

DISCOVER GROOMSPORT

Safeguarding Adults at Risk /Older Person Policy

Discover Groomsport as an organisation is committed to practices, which protects vulnerable adults and older people from harm.

Volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues, which cause harm to vulnerable adults.

We will endeavour to safeguard vulnerable adults and Older People by:

- Adopting protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for volunteers.
- Sharing information about good practice and protection with vulnerable adults, including older people, their families, carers and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving vulnerable adults, carers and families appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of committee and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at regular intervals.

Protection of Vulnerable Adults which includes Older People

A Vulnerable Adult is a person aged 18 or over who maybe in need of Health & Social Services assistance by reason of illness, frailty, mental disorder, physical, sensory, or learning disability. Unable to take care of himself/herself. Unable to protect against harm or serious exploitation from a third party.

1. DEFINITION OF ABUSE

- The physical, psychological, emotional, financial, or sexual maltreatment or neglect of a vulnerable adult by another person.
- The abuse may be a single act or repeated.
- It may take one form or multiple of forms.
- The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse.
- Abuse can occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person in breach of that trust, who have influence over the life of a dependant, whether they be formal or informal carers, staff or family members or others. It can also occur outside such a relationship.

2. CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Psychological and Emotional Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Misuse of Medication
- Institutional Abuse

3. TAKING A REFERRAL

BE ALERT TO A REFERRAL

- Be familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse
- Listen to what is said and unsaid

LISTENING TO A REFERRAL

- Believe the person
- Listen exactly to what is being said
- Be clear on details: establish where, when, how, what
- Repeat back what you understand the person has told you
- It is often helpful to make written notes and take exact quotes of what was said or to draw diagrams of an injury
- It must be established, if the referrer is not the victim, whether the referrer had
 - discussed the allegation with the client and the family including the possible perpetrator
 - If the referrer is a family member establish how this will impact upon the family situation
 - If the referral is made from another agency, written confirmation of this should be requested

EXPLAINING THE WAY FORWARD

- Explain procedures
- Gain consent for investigations to proceed
- If the person is able to make an informed decision, then the decision not to proceed with an investigation should be respected. In the event of doubt about the person's ability to make this decision other appropriate professional opinions should be sought.

MANAGEMENT OF REFERRAL

- Discuss with line manager
- Liaise with appropriate professionals
- Consider the need for a medical referral
- Refer to Designated Officer under Policy and Procedures OR convene a multi-disciplinary meeting to plan the way forward

4. SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

- Everyone should be aware that abuse does exist
- Everyone has a responsibility to prevent it, offer support, and report it
- Each person should be able to recognize the warning signs
- They should know what to do if and when they suspect abuse
- Be familiar with the relevant Policy and Procedures. Know where to find them and how to use them effectively
- Be aware of the definition of abuse and the types of abuse
- Recognizing potentially abusive situations

Code of behaviour guidelines - Volunteers

- Volunteers should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with vulnerable adults, away from others.
- Meetings with individuals should take place as openly as possible.
- If privacy is needed, the door should be left open and volunteers informed of the meeting.
- Ensure that an adult is not left alone in a closed room, particularly a sleeping area or a bathroom, with a young person or vulnerable adult. Have another adult present or keep the door open and inform the other leaders where you are why you are there and who is with you.
- Volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with young people or vulnerable adult. However, there may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing comfort and reassurance, or physical support, for example, assistance on and off a bus. In all cases, physical contact should only take place with the consent of the person involved.
- It is essential for leaders to ensure that any physical contact is always appropriate and cannot ever be interpreted as wrong or that which makes a person uncomfortable or unhappy.
- Do not do things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- It is not good practice to be alone in a car on journeys, however short with a vulnerable adult. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of carer, and someone in charge of the organisation.
- Volunteers should not meet with a vulnerable adult outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of family and the person in charge of the organisation.
- Leaders who are involved in relationships with other leaders, should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their leadership role within the organisation.
- Volunteers should never:
 - Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay – apart from structured sports activities
 - Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged
 - Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to anyone even in fun
 - Let allegations an adult makes go without being addressed and recorded
- Leaders should never touch anyone in an abrupt or forceful manner, which could be seen as physical abuse.
- No sectarian, sexist, racist or other offensive remarks are tolerated toward any person or other group.

- Restraint may *only* be used to prevent harm to the vulnerable adult or another vulnerable adult. A record must be made of circumstances in which the restraint has been considered necessary. Care must be given to the use of any physical restraint as it could be seen as physical assault.

Residential Trips and Outings

Trips out, residential weekends or retreats can be a very rewarding however, leaders should be aware that such activities, which by their nature involve sustained, close contact with vulnerable adult, create situations which could be easily be misinterpreted by them as being inappropriate.

- Plan event well in advance
- Make sure you have enough adult help
- When using coaches; talk to the company and make sure they are covered by full insurance. Do not exceed the limit or number of passengers given. Passengers should be informed that seat belts are to be used at all times and passengers must be seated during journeys.
- If you using private transport make sure there is correct insurance to cover passengers. Ensure there is no overloading of cars. Leaders should not take anyone in a car on their own.
- Inform family fully of arrangements in writing.
- On the trip it is good practise to give each leader a list of the persons for whom they will have charge, even if you all intend to stay together. It is also essential that each individual in the group return with the group they came with. If they are taking part in any special activity, check before you go that there are trained and skilled people in charge and the establishment has first aid and is well covered with insurance in case of accidents.
- Anyone use their own vehicles must take responsibility to inform their insurance company in writing (there is usually no extra charge for this).

