



Adult Safeguarding Policy

Purpose:	To ensure that all staff are aware of their legal obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and what process to follow should they require advice and guidance on any suspected or actual abuse
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Author:	Caroline Berry
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References/Legislation:	Incident Policy Safer Recruitment Policy DBS Policy Data Management Policy Code of Conduct Policy Disciplinary Policy Whistleblowing Policy CARM
Scope of Policy:	This policy applies to all Worcester Community Trust staff (including employees, Board members, agency staff, and volunteers)
Legal Framework:	Care Act (2014) Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 Human Rights Act 1998
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1. Introduction

Worcester Community Trust believes everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all vulnerable adults, to keep people safe, and to practise in a way that protects people. Worcester Community Trust is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all adults to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Effective adult safeguarding is essential as part of Worcester Community Trust's wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults. All agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults so that the need for action to protect vulnerable adults from harm is reduced.

All vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, sex, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or sexual identity have an equal right to be safeguarded from abuse.

The needs of those who may be particularly vulnerable such as people with a disability must be taken into account. All adults with additional communication needs, such as speaking English as an additional language, learning disabilities, hearing impairment, autism, or being non-verbal have a right to have their needs met in the same way as adults not facing the same barriers.

2. Policy Statement

The Care Act (2014) defines an adult at risk is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); *and*
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; *and*
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Worcester Community Trust has a duty of care to the vulnerable adults that we come into contact with, and the welfare of the vulnerable adult is paramount in our practice. Worcester Community Trust will ensure the safety and protection of all vulnerable adults through adherence to the Adult Safeguarding guidelines described in this policy.

Types of abuse include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and coercion, reproductive coercion, financial abuse, digital abuse

Physical Abuse

Pulling your hair, punching, slapping, kicking, biting or choking you

Forbidding you from eating or sleeping

Damaging your property when they're angry (throwing objects, punching walls, kicking doors, etc.)

Using weapons to threaten to hurt you or themselves, or actually hurting you or themselves with weapons

Trapping you in your home or keeps you from leaving

Preventing you from calling the police or seeking medical attention

Withholding prescriptions or hormones

Harming your children

Abandoning you in unfamiliar places

Driving recklessly or dangerously when you are in the car with them

Forcing you to use drugs or alcohol (especially if you've had a substance abuse problem in the past)

Cuckooing

Emotional Abuse

Calling you names, insulting you or continually criticizing you

Refusing to trust you and acting jealous or possessive

Trying to isolate you from family or friends#

Attempting to control who you see, where you go, what you do, or any other aspect of your life

Demanding to know where you are every minute

Punishing you by withholding affection

Threatening to hurt you, the children, your family, or your pets

Humiliating you

Blaming you for the abuse

Gaslighting

Accusing you of cheating and being often jealous of your outside relationships

Serially cheating on you and then blaming you for his or her behavior

Cheating on you intentionally to hurt you and then threatening to cheat again

Cheating to prove that they are more desired, worthy, etc. than you are

Attempting to control your appearance or presentation: clothing, makeup, binders, prosthetics, wigs, etc.
Referring to you by the wrong pronouns or calling you “it”
Telling you that you will never find anyone better, or that you are lucky to be with a person like them
Making you feel like you’re not good enough

Sexual Abuse and Coercion

Forcing you to dress in a sexual way
Insulting you in sexual ways or calls you sexual names
Forcing or manipulating you into to having sex or performing sexual acts
Holding you down during sex
Demanding sex when you’re sick, tired, or after hurting you
Hurting you with weapons or objects during sex
Involving other people in sexual activities with you against your will
Ignoring your feelings regarding sex
Forcing you to watch pornography
Purposefully trying to pass on a sexually transmitted infection to you
Making you feel like you owe them (because you’re in a relationship, because you’ve had sex before, because they spent money on you or bought you a gift, etc.)
Giving you drugs and alcohol to “loosen up” your inhibitions
Playing on the fact that you’re in a relationship, saying things such as: “Sex is the way to prove your love for me,” “If I don’t get sex from you I’ll get it somewhere else”
Reacting negatively with sadness, anger or resentment if you say no or don’t immediately agree to something
Continuing to pressure you after you say no
Making you feel threatened or afraid of what might happen if you say no
Trying to normalize their sexual demands that you say no to

