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Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Policy, Practice Guidance & Procedures

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Section 1: Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

The main objective of the safeguarding policy and procedures are to provide guidance to all staff and volunteers on how they can enable adults to be kept safe from abuse or neglect and immediate action to be taken where required to achieve this.

Richmond Borough Mind Adult Safeguarding policy follows the guidelines set out by the [London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#) 2019, which should be referred to in conjunction with this policy.

Richmond Borough Mind (RB Mind) is committed to supporting the right of adults at risk to be protected from abuse, and committed to making sure all staff and volunteers work together, in line with the Richmond Borough London Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures 2010, and act promptly when dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

We believe that:

Safeguarding is everyone's business – Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We will work together to prevent and minimise abuse. If we have concerns that someone is being abused, our loyalty to the vulnerable person comes before any other loyalties we may have, including but not limited to: our group; other service users; our colleagues; the vulnerable person's friends and family.

Doing nothing is not an option – If we know or suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, we will do something about it and ensure that our actions are properly recorded. We will always act within the boundaries of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures

2. Legal and Policy Context:

2.1. All adult safeguarding occurs within the legal framework of the [Care Act 2014](#). The statutory Care Act Guidance defines Adult Safeguarding as:

“Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, whilst at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted.”

2.2. The local safeguarding process are underpinned by the [London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#) 2019.

RB Mind - Our Commitment

In order to support vulnerable adults who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse, RB Mind is committed to:

- Identifying the abuse of vulnerable adults where it is occurring.
- Responding effectively to any circumstances giving grounds for concern, including but not limited to formal complaints being made or anxiety being expressed.
- Ensuring the active participation of individuals, families, groups and communities wherever possible and appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the extent of abuse on vulnerable adults and its impact on them.

- Promoting and supporting work designed to reduce abuse and the fear of abuse as experienced by vulnerable adults.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices for protecting vulnerable adults are working.
- Making sure our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with currently accepted good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding adult at risk / vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring our procedures are in line with the Richmond Borough London Adult Safeguarding Procedures.

3. PRINCIPLES

The following 6 principles underpin all adult safeguarding work:

Empowerment	Individuals will be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
Prevention	It is better to take action before harm occurs.
Proportionality	The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented should be sought.
Protection	Support and representation for those in greatest need will be provided.
Partnerships	Local solutions can be determined by services working with their communities.
Accountability	All safeguarding work should be transparent and accountable.

4. Definition and Purpose of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is defined as 'protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.' ([Care and Support statutory guidance, chapter 14ii](#)).

Adult safeguarding is about preventing and responding to concerns of abuse, harm or neglect of adults. Staff should work together in partnership with adults so that they are:

- Safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect;
- Treated fairly and with dignity and respect;
- Protected when they need to be;
- Able easily to get the support, protection and services that they need.

5. Aims of Adult Safeguarding are to:

- **Stop** abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- **Prevent** harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in **making informed choices** and **having**

control about how they want to live;

- Promote an approach that concentrates on **improving life** for the adults concerned;
- **Raise public awareness** so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect;
- Provide **information and support** in accessible ways to help adults understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult; and
- Address what has **caused the abuse**.

In addition RB Mind also aims to ensure:

Adults have a right to independence, choice and self-determination. This right extends to being able to have control over information about themselves and, in most cases, to determine what information is shared.

Decisions will be taken in partnership with the vulnerable person where possible.

- There will be no unnecessary delay in resolving matters.
- Intervention will be no more than is necessary to protect the individual.

Personal information will be treated in the strictest confidence, within the limits of the law, and following RB Mind's Confidentiality Policy.

All decisions and actions will be taken in line with The Mental Capacity Act (2005).

It should be agreed what further support is available, either from within RB Mind or from other specialist organisations. This is particularly important if the person does not wish to report the abuse.

If you are unsure, always speak with your line manager.

6. Adults at Risk

The term 'adult at risk' replaces 'vulnerable adult'. An adult at risk can be defined as an individual who is:

- Over 18.
- People who may be in need of care because they are frail, learning or physically disabled, or have a cognitive or sensory impairment.
- People with mental health needs such as dementia or a personality disorder
- People with a long term condition/illness.
- People who misuse alcohol or substances.
- A carer such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults who is themselves subject to abuse.
- A person who is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

7. Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person/s. This may be a single act or happen repeatedly over a period of time. It can affect one person or more,

and it can be carried out by anyone. Abuse or neglect does not have to be deliberate, malicious or planned.

