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Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Reviewed: November 23

Next Review date: November 24

Signed: *T. Krausz*

Position: Administrator

Date: 14/11/23

1178534

Registered Charity Number

There are some cases that require an urgent response

- **If you suspect a serious criminal act has taken place, telephone 999.** Tell them if you think it might be adult abuse.
- If the individual is injured seek immediate medical treatment. Tell the ambulance personnel or A&E staff that this is a potential adult abuse situation.
- Situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be discussed with the Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead and after sorting the initial response they would be contacted

Safeguarding leads;

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Saul Mark Sommer (Director) | Tel: 0191 477 1431 ext 7 |
| Alex Shepherd (Director) | Tel: 07906344777 |

Hours of operation to reach the above number are 9.30am-1pm.

For out of hours: 07952305373

1) Policy Statement

The policy exists to ensure that Regal Respite implements appropriate arrangements, systems and procedures to ensure that the organisation has the right skills, means and resources to protect adults. It should be read and considered in conjunction with the Health & Safety Policy, Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct, Data Protection Policy and Complaints Policy.

The purpose of Regal Respite is to alleviate stress and promote stability and emotional health and wellbeing of families and individuals going through challenges. We do this by providing respite opportunities, getaways and retreats for those being affected. We also provide events and health-promotion activities. We work with families with children that are challenged by illness, poverty, financial and other vulnerabilities. Local Rabbis and Doctors refer clients to us. This puts Regal Respite in a position to pick up any concerns and to step in and safeguard vulnerable adults.

Regal Respite recognises that a Vulnerable Adult is an Adult who is at risk of abuse and unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

2) What is Adult Safeguarding and Why Does it Matter

“Safeguarding means 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, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Organisations should always promote the adult’s wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professionals and other staff should not be advocating “safety” measures that do not take account of individual well-being, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act” (Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2014).

Vulnerable adults may be involved with Regal Respite, either as staff, volunteers or end service users. In promoting this policy, Regal Respite is keen to take reasonable steps to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect;
- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of vulnerable people;
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned;
- Keep vulnerable adults who have contact with Regal Respite staff or volunteers safe from harm;
- Support and protect the interests of staff and volunteers who have contact with, or access to adults who may be vulnerable;
- Safeguard vulnerable adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live;
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help staff and volunteers 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;
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements;

3) Definition of a Vulnerable Adult

An adult is anyone over 18 years of age.

The “Care and Support Statutory Guidance” (Department of Health, 2014) explains that safeguarding duties apply to an adult who

“Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and; is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and 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.”

Regal Respite recognises that some members of our community are potentially more vulnerable and that we have a general duty to protect and support vulnerable people in the community.

These include:

- Adults with physical or learning disabilities or mental health problems;
- Adults with hearing or visual disabilities;
- Adults at risk of self-harm or harming others;
- Older people;
- Adults with drug or alcohol problems;
- Adults at risk of cyber bullying or digital technology misuse;
- Vulnerable adults who are unable to manage their lives without some intervention.

We also recognise that care leavers may be vulnerable adults and may need support during the transition from children’s to adult’s services and beyond.

Regal Respite recognises that abuse can happen to any adult whether vulnerable or not.

4) Definition of Abuse

Unfortunately, there are many forms of abuse that vulnerable adults may suffer.

The types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse including:** Bodily assaults resulting in injuries e.g. hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions; Medical/healthcare maltreatment.
- **Domestic Violence:** Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Sexual abuse including:** Rape, incest, indecent exposure, sexual assault; sexual harassment or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting; inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography; sexual abuse might also include exposure to pornographic materials,
- being made to witness sexual acts and encompasses sexual harassment and non-contact abuse
- **Psychological/emotional including:** Threats of harm or abandonment, controlling, intimidation, blaming coercion and harassment, verbal abuse, deprivation of contact, enforced isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal from services or supportive networks; humiliation; bullying including cyberbullying, shouting, and swearing.
- **Neglect and acts of omission including:** Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services; withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Financial or material 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, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Discrimination Including:** Forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Modern slavery:** Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **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 because of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **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.

This list is not exhaustive and safeguarding action may be needed for any other issue which may arise and pose a threat to vulnerable adults, their families, friends, or the general public.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Our staff and volunteers will 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 abusing 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; or
- opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

5) Who does this apply to?

