POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Adult Safeguarding
Policy:
Adult Safeguarding

Purpose:
To explain the policy which must be adhered to with regards to safeguarding those adults who are eligible for care and support under the Care Act 2014

Scope:
Everyone working with adults

Contact point:
Department of Adult Social Services

Approved by: .................................................................
Signature: .................................................................

Title: Director of Adult Social Services
Date: June 2016
Review date: June 2017
Overview

In April 2015 new legislation called The Care Act 2014 was introduced in England in order to make care and support services better and more consistent across the country. The focus is firmly on the person rather than the service and the new law empowers people to be involved and in control of their care journey and in turn maximise their potential to live a full and meaningful life. Wellbeing is at the core of the Act and its aspiration is for local authorities to help prevent, reduce or delay the onset of care and support services to help people stay healthy and independent for as long as possible. Information and advice services are seen as having a vital role in this process. There will also be new systems in place around payments and charging. It was also planned that from April 2016 a cap on care costs would be introduced as well as an extension to the financial limits which determine who receives financial support. However the Government have now postponed these changes until 2020.

Care and support is a term used to describe the help which some adults need to live as well as possible with any illness or disability they may have. It can include help with things like getting out of bed, washing, dressing, getting to work, cooking meals, eating, seeing friends, caring for families and being part of the community. Care and support includes the help given by family and friends, as well as any provided by the Wirral Council or other organisations. People who are carers will be entitled to a carer’s assessment and, if eligible, their own support plans.

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (Wirral Council) has developed a number of policy documents to describe the process which is followed by the Council in relation to the care and support needs of adults in its communities.

Each policy reflects the over-arching commitment to put the person at the centre of all decisions which are made. The focus on personal wellbeing, information, choice and control is at the heart of how care and support is provided by Wirral Council.

All Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Department of Adult Social Services policies and procedures must be read in conjunction with the following

Legislation
The Care Act 2014 Chapter 23 Part 1 Care and Support, General responsibilities of local authorities.
Care and Support Guidelines Chapter 14: Safeguarding
The Mental Capacity Act 2005

Statutory Guidance
Revised Care and Support guidance 2016

Wirral Council Policies
Overarching values and principles
Assessment, Eligibility and review
Wirral Safeguarding Adults partnership Board Policy
Primary legislation to be repealed or disapplied

Title of legislation to be repealed, in whole or in part

National Assistance Act 1948
Health Services and Public Health Act 1968
Local Authority Social Services Act 1970
Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudications Act 1983
Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990
Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
Health and Social Care Act 2001
Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc.) Act 2003
Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
National Health Service Act 2006

Secondary legislation to be revoked

Title of instruments to be revoked, in whole or in part

Approvals and directions under S.21(1) NAA 1948 (LAC (93)10)
National Assistance (Assessment of Resources) Regulations 1992
National Assistance Act 1948 (Choice of Accommodation) Directions 1992
National Assistance (Residential Accommodation) (Relevant Contributions) Regulations 2001
National Assistance (Residential Accommodation) (Additional Payments and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2001
Delayed Discharges (Mental Health Care) (England) Order 2003
Delayed Discharges (England) Regulations 2003
National Assistance (Sums for Personal Requirements) Regulations 2003
Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc.) Act (Qualifying Services) Regulations 2003
Community Care Assessment Directions 2004
Community Care, Services for Carers and Children’s Services (Direct Payments) (England) Regulations 2009
NHS Continuing Healthcare (Responsibilities) Directions 2009
Ordinary Residence Disputes (National Assistance Act 1948) Directions 2010

Guidance repealed

No Secrets 2000
Policy Name

Safeguarding

1.0 Introduction

Living a life that is free from harm and abuse should be a fundamental right for every person. We all need to act as good neighbours and citizens by looking out for one another and seeking to prevent circumstances that can easily lead to abusive situations and place adults at risk of harm. This is a fundamental principle of a caring, compassionate and fair society.