7.1 What is abuse

Abuse acts. It can be:	is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people. Abuse may be single or repeated
Physical	for example: hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining, giving the wrong medication.
Psychological and emotional	for example: shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse.
Financial	including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, and/or pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance
Sexual	such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent – this can occur in any relationship.
Discriminatory	including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks.
Institutional	the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping, and liaising with other providers of care.
Neglect and acts of omission	including ignoring medical or physical care needs. These can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable person: for example, where a person is deprived of food, heat, clothing, comfort or essential medication, or failing to provide access to appropriate health or social care services.

This list is not exhaustive; there are many other types of abuse, please refer to the [London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#) 2019.

8. How Might We Notice Abuse?

Concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:

a. A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult or 'adult at risk'.
b. A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
c. An observation of the behaviour of the vulnerable adult by the volunteer, member of staff or carer.

9. Suspected Crime

The police should be informed if a criminal activity is suspected. This could include allegations or concerns of sexual abuse, physical injury (constituting an assault, actual or grievous bodily harm), cruelty (including ill-treatment or neglect), financial abuse, or unusual circumstances (e.g. organised or institutional abuse).

To contact the Police:

- Call 999 if a crime is happening now or someone is in immediate danger
- Call 101 to contact local Richmond upon Thames Police in a non-emergency situation

10. Person alleged to have caused harm.

Do not discuss the allegation with the person alleged to have caused the harm, unless the immediate welfare of the adult at risk requires this. However where an immediate decision has to be made to suspend the member of staff, the person has a right to know in broad terms what allegations or concerns have been raised against them.

If the person alleged to be causing harm is an employee or volunteer, ensure that they are not in contact with the adult at risk or any others who may be at risk, such as whistleblowers. Where the person alleged to be causing harm is another service user, it may be necessary to remove them from contact with the adult at risk. Arrangements should be put in place to ensure that their needs are met.

11. Regulated social care and health settings

If the adult at risk is allegedly abused in a regulated health or social care setting by a member of staff who is employed by a regulatory body, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) must be informed by the regulated service or by the Safeguarding Alert Manager in the council where the Safeguarding Adults concern has been reported to the local authority.

12. Mental Capacity and Consent

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 underpins the safeguarding process where the adult does not necessarily have the capacity. A mental capacity assessment will be carried out by a social worker to ascertain if the person has the capacity to make decisions regarding the abuse allegation and give consent to a safeguarding investigation. They may then appoint an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) to make decisions in the best interests of the adult at risk. If you suspect that someone is being deprived of their liberty in a care home or hospital the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards provide a framework for protecting people who lack the mental capacity to make the decision as to whether they receive care and/or treatment in a care home.

If after a discussion with the adult at risk who has mental capacity they refuse any intervention their wishes will be respected unless:

- there is a public interest, for example, not acting will put other adults or children at risk, or,
- There is a duty of care to intervene, for example, a crime has been or may be committed.

13. Prevention and Confidentiality

All staff and volunteers when joining the organisation are required to provide a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service certificate and two references before they have direct contact with vulnerable adults or their carers. For further information, please contact the **Operations Coordinator & Senior Administrator**: hradmin@rbmind.org.

All staff and volunteers are requested to read RB Mind's Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, and the London Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures 2019, and will be requested to attend safeguarding training.

RB Mind will work with vulnerable adults in a way that meets all the aspects of confidentiality in our different policies, but where abuse to a vulnerable person is alleged, suspected, reported or concerns raised, the Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures must be followed.

The confidentiality of the vulnerable person will be respected wherever possible and their consent obtained before sharing information. The vulnerable person should be made aware that staff cannot ignore issues around abuse and that steps will be taken to deal with them in as sensitive a manner as possible.

"The welfare of the individual is paramount."

Section 2. Safeguarding Procedure

14. The Adult Safeguarding Procedure

If you think abuse has or may have occurred:

Act immediately	It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a vulnerable adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to:
Make Safe	Deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence.

Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm. If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed.

This may include suspending the member(s) of staff or volunteer. The staff member or volunteer is also entitled to support at this stage. Please refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Inform	Tell your line manager immediately or the Head of Service if your line manager is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation. Contact the police if it is thought a crime has been committed.
Record	Record details of the allegation as soon as possible on RB Minds Incident form that can be kept secure. Include: a. The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident, what the vulnerable adult said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you. b. The appearance and behaviour of the victim. c. Any injuries observed.

