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## **Survivor Researcher Network C.I.C.**

### **Adult Safeguarding Policy**

#### **Introduction**

We are a Community Interest Company, Survivor Researcher Network C.I.C. (hereafter abbreviated to SRN), led by people with personal experience of mental distress. We are open to commissions for research and evaluation, training, and coordinating public involvement in research – all from a survivor researcher perspective and drawing on our collective knowledge and experience. We maintain the Survivor Researcher Network, providing information sharing via our website and newsletter, and mutual support for survivor researchers through online forums and individual mentoring insofar as our funding allows.

This policy and the processes outlined here are also intended to apply for children and young people safeguarding concerns, but this policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Safeguarding Policy setting out specific risks and issues requiring specific attention for children and young people.

SRN will not tolerate the abuse of adults in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding adults with care and support needs from harm and risk of harm.

Some legislation and guidance may refer to ‘vulnerable adults’ but SRN prefers to use the terms ‘adult at risk of harm’ and ‘adult with care and support needs’ in this policy.

This policy outlines the steps SRN will take to safeguard an adult with care and support needs if they are deemed to be at risk of harm. This policy sets out the roles and

responsibilities of SRN in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting the adult's welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect.

SRN will ensure that decisions made will support adults to make their own choices and include them in any decision making. SRN will also ensure that safe and effective working practices are in place.

This policy is intended to support our members, associates and volunteers (**our team**) working within SRN to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding adults. All our team are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all our team to:

- have an overview of adult safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>.

Copies of this policy should be available within SRN and all our team should be made aware of how this policy can be accessed.

## What are the types of abuse that adults with care and support needs can experience?

The Care and Support statutory guidance sets out the 10 main types of abuse:

● Physical abuse	● Discriminatory
● Neglect	● Organisational
● Sexual abuse	● Domestic violence
● Psychological	● Modern Slavery
● Financial abuse	● Self-neglect

However, you should keep an open mind about what constitutes abuse or neglect as it can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

For more information, read section 14.17 of the [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#).

Four additional types of abuse that are relevant are cyber bullying, mate crime, forced marriage and radicalisation.

## **Radicalisation**

Another area of concern referred to in government guidance relates to radicalisation, including recruitment to terrorist organisations which can be seen as a form of psychological abuse.

SRN recognises that members concerned about mental health may discuss linked political issues, including poverty, inequality, discrimination, and oppression.

SRN is conscious of potential safeguarding concerns where members or others seek to recruit members to other organisations or ventures in the course of SRN activities. Our Directors may discourage or refuse permission when such concerns arise. In this context, such other organisations could include, but are not limited to, terrorist organisations, ideological, political and religious organisations, business ventures, and organisations concerned with mental distress.

## **Who abuses and neglects adults?**

Abuse can happen anywhere, even in somebody's own home. Most often abuse takes place by others who are in a position of trust and power. It can take place whether an adult lives alone or with others.

## **What is Safeguarding Adults**

Safeguarding is defined as: '*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.' Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017*

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss, physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or neurodivergence. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of personal circumstances or external events at the time.

Some legislation and guidance may refer to 'vulnerable adults' but SRN prefers to use the terms 'adult at risk of harm' and 'adult with care and support needs' in this policy.

SRN adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work (See Care Act guidance)

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

SRN will not tolerate the abuse of adults by our team and aims to ensure that their work reflects the principles above. SRN will ensure that, wherever possible, the adult at risk of harm is in charge, and that their informed consent is obtained. SRN should ensure that the safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response required to mitigate the identified risk. Partner organisations and agencies from the community may be involved in any safeguarding work in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. SRN will be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

## **Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) and consent**

MSP means a safeguarding concern should be person-led and outcome-focused. SRN will ensure that the individual is involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation, as individuals may have different preferences, histories and lifestyles and the same response may not work for all.

If a person at risk discloses abuse or a risk of abuse to themselves, SRN will not take action beyond reporting to the Safeguarding Lead and recording under SRN procedures without their consent, unless the danger is serious and imminent, or if the person appears not to have mental capacity at the time in relation to their decision about the abuse.

Mental capacity should be considered by reference to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice>.

Where there is a disclosure of harm or risk of harm to others SRN will take into account the wishes of the person disclosing, and record the factors taken into account.

## **Who do adult safeguarding duties apply to?**

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to *any* adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing abuse and neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of their current and/or relevant care and support needs.

## **Who do I go to if I am concerned?**

In SRN, Safeguarding duties are a shared responsibility of the Directors.

We have a designated Safeguarding Lead (usually a Director) who provides an initial contact point for raising any safeguarding concerns, informs Directors of the concern, formulates recommendations on action including who to inform, and oversees record keeping. The Safeguarding Lead will only act alone in deciding on emergency action in exceptional cases where it is not practicable to consult any other Director.