Reproductive Coercion

Refusing to use protection during sex
Breaking or removing protection during sex
Lying about their methods birth control (ex. lying about having a vasectomy, lying about being on the pill)
Refusing to “pull out” if that is the agreed upon method of birth control
Forcing you to not use any birth control (ex. the pill, condom, shot, ring, etc.)
Removing birth control methods (ex. rings, IUDs, contraceptive patches)
Sabotaging birth control methods (ex. poking holes in condoms, tampering with pills or flushing them down the toilet)
Withholding finances needed to purchase birth control
Monitoring your menstrual cycles
Forcing pregnancy and not supporting your decision about when or if you want to have a child
Forcing you to get an abortion, or preventing you from getting one
Threatening you or acting violent if you don’t comply with their wishes to either end or continue a pregnancy
Continually keeping you pregnant (getting you pregnant again shortly after you give birth)

Financial Abuse

Giving an allowance and closely watching how you spend it or demanding receipts for purchases
Placing your paycheck in their bank account and denying you access to it
Preventing you from viewing or having access to bank accounts
Forbidding you to work or limiting the hours that you can work
Maxing out credit cards in your name without permission or not paying the bills on credit cards, which could ruin your credit score
Stealing money from you or your family and friends
Using funds from children’s savings accounts without your permission
Living in your home but refusing to work or contribute to the household
Making you give them your tax returns or confiscating joint tax returns
Refusing to give you money to pay for necessities/shared expenses like food, clothing, transportation, or medical care and medicine

Digital Abuse

Tells you who you can or can’t be connected with on Facebook, Snapchat, and other social media.
Sends you negative, insulting, or even threatening emails, posts, tweets, snaps, or other messages online.
Uses apps/sites like Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, foursquare, and others to keep constant tabs on you.
Puts you down in their status updates.
Sends you unwanted, explicit pictures and demands you send some in return.
Pressures you to send explicit video.
Shares explicit photos/videos of you without your consent (aka revenge porn)
Steals or insists to be given your passwords.

Constantly texts you and makes you feel like you can't be separated from your phone for fear that you will be punished.
Looks through your phone frequently, checks up on your pictures, texts and outgoing calls.
Tags you unkindly in pictures on Instagram, Tumblr, Facebook, etc

2.1. Organisational Responsibilities

Worcester Community Trust recognises that protecting vulnerable adults from harm and promoting their welfare depends on a shared responsibility and effective joint working between different agencies. Worcester Community Trust aims to ensure that it builds constructive relationships between individual practitioners as effective sharing of information is pivotal for identifying abuse, assessment, and implementing necessary action.

In order to safeguard vulnerable adults, as an organisation Worcester Community Trust will:

- listen to vulnerable adults and respect them;
- appoint an adult safeguarding lead and a member of the trustee board who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation;
- ensure there is clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all adults;
- produce detailed safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- provide appropriate training on safeguarding and child protection procedures to all staff and volunteers;
- risk assessments that specifically include safeguarding of adults;
- ensure that staff and volunteers are alert to potential indicators of abuse;
- ensure that staff and volunteers are alert to the risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults;
- enable all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific adult safeguarding issues;
- provide a framework that ensures vulnerable adults' support follows a specific planned pathway and outcomes against those plans are regularly reviewed;
- ensure vulnerable adults and their families (where appropriate) know about the organisation's safeguarding and adult protection policies and what to do if they have a concern;
- that all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote vulnerable adults' welfare; and
- review information on safeguarding concerns regularly in order to improve practice.

2.2. Staff Responsibilities

Safeguarding is responsibility of all staff and volunteers. At Worcester Community Trust it is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to gather information and report concerns, not to decide whether or not abuse has occurred. Staff/volunteers are not trained to make decisions about how best to manage safeguarding situations independently, concerns identified must be reported to the safeguarding lead.

All staff providing support or coming into contact with vulnerable adults will ensure:

- they prioritise direct communication and positive and respectful relationships with the people they work with;
- that safeguarding vulnerable adults and promoting their welfare forms an integral part of all elements of the support and care that they offer;
- that appropriate record keeping is maintained at all times so that an assessment can be made of whether vulnerable adults are suffering or are likely to suffer harm; and
- that all concerns are reported to the appropriate adult safeguarding lead.

2.3. Manager Responsibilities

Managers have additional responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. At Worcester Community Trust it is the responsibility of managers to support staff to identify safeguarding concerns, provide additional oversight of ongoing safeguarding concerns, and

support the safeguarding lead with multi agency work in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults. Managers are not trained to make decisions about how best to manage safeguarding situations independently, actions must arise from consultation with the safeguarding lead.