15. Safeguarding Lead's Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the line manager and the Safeguarding lead (**Head of Services**) to

A. **Decide** without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.

B. Deal with any **immediate needs and ensure that:**

- the victim of the alleged abuse **is safe**.
- any necessary **emergency medical treatment** is arranged.
- **no forensic evidence is lost**.
- If the alleged perpetrator is also a vulnerable adult, ensure that a member of staff is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.

C. **Clarify the facts** stated by the member of staff but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.

D. **Check that the circumstances** fall within the safeguarding adults procedures i.e. meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedure. If at all uncertain a referral should be made to the Richmond Access Team p9.

E. Address issues of **consent and confidentiality**.

F. A **formal referral must be made on the same day** as the alert is raised wherever:

- A **crime** has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.
- There is a **suspicion** that an abuse has taken place.
- The **allegation** involves a member of staff, volunteer or paid carer.
- Other vulnerable adults are at risk.
- The alleged perpetrator is a vulnerable adult, therefore they are unsure if abuse has taken place.

Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must still be recorded, with the record including the reason(s) for the decision not to refer. **The Head of Services must be informed that an alert has been considered always.**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Head Of Service Contact Details:

Name: Pritty Rana
Email: Pritty.rana@rbmind.org
Mob: 07756 883 495

16. REPORTING ABUSE OR SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

If you are concerned that any adult at risk is experiencing abuse or neglect, whether it is by an employee, volunteer, carer, family member, neighbour or other, it is your responsibility to report any concern immediately or within 4 hours to a line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Head of Services) at RB Mind.

After discussing your concerns with a line manager or the Head of Service and agreeing an alert should be raised, you must then alert Adult Social Services in London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council without delay.

If the Safeguarding concern is raised against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then the concern should be reported to the Chief Executive.

You can contact:

Richmond Council Adult Access Team on:

Phone: 020 8891 7971

Email: adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk

Or **refer online at:** https://www.richmond.gov.uk/report_adult_abuse#report_online

(The Access team is open Mon-Thurs from 9am-5.15pm, and on Fri from 9am-5pm)

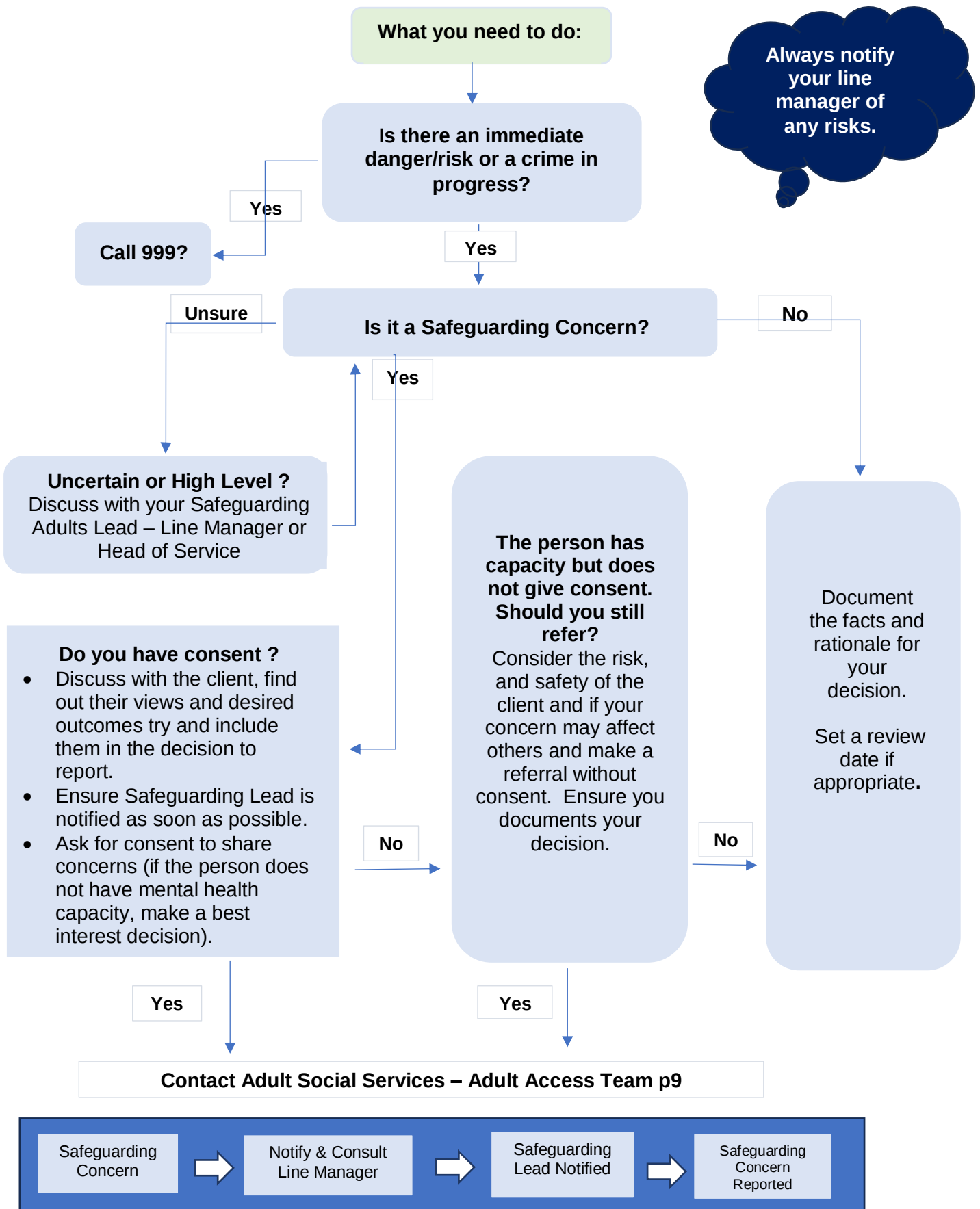
For emergencies outside of these hours you can contact the **Adults Emergency out of Hours Team** on 020 8744 2442.