When abuse does take place, it needs to be dealt with swiftly, effectively and in a way that is proportionate to the issues, where the adult at risk stays as much in control of the decision-making as possible. The rights of the individual to be central to the process and heard throughout are a critical element of the drive towards more personalised care and support.

The principles of safeguarding are clearly set out in the Care Act and must be at the heart of the approach with a clear emphasis on being outcome focused. Making Safeguarding Personal must be a golden thread of safeguarding work across the partnership and in everything we do. Safeguarding practice must be recorded clearly and subject to regular audit of compliance with procedures and what difference has been made.

In Wirral, as elsewhere, the main statutory agencies – local councils, the police and National Health Service (NHS) organisations – need to work together both to promote safer communities – thereby preventing harm and abuse – and to deal well with suspected or actual cases. It is our firm belief that adults at risk are best protected when procedures between statutory agencies are consistent across all partners.

This policy has been written to assist organisations in Wirral that are involved in protecting adults at risk in implementing good practice in their work. Its aim is to explain simply and clearly how agencies and individuals should work together to protect adults at risk, and it can be used in whatever way is most helpful to the organisations concerned. The target audience is everybody working with adults at risk in a paid or unpaid capacity.

2.0 POLICY

2.1 Adult Safeguarding – what it is and why it matters

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.

Wirral will always promote the adult’s wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. Professionals will work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved.

The Care Act requires that Wirral Council must:

- make enquiries, or cause others to do so, if it believes an adult is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect. An enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to prevent or stop abuse or neglect and if so, by who.
- set up a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)
- arrange, where appropriate, for an independent advocate to represent and support an adult who is the subject of a safeguarding enquiry or Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR)
- co-operate with each of its relevant partners

The aims of adult safeguarding in Wirral are to:

- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible; prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live;
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned; raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect;
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people 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; and
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

In order to achieve these aims, Wirral Council will:

- ensure that everyone, both individuals and organisations, are clear about their roles and responsibilities;
- create strong multi-agency partnerships that provide timely and effective prevention of and responses to abuse or neglect;
- support the development of a positive learning environment across these partnerships and at all levels within them to help break down cultures that are risk-averse and seek to scapegoat or blame practitioners;
- enable access to mainstream community resources such as accessible leisure facilities, safe town centres and community groups that can reduce the
social and physical isolation which in itself may increase the risk of abuse or neglect; and
• clarify how responses to safeguarding concerns deriving from the poor quality and inadequacy of service provision, including patient safety in the health sector, should be responded to.

Relevant partners of a local authority may include any other local authority with whom they agree it would be appropriate to co-operate (e.g. neighbouring authorities with whom they provide joint shared services) and the following agencies or bodies who operate within the local authority’s area

- ambulance and fire services;
- representatives of providers of health and social care services, including independent providers;
- Department for Work and Pensions;
- representatives of housing providers, housing support providers, probation and prison services;
- General Practitioners;
- representatives of further education colleges;
- members of user, advocacy and carer groups;
- local Healthwatch;
- Care Quality Commission;
- representatives of children’s safeguarding boards; and
- Trading Standards

2.1.1 Wirral Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board

The Wirral Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB) is the multi-agency partnership that leads the development of safeguarding adults work in Wirral. The main purpose of the Board is to safeguard adults who are aged 18 and over. Wirral Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board seeks to ensure that all adults at risk in Wirral are able to live free from the fear of abuse, neglect, harm and exploitation. The Board will promote a culture of positive learning and best practice across agencies and promote engagement with the wider communities of Wirral.

The Board will work to ensure adults who may be at risk are supported to enable them to exercise their rights, to live as independently as possible, and to receive access to appropriate information, care and support, protection and justice.

For further information please see the Wirral Safeguarding Adults Board Policy.

2.2 Personalisation

Key Principles

Six key principles underpin all adult safeguarding work within Wirral

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

Wirral Council is committed to a person-led and outcome-focused approach in order to make safeguarding personal.

