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| Doc Number: 4-04a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | RB - Head of Mental Health and Housing Support /<br>AB Head of Learning Disability Services | Last Full Review: March 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Tick one of the below for review/changes made :</b><br><b>Full review and changes made</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>(add changes summary to table below)<br><br><b>Full review, no changes made</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br><br><b>Changes made but no full review</b> <input type="checkbox"/><br>(add changes summary to table below) |                                                                                             | <b>Reviewer / Editor:</b> RB – Head of Mental Health & Housing Support/AB – Head of Learning Disability Services<br><br><b>Changes Approved By:</b> RB – Head of Mental Health & Housing Support/AB – Head of Learning Disability Services<br><br><b>Reviewed and edited in-line with the Beacon?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

## Safeguarding Adults Policy

### Document Change Details

| Date         | Summary of Changes Made                                                                                                                 |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jan 2024     | All P&Ps revert to version 01 as approval process & version control moved to Sharepoint. Version number no longer shown on the document |
| January 2025 | Responsibilities and job titles updated. Wording updated in line with the Beacon and content fully reviewed.                            |
| 28/03/2025   | Inclusion of roles and responsibilities in accordance with Service Delivery Model<br>Formatting<br>Change of 'staff' to 'colleague/s'   |

## 1.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>C-Suite</b>                       | Overall accountability for the implementation of organisational policies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Operational Performance Group</b> | Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring the organisation has appropriate policies, procedures, standard operating procedures (SOP) and guidelines in place for the safe and effective running of the business</li><li>• Ensuring policies, procedures, SOPs and guidelines remain in date and holding owners to account where this is not the case</li><li>• Overseeing the work of the Policies Group</li></ul> |
| <b>Policies Group</b>                | Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewing new, or major revisions to policies and procedures</li><li>• Ensuring the content is workable and proportionate</li><li>• Supporting the author in implementation and communication</li><li>• Ensuring policies and procedures align to the Beacon</li></ul>                                                                                                            |

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

We believe that everyone has the right to live in safety. We recognise the negative and potentially long-lasting impact abuse and neglect can have on individuals. A key part of our role is working to help ensure our clients and tenants are safe – particularly those unable to protect themselves from neglect or abuse. We also have a responsibility to people who are not our clients or tenants if we become concerned that they are, or could be, at risk of abuse or neglect and are unable to protect themselves. We work in partnership with other agencies to help prevent abuse and neglect, raise concerns and make safeguarding work as effectively as possible.

- **Safeguarding is everyone's business**

Everyone working at Southdown, whether a member of colleague, volunteer or Board Member, has a responsibility in relation to safeguarding, and this policy outlines those responsibilities.

- **What is safeguarding?**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety - free from abuse, violence and neglect. The Care Act Statutory Guidance also says:

“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 policy is based upon the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure issued in April 2015 to link with new requirements under the Care Act 2014. The Sussex guidelines are updated on a regular basis. Colleague should also make reference to the on-line updates available at: <http://sussexsafeguardingadults.procedures.org.uk>

Statutory safeguarding duties, as detailed in the Care Act 2014, apply to adults who meet the following three key tests:

- An adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not any of those needs are being met); and
- The adult may be experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of their care and support needs, the adult is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

**The C-Suite** have Overall accountability for the implementation of Safeguarding policies

**The Operational Performance Group** is responsible for:

- ensuring we follow relevant national guidance and standards for safeguarding
- promoting a positive safeguarding culture by ensuring there are procedures for safeguarding, safer colleague recruitment and whistle blowing.
- ensuring that we have the right skills, training and support to meet our safeguarding duties
- ensuring that safeguarding is included in strategic and operational plans and structures
- ensuring policy and strategy are implemented and audited.
- scrutinising our safeguarding performance and provide assurance to the Board.

**The Safeguarding Strategy Group** is responsible for:

- reviewing safeguarding performance, serious cases, trends and issues in practice and training compliance
- tracking and respond to national and local policies
- identifying themes in practice that need addressing
- ensuring colleagues have the right level of safeguarding knowledge and skill
- reviewing safeguarding reporting systems and ensuring they are fit for purpose.
- providing the Executive team and the Board with assurance that they are monitoring risk and maintaining best practice and compliance.

### **Senior Managers:**

- ensure safeguarding incidents and concerns are reported quickly and managed effectively.
- support Frontline Managers to recognise possible signs of abuse, assess whether a situation requires external reporting, seek appropriate advice and report concerns.

### **Frontline Managers** are responsible for:

- recognising possible signs of abuse and discussing new safeguarding concerns with their frontline colleague
- acting as a gatekeeper to check that the three key tests are met
- raising legitimate safeguarding concerns with the Local Authority or other appropriate agencies (after discussion with and approval from a Senior Manager)
- jointly assessing risk with the frontline member of colleague.

### **Frontline colleagues** are responsible for:

- being familiar with the Safeguarding policy and procedure
- identifying potential safeguarding issues
- discussing potential safeguarding concerns promptly with their manager.

