

Policy Statement

Crosspoint acknowledges and accepts that harm, abuse, prejudice or discrimination can occur in any setting and some people are more at risk than others.

The organisation aims to ensure that everyone in contact with the organisation and its services, whether as a trustee, volunteer or client, can do so safely and is treated with respect and dignity.

Definitions

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the term that describes the function of protecting adults and children from abuse or neglect. Safeguarding relates to the need to protect certain people who may be in vulnerable circumstances and may be at risk of abuse or neglect due to the actions (or lack of action) of another person

Adult at risk

An individual aged 18 years or over: “who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against harm or exploitation” (No Secrets 2000).

Child

There is no single law that defines the age of a child across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This policy adopts the definition as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK government in 1991, which states that a child “means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.” (Article 1, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 NSPCC 2011).

Abuse

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons”. (No Secrets, DH March 2000).

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and it may be a single or repeated act.

Abuse includes:

- a) Physical abuse - hitting; slapping; kicking; squeezing; shaking; suffocating; punching; drowning; burning; scalding, misuse of medication;
- b) Sexual abuse - rape; indecent assault; inappropriate touching; other sexual acts including activities such as looking at or being involved in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging individuals to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- c) Financial or material abuse - theft; fraud; embezzlement; selling of assets; withholding of money or possessions; intentional mismanagement of a person's finances or property;
- d) Psychological/emotional abuse - belittling; threats of harm; abandonment or withdrawal of social contact; humiliation, name calling; denial of required services, contacts and social or family networks;
- e) Neglect and acts of omission - failure to access appropriate services for recognised needs; avoidance of required healthcare; ignoring physical needs; withholding of adequate nutrition, water, clothing or warmth; leaving in soiled clothes; exposing a person to unacceptable risk; omitting to provide or ensure adequate supervision;
- f) Discriminatory - any acts that use hurtful language, cause harassment or similar treatment of an individual because of their race, gender, age, faith, culture or sexual orientation;
- g) Institutional - the use of systems, routines, practices or care that neglects, denies or prevents the meeting of an individual's needs;
- h) Human and Civil Rights - the denial of or coercive influence on an individual's rights to be registered and to vote; the right to be treated as an equal with dignity and respect; the right of speech and movement (where physically possible).

This is not an exhaustive list of examples but a guide to the most regular forms of abuse.

Safeguarding Procedure

The Chair of Trustees is the organisation's nominated Safeguarding Lead, and oversees safeguarding, deals with any concerns and ensures regular reviews and updates.

Trustees will ensure that they understand their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding. These responsibilities include:

- Regularly reviewing Crosspoint's risk register to ensure that any potential Safeguarding risks are identified and mitigated;

- Ensuring that all volunteers are aware of this policy and procedure, are able to recognise a safeguarding concern and know what to do about it;
- Ensuring that all potential Trustees, counsellors and volunteers have appropriate checks to minimise risks of harm to others. These include:
 - completion of an application form
 - taking up at least two references
 - a Disclosure and Barring Service check for Trustees and counsellors

The Local Authority is responsible for investigating and co-ordinating all incidents of suspected abuse. The legal framework for how local authorities and other organisations should react to suspicion of abuse or neglect are set out in the Care Act (2014).

All Crosspoint volunteers have a responsibility to promote the safety and protection of adults at risk and children with whom we work. Volunteers must act promptly and appropriately if they become aware that an adult or child may be at risk of abuse or neglect. It is not the responsibility of Crosspoint personnel to decide whether or not abuse or neglect has taken place, or to investigate the concern. This is the role of the Local Authority and/or police who hold the lead responsibility for establishing and co-ordinating local intra-agency frameworks for safeguarding adults at risk and children.

Volunteers are responsible for contacting the appropriate agency when concerns of abuse or neglect are brought to their attention. In the event that the adult at risk or child is in immediate danger, volunteers should contact the police without delay and then report their action to a committee member.

If an adult at risk discloses abuse or neglect to a Crosspoint volunteer, care should be taken to explain to them that a report will be made to the designated person and/or appropriate agency.

Personal information may be disclosed without the individual's consent if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an individual is at risk of harm

The risk of ignoring safeguarding concerns include:

- Abuse or harm to an adult at risk or a child
- Potential damage to the reputation of Crosspoint and a loss of confidence in the organisation
- Crosspoint could be vulnerable to complaints and legal action

Referrals

In the event of safeguarding concerns about a **child or young person**, contact:

Wiltshire Children's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- Monday to Thursday 0845 – 1700hrs and Friday 0845 – 1600hrs 0300 456 0108

- Out-of-hours 0300 456 0100

In the event of safeguarding concerns about a vulnerable **adult**, contact:
Social Care Help Desk

Email: adviceandcontact@wiltshire.gov.uk

- Monday to Thursday 0830 – 1720 or Fridays 0830 – 1620hrs 0300 456 0111
- Out-of-hours 0300 456 0100

In the event of an emergency, call **999**.

[You can make a safeguarding referral online](#)

Or if there is immediate danger, phone the police or emergency services on 999.
For less urgent enquiries, email mash@wiltshire.gov.uk