All managers will ensure:

- they appropriately support and supervise staff;
- they support teams to reflect on best practice and identify areas for improvement;
- they identify gaps in knowledge, arrange training, and maintain training logs;
- they adhere to safer recruitment policies; and
- they maintain the safeguarding log accurately and in a timely manner.

2.4. Adult Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

The adult safeguarding leads is Caroline Berry and in Caroline's absence cover will be arranged with another Director or manager. The adult safeguarding lead's contact details are:

Caroline Berry
Director of Operations
Telephone: 01905 453453
Mobile: 07776962914
Email: caroline@worcestercommunitytrust.org.uk

The Board of Trustee Safeguarding lead is:
Bridget Brickley
bridget@worcestercommunitytrust.org.uk

If the safeguarding lead cannot be contacted then Jonathan Newey (CEO), Helen Davis (Director of Skills and Training) and Sarah Mackay (Director of Development) can be contacted.

The adult safeguarding lead has additional responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. The adult safeguarding leads are the point of contact for anyone at Worcester Community Trust who is concerned about a vulnerable adult. They are responsible for leading on:

- receiving concerns about an adult;
- advising staff on managing safeguarding concerns;
- reporting, storing and retaining records following the organisation's policies and procedures;
- ensuring that the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures are fit for purpose; and
- ensuring that the organisation's training in relation to safeguarding is fit for purpose.

3. Principles

Safeguarding is underpinned by 6 key principles (<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/six-principles>).

These principles are at the heart of the work we carry out with the people we come into contact with and are embedded into Worcester Community Trust's procedures and practice.

- **EMPOWERMENT:** We support and encourage people to make their own decisions and give fully informed consent.
- **PREVENTION:** Wherever possible we take early action early to prevent harm from occurring.
- **PROPORTIONALITY:** When we take action we make the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **PROTECTION:** We make sure that we support and advocate for those in greatest need.
- **PARTNERSHIP:** We create local solutions, work with communities, and build networks to help prevent, detect, report, and address neglect and abuse.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We show accountability and transparency in safeguarding. We take responsibility, reflect, and improve our practice at every opportunity.

The purpose of all services, whether meeting the needs of all adults, adults who are vulnerable, or adults at risk, is to achieve the best possible outcomes for each person recognising each is unique.

4. Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Worcester Community Trust recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse vulnerable adults in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with vulnerable adults.

Worcester Community Trust's *Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy* and *DBS Policy* ensure safe recruitment policies and practices, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff, including agency staff, students and volunteers, working with vulnerable adults.

The details of the procedures in place can be found in the *Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy* and *DBS Policy* but key points are outlined below.

- All potential staff and volunteers must complete an application form including a self-disclosure regarding previous convictions.
- Advice will be sought from the Safeguarding Officer if there is a criminal record and the offence does not relate to children or vulnerable adults before appointing. A risk assessment will be conducted for any offences and conversation had with the applicant to ascertain further information and risk. If there are offences and/or concerns relating to safeguarding this could impact the offer of employment.
- At least 2 references must be obtained and verified and essential qualifications verified before making appointments.
- Before appointment applicants must be asked for reasons for gaps or inconsistencies in employment and appointment must not proceed unless satisfied with the explanation given.
- A face to face interview must be carried out with at least two people.
- A member of the senior management team must meet with the applicant during the recruitment process.
- Identity must be checked during this process by looking at a birth certificate, driving licence, passport and/or other document with a photograph.
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks (enhanced) must be carried out on offer of a post and every three years for all staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults.
- No unsupervised access to vulnerable adults until a satisfactory DBS check has been received and references reviewed and verified.

5. Training

Worcester Community Trust is responsible for ensuring their employees and volunteers are confident and competent in carrying out their responsibilities, and for ensuring employees/volunteers are aware of how to recognise and respond to adult safeguarding concerns.

In addition to pre-selection checks, Worcester Community Trust provides on-going training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to analyse their own practice against established good practice, recognise their responsibilities, respond appropriately to concerns expressed, and work safely and effectively with vulnerable adults.

All appointments to work with vulnerable adults are subject to a supervised probationary period during which there is a comprehensive induction. As part of the induction process, all staff are required to read the safeguarding policies and procedures within the first week and discuss Worcester Community Trust's approach to safeguarding with their manager. All new employees and volunteers will sign up to Worcester Community Trust Code of Conduct and Adult Safeguarding Policy within their first week. Within their probationary period all staff are required to complete initial safeguarding training. Safeguarding training will be updated on an annual basis or as and when required by the organisation. Information will be sent out when relevant such as changes in legislation and requested to take responsibility for the updating of knowledge.