There will be an emphasis on sensible risk appraisal, not risk avoidance, which takes into account individual’s preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyles.

This engages the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

Supporting people to make the best decision for themselves and what happens if they don’t have the capacity to make those decisions.

2.3 The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA)

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) is an essential tool to support decision-making in health and social care. The MCA and the Care Act work together to promote the empowerment, safety and wellbeing of adults with care and support needs. Section 44 of the MCA prioritises people’s safety by making wilful neglect or mistreatment of an adult who lacks capacity to make decisions a criminal offence.

There is nothing in the Care Act that replaces or undermines the MCA when it comes to making decisions with or on behalf of adults who lack capacity. The principles of the MCA remain as important as ever.

Both pieces of legislation should enable individuals to maintain their independence and exercise as much control as possible over their lives and any care and support they receive. This is just as relevant in adult safeguarding enquiries as in other areas.

All practitioners involved in safeguarding enquiries will ensure that they have a good understanding of the MCA, and put into practice its five key principles:

• Assume that a person has capacity to make decisions, unless there is evidence otherwise.
• Do all you can to maximise a person’s capacity.
• Unwise or eccentric decisions do not in themselves prove lack of capacity.
• If you are making a decision for or about a person who lacks capacity, act in their best interests.
• Look for the least restrictive option that will meet the need.

Practitioners should also expect to make available any help and support that a person may need to make a specific decision. This could include help with communication or, wherever possible, making sure that they talk to the person at a time when they are best able to make the decision for themselves.

It is important to be aware that there will be some safeguarding situations where the person may appear to be mentally capacitated, but is in fact subject to duress or coercion by another person. If this is the case, MCA procedures may not cover the particular situation. Professionals from a range of disciplines will need to work with the person, to explore options that may be available to keep them safe. Supporting people who are subject to coercion is often complex and challenging work. If the situation cannot be resolved in other ways, you may need to apply to the High Court under its inherent jurisdiction.

2.4 Recognition

Wirral Council recognises the following forms and patterns of abuse

• **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
• **Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence and FGM (female genital mutilation), forced marriage as well as coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate or familial relationships.
• **Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
• **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
• **Financial or material abuse** – 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.
• **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.
Department of Adult Social Services

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- **Discriminatory abuse** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, hate crime or religion

- **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 as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health and surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult’s ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this without external support.

- **Radicalisation and exploitation of vulnerable people.**

2.4.1 Patterns of abuse

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

Wirral Council recognises that anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- spouses/partners;
- other family members;
- neighbours;
- friends;
- acquaintances;
- local residents;
- people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse;
- paid staff or professionals; and
- volunteers and strangers.
Abuse can happen anywhere: for example, in someone’s own home, in a public place, in hospital, in a care home or in college. It can take place when an adult lives alone or with others.

2.5 Reporting and responding

Regardless of how the safeguarding concern is identified, everyone should understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help and advice. It is vital that professionals, other staff and members of the public are vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves. This will include:

- knowing about different types of abuse and neglect and their signs;
- supporting adults to keep safe;
- knowing who to tell about suspected abuse or neglect; and
- supporting adults to think and weigh up the risks and benefits of different options when exercising choice and control.

In order that Safeguarding Adult Concerns are responded to appropriately Wirral Council will have clear safeguarding reporting mechanisms. Regardless of how the safeguarding concern is identified, adults at risk, professionals, other staff and members of the public should understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help and advice. In order to support the wider community in the recognition and reporting of suspected abuse or neglect information will be produced in a range of user friendly formats.

Further details on Wirral reporting procedures can be found at:


Wirral Council is committed to responding to safeguarding concerns in a timely and effective manner. The circumstances surrounding any actual or suspected case of abuse or neglect will inform the response. The priority will always be to seek the views of the adult at risk and consider these alongside the immediate safety of the individual. This will include, when necessary, the consideration of immediate steps to protect the adult from the abuse or neglect they are suffering and whether or not to refer the matter to the police.