Accident prevention and safety guidelines for working with vulnerable adults

Health and Safety

Discover Groomsport maintains specific practices to prevent the risk of accident and to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults.

- One volunteer is trained in First Aid.
- Accident prevention measures are taken – eg use of safety mats and safe equipment.

Medication

- Where treatment requires specialist knowledge (i.e. injections), volunteers are **NOT** in a position to administer medication or personal care.
- Where specialist knowledge is not required, routine medication/treatment can only be administered by volunteers in exceptional circumstances e.g. asthma. In these circumstances, the following must be complied with:
 - To be administered by a nominated member.
 - A letter from the persons doctor agreeing that the relevant volunteer or staff member can give them the relevant treatment is required. The letter should state the circumstances/illness, type of treatment, method of administration, appropriate dosage and that it is appropriate to be administered by a Discover Groomsport member/ staff.

- Written permission from a carer.
- All medications are to be kept in a secure place.
- A record on the appropriate form must be kept of all medicines administered during project sessions/trips.
- Antiseptic or any other sort of cream or lotion will not be used on open wounds; sterile water will be used instead.
- Homeopathic medicines will be treated in the same way as any other form of medication.
- Ensure that medical consent forms are signed to authorise the person in charge to permit any emergency life saving treatment.

Accident and incidents

Always fill in an accident or incident report form with as much information as possible regarding the accident or incident. This helps with any necessary follow up. The person in charge should keep these forms.

Procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse against a member /volunteer

Allegations of abuse can potentially be made about any member/ volunteer. Any allegation must be reported to the designated officer.

As a result of any allegation being received the matter will immediately be the subject of an investigation and consideration will be given as to whether or not the employee should be suspended from work while a full investigation is carried out.

Guidance on disclosure of abuse and how to deal with it

Anyone who suspects that a vulnerable adult has or is being harmed or is at risk of harm has a duty to record the suspected incident and to convey this concern immediately to the Designated Officer within the organisation.

The following information is a guide as to some of the do's and don't s on how to react when a disclosure of abuse has been made.

Do

Stay calm
 Recognise your own feelings
 Receive the information
 Reassure
 Listen
 Record
 Report to the Chair
 Get support for yourself

Don't

Promise confidentiality
 Probe for more information/investigate

Panic

Make the person repeat the story unnecessarily

Use leading questions

Remember: how you react may mean the person telling or not telling his/her story. It may be the beginning of the healing journey for the vulnerable adult

Concerned!

Are you concerned about abuse by a volunteer or another person?

- Yes
- Report your concerns to the Designated Officer
- Provide copy of report
- Retain in safe place
- Do not investigate this yourself or inform parents
- Social Services will advise and act accordingly
- Designated officer and relevant committee member/staff member to meet
- Designated officer makes referral to Social Services.

Recording allegations or suspicions of abuse

Where an allegation is made, or someone in Discover Groomsport has concerns, the Designated Officer should be informed and a detailed record should be made.

Volunteers should ensure is so far as possible that the person is protected from the situation of danger. As soon as it practical and not less than 4 hours after the incidence, contact must be made with the Designated Officer.

It is important for the member of Discover Groomsport who has made the observation to make a record of observations, happenings and discussions that are relevant. The record should be factual and not include opinions or personal interpretations of the facts presented. The record should be made within 6 hours of the suspicion arising, with each recording dated, signed and stored in a secure place. A copy must be provided to the Designated Officer.

Discussion should not take place with anyone else who was not involved immediately within the situation as this impedes investigation and affects the confidentiality of the situation. It is up to the discretion of the Designated Officer as to who else is to be informed of the situation, including incidents where a member of Discover Groomsport may be the alleged abuser.

The following is a checklist of details to note and questions to ask yourself in making a record:

- Name of person.
- Age.
- Any significant factors.
- Name of Carer
- Home address and phone number.
- In the person making the report expressing their own concerns or passing on those of somebody else?

- What has prompted the concerns: Include dates, times etc. of any specific incidents.
- Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?
- Has anyone approached the young person? If so what was said?
- Has anybody been alleged by the young person? If so, record details.
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

Role of Designated Officer

The Designated Officer is responsible for acting as a source of advice on matters pertaining to vulnerable adults, for co-ordinating actions within the organisation and for liaising with Health & Social Services Trusts and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of abuse.

The Designated Officer therefore will:

- Establish contact with the senior member of Social Services' staff responsible for vulnerable adults in the Southern Trust area.
- Provide information and advice on protection of vulnerable adults within the organisation.
- Ensure that the vulnerable adult policy and procedures for Discover Groomsport are followed and will inform Social Services of relevant concerns about individuals.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover.
- Liaise with Social Services and other agencies, as appropriate.
- Keep relevant people within the organisation, particularly the management committee, informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the organisation, and the liaison with other agencies and the outcomes.
- Advise the organisation of vulnerable adult training needs.

Declaration

On behalf of Discover Groomsport, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults/Older Person Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Name: Alain L. Wood-

Position: Chairperson

Date: 8/12/22.