All staff are also required to attend an internal safeguarding workshop where they are supported to achieve the following:

- Understand their role
 - Where to get information

- Where to get support
- How to identify concerns
- How to respond to concerns
- How to learn from experiences
- Understand Worcester Community Trust's role
 - What colleagues do
 - What Worcester Community Trust's legal responsibilities are
 - What Worcester Community Trust's processes are and why
 - How to work together
 - How to learn from experiences
- Understand other roles
 - What statutory services do
 - What other agencies do
 - Who takes the lead when there is a concern
 - How to work together

Worcester Community Trust recognises that staff and volunteers will have different training needs which will be dependent on their degree of contact with vulnerable adults. Staff training needs in Safeguarding and Adult Protection are reviewed in supervision and appraisals with particular attention paid to those working directly with vulnerable adults. Staff are offered appropriate additional training depending on their role and their learning and development needs throughout their time with Worcester Community Trust.

All staff are expected to undergo indepth safeguarding training every two years, or sooner if major changes in procedures have taken place. Regular updates are arranged 'in house' and all staff working in specialist roles are required to attend Local Safeguarding Adults Board multi agency training.

6. Information Sharing

In order to safeguard vulnerable adults, Worcester Community Trust follows the statutory guidance *Care and support statutory guidance*, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>) which states:

“For people to receive high quality health and care and support, local organisations need to work in a more joined-up way, to eliminate the disjointed care that is a source of frustration to people and staff, and which often results in poor care, with a negative impact on health and wellbeing. The vision is for integrated care and support that is person-centred, tailored to the needs and preferences of those needing care and support, carers and families.”

Adults have a general right to independence, choice and self-determination including control over information about themselves. In the context of adult safeguarding these rights can be overridden in certain circumstances. The law does not prevent the sharing of sensitive, personal information between organisations where the public interest served outweighs the public interest served by protecting confidentiality.

Each situation should be considered on a case-by-case basis but the following information sharing principles underpin Worcester Community Trust's safeguarding procedures.

- **NECESSARY AND PROPORTIONATE:** When taking decisions about what information to share, you should consider how much information you need to release and the impact of disclosing information on all those involved. Any information shared must be proportionate to the need and level of risk.
- **RELEVANT:** Only information that is relevant should be shared with those who need it to allow everyone to carry out their roles effectively and make sound decisions.
- **ADEQUATE:** Information should be adequate for its purpose, and be of the right quality to ensure that it can be understood and relied upon.

- **ACCURATE:** Information should be accurate and up to date and should clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. If the information is historical then this should be explained.
- **TIMELY:** Information should be shared in a timely fashion to reduce the risk of harm, related to the urgency of the situation. This is key in emergency situations and it may not be appropriate to seek consent for information sharing if it could cause delays and therefore harm to a child.
- **SECURE:** Information should be shared in an appropriate, secure way in line with Worcester Community Trust's Data Management Policy.
- **RECORDED:** Information sharing decisions should be recorded. If it is decided to share, reasons should be given and what information has been shared and with whom. If it is decided not to share, reasons should be given and discussed with the requester.

Worcester Community Trust's Data Management Policies requires that the people we work with are informed about confidentiality, how we manage their data, and when that data will be shared and with whom. Customer handbooks are a good example of how each service can provide people with further details from the outset of engagement about why, what, how and with whom, their information will be shared. *A referral should not be seen as a betrayal of trust but as a necessary and responsible way of safeguarding adults.*

All staff should seek consent where people may not expect their information to be passed on and wherever possible share information with the informed consent of the person involved, where it is safe to do so.

If the person does not consent to a referral, we respect their choice, but there may be situations where the information needs to be shared without their consent due to the risk posed. As long as it does not increase risk, staff should inform the person if they need to share their information without consent.

The Data Protection Act (2018) and its implementation of UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) regulate information collection, processing, and sharing. Worcester Community Trust has a comprehensive Data Management Policy, Code of Conduct, and Confidentiality Guidance which must be adhered to at all times. However, these are not barriers to justified information sharing as where there is a clear risk of significant harm. Where there are concerns about sharing information without consent in order to safeguard a vulnerable adult this should be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead and they will make a decision or recommendation.