All colleagues must work in a way that will help to prevent abuse. This means providing good quality care and support and putting the individual at the centre of their support, empowering them to have as much control over their lives as possible.

**All colleagues have a responsibility to safeguard adults who are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.**

The principles and approaches we follow are:

- Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures re-issued in April 2015
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued as part of the Care Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1999
- Disclosure and Barring Service introduced under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 which established the Care Quality Commission
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 including subsequent Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards procedures and Guidance

Six key principles underpin all adult safeguarding work as defined in the Care Act Statutory Guidance:

1. **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
2. **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
3. **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
4. **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
5. **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
6. **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding  
In line with the Care Act, we adopt a 'Making Safeguarding Personal' (MSP) approach in all safeguarding work. The key principle of MSP is to support and empower each adult to make choices and have control about how they want to live their own life – including in relation to the safeguarding process. This means, where possible, asking the individual what outcome they want from a safeguarding concern.

Our safeguarding work with adults at risk must be guided by the following additional principles (as set out in Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures):

- every person has a right to live a life free from abuse, neglect and fear
- there is a zero tolerance to the abuse of adults at risk
- all reports of abuse will be treated seriously
- every person should be able to access information about how to gain safety from abuse and neglect
- all adults safeguarding work aims to prevent abuse from taking place, and to make enquiries quickly and
- effectively and take appropriate action where abuse is taking place or suspected
- all partner agencies, organisations and partners across the community of Sussex actively work together and encourage accountability, transparency and appropriate professional challenge
- people working or involved in supporting adults have the appropriate knowledge, skills and training to undertake their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults
- support is in place for adults to prevent abuse from occurring as well as post-abuse support.

We will:

- provide an environment that is free from prejudice and safe from abuse for our clients and tenants.
- safeguard adults by taking all reasonable steps in a proportionate, timely and professional manner to prevent and detect abuse, and will raise external reports where abuse is suspected.

- ensure that clients and tenants receive safeguarding information and are clear how to report concerns about their own welfare or that of others.
- use a psychologically and trauma informed approach in our safeguarding work.
- work in partnership with the Local Authority and other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard adults at risk.
- ensure we complete training to ensure we understand our role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults at risk.

Although the Care Act and Sussex Safeguarding Policies and Procedures do not provide detailed definitions, from our experience adults may be more likely to experience abuse or neglect if they:

- are frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- have a learning disability
- have a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- have mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- have a long-term illness/condition
- misuse substances or alcohol
- are a carer such as a family member/friend who may be at risk because of their caring role
- are socially isolated
- are unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a relevant decision and are in need of care and support.

Although these individuals may be statistically more likely to be at risk, colleague must never limit their views of what constitutes abuse or neglect or who this may occur to. A person is not inevitably 'at risk' just because of their age, frailty or disability. For example, a person with a disability who has mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety, could be able to make informed choices and protect themselves from harm.

People with capacity can also be at risk of abuse or exploitation.

### **3.0 APPROACH TO CAPACITY, CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

#### **Consent and involvement**

We must make every effort to seek the views and agreement of the adult involved if they are not the person raising the safeguarding concern, unless doing so is likely to increase the risk to them or others (including us).

#### **Capacity and best interests**

Where a person is unable to make a specific decision for himself or herself, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 process must be followed before a decision can be made on their behalf.

We should assume people have capacity to make their own decisions (including those with disabilities) and must be given sufficient support before anyone treats them as not being able to.

Where an adult lacks capacity to make a decision, actions taken, or decisions made for or on their behalf, must be made in their best interests.

If we have concerns that someone might lack capacity in relation to decisions about potential abuse or neglect, we will let the local authority (or other agency) know this when we raise the concern, providing information about why we think this.

## **Confidentiality**

Whenever possible we will seek informed consent from clients and tenants before taking action in relation to any safeguarding concerns.

If they request that we do not do anything with the safeguarding concerns, we must still discuss with our manager. The client's/tenant's wishes do not automatically override our responsibility to discuss/raise the concerns with the local authority if necessary. This is particularly the case if there is a risk of harm to other people or there are concerns about lack of capacity. The rationale for decisions must be recorded.

The client's/tenant's stated views and wishes will be made clear when discussing concerns with the local authority and this may inform their decisions and actions.

Information sharing should follow these principles:

- information sharing protocols will be established with external agencies wherever possible.
- Information can only be shared with an agency with formal responsibility for making specific safeguarding enquiries (either the local authority or another agency to which they have delegated this responsibility)
  - information must only be shared with agencies:
    - if relevant and necessary.
  - when there is a specific need for the information to be shared at that time

## **4.0 RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION**

Safeguarding information must be recorded on clients records in the database relevant to the service. In MHHS and Housing services this must be completed by the colleague member working directly with the client/tenant, and in LD services by a Manager, Operations.

In LD, Services Managers must keep all safeguarding information in the manager's electronic file, under 'Safeguarding'.

A quarterly safeguarding report must be produced by the Safeguarding Strategy Group, for the Operational Performance Group and the Board.

**Related Procedure:**

[4-04b Safeguarding Adults Procedure](#)