This safeguarding adult policy and procedures applies to all individuals involved in Regal Respite, including board members, staff, volunteers and members/service users

6) What to look out for

Signs of abuse may include multiple bruising or finger marks, have injuries they cannot give a good reason for, show health deterioration for no apparent reason, have sudden weight loss/gain, be withdrawn or display mood changes, be inappropriately or inadequately clothed. They may also be unwilling to be alone with a particular carer or person, have an unexplained shortage of money, be violent or use prejudiced language or behaviour, and they might be bullied or harassed.

7) What you should do

Ensure safe environments through fully inclusive and integrated practices. Act if you suspect a vulnerable person is being abused. Early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response where there are emerging concerns. Talk to the person, listen carefully but let them know you have to report this information. Telephone one of the contact numbers below – even if you are not sure. **Do not ignore or promise to keep it secret or put it off.**

If it is appropriate and there is consent from the individual, or there is a good reason to override consent, such as risk to others, a referral will be made to Community Health and Social Care Direct team. If the individual experiencing abuse does not have mental capacity to consent to a referral, a best interest decision will be made on their behalf.

8) Promoting Adult Safeguarding within Regal Respite

8.1 The following six principles inform the ways in which our staff and volunteers work with vulnerable adults (Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2014). They underpin all adult safeguarding work:

- 8.1.1 Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- 8.1.2 Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- 8.1.3 Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- 8.1.4 Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- 8.1.5 Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with the community. The wider community has a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- 8.1.6 Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

8.2 Safe Recruitment & Selection

Our policies and procedures which cover all potential Trustees, paid staff and volunteers ensure that all potential new staff, volunteers and trustees;

- **Complete an application form or a letter of application.** This includes address, evidence of relevant qualifications, paid work and voluntary work experience and all criminal convictions.
- **Provide two pieces of identification which confirm both identity and address.**
- **Undergo an interview** (formal or informal) involving at least two interviewers.
- **Provide at least two references** which are followed up before a post is offered. One reference should be from the last employer or an organization that has knowledge of the applicant's work.
- If undertaking a regulatory activity Consent **to a Disclosure and Barring Service check** (formally CRB check) and to sign up to the update service and agree to Regal Respite requesting an annual update.

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- Understands that a person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work or volunteer or try to work or volunteer with these groups.
- Understands that an organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.
- Understands that if our organisation or any partners dismiss a member of staff or volunteer because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult or would have done so if they had not left, we must make referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

[About - Disclosure and Barring Service - Inside Government - GOV.UK](#)

8.3 Management & Support of Paid Staff & Volunteers

Regal Respite has the following items in place for managing their staff and volunteers:

- Staff and volunteers are provided with a job description (paid staff) or a role profile (volunteers) outlining their main responsibilities. This includes a requirement to comply with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Code of Conduct.
- Safeguarding information will be shared with all paid staff and volunteers during the induction period alongside the organisation's other policies and procedures.
- All paid staff and volunteers are given regular supervision or support sessions.
- Trustees, paid staff and volunteers attend regular ongoing safeguarding training where relevant to their role.

8.4 Code of Conduct

We have a Code of Conduct in place for

- **Trustees**
- **Staff and volunteers**

8.5 Training

Regal Respite will promote a culture of awareness around safeguarding vulnerable adults and related issues, to its Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, broader membership and services users.

Trustees, Staff and Volunteers will be offered Adult Safeguarding training where appropriate to their role.

Regal Respite will also ensure that there is awareness within their staff team of issues that impact on Adult Safeguarding including:

- Links to Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Domestic Abuse
- Institutional Abuse
- Honor Based Violence and Forced Marriage
- Adult Exploitation- Slavery Trafficking

9) Reporting procedures

The following procedure refers to abuse or suspicion of abuse of a vulnerable adult that staff and volunteers become aware of during their work with Regal Respite. Any member of staff or volunteer who becomes aware that a vulnerable adult is, or is at risk of, being abused should raise the matter immediately with their supervisor /or with the designated safeguarding lead. A decision will need to be made in regard to whether the person is a vulnerable adult and whether they are at risk of abuse/experiencing abuse. If it is a case of abuse towards a vulnerable adult, a decision will be made about what action will need to be taken and how to inform the (vulnerable) adult.

