

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

# Policy Statement

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It is fundamental to high-quality health and social care. It is important to understand that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, we all have a role to play in preventing abuse.

Safeguarding is work that helps vulnerable adults to keep their independence, wellbeing, and choice and to live a life free from abuse, including neglect.

# Definition of Vulnerable Adult

CRASAC adopts the NHS definition of vulnerable adult, which is as any adult (person over the age of 18) unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation.

Many factors can influence adult vulnerability, experiences of vulnerability in childhood may negatively impact adults in later life – particularly if someone has fewer protective factors in place, such as a supportive family or a stable household income.

Being vulnerable is defined as in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect.

# Type of Abuse

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

* **Physical:** This includes hitting, slapping, kicking, female genital mutilation, misuse of medication, restraint and force feeding.
* **Domestic violence:** including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.
* **Financial or material:** This includes theft, fraud or using a person's money, possessions or property without consent.
* **Psychological/emotional:** This includes threats of harm or abandonment, isolation, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, threats or bribes.
* **Sexual:** This includes sexual assault, rape or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, could not consent, or was pressurised into consenting.
* **Neglect or acts of omission:** A failure to provide appropriate care (such as food, clothing, medication, heating, cleanliness, hygiene) and denying religious or cultural needs.
* **Discriminatory abuse:** This includes racism, sexism, ageism and discrimination based on a person's disability or sexual orientation. Some abuse in this category might also be classed as a hate crime.
* **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.
* **Self-neglect**: this covers a wide range of behaviour around neglecting to care for personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

CRASAC supports adult clients (and their carers/partners/supporters) who have experienced sexual violence at any time during their lives. In supporting this vulnerable section of the community, CRASAC aims to facilitate the best possible practice in preventing as well as intervening in situations as above.

CRASAC has a separate policy for children and young people aged 18 and under or 21 and under if they have been a looked after child. *[NB this is the term used by NSPCC* [*https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/children-and-families-at-risk/looked-after-children*](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/children-and-families-at-risk/looked-after-children)*]*

There may be situations when we need to safeguard adults not defined as ‘vulnerable adults’, for example if they are a risk to themselves or others.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for all those working at CRASAC, including volunteers. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

As part of our safeguarding policy CRASAC will promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of service users and ensure that:

* Service users are aware of the Safeguarding policy
* Service users will be listened to
* Service users are involved in decision-making and in the investigation of abuse (only if it is safe to do so)
* Other professionals are supported in the prevention, assessment, and investigation of abuse
* Recruitment and Selection processes incorporate Safeguarding processes (See Recruitment and Selection Policy, and DBS Policy)
* Everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding, through Induction, line management, and ongoing training
* Everyone is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify, and respond to safeguarding concerns through Induction, initial Safeguarding training, and refresher training every 3 years
* A Safeguarding Lead is always available to staff, and operate an ‘open door’ policy
* Appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse, and support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
* Confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
* Robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation

# Training

All staff and volunteers will receive Safeguarding training as part of their induction process. In addition, for volunteers, safeguarding training is included within their Volunteer Training course.

Staff will be required to attend Safeguarding training during their first six months with CRASAC, and thereafter attend a refresher course every three years.

# Safeguarding Leads

The overall Safeguarding Lead for CRASAC is the Chief Executive Officer. There are also named Safeguarding Leads across the Management team to support effective safeguarding.

Safeguarding Leads operate an ‘open door’ policy and are available at any time to discuss Safeguarding concerns. If a Safeguarding Lead is not physically present on the premises, phone numbers and whereabouts are provided to workers in order that contact can be made should the need arise.

Each Safeguarding Lead is able to respond to any Safeguarding concern, regardless of the service the concern is raised in. Safeguarding Leads will react calmly, and with consideration, to any concern raised.

It is the Safeguarding Lead’s responsibility to make a decision regarding progress of the concern raised, to ensure relevant documentation is completed, and agreed actions are taken.

Safeguarding Leads meet on a regular basis to monitor safeguarding systems, oversee concerns and share best practice.

# Reporting Procedure

All Safeguarding concerns will be reported immediately to a Safeguarding Lead, as per the Safeguarding Flowchart (appendix one).

Action following this will be in line with Safeguarding Principles, and follow the path laid out in the Safeguarding Flowchart. Contact numbers of the relevant agencies are on the Flowchart for ease of reference.

# Raising a Concern

If workers identify a safeguarding concern, the first step must be to discuss this with a Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Lead will listen, ascertain the salient facts, discuss the workers’ concern, and approve or outline a course of action. Discussion will be focused on facts, and how to move forward. Appropriate action will be then taken, usually by the worker raising the concern, using the steps agreed with the Safeguarding Lead, and contact details outlined in the Safeguarding Flowchart.

# Immediate Harm

If a concern of immediate harm is raised, the worker must immediately inform a Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure appropriate action is taken, including calling 999 if necessary. If a Safeguarding Lead is not immediately available, the worker should take responsibility for ensuring the appropriate immediate action is taken, following the Safeguarding Flowchart.

# Raising a Concern about a member of CRASAC

When clients are using CRASAC’s services they are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation simply because they are reliant on the help and support given by others. Whilst we believe staff & volunteers employed by CRASAC are trustworthy, everyone must be vigilant in watching for signs of abuse and taking swift action to prevent or stop it.

If a safeguarding concern is raised about a member of CRASAC, the immediate concern must be dealt with in line with this policy. Once this is dealt with, if the concern is regarding a member of staff, the Disciplinary Policy must be invoked. If the concern is regarding a volunteer, they must be suspended immediately pending an investigation.

# Sharing Information

Sharing Information will be done in line with English Law, CRASAC’s Confidentiality Policy, and with regard to disclosure forms signed by the client.

# Recording Concerns

Once concerns have been raised by workers with a Safeguarding Lead, this must be recorded on the safeguarding section on the LUNA database. Recording of the safeguarding should follow the guidance on the recording flowchart (appendix two). These must be reviewed and kept up to date. The Safeguarding log is reviewed weekly by a Safeguarding Lead. Non-frontline staff (e.g. Business Team should follow the guidance on the Admin recording flowchart (appendix three)

Once the Safeguarding Lead and the worker are confident that the risk has been held by the appropriate statutory organisation, it can be closed on the safeguarding log and monitored in ongoing work which is to be recorded in the client notes on the Crasac database. Should a further risk arise that is not considered ‘held’ by statutory services, a new safeguarding concern can be raised and recorded on the safeguarding log, and the same process followed.

# Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed at least every three years, in line with good practice guidelines, or sooner if there are any relevant changes to legislation or good practice guidelines.

# Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

* Confidentiality Policy
* Data Protection, Access to Files, and Confidentiality Policy
* DBS Policy
* Disciplinary Policy
* Induction Process
* Recruitment & Selection Policy
* Safeguarding Children Policy
* Training and Development Policy

Adopted by the Board of Trustees in: July 2022

Next Review Date: July 2025

# Appendix One: Flowchart

[Internal document]

# Appendix Two: Recording Guidance

[Internal document]

# Appendix Three: Admin Process Map

[Internal document]