



HEAR US CROYDON

Croydon's Mental Health Service Users Group

www.hear-us.org

info@hear-us.org

020 8681 6888

Hear Us

QUALITY MANUAL



SECTION D: People Management

D.3.5.1 Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

AGREED DATE:	27/07/2021
LAST DATE OF REVIEW:	11/09/2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	11/09/2025
VERSION #:	V7



Hear Us
Orchard House
15a Purley Road
South Croydon
CR2 6EZ

Telephone: 020 8681 6888
Email: AQS@hear-us.org
Website: www.hear-us.org
Registered in England No. 6891337
Charity No.1135535



1. CONTEXT

Hear Us is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for service users and carers.

Since April 2015, [the Care Act 2014](#) has provided the statutory framework for adult safeguarding.

This policy sets out how to monitor, record and escalate any concerns that staff may have or receive about the welfare and safety of service users, carers, volunteers and staff.

At Hear Us, we believe that safeguarding adults at risk is everyone's responsibility.

If a person is injured or in immediate physical danger, or if a crime has been committed, contact the police and other appropriate emergency services – dial 999.

If it is not an emergency, but a safeguarding issue needs to be reported, then please follow the instructions within this document. Please also inform the Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as practicable.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to outline how a member of staff, volunteer or trustee, should alert both internal and external agencies and report what they have heard, seen, suspect or been told.

This policy is an essential resource that all staff, volunteers and trustees need to be aware of and fully understand during day-to-day involvement with service users.

3. SUMMARY OF ADULT ABUSE

Abuse or neglect can take many forms. These are described in ten categories which are expansive and cover a range of abusive situations or behaviours:

- Physical Abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern Slavery



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- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

It is important to recognise that exploitation is a common theme in nearly all types of abuse and neglect. Please refer to Appendix I at the end of this document for more details on types and indicators of abuse and neglect.

4. ADULTS AT RISK – HEAR US SAFEGUARDING REPORTING PROCEDURE

You are not expected to be an expert in identifying abuse or investigating allegations, but you have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns to a senior member of Hear Us Staff and/or the appropriate agency.

Hear Us Staff: If you receive a disclosure of alleged abuse or develop a strong suspicion that abuse is taking place, you should:

- record the allegation clearly and accurately,
- and make a safeguarding referral.

If you are unsure about whether or not to make a referral, you can speak to the Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance, in their absence, the CEO or Chair of the Trustees.

Hear Us Volunteers or Trustees: If you receive a disclosure of alleged abuse or develop a strong suspicion that abuse is taking place, you should:

- record the allegation clearly and accurately,
- report your concern to your line manager or other Hear Us senior manager as soon as possible, who will take appropriate action.

5. RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF ABUSE/RECEIVING A REPORT

You may become aware of suspected abuse in the following ways:

- by receiving an allegation directly from the adult at risk
- by receiving an allegation from someone who is not the adult at risk



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- by receiving a report from outside agencies the adult at risk may be involved with
- developing a strong suspicion based on your own observations or experience

You should record any report or suspicion, making clear notes of the case (dates, times, details of incident). If you are receiving the report from a third party, you should make them aware that you have a duty to share this information with the relevant statutory agency.

As soon as you have recorded the details of the case, you should:

- notify the relevant statutory agency (which in Croydon is Adult Health and Social Care) by making a safeguarding referral (see below)
- notify the Hear Us designated safeguarding lead (or in their absence, the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Trustees).

Allegations against staff

Any allegation made against a member of staff, volunteer or trustee, should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or another Senior Manager as soon as possible.

If you have immediate concerns regarding a risk to someone's health or safety, please call the emergency services directly on 999.

If you think a crime has been committed, you should contact the police on either 999, 101 or online www.met.police.uk/

Report a safeguarding concern about an adult

If someone is at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect, within the London Borough of Croydon, you can report your concern by completing the Croydon Council [online Safeguarding Adults form](#)

Making a Safeguarding Referral

Online:

Hear Us staff can make a referral using the Croydon Council [online portal](#) and follow the instructions. Please note: **in order to progress with the online referral form you must either log in or complete a simple registration for a new account. You can then continue to complete this form.**



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By phone:

You can also call on **020 8726 6500** (8:30am to 5pm Monday to Friday, not including public holidays).

Please provide as much information as you can as this will help to progress the referral quickly.

What happens next

The safeguarding referral will be checked by the Local Authority social work team. They will make decisions on the next steps, which may involve contacting you to discuss the concerns further.

The Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead will make sure accurate details of all safeguarding referrals are recorded in the appropriate databases. The Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure all safeguarding referrals are regularly reported to

- the South West London ICB (Integrated Care Board)
- any funders who require this information, ensuring confidentiality is adhered to in line with Hear Us confidentiality policies
- and Hear Us Trustees

ADULT SOCIAL CARE REFERRALS

If you think someone needs adult social care support (NOT safeguarding concerns) you can make direct referrals for Adult Social Care for residents of Croydon using the [online portal](#).

Eligibility

The person you are referring must be:

- Over 18
- Living in the London Borough of Croydon

If you can't make an online referral you can telephone 020 8726 6500.



6. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE SAFEGUARDING WORK OF THE ORGANISATION

Partnership Working – Hear Us is committed to working with other organisations and agencies to safeguard adults at risk from abuse.

