



## **Safeguarding Adults Policy**

### **2025 - 2026**

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## Statement of Policy

Integrating has a responsibility to prevent and report concerns about the abuse, neglect and ill-treatment of adults who are at risk of being harmed. This works alongside the organisation's responsibility to protect children and young people at risk of or suffering from harm.

There are legal requirements on statutory bodies under the Care Act 2014, and statutory guidance (Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2018) for organisations to do everything they can to recognise and report abuse quickly and appropriately to keep adults safe, and to prevent such abuse from happening in the first place.

Anyone employed by, or who volunteers for, or works on behalf of Integrating, has a role to play in safeguarding and protecting adults.

Everybody at Integrating must:

- know how to recognise potential abuse of adults at risk/vulnerable adults
- know what to do when safeguarding concerns arise
- understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their own behaviour and actions

An adult at risk of abuse can be anyone over the age of eighteen, including members, staff or volunteers. Whilst personal characteristics may make an individual more vulnerable i.e. disability and communication difficulties, it is the situation around an individual which may increase risk or place them at potential risk of harm. Therefore, it is vital to be open to the possibility that any adult may be at risk and that this can be temporary or on-going depending on the support and protective factors around them.

This policy and procedures must be read in conjunction with:

- Integrating's Safeguarding Policy - this policy applies to all staff, tutors, volunteers, Trustees, students on placement (where relevant), associates and partner agencies.
- The Durham Safeguarding Adults Threshold Guidance (*Appendix 3 p.14*)
- Reporting Abuse - [DurhamSafeguardingAdults Home Page - Durham Safeguarding Adults](#) (*Appendix 5 p.16*)

The Durham Safeguarding Adults Threshold Guidance is a document that helps to determine how to address concerns about adult safeguarding in Durham. The guidance can support conversations with Durham's First Contact Team and helps to:

- determine if safeguarding responses are proportionate to the abuse or neglect
- inform the decisions taken whether to raise a safeguarding concern
- determine the type of safeguarding response to take

This guidance does not replace professional judgement or aim to set a rigid threshold for intervention.

## Legal context

Adults at risk of abuse may have additional support needs, meaning that they are more likely to experience abuse, and less able to protect themselves from it. The abuse of adults at risk can have devastating effects on their physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing, as well as on their children or children connected to them. Adults at risk may have been victims or survivors of abuse and harmful experiences in childhood which have impacted upon their confidence, self-worth and resilience and compounded other personal characteristics increasing vulnerability.

Statutory guidance means that Integrating must protect adults at risk. The relevant law and guidance is the **England The Care Act 2014**, which is the primary legislation in England for the support and protection of adults (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>).

This legislation sets out how people's care and support needs should be met and introduces the right to an assessment for anyone, including carers and self-funders, in need of support. The act's "wellbeing principle" spells out a local authority's duty to ensure people's wellbeing is at the centre of all it does with greater emphasis on outcomes and helping people to connect with their local community.

It seeks to ensure that people's eligibility for services will be the same across England. Guidance on safeguarding vulnerable adults, which in England had taken the form of the 'No Secrets' (2000) guidance, has been replaced by statutory guidance issued under the legislation which is the Care and Support Statutory Guidance (revised October 2018): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-supportstatutory-guidance>

This guidance is the adult equivalent of Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education, 2018) for those seeking to support and protect adults at risk.

For more information about the key legislation and government initiatives in relation to the protection of adults at risk go to:

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safeguarding-adults-legislation>

## Terminology

For the purpose of this policy and procedures, the following terms are used:

**Adult at risk:** An adult at risk is 'any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support' (Care Act 2014 [England]).

**Adult at risk of harm:** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) *Personal characteristics* which may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain and/or
- b) *Life circumstances* which may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

**Adult in need of protection:** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics and/or
- b) Life circumstances, and
- c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; and
- d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, them to be harmed

**Vulnerable adults:** a person aged 18 or over who is receiving services of a type listed in paragraph (A) below and in consequence of a condition of a type listed in paragraph (B) below has a disability of a type listed in paragraph (C) below:

(A) The **services** are:

- (a) accommodation and nursing or personal care in a care home
- (b) personal care or nursing or support to live independently in his own home
- (c) any services provided by an independent hospital, independent clinic, independent medical agency or National Health Service body
- (d) social care services; or
- (e) any services provided in an establishment catering for a person with learning difficulties.

