West Birmingham Christadelphian Ecclesia

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

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Spring 2017

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Principles and practice

Members of West Birmingham Christadelphian Ecclesia recognise that as an expression of our love of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ we should show love to all (Matthew 22: 37-39, Galatians 6:10) and treat others as we would wish to be treated (Matthew 7: 12).
We are aware that in seeking to put these principles into practice we should take particular care when dealing with children (see separate Safeguarding Children Policy) and vulnerable adults.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means making arrangements or taking precautions intended to protect people from abuse, including significant harm or exploitation.

Who are vulnerable adults?

A vulnerable adult is anyone aged 18 or over who is in a vulnerable situation or relationship. This includes people who are frail, have a learning disability, a physical disability, problems with eyesight or hearing or mental health issues and who cannot care for themselves or take steps to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation. They may have difficulty making their wishes or feelings known. They may need or already receive community care services such as a care package or support worker or they may be heavily dependent on one or more family members or friends.

What is abuse?

Abuse may be physical, emotional or sexual or it may involve not looking after someone properly, taking money or property without informed consent, misusing it or committing fraud. It may include poor care practices, bullying or humiliating, or not allowing contact with family or friends. It often involves criminal acts. Abuse can be a single act or it may continue over time and may take many different forms. It can be unintentional or deliberate but in all cases it will result in harm to the victim that affects their wellbeing or security. Individuals may suffer more than one kind of abuse.

Who might abuse a vulnerable adult?
An abuser may be:

- A partner, family member, friend or neighbour.
- A carer, volunteer, staff member or another service user.
- A stranger.

Where could abuse happen?
Abuse could happen anywhere and at any time including:

- In the victim's own home or someone else's.
- In a day centre, care home or hospital.
- At work or in a college or school.
- In a public place, including any ecclesial or other meeting room.

What increases the risk of abuse?
Anyone can be at risk of abuse but the majority of people are not at risk all of the time.
The risk of abuse increases when:

- Someone is isolated.
- They depend on others for food or personal care.
- They are suffering from an illness or recovering.
- They are not mentally capable of making decisions for themselves.
- They have suffered previous abuse.

How can I help a vulnerable adult but reduce the risk of being accused of abuse?
Always be sensitive to their needs and treat them courteously.
Unless they are your close friend or family member or they rely on you for personal or professional care, try to have someone else with you when spending time with them, especially for long periods.
If they need help with financial matters or dealing with property try to get their agreement to involve someone else such as a member of their family or a member of staff at their bank, building society or solicitor's office.

What should I do if I think a vulnerable adult is being abused?

In an **emergency** or if someone is in **immediate danger** call **999.**
To report a crime (non-emergency) call **101** (West Midlands Police)

Otherwise, speak to the **D**esignated **S**afeguarding **L**ead:
Name (DSL at date of issue of this leaflet: Spring 2017).

If the DSL is not available and you need to get advice or report adult abuse quickly, check the permanent address of the vulnerable adult and contact the safeguarding organisation that covers that address:

BIRMINGHAM (including addresses in Edgbaston, Harborne, Quinton, Northfield etc.)
Office hours **0121 303 1234 (option 2)**
Outside normal office hours **0121 675 4806**
Email: acap@birmingham.gov.uk

DUDLEY (including addresses in Halesowen etc.)
01384 818 543 or **0300 555 0055**
Email: accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk

SANDWELL (including addresses in Warley etc.)
Mon.–Thurs. 9am-5.30pm : Fri. 9am-5pm: **0121 569 2266 (option 4)**
Outside those hours: **0121 569 2355**.
Email: secure_enquiry@sandwellgcsx.gov.uk

WORCESTERSHIRE (including addresses in Bromsgrove, Redditch etc.)
01905 768 053
Email: adultteam@worcestershire.gov.uk

Local Authority contact details for vulnerable adults living in any other Local Authority area can be found via the relevant website.