

Colchester Diverse Communities Network (CDCN)

31, Eld Lane, Colchester, CO1 1LS

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Version	V1	Approved by	Trustees	Trustees	Trustees	Trustees
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Safeguarding Lead: Rachel Walton

Purpose

This policy defines 'safeguarding', 'abuse' and gives other relevant information about safeguarding. It also tells people what they should do if they see or suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding is about protecting certain people who may be in a vulnerable situation. These people may be at risk of abuse or neglect if someone else does something that they should not do or does not do what they should do.

Safeguarding adults includes:

- Protecting their rights to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- People and organisations working together to prevent the risk of abuse or neglect, and to stop abuse or neglect from happening.
- Making sure people's wellbeing is promoted, taking their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs into account.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a misuse of power and control that one person has over another. Where someone is dependent on another, there is the possibility of abuse or neglect unless enough safeguards are put in place.

It can happen when a vulnerable adult is persuaded into a financial or sexual exchange they have not consented to, or cannot consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.

Some types of abuse are illegal. If **CDCN** suspects that a crime against a person has been committed, we refer the matter to the police. Sometimes an urgent referral to police is made for the safety of the vulnerable adult or to preserve evidence.

Types of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms. It might not comfortably fit into any of these categories, or it might fit into more than one.

1. Physical

This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, giving the wrong (or no) medication, restraining someone or only letting them do certain things at certain times.

2. Domestic

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse. It also covers so-called 'honour' based violence.

3. Sexual

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, taking sexual photographs, making someone look at pornography or watch sexual acts, sexual assault or sexual acts the adult did not consent to or was pressured into consenting.

4. Psychological

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, depriving someone of contact with someone else, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, putting pressure on someone to do something, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

5. Financial or material

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, putting pressure on someone about their financial arrangements (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions) or the misuse or stealing of property, possessions or benefits.

6. Modern slavery

This covers slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.

7. Discriminatory

This includes types of harassment or insults because of someone's race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

8. Organisational

This includes neglect and poor care in an institution or care setting such as a hospital or care home, or if an organisation provides care in someone's home. The abuse can be a one-off incident or repeated, on-going ill treatment. The abuse can be through neglect or poor professional practice that might be because of structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

9. Neglect and acts of omission

This includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to educational services, or not giving someone what they need to help them live, such as medication, enough nutrition and heating.

10. Self-neglect

This happens when someone is not caring for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It may include hoarding.

11. Forced marriage

Forced marriage happens across all cultures. It's when someone is pressured into an arranged marriage or forced to marry someone they haven't freely chosen. It can also happen if someone lacks the mental capacity to make their own choices. If we suspect abuse involving a forced marriage, we will refer the matter to the Forced Marriage Unit.

Who could be an abuser?

Adults at risk can be abused by a wide range of people – anyone, in fact, who has contact with them. This includes family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately take advantage of vulnerable people, strangers and people who see an opportunity to abuse.

Abuse can also be done by one vulnerable adult towards another. This is still abuse and should be dealt with. The vulnerable adult who abuses someone else may also be neglecting him/herself that could also be a reason for a safeguarding referral.

Sharing information

CDCN Trustees and Volunteers personal and sensitive information about people according to the law and its Data Protection Policy. We make sure there's no unauthorised access, loss, misuse, amendment or disclosure of this information. When safeguarding adults at risk, we sometimes need to share personal or sensitive information with someone from another organisation. **CDCN** will only do this when allowed by law says, and where sharing the information is in the person's best interests. This is also done when doing so might prevent a crime. We will always share information that safeguards vulnerable adults, on a 'need to know' basis. We will make sure any information we share is correct.

Assessing and responding to the level of risk

1. We will take all suspicions or allegations of abuse seriously.
2. Everyone at **CDCN** must know that the needs of the adult or child at risk are of the highest importance.
3. The **CDCN** will do whatever it can to guarantee the safety and protection of adults and children at risk. This policy is adopted by the **CDCN** board of trustees. They will spread the messages in it and make sure that all staff and volunteers follow this policy.
4. The **CDCN Trustees** are responsible for:
 - making sure that staff and volunteers are fully aware of the safeguarding policy
 - telling people that the policy is important and keeping it up to date

- allowing staff and volunteers to attend training and letting them access guidance to help them identify abuse and the risk of abuse, and deal with it in the ways set out in this policy
 - making sure staff and volunteers know about and follow the reporting procedure
5. All **CDCN** trustees, staff and volunteers will be informed where to find a copy of this policy. Staff will be responsible for reading and understanding this policy. If someone does not understand any part of the policy, they can ask their manager for help. All trustees, staff and volunteers will check the guidance on protecting information when managing personal information about vulnerable adults.

Training

All trustees/committee members, lecturer and teachers and volunteers will attend training or meetings about the responsibilities of **CDCN**, how to recognise abuse or the risk of abuse, and on our procedures.

Reviewing this policy

This policy is part of an ongoing process to strengthen working with other agencies. It will be reviewed and revised whenever there's a change in national policy or the law.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for making sure that this happens.

Report a safeguarding issue

1. Contact the social care department at the local authority if you are concerned about a vulnerable adult. If you can not get through to the local council, call the Care Quality Commission on **03000 616161**. You can also email them at enquiries@cqc.org.uk.
2. Please also see the reporting flowchart given in the appendix.

Appendix: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Tell the Trustees about your concerns immediately



If needed, seek medical attention for the vulnerable person



Discuss with vulnerable person. Get permission to make referral if safe and appropriate.



If needed, seek advice from Colchester City Council, Adults helpdesk



Complete the Local Authority Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Incident Report Form if required and submit to the local authority within 24 hours of making a contact



Ensure that feedback from the Local Authority is received and their response recorded