2.6 Carers and safeguarding

Identifying the point at which poor care by regulated services becomes a potential safeguarding issue is a dilemma which does not always have a clear-cut answer; it is even less straightforward when the care is being provided by unpaid family Carers.

The Care Act also recognises the key role of Carers in relation to safeguarding. For example a Carer may witness or report abuse or neglect; experience intentional or unintentional harm from the adult they are trying to support or a Carer may (unintentionally or intentionally) harm or neglect the adult they support.
It is important to view the situation holistically and look at the safety and well-being of both. The Act makes it clear throughout the need for preventing abuse and neglect wherever possible. Observant professionals and other staff making early, positive interventions with individuals and families can make a huge difference to their lives, preventing the deterioration of a situation or breakdown of a support network*. 

The quality of the care they provide is not subject to regulation or inspection, so it can be difficult for practitioners to decide when and how to intervene. This question is not about obvious signs of abuse – physical, psychological, financial or any other kind – but about the difficult area of 'care that is less than ideal'.

Family Carers are obviously not required to meet specific care standards, although if wilful neglect or mistreatment has occurred, Carers may be prosecuted under Section 44 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

It is not always easy to pinpoint where private decision-making in families about how they want to do things should end and where intervention should begin, to ensure the safety and uphold the rights of the adult with care and support needs. Always bear in mind the wishes and feelings of the person with care and support needs as a guide.

You will undoubtedly come across care situations in domestic settings that you judge to be inadequate for the person being cared for and that would be unacceptable in a care home. There will be times when family Carers act in a way that you would not expect a paid care worker to act. For example:

- medicine may not be given exactly as it is prescribed
- lifting and handling practices may not be ideal
- money that has been allocated to meet a disabled adult's needs may be spent on other family members.

If a paid Carer was responsible, you would probably intervene. In a family setting, you may be unclear about whether to do anything about it. The key issue is whether the person being cared for is at direct risk of harm, and the extent of any potential or actual harm.

*(Source SCIE: Care Act Learning and Development materials)*

2.6.1 In circumstances that a Carer is experiencing abuse

Circumstances in which a Carer (for example, a family member or friend) could be involved in a situation that may require a safeguarding response include:

- a Carer may witness or speak up about abuse or neglect;
- a Carer may experience intentional or unintentional harm from the adult they are trying to support or from professionals and organisations they are in contact with; or,
Assessment of both the Carer and the adult they care for must include consideration of both their wellbeing. Section 1 of the Care Act includes protection from abuse and neglect as part of the definition of wellbeing. As such, a needs or Carer’s assessment is an important opportunity to explore the individuals’ circumstances and consider whether it would be possible to provide information, or support that prevents abuse or neglect from occurring, for example, by providing training to the carer about the condition that the adult they care for has or to support them to care more safely. Where that is necessary Wirral Council should make arrangements for providing it.

If a Carer speaks up about abuse or neglect, it is essential that they are listened to and that where appropriate a safeguarding enquiry is undertaken and other agencies are involved as appropriate.

### 2.7 Information Sharing

Early information sharing is key to providing an effective response to emerging safeguarding adult concerns. Wirral Council will set in place clear processes and principles for the sharing of information between partner agencies, other professionals and the SAPB in order to ensure the most appropriate multi-agency response to the concern. The confidentiality of such information will be consistent with the principles set out in the Caldicott Review (2013) ensuring that:

- Information will only be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis when it is in the interests of the adult;
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy;
- Informed consent must be obtained but, if this is not possible and other adults are at risk of abuse or neglect, it may be necessary to override the requirement; and
- It is inappropriate for agencies to give assurances of absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse, particularly in those situations when other adults may be at risk.

Where an adult has refused to consent to information being disclosed for these purposes a decision will be made as to whether there is an overriding public interest that would justify information sharing and the Caldicott Guardian for Wirral Council may be involved.

