

Safeguarding policy: safeguarding adults and children at risk

The aim

The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for all staff and volunteers at Parkinson's UK to contribute to the safeguarding of adults and children at risk through raising awareness and providing a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected or disclosed.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This policy aims to protect adults and children at risk, all our staff and volunteers and all those we encounter through our work. The policy applies to all staff and volunteers and is applicable across the UK.

Adult at risk

Please note that in Northern Ireland the term "vulnerable person" is used rather than "adult at risk". The term "adult at risk" is now used across England, Scotland and Wales.

A generally accepted definition of an 'adult at risk' and whom the safeguarding duties apply to is an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs or not)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

(Care Act 2014)

Child at risk

All children (up to the age of 18 years) are potentially vulnerable to abuse.

Details of legislation and guidance regarding safeguarding children in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland can be found on the NSPCC website

www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/policyandpublicaffairs/ppa_wda48585.html

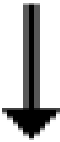
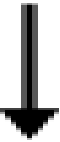
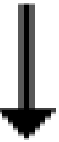
A safeguarding concern

You may have concerns regarding a child or adult at risk's behaviour or changes in their state of mind or someone may disclose information regarding themselves or a child or an adult at risk that you're concerned about.

If you have any concerns, you must inform your relevant contact of your concerns. This might be your line manager if you're a member of staff or your staff contact if you're a volunteer. They or the Designated Safeguarding Officer will be able to make a judgement using the information given on whether the concern should be referred on to the appropriate safeguarding agency.

If your relevant contact (line manager or staff contact) is not available contact the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303** (please ask for the 'manager' and say that your call is in relation to a safeguarding concern). For further advice please call the Designated Safeguarding Officer on **0344 225 9853** and leave a message if unavailable.

If you have any safeguarding concerns, always discuss them with your relevant contact. It is better to raise your concerns and find no further action is needed than to keep your concerns to yourself and risk that someone is not supported when it is needed.

If you are a volunteer or member of a local group	If you are a Parkinson's adviser	If you are a volunteer or member of staff (in our UK office or home-based)
		
Please contact your staff contact or England Manager/Country Director	Please contact your Senior Adviser or Service Manager	Please contact your staff contact (for volunteers) or line manager (for staff)

In exceptional circumstances, for instance if the individual is deemed to be in immediate danger, then the safety and wellbeing of the individual is the first concern. Emergency services should be contacted; however, the individual should be informed of this action and the reason for this wherever possible.

Please note:

1. Parkinson's UK does not investigate safeguarding referrals. Our duties extend to referring safeguarding concerns to the relevant statutory authorities and gaining the individual's consent wherever possible. Where consent is not given or not requested, we may still refer the matter.
2. If you report a safeguarding concern to your contact, you may not receive feedback on the outcome of the report. We have a duty to protect people's confidentiality and if we decide to report the safeguarding concern to the authorities, we will not necessarily hear the outcome of that referral. Please do be assured that we do treat each concern raised as a priority.

Definitions

Safeguarding appropriate people

An adult at risk (as defined above) may be a person who:

- is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a physical disability and/or sensory impairment
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long-term illness/ condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is a carer; such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse
- is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

This list is not prescriptive, therefore other variations should be considered.

What do we mean by abuse?

Abuse is a violation of human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be planned or unplanned. It may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. It may happen when an adult at risk is persuaded to enter into a transaction that they are unable to consent or have not consented to.

Abuse can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self-neglect

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetrated by anyone.

