

ESCAPE INTERVENTION SERVICES LTD

VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The Management of Escape Intervention Services Ltd (EISL) recognises that the protection and safety of vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility. EISL defines a vulnerable adult based on the Law Commission's definition – that is a person 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 or herself against significant harm or exploitation'*.

In clarifying this further, EISL adopts the Department of Health's guidance in that an 'adult' refers to a person aged 18 years and over and that people with learning difficulties, mental health problems, older people and people with a disability or impairment will be included within this definition, particularly when their situation is complicated by additional factors, such as physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.

This policy, the related procedures and the Code of Good Practice which follow, establishes the roles and responsibilities of staff; paid or unpaid, in relation to the protection of vulnerable adults, with whom their work brings them into contact. In relation to vulnerable adults, the approach EISL will take is based on, and reflects, the principles of relevant legislation and guidance relating to the protection of vulnerable adults.*

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- 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

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned
- raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect

The Management are responsible for the protection of vulnerable adults within EISL. They have designated the Service Manager as Safeguarding Lead, Lynne Yousef, to oversee this on their behalf: contact 0191 4276353 / 07714 637624. This will include ensuring the implementation and monitoring of this policy.

In relation to recruitment and selection of staff, this will also include ensuring that all criminal disclosures are made regardless of when they were committed or whether they were of major or minor consequence, including spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and references taken which refer to candidates' suitability to work/have contact with vulnerable adults.

It is also the responsibility of the Management of EISL to ensure that all staff, for whom they are responsible, are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and the related procedures and code of good practice.

Management recognises that if vulnerable adults are to be truly protected it is essential that everyone working with vulnerable adults contributes to the work of those with direct responsibility for the protection of vulnerable adults. The procedures that follow recognise and are consistent with that objective and have been designed to complement Local Authority procedures.

As a responsible body, we can not and should not restrict our sense of duty to those vulnerable adults we identify as our service users. Staff, through their work, come into contact with a number of vulnerable adults each and every year. By being vigilant and acting where concerns exist, we can play an important part in their protection.

In operating this policy, staff must also be aware that, in order to protect vulnerable adults, in some circumstances it will be necessary to share what might normally be regarded as confidential information. The following principles should be adhered to:

- Information will only be shared on a need to know basis
- Information will only be shared when it is in the best interests of the service user
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy
- Informed consent should be obtained but if this is not possible and other vulnerable adults are at risk, it may be necessary to override it

Guidance in the form of a Code of Good Practice has also been developed to provide staff with ideas which not only will help to protect vulnerable adults but will also help to identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse. Staff should familiarise themselves with this and if it is necessary to carry out practices contrary to it, only do so after discussion with, and the approval of, the Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy.

Remember, the first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable adults and that it is the responsibility of all staff to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect.

*Carers Act 2014, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986, Employment Rights Act 1996, Enduring Power of Attorney Act 1995, Health Act 1999, Health Services and Public Health Act 1968, Housing Act 1985 & 1996, Human Rights Act 1998, Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, Mental Health Act 1959 & 1983, National Assistance Act 1948, National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, National Health Service Act 1977, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Power of Attorney Act 1971, Public Health Acts 1936 & 1961, Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, Registered Homes Act 1984, Registered Homes (Amendment) Act 1991, Sexual Offences Act 1956 & 1967, Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000, Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, and Data Protection Act 1998.

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Angela Jones (Secretary)	<i>AJ Jones</i> Date:14.1.26