In certain circumstances, it will be necessary to exchange or disclose personal information which will need to be in accordance with the law on confidentiality and the Data Protection Act 1998 where this applies.
2.8 Safeguarding Enquiries

Wirral Council will make enquiries, or request others to do so, under Section 42 of the Care Act, if they reasonably suspect an adult who meets the aforementioned criteria is, or is at risk of, being abused or neglected.

An enquiry is the action taken or instigated by Wirral Council in response to a concern that abuse or neglect may be taking place. The nature of the enquiry will be determined by the nature of the concern but will always seek the views and wishes of the adult at risk. If Wirral Council feel it is appropriate they may ask another organisation to undertake the enquiry on their behalf and will set timescales and require feedback on the outcomes of the enquiry and agreed actions.

An adult at risk should be involved from the beginning of any enquiry relating to themselves unless there are exceptional circumstances that would increase the risk of abuse. If the adult has substantial difficulty in being involved, and where there is no one appropriate to support them, the Wirral Council will arrange for an independent advocate to represent them and facilitate their involvement.

2.9 The Role of the Police

The police have a crucial role to play in the safety and protection of adults at risk of harm and abuse. This includes empowering the community to have the confidence to identify and report signs of abuse and suspected criminal offences. The police have responsibility to train staff how to recognise signs and take action to prevent abuse occurring. In addition, a core policing role is identifying and managing perpetrators who choose to target adults who are vulnerable. The Care Act underpins this duty.

The Act places a requirement that the local chief officer of police is a statutory core member of the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). Police officers need to be cognisant of their responsibilities in this area as outlined within Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on Safeguarding Adults which provides clear guidance on respective roles and responsibilities. As the ‘eyes and ears’ of the community, local officers will ensure that they gather and record information and intelligence to enable informed decision making for safeguarding through the multi-agency partnership arrangements.

Wirral multi-disciplinary procedures will make it clear where and when the police will become involved and the hierarchy of enquiries place a criminal investigation as taking precedence, although Wirral Council will work together with the police to ensure appropriate steps are taken to safeguard and support the adult. There will be occasions where other enquiries can proceed alongside to ensure minimum delays.

It is the responsibility of the police to lead investigations where criminal offences are suspected by preserving and gathering evidence at the earliest opportunity. They have a duty under the Victims Code of Practice 2013 to assess the immediate needs of victims and consider the long term requirement to enable that person to be
appropriately supported through the criminal justice system. Police must consult them before taking any action.

Where someone lacks capacity to make a decision, police will always act in his or her best interests, taking into account cultural, language and communication needs or any other form of impairments that may require support to facilitate appropriate engagement with the person concerned. Police have effective ways of assessing and managing risk using the National Decision making model and other accredited risk tools and take appropriate action.

As the lead investigating agency, the police should work with the Wirral Council and other partner agencies to ensure that all relevant information is shared and identified and a risk management or safeguarding plan is agreed at an early stage. In cases where criminal proceedings are deemed inappropriate, the police should agree a course of action with partnership agencies to protect the adult(s).

All officers have a duty to ensure they are up to date with their legal powers and duties, including their responsibilities in relation to the MCA and MHA. Police have multi-agency partnership arrangements in place and staff will understand how to use these. Police foster a “one” team approach that places the welfare of individuals before the “needs” of the system.

### 2.10 Partnership Working

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and Wirral Council is committed to working with agencies across the area to ensure that the care and support needs of those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, abuse or neglect are responded to appropriately and effectively. The fundamental priority is the safety, wellbeing and independence of the individual at risk and to achieve this collaboration will take place at all levels from frontline practitioners and managers to Chief Executives and Regulated Bodies i.e Care Quality Commission.

