



Document Title:	Safeguarding Adults Policy
Document Purpose:	SEND The Right Message (STRM) is committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of adults they come into contact with
Document Statement:	<p>This document aims to ensure that there is an overarching approach to adult safeguarding STRM and that there is a culture where the reporting of concerns of abuse and neglect is encouraged and that staff, volunteers and members of the public feel supported to do so. This document provides a consistent framework so that adults are safeguarded from abuse and neglect and to ensure that each adult is supported to maintain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wellbeing.• Choice and control.• Safety.• Good health.• Independence.• Dignity and respect. <p>whilst ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The human rights of any adult(s) who is experiencing, or who is at risk of, abuse or neglect are maintained.• The needs and interests of the adult(s) are always respected.• A proportionate, timely, professional and ethical response is offered.• All decisions and actions are proportionate and taken in line with the statutory framework related to adult safeguarding.
Document Application:	Organisation-wide- all staff, volunteers and Trustees
Responsible for Implementation:	Designated Safeguarding Lead (Maggie Cleary) Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding (Rachel King)
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Associated Documents

Data Protection Policy

code of conduct for staff and volunteers

Complaints, comments and complements policy

Whistleblowing policy

Health and safety policy

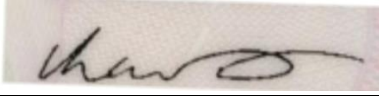
Safer Recruitment Policy

Staff and Volunteer Handbooks

SET Safeguarding procedures

Safeguarding Children Policy

Signed



Chair of Trustees: Vicki Lamb

Contents:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Purpose**
- 3. Scope**
- 4. Policy**
- 5. Schedule of Responsibilities**
- 6. Definitions**
- 7. Duty to Report**
- 8. Procedures to be followed following an Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse**
- 9. The Designated Person**
- 10. Consent**
- 11. Confidentiality**

1. Introduction

1.1 SEND The Right Message (STRM) is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of adults they come into contact with. An adult is defined as an individual over the age of 18, and it is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, and trustees to abide by this commitment.

1.2 The Care Act 2014, which came into force on 1st April 2015, is the most significant legislation on care and support in England for over fifty years. The principles that underpin the Care Act are that of promoting the wellbeing of individuals and of making sure that we always recognise that each person's needs are different and respond accordingly.

1.3 Living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person, all of us need to sign up to this principle and to follow it in acting as good neighbours and citizens. STRM is committed to preventing abuse and neglect, raising safeguarding concerns and putting adults at the centre of our work.

2. Purpose

2.1 This document aims to ensure that there is an overarching approach to adult safeguarding STRM and that there is a culture where the reporting of concerns of abuse and neglect is encouraged and that staff, volunteers and members of the public feel supported to do so. This document provides a consistent framework so that adults are safeguarded from abuse and neglect and to ensure that each adult is supported to maintain:

- Wellbeing.
- Choice and control.
- Safety.
- Good health.
- Independence.
- Dignity and respect.

Whilst ensuring that:

- The human rights of any adult(s) who is experiencing, or who is at risk of, abuse or neglect are maintained.
- The needs and interests of the adult(s) are always respected.
- A proportionate, timely, professional and ethical response is offered.
- All decisions and actions are proportionate and taken in line with the statutory framework related to adult safeguarding.

2.2 The adult experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect will hereafter be referred to as the adult throughout this document.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy and procedure is designed to enable everyone who works for STRM H to understand and carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding adults who need care and support and are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse.

4. Policy

4.1 STRM's Safer Recruitment Policy puts in place procedures to ensure that appropriate checks are made prior to appointment of staff, volunteers and external/agency personnel, in order to prevent, as far as is possible, anyone from using their position to abuse adults who need care and support.

4.2 A structured programme of induction is provided for all new staff that takes account of their level of knowledge about adults at risk. Induction will ensure that employees and volunteers know what behaviour is and is not acceptable, understand what might constitute abuse and who should be informed if abuse is suspected.

4.3 STRM supports staff and volunteers in delivering safe services by providing regular supervision, training, and development.

4.4 All STRM services will ensure that every service user, or others on their behalf, are actively encouraged to provide feedback on the service they receive and take any comments or complaints seriously.