Signs and indicators that abuse or neglect may be happening

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) provides a helpful guide to signs and indicators that abuse, or neglect may be happening for adults:

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>

The NSPCC provides similar guidance for children:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/>

Our duty of care

While Parkinson's UK has no statutory responsibility to act in cases of abuse, we do have a duty of care for everyone we encounter through our work, our volunteers and staff. To exercise our duty of care we operate within the following framework:

- Our procedures aim to make sure that the safety, needs and interests of adults and children at risk are always respected and given priority.
- We believe people should be empowered and supported to make their own choices, while being protected from harm.
- We will assess the safeguarding risks that adults and children at risk encounter in their engagement with Parkinson's UK and take all necessary steps to manage them, while also ensuring staff and volunteers take the necessary steps to look after themselves in all their activities.
- We will inform and support everyone we work with, including our staff and volunteers, of how to voice concerns about any potential safeguarding situation or concerns.
- We will regularly update our policies, procedures and guidelines to take account of UK safeguarding legislation and good practice.

- We expect all staff and volunteers to understand their duty to report concerns and will provide them with the relevant resources to do so.
- We will ensure we maintain high standards in our safeguarding approach through recruitment, training, support and supervision.
- We will require all partners or agencies that act on our behalf to follow our safeguarding policy.
- We will request disclosure and barring checks where appropriate and legally entitled to do so, in line with our staff and volunteer recruitment policies.
- We will identify a senior member of staff as Designated Safeguarding Officer. This person has overall responsibility for overseeing safeguarding policy and procedure and for making decisions regarding referrals to safeguarding authorities. This person may delegate this role to other nominated colleagues when appropriate.
- Statutory agencies involved in safeguarding – primarily the Police, Local Authorities and the Health Service – have explicit expectations of staff and volunteers in voluntary organisations and these are based on a clear definition of who should be considered an ‘adult at risk’.

Put simply the expectation is that:

- all staff and volunteers from any service or setting should know about the safeguarding policy and procedures and how to access the most up to date information and guidance.
- all staff and volunteers from any service or setting who have contact with adults at risk or children have a responsibility to be aware of issues of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- all staff and volunteers have a duty to act in a timely manner, ideally on the same or next working day, on any concern or suspicion that an adult or child, who is at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited and to ensure that the situation is assessed and referred to safeguarding authorities, as appropriate. It is important to note that where an ‘adult at risk’ or child is deemed to be in immediate danger, we will involve the emergency services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual.

Consent

Issues of consent and capacity underpin our approach to safeguarding. The role of Parkinson’s UK does not include conducting investigations, but it is important to understand these issues and consider the way in which they may impact on decision making in relation to a reported concern.

An **adult’s** consent should always be sought when sharing information with other parties, ie. the safeguarding contact and external safeguarding agencies. A person’s wishes will be respected as far as possible while judging this against our duty of care towards individuals.

Parkinson's UK should only take any action once consent has been given by the 'adult at risk', except in exceptional circumstances and ideally with direction from the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

We will record where consent has been given on the record of concern form.

If an individual does not give consent and you remain concerned that there is a safeguarding concern, please contact the designated safeguarding officer who will make the decision as to whether the concern should be reported to the relevant authorities.

If you consider that the situation is of immediate urgency, for instance if you are concerned that an individual is at immediate risk and you cannot reach the designated safeguarding officer, please do make the report to the relevant statutory authority, even if you do not have consent.

If a concern is raised about or by a **child**, it is imperative that you contact the designated safeguarding officer who will make the decision about whether the concern should be reported to the relevant authorities.

If you consider that the situation is of immediate urgency, and you cannot reach the designated safeguarding officer, please do make the report to the relevant statutory authority, dialling 999 if necessary. Consent is not an issue in these circumstances.

Capacity

"Mental capacity" refers to an individual's ability to make decisions for themselves.

We will always assume that an individual has the mental capacity to make their own decisions unless it is known otherwise. Staff and volunteers are not expected to assess capacity.

Further guidance and relevant policies

Alongside this policy there are other documents available for staff and volunteers that are essential guidance. These should be referred to when considering safeguarding.

These are:

- safeguarding procedure
- safeguarding people at risk – record of concern via the service desk (for staff only - volunteers should talk to their staff contact or the Parkinson's UK helpline)

Other relevant staff policies to refer to are:

- health and safety
- whistleblowing
- data protection
- lone working