In practice this means that partner organisations will;

- Actively work together within a multi-agency framework to promote the empowerment and wellbeing of adults at risk through the services they provide;
- Share information appropriately, in line with Data Protection Act, to ensure responses are appropriate and proportionate;
- Act in a way which supports the rights of individuals to lead an independent life based on self-determination and personal choice;
- Ensure the safety of adults at risk by committing to the integrating of strategies, policies and services relevant to abuse within the current legal framework;
- Ensure that the law and statutory requirements are known and used appropriately so that adults at risk receive the protection of the law and access to judicial process.
2.11 Wirral Council’s role and responsibilities

2.11.1 As chief officer for the leading adult safeguarding agency, the Director of Adult Social Services has a particularly important leadership and challenge role to play in adult safeguarding.

2.11.2 All social workers undertaking work with adults should have access to a source of additional advice and guidance particularly in complex and contentious situations. Principal social workers are often well-placed to perform this role or to ensure that appropriate practice supervision is available.

2.11.3 Principal social workers in the local authority are responsible for providing professional leadership for social work practice in their organisation and organisations undertaking statutory responsibilities on behalf of the local authority. Practice leaders / principal social workers should ensure that practice is in line with this guidance.

2.12 Recruitment and training for staff and volunteers

Wirral Safeguarding Adults Partnership board (WSAPB) should ensure that relevant partners provide training for staff and volunteers on the policy, procedures and professional practices that are in Wirral, which reflects their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding adult arrangements. This should include:

- basic mandatory induction training with respect to awareness that abuse can take place and duty to report;
- more detailed awareness training, including training on recognition of abuse and responsibilities with respect to the procedures in their particular agency;
- specialist training for those who will be undertaking enquiries, and managers; and, training for elected members and others e.g. Healthwatch members; and
- post qualifying or advanced training for those who work with more complex enquiries and responses or who act as their organisation’s expert in a particular field, for example in relation to legal or social work, those who provide medical or nursing advice to the organisation or the Board.

Training should take place at all levels in an organisation and be updated regularly to reflect best practice. To ensure that practice is consistent - no staff group should be excluded.

Training should include issues relating to staff safety within a Health and Safety framework and also include volunteers. In a context of personalisation, boards should seek assurances that directly employed staff (e.g. Personal Assistants) have access to training and advice on safeguarding.

Training is a continuing responsibility and should be provided as a rolling programme. While training may be undertaken on a joint basis and the WSAPB has an overview of standards and content, it is the responsibility of each organisation to
train its own staff. Regular face-to-face supervision from skilled managers and reflective practice is essential to enable staff to work confidently and competently with difficult and sensitive situations.

2.12.1 Roles and Responsibilities for providers of services

All Wirral service providers, including housing and housing support providers, should have clear operational policies and procedures that reflect the framework set by the WSAPBs in consultation with them. This should include what circumstances would lead to the need to report outside their own chain of line management, including outside their organisation to Wirral Council. They need to share information with relevant partners such as the local authority even where they are taking action themselves. Providers should be informed of any allegation against them or their staff and treated with courtesy and openness at all times. It is of critical importance that allegations are handled sensitively and in a timely way both to stop any abuse and neglect but also to ensure a fair and transparent process. It is in no-one’s interests to unnecessarily prolong enquiries. However some complex issues may take time to resolve.

2.12.2 Voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations need to work with commissioners and the WSAPB to agree how their role fits alongside the statutory agencies and how they should work together. This will be of particular importance where they are offering information and advice, independent advocacy, and support or counselling services in safeguarding situations. This will include telephone or on-line services. Additionally, many voluntary organisations also provide care and support services, including personal care. All voluntary organisations that work with adults need to have safeguarding procedures and lead officers.

2.12.3 Regulated professionals

Staff governed by professional regulation (for example, social workers, doctors, allied health professionals and nurses) should understand how their professional standards and requirements underpin their organisational roles to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse and neglect.

All organisations must be cognisant of their duty to alert, investigate and resolve allegations made against their staff and volunteers in line with the Wirral SAPB Allegations Local Authority Designated Officer (ALADO) policy:

*Insert WBC Link (not currently available)*

In particular their duty to refer individuals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where appropriate: [https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)

ENDS