeguarding officer for adults:

- charlief@backuptrust.org.uk / 020 8875 6763 / 07738 276 753
- Out of hours Charlie is on call, available on her mobile
- The safeguarding leads are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding cases in their areas of operation are managed correctly and for implementing any action plans to address the safeguarding concern.

All staff and volunteers are expected to have an understanding of the different forms of abuse and how to recognise signs / indications.

## Training and Ongoing Support

- All staff and volunteers will receive an introduction to our Safeguarding policy and procedures at their induction.
- Back Up will offer annual safeguarding refreshers for staff delivered by the safeguarding leads. Volunteers will also be trained on Back Up's safeguarding procedures at their initial training events and be given refresher sessions at development days.
- 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 and ongoing training and support.

## What to look out for:

- Signs of abuse; types of abuse include physical, financial, sexual, neglectful (including self-neglect), verbal, psychological (including emotional abuse), discriminatory, organisational, domestic and modern slavery
- Suicidal thoughts or plans, or indication someone has engaged in self-harm or risk-taking behaviors 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, it can also be single act or a reoccurring acts.

## Our approach

Back Up will endeavor 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 line with Back Up's values we will make the dignity, safety and wellbeing of the individual a priority.

## Reporting a concern

If someone has disclosed something to you or you have a gut feeling something isn't right, follow the three **Rs**:

- **RECOGNISE** an issue, listen carefully to what that person has to say and don't try to interject.
- **RECORD** it as accurately as possible, and in the person's own words.
- **REPORT** it to a member of Back Up staff and/or the Back Up safeguarding team asap. **Proof is not required** to report a safeguarding concern, all that is required is that there are reasonable grounds to suspect abuse has taken place. You can also report a concern directly to the police or that person's local authority.

## Tips for when someone reports a concern

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

- Try to stay calm,

- Ask questions for **clarification only**
- Allow the person to continue
- Don't promise to keep secrets
- Be clear that you are going to report the concern to Back Up.

## What happens when a concern is reported?

Back Up will provide you with on-going support. It may not always be possible to inform you of action taken; this will be assessed on a case by case basis.

*Back Up will endeavor to safeguard the individual by valuing, listening to and respecting 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 Social Services, GP or mental health team. Back Up may also be in contact with the individual's local safeguarding board. 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, if there are public interest or vital interest considerations or if other people could be at risk from the same person will information be passed onto relevant safeguarding organisations without the person's consent – if we do this or anything else against the wishes of the person it will be fully explained to the person.*

## 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 or a mentoring supervisor.

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.

## Consent and Mental Capacity

We will presume the adults have the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their own safety and how they lead their lives.

However, in circumstances where a service user has been assessed under the Mental Capacity Act as lacking capacity in certain areas which may include lacking capacity to make informed consent to a safeguarding referral – where this is the case we will follow multi-agency approach.

## Recording Concerns, information sharing and data protection

Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy – i.e. the need to protect the interests of Back Up should not override the need to protect the adult. Back Up have a [Whistleblowing policy](#) and the protection under the Public Interest and Disclosure Act.

Decisions to pass on information to relevant safeguarding agencies are never made in isolation and Back Up safeguarding leads will seek support from SMT and multi-agency safeguarding hubs.

Information of individual safeguarding cases and actions are stored on a password protected spreadsheet in Back Up's safeguarding folder.

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.