The SRN Safeguarding Lead is currently Holly Dale who can be contacted at:  
[holly.dale@survivorresearcher.net](mailto:holly.dale@survivorresearcher.net)

All our team should contact the Safeguarding Lead (or another Director) for any concerns/queries they have in regard to safeguarding adults. A log of the concern must be kept.

The Directors will ensure that Safeguarding Adults policies and procedures are in place, up to date, and available to our team and to the public. They will ensure a safe environment is promoted for our team and others involved in our activities.

The Directors will ensure that our team is up to date with their safeguarding adults training.

## **What we do if we become aware of a safeguarding concern?**

Team members at SRN who have any adult safeguarding concerns should:

### **1. Respond**

- Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of serious harm/in need of urgent medical attention, and there is no time to report to the Safeguarding Lead or other Director. Dial 999 for emergency services.
- Get brief details about what has happened and what the adult would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini investigation.
- Establish whether the adult at risk consents to action and to reporting the concern to external agencies.
- Consider whether the adult may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing.

- If our team member decides to act against the wishes of the adult or without their consent, they must record your decision and the reasons for this.

## **2. Report**

- Report the safeguarding concern to the Safeguarding Lead or another Director.

## **3. Record**

- As far as possible, records should be written immediately, dated and signed.
- The Safeguarding Lead will oversee maintenance of a secure online log of all safeguarding incidents including all concerns brought to their own attention.
- Keep records about safeguarding concerns confidential and in a location where only authorised staff will have access and the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access to confidential information including the sharing of passwords should not be given to any unauthorised person. For further information on our record keeping, see our Privacy Policy.
- Where action is taken against the wishes of the person disclosing the abuse or risk of abuse or without their consent, the decision and the reasons for this and names of Directors making the decision must be recorded.

## **4. Refer**

- Decisions to refer to an external agency will be taken by Directors or, in exceptional emergency situations where it is not practicable to consult any other Director, by the Safeguarding Lead. The following factors will all be considered and given appropriate weight according to the circumstances:
  - the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
  - whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety

- the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- whether they believe a potential crime is about to be committed or has been committed.

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the police if a potential crime has been or is about to be committed and/or
- social services for possible safeguarding enquiry
- relevant regulatory bodies such as Care Quality Commission, Ofsted, Charities commission
- family/relatives as appropriate (seek advice from adult social services)
- A record of the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring should be made.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Our team should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.

SRN's ability to refer and inform of safeguarding concerns is constrained by the personal information we collect. Whilst we normally seek contact details (including addresses) for our team, we are dependent on team members providing up to date and accurate information, and we may collect limited or no personal information about people attending our events and activities.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

All our team at SRN are expected to report any concerns to the named person for safeguarding. If the allegation is against one of our team, seek advice from our

Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Lead, or the Safeguarding lead is unavailable, the concern should be reported to any other Director.

The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and brief feedback to the person raising the original concern. Feedback should be given in a way that will not make the situation worse or breach data protection regulations. If the police are involved, they should be consulted prior to giving feedback to the referrer to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.

## **Complaints procedure**

SRN promotes transparency and honesty when things go wrong. All our team should apologise and be honest with people we work with when things go wrong.

If one of our team or anyone else working with SRN is unhappy with SRN's decision about the safeguarding concern, they can raise this through our complaints procedure, which can be found in our Complaints Policy.

SRN is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers who whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation.

## **Why is it important to take action?**

It may be difficult for adults with care and support needs to protect themselves and to report abuse. They may rely on our team to offer support and assistance when needed.

## **Confidentiality and information sharing**

SRN expects our team to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with data protection law, SRN does not share information if not required.

It should however be noted that information could be shared with authorities if an adult is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm. Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference when attempting to prevent harm. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding see:

<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/keymessages.asp>

## **Recruitment and selection**

SRN is committed to safe employment. Safe recruitment practices, such as Disclosure and Barring checks reduce the risk of exposing adults with care and support needs to people unsuitable to engage with them.

## **Training, awareness raising and supervision?**

SRN will ensure that all our team receive basic awareness training on safeguarding adults as they may come across adults with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse. When things of concern are reported to our team, they should be equipped with the basic knowledge around safeguarding adults and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and any action that may be required. All our team should be clear about the core values of SRN and commitment to safeguarding adults.

## **Safeguarding for Children**

This policy is intended to also apply to concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children, subject to the additional considerations in our Child Safeguarding Policy

## **Resources**

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/>

Care act- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Safer recruitment-

<http://www.islingtonscb.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Safer%20recruitment%20-%20safeguarding%20children%20and%20adults%205%20August%202013.pdf>

Carer and support statutory guidance-

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/506202/23902777\\_Care\\_Act\\_Book.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/506202/23902777_Care_Act_Book.pdf)

Information sharing-

<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/keymessages.asp>

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/>

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/#understandingsafeguarding>

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