



Glyndwr Ensemble

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The broad definition of a vulnerable adult is:

‘A person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation’

People with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and disabled people may fall within this definition. All vulnerable adults have a right to protection from harm.

We must ensure that:

- All vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicion and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

POLICY STATEMENT

All vulnerable adults have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation. Abuse of vulnerable adults is never acceptable. We have a commitment to protecting vulnerable adults with/for whom we work. When we work with partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards for protection of vulnerable adults in their programmes.

DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

- **Physical Abuse** – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, undue restraint or inappropriate sanctions. Possible indicators include: multiple bruising, which is not consistent with the explanation given; cowering and flinching; unusually sleepy or docile.
- **Sexual Abuse** – includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not, or could not, consent and/or was pressured into consenting. Possible indicators include: unexplained and uncharacteristic changes in behaviour; excessive washing; deliberate self-harm.
- **Psychological Abuse** – includes threats of harm or humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation. Possible indicators include: anxiety, confusion or general resignation; loss of confidence; excessive or inappropriate craving for attention.
- **Financial Abuse** – includes theft, fraud, pressure around wills, property or inheritance, misuse or misappropriation of benefits. Possible indicators include: unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills; sudden withdrawal of money from accounts; personal possessions going missing.

- **Neglect and/or Acts of Omission** – includes failure to access medical care or services, failure to give prescribed medication, poor nutrition or lack of heating. Possible indicators include: poor hygiene and cleanliness; repeated infections; reluctant contact with health and social care agencies.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH VULNERABLE ADULTS

Members and volunteers must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse vulnerable adults.
- Develop physical or sexual relationships with vulnerable adults.
- Develop relationships with vulnerable adults, which could in any way be deemed inappropriate or exploitative.
- Act in ways that may be abusive or place vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Behave in an inappropriate or sexually provocative manner.
- Allow vulnerable adults with whom they are working to stay overnight unsupervised.
- Do things of a personal nature that vulnerable adults are able to do for themselves.
- Condone, or participate in the behaviour of vulnerable adults, which is illegal, abusive or unsafe.
- Intentionally act in ways intended to shame, humiliate or degrade vulnerable adults.
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular vulnerable adults to the exclusion of others.

WHAT WE WILL DO.

- **AWARENESS:** We will ensure that all are aware of the issues of the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA), the problem of abuse of vulnerable adults and the risks.
- **PREVENTION:** We will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that all minimise the risk to vulnerable adults.
- **REPORTING:** We will ensure that all are clear about what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of vulnerable adults.
- **RESPONDING:** We will ensure that action is taken to support and protect vulnerable adults where concerns arise regarding possible abuse. In responding to allegations or suspicions, it is not the responsibility of anyone to decide whether or not the abuse of vulnerable adults has taken place. There is however a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. We will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concerns someone is abusing a vulnerable adult.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.