(B) The **conditions** are:

- (a) a learning or physical disability
- (b) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
- (c) a reduction in physical or mental capacity.

(C) The **disabilities** are:

- (a) a dependency upon others in the performance of, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of, basic physical functions
- (b) severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others; or

(c) impairment in a person's ability to protect himself from assault, abuse or neglect.

**Safeguarding:** This describes the activity that is undertaken to protect adults at risk from abuse, harm, ill-treatment and neglect.

**Abuse:** This is the ill-treatment or abuse of an adult at risk. A person may abuse or neglect an adult at risk by inflicting harm or by knowingly failing to act to prevent harm. Adults can be abused in a family, at a community fundraising event, in any type of institution/organisation, by those known to them or others, for example by those responsible for organising, participating or providing support or care.

**Prevention:** This is how we seek to reduce the abuse of adults at risk occurring in the first place. This includes training, guidance and support for employees and volunteers, as well as for those receiving services.

**Categories of Abuse:** See Appendix 1.

## Key Principles

Integrating's approach to safeguarding adults at risk is based on the following principles:

- All adults have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or personal characteristics which may indicate additional vulnerabilities
- The best interests of the child (where relevant) are paramount in all considerations about the safeguarding and protection of adults at risk
- Where concerns are identified, the key principles of working with adults at risk embedded in the Care Act 2014, will inform Integrating's approach to interventions at all times
- Where a concern is identified, we will communicate very clearly what we will be doing to safeguard the adult at risk, unless to do so would in any way increase risk to them. A record of concern, actions and outcomes is added to the central Safeguarding Log. Capacity will be assumed unless there is reason to believe that the person cannot understand (see section '**Capacity and Consent**')
- Where we are working together with adults at risk, their carers', family members and other agencies, it is essential to recognise that, in some circumstances, it will not be appropriate to engage with carers or family members in order to protect the adult at risk
- Concerns or allegations that Integrating staff or volunteers have abused or neglected adults will be taken very seriously and managed sensitively and fairly in accordance with other policies, relevant legislation and local procedures.

We deliver this policy by:

- providing effective leadership and management for staff and volunteers through induction, supervision, support and training
- ensuring effective and robust safeguarding and protection practices by having clear policies, procedures, practice standards and guidance in place
- enabling staff to exercise professional judgements in seeking to act in the best interests of, and outcomes for, the adult at risk
- safe recruitment and employment practices to ensure that robust recruitment, selection, induction and supervision processes are in place for all those who work for and with Integrating.

## **How to comply**

### **Capacity and Consent**

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides the legal framework for making decisions on behalf of people who lack the mental capacity to make decisions themselves. Everyone working with and/or caring for an adult who may lack capacity to make specific decisions must comply with this Act when making decisions or acting for that person, when the person lacks the capacity to make a particular decision for themselves.

Integrating staff and volunteers should always seek to ensure that members are respectfully consulted in relation to participation in activities and/or sharing of information about them. A young person aged 16 or older is presumed in law to have capacity to consent, unless there is evidence to the contrary.

It is important to be aware of cognitive capacity which can increase the vulnerability of people where they have a reduced ability to make informed decisions in the moment. This may be transient (e.g. due to fear, shock, injury, illness) or long term (e.g. due to learning differences, disability, mental health issues)

Capacity to consent is not simply based on age, especially where learning and communication difficulties and disabilities are identified. Consideration should always be given to a person's capacity to understand the consequences of giving or withholding their consent. They should not be treated as unable to make a decision until all practicable steps to help them have been taken.

Integrating staff and volunteers should always seek to explain the issues using their preferred mode of communication and language. If there is any uncertainty around members' capacity to consent, seek advice from Team Leader or Project Manager.

The following criteria should be considered when assessing whether a person has sufficient understanding at any time to consent, or to refuse consent, to sharing of information about them or participating in specific activities:

- Can the person understand the question being asked of them?
- Are they taking an active part in the discussion?
- Can they rephrase the question in their own words?
- How would they explain it to someone else?