7. Barriers

Worcester Community Trust recognises that abuse thrives on secrecy and needs to be handled in a sensitive, accepting way. To achieve this staff may have to overcome certain barriers when dealing with concerns.

Worcester Community Trust recognises that there may be barriers to vulnerable adults telling anyone about abuse; the deliberate and skilled way that abusers target their victims should not be underestimated. Barriers to disclosing abuse include:

- fear because they have been threatened;
- a belief that they will be taken away from home or their support network;
- a belief that they are to blame;
- a belief that the abuse is normal or that it happens to everyone;
- feeling embarrassed;
- feeling guilty;
- not wanting to get the abuser into trouble;
- communication or learning difficulties;
- not having the vocabulary to say what happened;
- fear they won't be believed; and
- a belief that they have told someone, maybe by dropping hints, but have been ignored or disbelieved.

These issues will be covered with people who use Worcester Community Trust's services in inductions, information handouts, support sessions, and in specific awareness raising sessions. Where people have varying communication needs these will be met

as is required on a case by case basis to ensure a consistently high quality person centred coordinated approach. Where there are other opportunities to educate people about abuse, risks and dangers these will be utilised appropriately and sensitively. These might be group sessions, or one to one support.

There are also barriers to people taking action. Worcester Community Trust understands that these barriers have to be actively broken down and staff supported to understand why they cannot be reasons not to respond to concerns. This issue is covered with staff in inductions and supervisions as well as specific safeguarding sessions, and some specific barriers are addressed.

- Not having the necessary information on what to do or who to contact – all staff are provided with information on how to manage concerns and where to seek advice as part of induction, through policies and procedures, and training.
- Finding it difficult to believe what someone is saying – staff are supported to understand that all allegations must be taken seriously and looked into carefully to ensure that abuse is identified and prevented and to ensure that staff are trusted by vulnerable adults to take future disclosures seriously.
- Fearing ‘getting it wrong’ – Worcester Community Trust supports staff to have an open and accountable culture where people make decisions within frameworks and everyone can learn from mistakes. Staff are also specifically supported to understand the impact of doing nothing.
- Fearing that action may make things worse for the person – staff are supported to understand the impact of doing nothing, how to work with other agencies to promote vulnerable adults’ best interests, and how to hold themselves and other accountable.
- Believing that the services dealing with concerns are stigmatising – staff are supported to understand the impact of doing nothing, how to work with other agencies to promote vulnerable adults’ best interests, and how to hold themselves and other accountable.

8. Identifying concerns about a vulnerable adult’s welfare

People may not disclose abuse for a wide range of reasons. There are two areas that Worcester Community Trust focuses on to help identify and prevent abuse: identifying concerns about welfare and escalating those concerns appropriately, and developing supportive services that encourage disclosures.

To enable the identification of abuse without vulnerable adults needing to disclose, Worcester Community Trust provides all staff with training on how to identify concerns about a person’s welfare, both as part of their induction, training, policies and sharing of information. Worcester Community Trust also has clear frameworks for record keeping and information sharing, both internally and with other agencies to ensure that patterns are identified and concerns shared.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence guidance for professionals on how to recognise the signs of abuse provides basic information on indicators of abuse which is available at: <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse> and staff should use this guidance to support the provided training.

Staff are able to intervene by noticing changes in people that they work with and discussing those changes appropriately with them or with other professionals. Building trust requires staff to take notice, spend time with people, and create a history of reliability.

Staff are also able to intervene by directly asking a vulnerable adult if they are being abused. There is sometimes a concern that this can be damaging to a professional relationship, but it is important to create the opportunity for a someone to disclose and to make sure that they are aware that staff are paying attention to them and will listen.

9. Guidance, Decision Making and information on CARM

If any member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that a vulnerable adult is at immediate risk, they must take action without delay and contact the emergency services on 999.

If any member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that a vulnerable adult is being abused or has been abused, they must discuss this without delay with the Safeguarding Lead who will make a decision on action to be taken in line with this policy. If the safeguarding lead believes or suspects that a vulnerable adult may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm then this should always be referred via a Safeguarding Alert to the local authority adult social care services.

Additional guidance and information can be sourced from the local safeguarding team, police, and NHS community services following the agreement of the Safeguarding Lead.