4.5 All staff and volunteers that come into regular contact with service users will be made aware of the vulnerability of our service users. They will be taught to recognise and appropriately respond to suspicions or allegations of abuse. Abusive staff, volunteers or practices will not be accepted or tolerated, and action will be taken using the framework of the STRM Disciplinary and/or Whistle Blowing policies.

5. Schedule of Responsibilities

5.1 Trustees

- To ratify policy
- To have an awareness of the issues relating to service users and abuse
- To read and understand Charity Commission Guidance 'Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees 2017' Updated in 2022

5.2 Chief Executive

- Act as Designated Person in relation to Safeguarding.
- At the discretion of the Chief Executive, a Senior Manager may be made responsible for carrying out a staff disciplinary investigation into abuse.
- To create and review policy
- To authorise and monitor any actions resulting from an investigation
- To follow Data Protection and Information Sharing policy and decide upon what information should be shared with individuals and agencies during the course of and following an investigation into abuse
- To deploy staff in a way that deters collusive relationships and opens up opportunities for disclosure
- To enforce the policy and procedures
- To ensure all staff and volunteers receive adult safeguarding training commensurate with their role and responsibilities

- To report any alerted allegation or suspicion of abuse to the registering authority
- To carry out an initial assessment of any allegation or suspicion of abuse
- To report any allegation or suspicion of abuse to the LADO
- To know the Southend Essex and Thurrock procedures for reporting and investigating allegations or suspicions of abuse for each service within their responsibility
- To produce a written report following an investigation for the Trustees together with any recommendations for action

5.3 **All Employees and volunteers**

- To personally uphold STRM's Statement of Values and Code of Conduct
- To be aware of abuse as an issue and to alert their or another Manager of any concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse
- To maintain a service user's safety and wellbeing at all times. They should secure the service user's immediate safety where possible and ensure immediate medical attention if required.
- To ensure their duty to alert overrides any desire to keep a confidence
- To make clear and detailed written records when abuse is disclosed, witnessed or alleged

6. **Definitions**

6.1 What is adult safeguarding?

Safeguarding is a term that refers to our duty to protect 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 well-being is promoted, including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs when deciding on any action.

An Adult at Risk is a term that refers to any adult aged 18 years or over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs are unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

An adult at risk may therefore, be a person who, for example:

- is an older person who is frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- has mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long-term illness/condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is an unpaid carer such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse

- lacks mental capacity to make particular decisions and is in need of care and support

All staff need to recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, irrespective of the role they undertake.

6.2 There are two key parts to this process:

Preventing abuse from happening. This includes safe recruitment to ensure that unsuitable people are not employed and an organisational culture in which all staff and volunteers are empowered to play a part in preventing and ending abuse.

Protecting people who may be experiencing, or at risk of, abuse. This includes empowering people to know their rights and to access the right support to enable them to achieve the outcomes that they want.

6.3 What is abuse?

Abuse and neglect can take many forms. Organisations should not be constrained in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect and should always consider the circumstances of the individual case.

The main forms of abuse set out in the Care Act 2014 (Chapter 14) are as follows):

- Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions
- Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so-called 'honour' based violence
- Sexual abuse – including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, could not consent or was pressured into consenting, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography, witnessing sexual acts or indecent exposure
- Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber abuse, 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
- Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion
- Organisational abuse - including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home

- Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical 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 – a wide range of behaviour, including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

6.3 Abuse is difficult to assess; situations are rarely as tidy or straightforward as these categories suggest. Many situations may involve a combination of abusive elements.

7. Duty to Report

7.1 However difficult it may seem, all staff and volunteers have a duty to make known their suspicions of abuse. Failure to do so is a failure in our duty of care. Remember, an individual may not be able to alert anyone themselves, perhaps through failure to understand that the activity is abusive or through poor communication skills or through fear.

7.2 Reporting is not easy and often takes a great deal of personal strength and courage. Staff who have reported incidents have already been exposed to disturbing information that could leave them feeling a range of emotions from sadness to anger and even guilt that they could not prevent the alleged abuse.

7.3 Managers must be aware of these issues when receiving a report and ensure that staff are appropriately supported according to their individual needs.