- Do they have a reasonable understanding of what the risks or benefits of giving their consent or saying no?
- What do they say they think would happen if they agree the action being suggested?
- Can they appreciate and consider the alternatives, weighing up one aspect against another and express a clear and consistent personal view?  
Encourage them to say out loud their view of the pros and cons. You could check these views later or at a later contact with them.

In an emergency, i.e. if the staff member or volunteer feels that someone is in imminent danger and needs either police or medical attention, they must contact the relevant emergency services. They must work in conjunction with the Team Leader/Senior Support Worker and notify the Project Manager without delay.

### **Staff and volunteers outside of their working or volunteering role**

When staff, volunteers or tutors are outside of their working or volunteering role for Integrating, they may identify safeguarding concerns in their own family or networks, community, neighbourhood or through activities in which they participate. There is an expectation to act appropriately on any safeguarding concerns they encounter about an adult at risk. Staff and volunteers should share any safeguarding concerns with the local authority adult social care service (or equivalent), or the police in the case of an emergency. It should never be an option to do nothing where there are concerns about an individual who may be at risk of harm.

### **Complaints**

At Integrating, we are committed to delivering a quality service to all our members. We aim to take effective action to ensure that standards are upheld. We believe that an effective complaints procedure can contribute to the quality and effectiveness of our service.

Please refer to the separate **Complaints Policy** for further information.

### **Health and Safety**

Integrating's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures are contained in a separate Policy Document maintained at the charity's office. This is open for inspection on request by anyone with a legitimate interest.

## Training

Integrating ensures mandatory safeguarding training is undertaken on induction as well as refresher training every 2 years.

| Job Role              | Training                                                         | Date of last training |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Project Manager/DSL   | 1. Safeguarding Adults – Managing the Concern                    | 2023                  |
|                       | 2. Prevent Duty Awareness                                        | 2024                  |
| Senior Support Worker | 1. Safeguarding Adults Level 1<br>2. Safeguarding Adults level 2 | On induction          |

## Contact Details

|                                                      |              |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding activity</b> |              |
| Jayne Oliver                                         | 07815 053404 |
| <b>Chairperson of Board of Trustees</b>              |              |
| Richard Taylor                                       | 07791 800324 |
| <b>Project Manager</b>                               |              |
| David Gaudie                                         | 07889 575814 |

## Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees every two years or when significant changes occur internally or externally, or when circumstances require.

## Approval

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Reviewed: 01.12.25 – no amendments

## Appendix 1: Categories of Adult Abuse Reference: Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2018)

### What constitutes abuse and neglect?

This section considers the different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and the different circumstances in which they may take place. This is an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Organisations and individuals should not limit their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

Exploitation and abuse of power are common themes in the following list of the types of abuse and neglect.

#### Physical abuse including:

- assault
- hitting
- slapping
- pushing
- misuse of medication
- restraint
- inappropriate physical sanctions

#### Domestic violence including:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional abuse
- honour-based violence

The cross-government definition of **domestic violence and abuse** is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the Serious Crime Act 2015. The offence will impose a maximum 5 years' imprisonment, a fine or both. The offence closes a gap in the law around patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour during a relationship between intimate partners, former partners who still live together, or family members, sending a clear message that it is wrong to violate the trust of those closest to you, providing better protection to victims experiencing continuous abuse and allowing for earlier identification, intervention and prevention.

**Sexual abuse** including:

- rape
- indecent exposure
- sexual harassment
- inappropriate looking or touching
- sexual teasing or innuendo
- sexual photography
- subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts
- indecent exposure
- sexual assault
- sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting

**Psychological abuse** including:

- emotional abuse
- threats of harm or abandonment
- deprivation of contact
- humiliation
- blaming
- controlling
- intimidation
- coercion
- harassment
- verbal abuse
- cyber bullying
- isolation
- unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks

**Financial or material abuse** including:

- theft
- fraud
- internet scamming
- coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

Financial abuse is the main form of abuse investigated by the Office of the Public Guardian amongst adults at risk. Financial recorded abuse can occur in isolation, but as research has shown, where there are other forms of abuse, there is likely to be financial abuse occurring. Although this is not always the case, everyone should also be aware of this possibility. Potential indicators of financial abuse include:

- change in living conditions
- lack of heating, clothing or food
- inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money

- unexplained withdrawals from an account
- unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents
- the recent addition of authorised signers on a client or donor's signature card
- sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents

**Modern slavery** encompasses:

- slavery
- human trafficking
- forced labour and domestic servitude
- traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment

**Discriminatory abuse** including forms of:

- harassment
- slurs or similar treatment: because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation and/or religion

**Organisational abuse**

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home.