Worcestershire also has a process called CARM (Complex Adult Risk Management) [CARM Final V2.1 \(August 2022\) - Worcestershire Safeguarding Boards \(safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk\)](#)

As per the website above, the CARM was introduced in 2022 and provides front line practitioners with a framework to facilitate effective working with adults who:

- are at risk of harm due to their complex needs,
- where the risks cannot effectively be managed via other processes or interventions, such as section 9 care and support assessment or section 42, safeguarding enquiry under the Care Act 2014.
- the adult's engagement with support is intermittent or it has been difficult to engage with the adult
- individual agency procedures have not been able to resolve the problem(s)
- Without some support the risk is likely to increase.

The CARM process should be utilised when:

- Is unable / or there has been a difficulty to engage them in the necessary care / essential services to meet their care and support needs; and/or
- Is unable / or there is a difficulty to engage them in an assessment of their needs / mental capacity; and/or
- Is unable to protect themselves against potential exploitation* or abuse; and/or
- Has on-going needs or behaviours which lead to choices placing the person at high risk

How to Make a CARM Referral

The referral should be made by using the attached form: [WSAB CARM referral form](#) It should then be submitted to the CARM Coordinator via this email: CARM@worcestershire.gov.uk

10. Procedure for responding to disclosures of abuse

10.1. Receiving a disclosure

When someone makes a disclosure it is an opportunity to prevent abuse from continuing. It is also an opportunity to provide a vulnerable adult with holistic intervention that supports them and has a positive impact on their life beyond the ending of a specific abuse.

It's important not to ask leading questions or pressure the person to give more information, as this can disrupt the disclosure, affect safeguarding investigations, and could compromise any criminal investigation. This is extremely important with allegations of sexual abuse, in no circumstance should staff question someone about sexual abuse. Questions that are asked should be very general e.g. "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

There are three key principles staff should follow for receiving a disclosure to make the most positive impact:

- believe the person making the disclosure
- take action in response to the disclosure
- secure emotional support for the person

10.2. Collecting information from a disclosure

The information disclosed must be recorded fully and should clearly state what was said by everyone as precisely as possible.

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure, which should include the following:

- The person's name, age and date of birth
- The person's address and telephone number
- The nature of the allegation (include dates, times, any special factors, and other relevant information)
- The account that was given by the person making the disclosure
- If the person experiencing abuse was not the person who reported the abuse, whether that person has been spoken to and, if so, what was said by staff
- If the person experiencing abuse was not the person who reported the abuse, whether that person has been spoken to and, if so, their account of what has happened

- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- Anyone else who has been consulted
- Anyone who has been alleged to be the abuser
- It may also be helpful to record perception of emotional and physical presentation

10.3. Reporting a disclosure

Following a disclosure a staff member must take action as outlined in

- contact the emergency services without delay if they have reason to believe that a vulnerable adult is at immediate risk
- discuss the disclosure without delay with the Safeguarding Lead
- make a safeguarding alert to the relevant local authority adult social care services if it is believed or suspected that a vulnerable adult may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm

to report a safeguarding concern please call **01905 768053**

if you would like safeguarding advice please phone the Adult Safeguarding Team on **01905 843189** (note this number does not accept referrals)

professionals can complete an **online form to report concerns about abuse or neglect**

10.4. Record Keeping

Record keeping is a vital part of safeguarding vulnerable adults. Staff must always:

- record in writing concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare
- record in writing discussions had about a vulnerable adult's welfare
- reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken at the close of any discussions
- record actions taken and feedback from other agencies
- retain copies of safeguarding alerts
- retain copies of correspondence with statutory agencies

11. Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse

11.1. Identifying concerns

Staff may identify concerns about vulnerable adults in the course of their work with them.

Safeguarding must be discussed as part of team meetings and supervision and staff should raise any minor concerns about vulnerable adult with their manager as part of their day to day work.

Where a staff member identifies a vulnerable adult may be experiencing or at risk of experiencing abuse they should collate information about the concerns. All interactions must be recorded – if as part of support, logs are kept these should be routinely reviewed to identify concerns. If there are no logs however there are concerns, please log with line manager and safeguarding lead.

11.2. Collating information about concerns

The information in relation to the concern must be recorded fully.