8. Procedures to be followed following an Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse

8.1 The minimum requirement for all staff and volunteers is that they know how to:

- Recognise, record and report abuse
- Take any immediate action to protect further harm
- Access help and advice for the adult at risk

These guidelines follow four procedural stages:

- Alerting
- Reporting
- Investigating
- Monitoring

8.1.1 Alerting

Any member of staff working with service users may be alerted to the possibility of abuse.

Alerting could mean that you witness an act of abuse, a person saying that abuse has occurred, or suspicions raised by indicators listed in these guidelines. In carrying out these procedures, the person alerted must keep detailed records

of the initial cause of concern. Note down exactly what the complainant or alleged victim has said or indicated to you or what you have witnessed. Any such records must clearly separate factual information from an expression of opinion. The member of staff must be aware that the report may be required later as part of legal or disciplinary action.

If the disclosure is made by a Service User, staff must accept what the person is saying and never make a decision without consulting with their line manager to ignore or suppress a disclosure because it is thought to be fantastic or improbable. Do not make comments other than to be comforting and sympathetic.

9. The Designated Person

9.1 The Designated Person is the Chief Executive who is the safeguarding lead for STRM. Incidents and allegations of abuse must be reported to the Designated Person. The Designated Person will ensure correct completion of any referral form as appropriate to the Local Authority to be contacted.

9.2 If you have any concerns at all about the possible abuse of an adult who needs care and support, and are not sure what to do, you should immediately contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding. If an urgent concern arises outside of office hours or when you cannot make contact with the Designated Person, you should report it without delay to the relevant Social Care department:
Southend- Telephone: 01702 215008 email: accessteam@southend.gov.uk
Essex- Telephone: 0345 603 7630 | mail: businesssupportadultsovas@essex.gov.uk
or to the Police (via 999) if it is an emergency situation.

9.3 All staff should be aware of STRM's Whistle-Blowing policy. If a member of staff believes that an adult safeguarding allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately or is suspected of perpetrating abuse, and they have exhausted all other reasonable approaches, this policy should be used to escalate those concerns.

9.4 In any case of suspected abuse, staff have a responsibility to ensure the service user's immediate safety. This may involve immediately challenging the person abusing the service user, even though this may be difficult to do, and trying to persuade him or her to stop. Ensure immediate medical attention is arranged if necessary (e.g. physical injury/trauma, reports of severe pain). Inform any examining doctor of the suspicion of abuse and that a written report will be required which may be used in legal proceedings.

9.5 Every effort must be made to preserve and note evidence by:

- Placing any material evidence in a safe place.
- Not allowing vital evidence to be destroyed by lack of forethought or the passage of time (for example, evidence of a sexual assault could be destroyed if the victim takes a bath before he/she has been medically examined).
- Noting carefully any pertinent comments relating to the alleged abuse

10. Consent

10.1 It is always essential to safeguard the child's safety to consider whether the adult at risk is capable of giving informed consent in relation to the investigation. If they are, their consent should be sought. This includes an awareness of the risks of disclosing that an investigation is being undertaken.

10.2 Where an adult at risk with capacity has made a decision that they do not want action to be taken, and there are no public interest or vital interest considerations, their wishes must be respected.

10.3 The adult at risk must be given information and have the opportunity to consider all the risks and fully understand the likely consequences of that decision over the short and long term.

10.4 If, after discussion with the adult at risk who has mental capacity, they refuse any intervention, their wishes will be respected unless:

- there is a public interest; for example, not acting will put other adults or children at risk
- there is a duty of care to intervene; for example, a crime has been or may be committed

However, consent may need to be considered in relation to the adult at risk of participation in an activity that may be abusive. If consent to abuse or neglect was given under duress, for example, as a result of exploitation, pressure, fear or intimidation, this apparent consent should be disregarded with a safeguarding adults investigation going ahead in response to the concern that has been raised.

11. Confidentiality

11.1 All staff must be aware of the sensitivity for all concerned in matters of abuse. Strict confidentiality must be adhered to on a 'needs to know' basis, according to the reporting procedures contained herein. **ALL DOCUMENTS STORED OR SENT ELECTRONICALLY MUST BE PASSWORD-PROTECTED**