This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice due to the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Neglect and acts of omission** including:

- ignoring medical
- emotional or physical care needs
- failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services
- the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

**Self-neglect**

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and of what we now describe as organisational abuse. In

order to see these patterns, it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

Patterns of abuse vary and include:

- serial abuse, in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse
- long-term abuse, in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse
- opportunistic abuse, such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around

Note: This is not an exhaustive list.

# Policy Under Review

## **Appendix 2**

Care and Support Statutory Guidance (Re-issued 2018) Key principles when working with Adults at Risk

### **Empowerment**

People being 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.

### **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 neglect and abuse.

### **Accountability**

Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Policy Under  
Review

See below for illustration only.

of 2

**Risk Threshold Tool**

For your notes:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**David Case Direct**  
03000 25 79 79

David Case Direct is open from 8.00am - 5.00pm  
Monday to Thursday and 8.30am - 4.00pm Friday

An out of hours EMERGENCY service is also available on this number.

Telephone: 03000 25 79 79  
Text message: 07766 037280  
Email: [info@riskthreshold.org.uk](mailto:info@riskthreshold.org.uk)

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| Section                        | Definition                                                                                                                          | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------|------|-----------|
| 1. Vulnerability of the person | How vulnerable is the person to harm? Consider the person's age, health, social circumstances, and any previous experience of harm. | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
| 2. Nature of the risk          | What is the nature of the risk? Consider the type of harm, the likelihood of it occurring, and the potential consequences.          | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
| 3. Impact of the risk          | What is the impact of the risk? Consider the physical, emotional, and financial consequences.                                       | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
| 4. Control of the risk         | What is the control of the risk? Consider the measures in place to prevent or reduce the risk.                                      | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
| 5. Support of the person       | What is the support of the person? Consider the person's access to services, resources, and support networks.                       | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
| 6. Risk of escalation          | What is the risk of escalation? Consider the potential for the risk to worsen or spread.                                            | Low | Medium | High | Very High |
| 7. Overall risk                | What is the overall risk? Consider the combined effect of all the factors above.                                                    | Low | Medium | High | Very High |

## Appendix 4

What to do if see, hear, or suspect that an adult with care and support needs is being harmed, abused or neglected, you must report what you know.

***If the person is in immediate danger call 999 straight away.***

- Concerned about an adult? Call [Social Care Direct](#) 24 hours a day on 03000 267 979 - a trained officer will listen carefully to your concerns, give advice, and accept a safeguarding adults report if necessary, even if you want to remain anonymous.
- Contact the police on 101 if you have concerns that someone is a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking.
- If you are a patient or visitor to a hospital or other health facility, immediately report your concerns to a member of staff.
- Concerned about a child including a young person aged 16 or 17 years of age? Please visit [Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership - Concerned about a child](#).

### **Please note**

- In County Durham, Social Care Direct does not have a safeguarding adults referral form - it is a telephone reporting system.
- If calling from a social care setting, please use the [Checklist for Providers Dealing with a Safeguarding Concern \(PDF, 116 KB\)](#) which is series of prompts and questions.

## Appendix 5

### Useful contacts

- Social Care Direct Tel: 03000 26 79 79
- Domestic abuse services - Harbour. Tel: 03000 20 25 25  
[www.myharbour.org.uk](http://www.myharbour.org.uk)
- Hate crime - [www.durham.gov.uk/hatecrime](http://www.durham.gov.uk/hatecrime)
- Modern slavery - 0800 121 700 [www.modernslavery.co.uk](http://www.modernslavery.co.uk)

# Policy Under Review