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time that a concern is identified, which should include the following:

- The person's name, age and date of birth
- The person's address and telephone number
- The nature of the allegation (include dates, times, any special factors, and other relevant information)
- The indicators that led to the concern

- Whether the person has been spoken to and, if so, what was said by staff
- Whether the person has been spoken to and, if so, the child's account of what has happened
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- Anyone else who has been consulted
- Anyone who has been alleged to be the abuser

11.3. Reporting a concern

Following a disclosure a staff member must take action:

- contact the emergency services without delay if they have reason to believe that a vulnerable adult is at immediate risk
- discuss the disclosure without delay with the Safeguarding Lead
- make a safeguarding alert to the local authority adult social care services if it is believed or suspected that a vulnerable adult may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm

11.4. Record Keeping

Record keeping is a vital part of safeguarding vulnerable adults. Staff must always:

- record in writing concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare
- record in writing discussions had about a vulnerable adult's welfare
- reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken at the close of any discussions
- record actions taken and feedback from other agencies
- retain copies of safeguarding alerts
- retain copies of correspondence with statutory agencies

12. Procedure for responding disclosures or concerns about staff or volunteers

Where a staff member receives a disclosure from a vulnerable adult about abuse by Worcester Community Trust staff or volunteers, or a staff member identifies concerns about other Worcester Community Trust staff or volunteer, the procedure to be carried out by that staff member is the same as for any other disclosure or concern. Staff should therefore follow either *Section 10: Procedure for responding to disclosures of abuse* or *Section 11: Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse* as appropriate.

Worcester Community Trust will fully investigate any concerns raised about staff or volunteers in relation to the abuse of vulnerable adults. It may be necessary to suspend staff or volunteers while an investigation is carried out in line with the Disciplinary Policy. If an investigation suggests that a criminal offence appears to have been committed or a vulnerable adult has been harmed by or is at risk of harm from a staff member or volunteer, the matter will be referred to the police and a referral about a person in a Position of Trust (POT) made to the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) Team.

Irrespective of the findings of the social care or police inquiries, Worcester Community Trust's Safeguarding Lead will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Safeguarding Lead will reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the vulnerable adult will remain of paramount importance throughout.

Any staff member or volunteer who in good faith reports their concerns that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a vulnerable adult or adults will be fully supported and protected, in line with the Whistleblowing Policy.

13. Procedure for reporting incidents you are involved in

Where any of the following incidents happen staff should follow the Incident Management Policy and report the incident immediately to their manager and the Safeguarding Lead.

- A vulnerable adult is accidentally hurt by a staff member

- A vulnerable adult appears to be sexually aroused by a staff member's actions
- A vulnerable adult interprets something you have said or done as inappropriate

Depending on the exact nature of the incident it may be necessary to suspend staff or volunteers while an investigation is carried out, in line with the Disciplinary Policy.

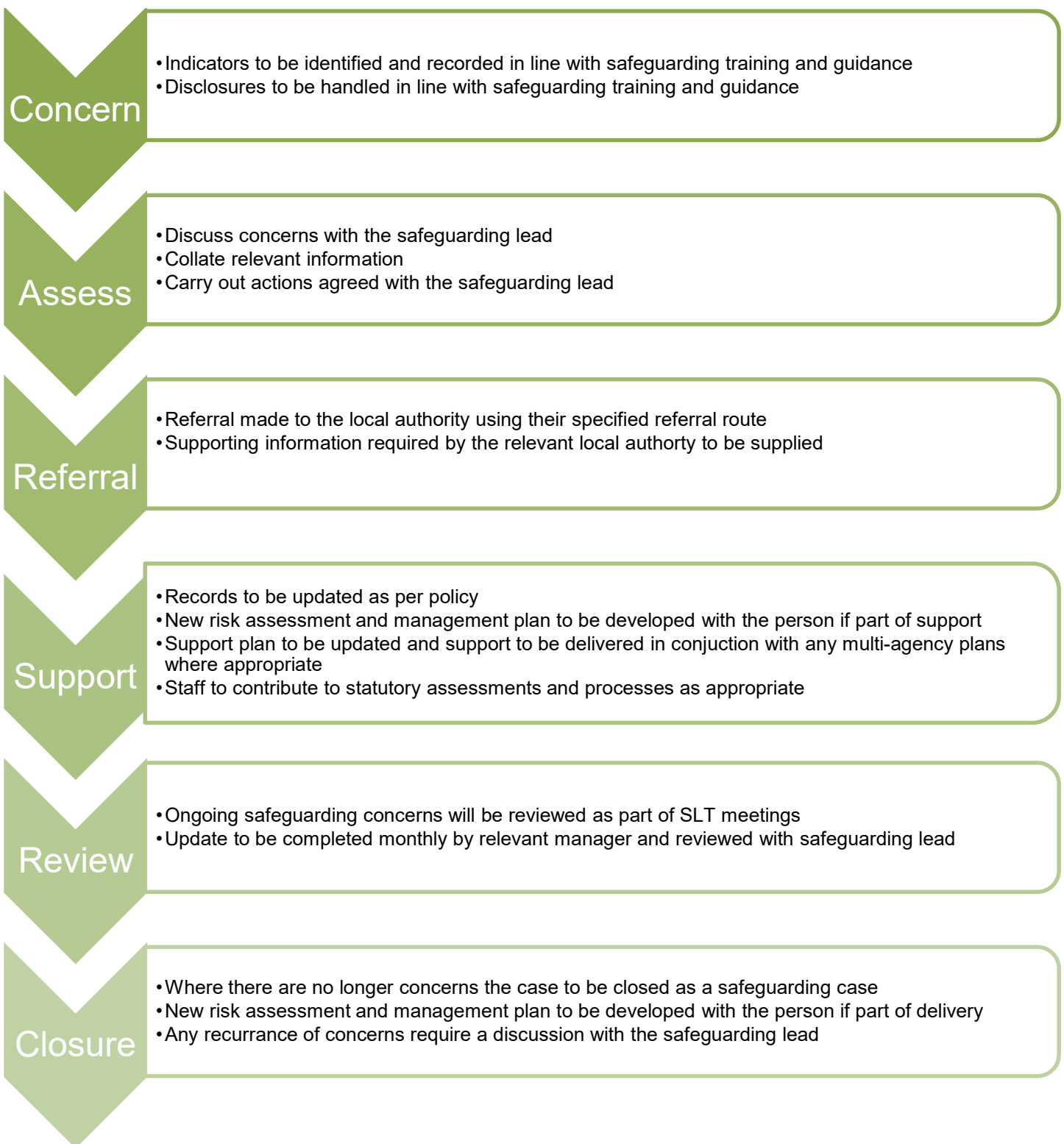
14. Procedure for responding to concerns about or disclosures or concerns about another vulnerable adult

