

**FOREVER ACTIVE FORUM
(REPRESENTING CAMBRIDGE CITY)**

VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The abuse of vulnerable adults constitutes a clear infringement of their rights and freedom as citizens. This policy aims to protect vulnerable adults who attend the Forever Active scheme from risk of abuse. As a service we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all members.

Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults accessing the Forever Active Scheme.

Definition of a Vulnerable Adult

“Vulnerable Adult”

Is a person aged 18 years or over

“Who is or maybe in need of community care services by means of mental or other disability, age or illness”

and

“Who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”

Thus a vulnerable adult may be someone who is

- Elderly and Frail
- Has a mental disorder including dementia or a personality disorder
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is an unpaid carer
- Is homeless

What is abuse?

Abuse can include: physical, financial, material, sexual, psychological, discriminatory, emotional abuse and neglect. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone.

All staff, volunteers and Forever Active members have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

- Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment
- Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism
- Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation
- Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc.
- Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition
- Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment
- Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
- Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions
- Institutional abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity

Principles

This Policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of vulnerable adults is the primary concern.
- All vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse and the responsibility of the Social Work Department and the Police to conduct, where appropriate, a joint investigation.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Responsibilities

The Forever Active Scheme will:

- Promote the health and welfare of vulnerable adults accessing the scheme by providing opportunities for them to take part in all activities safely.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of all members.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well being of vulnerable adults and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its members to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect vulnerable adults from abuse and to minimise risk to themselves.
- Ensure all staff working on the programme have a clear CRB check.
- Require members to adopt and abide by this Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of vulnerable adults in line with this Policy as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Review and evaluate this Policy on a regular basis.

Reporting Procedure

All members of staff have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have concerning adult abuse to Helen Johnston, Chair, Forever Active Forum on 01223 457535 or if necessary directly to Social Services or the Police.

Review

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of vulnerable adults
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of vulnerable adults within the Forever Active Scheme
- In all other circumstances, at least annually.