(The Out of Hours team is available Mon-Friday from 5pm-8am, and 24 hours at weekends and on Bank Holidays)

Where there is uncertainty about the appropriateness of raising a safeguarding alert, advice can be sought from Adult Social Services on the contact details above.

The Safeguarding Adults Board is Richmond and Wandsworth's strategic lead body for safeguarding adults with care and support needs who may be suffering, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect. All contact relating to advice on a safeguarding concern or reports of abuse should go directly to the Adult Access Team, however, for other queries, the Board can be contacted on sab@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

17.Safeguarding Flow Chart



In using this document, a number of phrases, wording or acronyms have been used. The following provides more information and, where necessary, a definition:

Adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who is in need of care and support (whether or not those needs are being met), who is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and because of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Adult safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Adult safeguarding lead is the title given to the member of staff in an organisation who is given the lead for Safeguarding Adults.

Advocacy is supporting a person to understand information, express their needs and wishes, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain the care and support they need.

Appropriate Adult is a specific role prescribed under the Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984. The role of an appropriate adult is confined to instances where a police officer has any suspicion, or is told in good faith, that a person of any age may be mentally disordered or otherwise mentally vulnerable, in the absence of clear evidence to dispel that suspicion, the person shall be treated as a vulnerable adult and supported by an 'Appropriate Adult'.

Appropriate individual within this document an 'appropriate individual' is a person who supports an adult at risk typically but not exclusively in an advocacy role and is separate to an Appropriate Adult as described above. Borough Operational Command Unit (BOCU) the regional units of the Metropolitan Police based on the 32 London Boroughs.

Best Interest - the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) states that if a person lacks mental capacity to make a particular decision then whoever is making that decision or taking any action on that person's behalf must do so in the person's best interest. This is one of the principles of the MCA.

Care setting is where a person receives care and support from health and social care organisations. This includes hospitals, hospices, respite units, nursing homes, residential care homes, and day opportunities arrangements. Carer throughout these policy and procedures refers to a Family/Friend Carer as distinct from a paid carer, who is referred to throughout as Support Worker. The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) define a carer as someone who 'spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems'.

Commissioning is the cyclical activity, to assess the needs of local populations for care and support services, determining what element of this, needs to be arranged by the respective organisations, then designing, delivering, monitoring and evaluating those services. Community Safety Units (CSUs) operate in every area in London with dedicated staff who receive special training in community relations, including local cultural issues. The CSUs will investigate the following incidents: domestic violence, homophobia, transphobia and racism, criminal offences where a person has been targeted because of their perceived 'race', faith, sexual orientation or disability.

Concern is the term used to describe when there is or might be an incident of abuse or neglect and it replaces the previously use term of 'alert'.

Contracting is the means by which a process is made legally binding. Contract management is the process that then ensures that services continue to be delivered to the agreed quality standards.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups. It replaces the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Enquiry establishes whether any action needs to be taken to stop or prevent abuse or neglect, and if so, what action and by whom the action is taken. Previously this may have been referred to as a 'referral'

Enquiry Lead is the agency who leads the enquiry described above.

Enquiry Officer is the member of staff who undertakes and co-ordinates the actions under Section 42 (Care Act 2014) enquiries.

Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a legal framework that sets guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information of individuals within the European Union (EU). The GDPR sets out the principles for data management and the rights of the individual, while also imposing fines that can be revenue-based. The GDPR came into effect across the EU on May 25, 2018 and its requirements are part of English law under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) - Adults who are the subject of domestic violence may be supported by an IDVA. IDVAs provide practical and emotional support to people who are at the highest levels of risk. Practitioners should consult with the adult at risk to consider if the IDVA is the most appropriate person to support them and ensure their eligibility for the service.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) - established by the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 IMCAs are mainly instructed to represent people who lack capacity where there is no one else, such as family or a friend, who is able to support and represent them independently. IMCAs are a legal safeguard for people who lack the mental capacity to make specific important decisions about where they live, serious medical treatment options, care reviews or adult safeguarding concerns.

Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA) - under the Mental Health Act 1983 certain people known as 'qualifying patients' are entitled to the help and support from an Independent Mental Health Advocate. If there is a safeguarding matter whilst the IMHA is working with the adult at risk, consideration for that person to be supported by the same advocate should be given.

Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) - is trained to provide support to people in rape or sexual assault cases. They help victims to understand how the criminal justice process works and explain processes, for example, what will happen following a report to the police and the importance of forensic DNA retrieval.

LGBT is an acronym used to refer collectively to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

people.

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is about person centred and outcome focussed practice. It is how professionals are assured by adults at risk that they have made a difference to people by taking action on what matters to people and is personal and meaningful to them.

MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) are a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by the most serious sexual and violent offenders (MAPPA-eligible offenders) under the provisions of sections 325 to 327B of the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

Natural justice refers to the principles and procedures that govern the adjudication of an issue, which should be unbiased, without prejudice, and there is equal right to being heard.

Person/organisation alleged to have caused harm is the person/organisation suspected to be the source of risk to an adult at risk.

Procurement is the specific function to buy or acquire services which commissioners have duties to arrange to meet people's needs, to agreed quality standards, providing value for money to the public purse.

Public interest Test refers to the test used under data protection legislation when deciding whether the public interest in disclosing information in order to protect a vulnerable adult justifies interfering with another individual's right to privacy.

Registered Intermediaries (RI) play an important role in improving understanding of the justice process for people who have communication difficulties. They help people to understand the questions that are put to them and to have their answers understood, enabling them to achieve best evidence for the police and the courts.

Regulated Provider is an individual, organisation or partnership that carries on activities that are specified in Schedule 1 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Safeguarding Adults Manager (SAM) is the person who manages, provides guidance and has oversight of safeguarding concerns that are raised to the Local Authority.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres (The Havens) Havens are sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) in London for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted within the past 12 months. If the assault took place more than 12 months ago, the Haven can provide information and signpost people to other organisations. If a person has reported the rape or assault to the police, first they will organise the visit to the Haven. The Haven also takes self-referrals from people who do not wish to report to the police. Referrals are also accepted from professionals in London such as GPs, sexual health clinics and A&E departments. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Adults are only offered appointments through consent and direct initial contact following referrals. Havens also offer follow-up medical and counselling care, including full health screening for sexually transmitted infections, a pregnancy test and emergency contraception. More information is available here: <https://thehavens.org.uk/>.

Strategic Executive Information System (StEIS) Reporting a Serious Incident must be done by recording the incident on this system, which facilitates the reporting of Serious Incidents and the monitoring of investigations between NHS providers and commissioners. **More information** is available here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/>.

Victim Support is a national charity, which provides support for victims and witnesses of crime in England and Wales. It provides free and confidential help to family, friends and anyone else affected by crime, which includes information, emotional and practical support. Help can be accessed either directly from local branches or through the Victim Support helpline.

Vital interest a term used in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to permit sharing of information where it is critical to prevent serious harm or distress, or in life-threatening situations.

Policies to Read Alongside this Adults Safeguarding Policy:

1. Children and young people Safeguarding Policy,	All Staff & Volunteers - if working with children and young people or parents,
2. Confidentiality Policy	All Staff & Volunteers,
3. Online Safeguarding Policy,	All staff & volunteers,
4. Whistleblowing	All Staff
5. DBS Policy,	All service leads/managers,
6. Volunteer Policy,	All staff who recruit and manage volunteers.
7. Prevent Policy	All staff & volunteers,

Further Information:

1. [Making Safeguarding Personal](#)
2. [Richmond Self Neglect and Hoarding Panel](#)
3. [Hoarding – Clutter scale](#)
4. [Mental Health Capacity Act 2005 - Mind](#)