Where a staff member receives a disclosure from a vulnerable adult about abuse by another vulnerable adult, or a staff member identifies concerns about abuse by another vulnerable adult, the procedure to be carried out by that staff member is the same as for any other disclosure or concern.

However, staff also have a duty to safeguard the vulnerable adult that is alleged to or suspected of carrying out abuse. It should be considered whether the concerns identified indicate that this vulnerable adult has also experienced abuse and, if so, the procedure detailed in Section 11: Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse should be carried out.

15. Procedure for managing ongoing concerns

15.1. Internal procedures



15.2. Advocacy

People have a right to understand the statutory processes that are taking place and a right to complain where statutory processes are not taking place. Staff supporting vulnerable adults who are receiving statutory services should be able to identify where services are not being provided in line with statutory requirements and they should be supported to access advocacy organisations if they wish to make a complaint.

16. Mental Capacity

It should always be assumed that a person has the ability to make decisions, even if that decision may result if harm to themselves, unless there is clear evidence that the person hasn't the ability to understand the nature and effects of decisions and to communicate this effectively to others.

If there is any doubt about the person's ability to make an informed decision, the safeguarding adults strategy discussion/meeting and/or case conference should consider the implications of this. This will incorporate mental capacity assessment, deprivations of liberty safeguards, and best interests decisions.

17. Procedure for storing adult protection records

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- the Project Manager/Director of that department, Safeguarding Officers
- the person making the allegation
- social services/police

Information must be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws.



WCT SAFEGUARDING FORM (internal)

Safeguarding Log number	
Person Completing this Form	
Date	
Child/Young Person/Adult Information	
Name of child/young person/Adult if known	
Home address	
Home	
Mobile	
Date of Birth	
Age	

Reporting Log		
Contact Type	Date & Time	Action taken/Advice given/Name of contact
Contact with Designated Safeguarding Lead		
Contact with Director of department		
Contact with CEO		
Contact with Police		
Contact with Social Services		
Contact with other agencies (please specify)		

Details of Safeguarding Concern	
Date	
Place	
Time	
Nature of safeguarding	
Action Taken	
Outcome including contact with, or referrals made	
Action to be taken risk assessment/changes to working practice	

When completed this form should be shared with line manager and be stored in a confidential file.

Please enter below any precautionary measures recommended for the individual in light of the above questions to ensure that the risk of any reoccurrence of any potential criminal activity or associated behaviour is avoided. In order to be more specific this can be expanded on as necessary for the particular role as required.

Main Risks

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Nature of Risk?	Who might be harmed?	What is already/will be done to minimise risk?	What further action is required?	Who is responsible for taking this action and by when?