Regal Respite will

- Inform the adult of the action we propose to take.
- Seek their agreement for any referral.
- Confidentiality may be broken in a situation where someone is at risk
- Ensure that they are kept informed about what will happen next, so they can be reassured about what to expect.
- Endeavour to ensure that they are safe and supported before proceeding with any other action.
- Inform the adult if Regal Respite is planning to seek advice from or report concerns to an external agency.

In most situations, there will not be an immediate threat and the decision about protecting the vulnerable person will be taken in consultation with themselves and/or Social Services.

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adult Board has overall responsibility for strategy, policy, engagement and statutory links as part of the functions of keeping vulnerable adults safe.

You can raise a safeguarding concern through Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you have a safeguarding adults query you can speak to the Safeguarding Adults duty worker on 0191 433 2222. This number is for safeguarding queries only, not safeguarding referrals. Safeguarding Adults Duty operates between 9.00 am and 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday.

You can also raise a Safeguarding Adults concern on line on the Gateshead Safeguarding Adults website.

For non-emergencies you can call Northumbria Police on 101

10) Recording

A written record must be kept pertaining to any concern regarding a vulnerable adult. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken.

The recordings must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially filed.

11) Designated Safeguarding Leads

| Name | Contact Details |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Saul Mark Sommer (Director) | 0191 477 1431 ext 7 saul@regalrespite.co.uk |
| Alex Shepherd (Director) | 07906 344 777 alex@regalrespite.co.uk |

Please note the above numbers are for 9.30am-1pm. For out of hours, call 07952305373.

12) Data Protection compliance

- Regal Respite has appropriate Data Protection and Privacy policies compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and has reviewed relevant areas of data processing of personal data.
- We only hold personal data for as long as necessary, have reviewed/noted reasons for storing particular data and have a Data Retention policy and procedures for archiving and anonymisation of personal data.
- information that is recorded will be kept secure.
- We will review any requests from data subjects to access their personal data, including requests to have their data erased in line with the GDPR (individuals may not always be able exercise their right to data erasure if such data is needed for legal proceeding i.e. in cases of misconduct or dismissal for abuse or other offences).
- We will seek consent, whenever relevant and legally required to do so, for accessing and processing personal data. We will make sure that, when consent is needed, the reasons for data being collected will be clearly explained to individuals alongside their rights to data protection.

- All staff and volunteers processing personal data will be briefed on the Data Protection compliance. They will also be trained on cases when other legislation overrides data protection.

- The best interests of vulnerable adults come first.
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any vulnerable adult, they should continue to act on it immediately.
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times.
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not gain access to vulnerable adults.
- Vulnerable adults should continue to be protected when they are online.
- Measures in line with government guidelines such as social distancing and hygiene protocols should be religiously applied to protect the workforce, which will in turn protect vulnerable adults they may come into contact with during the course of their work. These measures will be similarly applied to vulnerable adults when attending activities in settings.

RAISING AWARENESS AND REPORTING CONCERNS

Any concerns about vulnerable adults should be raised with Designated Safeguarding Leads, in line with protocols and/or addendums to Safeguarding policies, in the usual way at Regal Respite. It is still vitally important that all staff and volunteers continue to flag and act on any concerns they have about a vulnerable adult immediately.

RECRUITING NEW STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers applying to work, or volunteer are safe to work with vulnerable adults. We continue to follow Safer Recruitment procedures which can be supplemented with remote meetings.

In urgent cases, verification of scanned proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check will be accepted, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents (in line with revised guidance from the DBS). New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work.

SAFEGUARDING INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Regal Respite provides safeguarding training for staff and volunteers at a level appropriate to their work in line with our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy. Staff and volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Addendum as well as understanding how to contact Designated Safeguarding Leads or deputies should they have any concerns.

Existing staff will be briefed on the Addendum to the Safeguarding Policy with which they should familiarise themselves and use as part of operating a safe culture through the organisation.

REGAL RESPITE'S SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Chief Executive/Responsible Officer S M Sommer

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead A Shepherd

STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033, or on the Gateshead Safeguarding Adults website.

This policy has been drawn up following national and local guidance on legislation, policy and guidance.

Safeguarding Adults in all home nations is compliant with United Nations directives on the rights of disabled people and commitments to the rights of older people. It is covered by:

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Data Protection Act 2018

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

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Including, but not limited to, -

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Disclosure and Barring Service 2013

The Care Act 2014

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021