Prevention – At Hear Us, all of our work is aimed at preventing abuse occurring in the first place rather than reacting to abuse after it has happened.

Protection – All vulnerable individuals deserve protection from the risk of abuse and actual abuse.

Proportionality – At Hear Us, the response we make to suspected abuse is in line with the risks presented. Safeguarding protocols will be used for those cases in most need of action whilst other protocols will be followed wherever necessary.

Accountability – Through the records we keep and the role of the Safeguarding Lead within the organisation, we hold ourselves accountable to our service users and outside agencies.

Empowerment – At Hear Us we want to ensure that our service users are involved with the key decisions they make about their lives. Wherever possible we will inform the service user of concerns at the earliest opportunity. For service users who lack the capacity to understand whether they would benefit from a safeguarding referral, a best interest decision will be made.

7. RECRUITMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All offers of paid work and volunteer placements will be subject a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. No-one will start paid work or voluntary placements until a satisfactory DBS certificate has been received by Hear Us. DBS certificates will need to be renewed every three years.

8. TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

At Hear Us, we are committed to ensuring all staff, volunteers and trustees undertake appropriate safeguarding training and receive regular supervision. The required level and frequency of safeguarding training (including refreshers) and supervision will be dependent on their role within the organisation and is monitored by senior management and the Safeguarding Lead.



9. DIGNITY IN CARE

Dignity in care and safeguarding are integral to safe dignified care. Within Hear Us, we are committed to [The Dignity Challenge](#) and we believe that our services keep people safe and respect peoples' dignity because we

- Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse,
- Support people with the same respect we would want for ourselves or a member of our own family,
- Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service,
- Enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice and control,
- Listen and support people to express their needs and wants,
- Respect people's right to privacy,
- Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution,
- Engage with family members and carers as care partners,
- Assist people to maintain confidence and positive self-esteem,
- Act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation.

10. ASSOCIATED HEAR US POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Staff Handbook (including whistleblowing, complaints, lone-working)
- Staff Supervision and Appraisal Policy
- Hear Us Safeguarding Procedure Flow Chart

11. Useful links:

Further information and advice is available at

<https://www.croydonsab.co.uk/> or

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/sva/reporting-abuse>

Care & Support Statutory Guidance (Care Act 2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>



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Prevent – Building Partnerships, Staying Safe DH 2011

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215251/dh_131934.pdf

GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY

Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead	Name: Claire Hawkes Email: claire@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888 or 07784 334 379
Hear Us Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Lead	Name: Claire Hawkes Email: claire@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888 or 07784 334 379
Chief Executive Officer	Name: Tim Oldham Email: tim@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888 or 0772 373 296
Chair of the Trustees	Name: Abeline Greene Email: abeline@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888



APPENDIX I

Types and indicators of abuse and neglect

Physical Abuse

Types of physical abuse

- Assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing
- Rough handling
- Scalding and burning
- Physical punishments
- Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint
- Making someone purposefully uncomfortable (e.g. opening a window and removing blankets)
- Involuntary isolation or confinement
- Misuse of medication (e.g. over-sedation)
- Forcible feeding or withholding food
- Unauthorised restraint, restricting movement (e.g. tying someone to a chair)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a very specific form of physical (and psychological) abuse. It is also known as "female circumcision"

Possible indicators of physical abuse

- No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened
- Injuries are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle
- Bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps
- Frequent injuries
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person
- Signs of malnutrition
- Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP

Domestic violence or abuse

Types of domestic violence or abuse

Domestic violence or abuse can be characterised by any of the indicators of abuse outlined in this briefing relating to:

- Psychological



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- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional.

Domestic violence and abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It also includes so called 'honour' -based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Coercive or controlling behaviour is a core part of domestic violence. Coercive behaviour can include:

- Acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation
- Harming, punishing, or frightening the person
- Isolating the person from sources of support
- Exploitation of resources or money
- Preventing the person from escaping abuse
- Regulating everyday behaviour.

Possible indicators of domestic violence or abuse

- Low self-esteem
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not
- Physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones
- Verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others
- Fear of outside intervention
- Damage to home or property
- Isolation – not seeing friends and family
- Limited access to money

Sexual abuse

Types of sexual abuse

- Rape, attempted rape or sexual assault
- Inappropriate touch anywhere
- Non- consensual masturbation of either or both persons
- Non- consensual sexual penetration or attempted penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth
- Any sexual activity that the person lacks the capacity to consent to

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- Inappropriate looking, sexual teasing or innuendo or sexual harassment
- Sexual photography or forced use of pornography or witnessing of sexual acts
- Indecent exposure

Possible indicators of sexual abuse

- Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Foreign bodies in genital or rectal openings
- Infections, unexplained genital discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- The uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude
- Incontinence not related to any medical diagnosis
- Self-harming
- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance
- Excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships
- Fear of receiving help with personal care
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

Psychological or emotional abuse

Types of psychological or emotional abuse

- Enforced social isolation – preventing someone accessing services, educational and social opportunities and seeing friends
- Removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance
- Preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs
- Preventing the expression of choice and opinion
- Failure to respect privacy
- Preventing stimulation, meaningful occupation or activities
- Intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing or verbal abuse
- Addressing a person in a patronising or infantilising way
- Threats of harm or abandonment
- Cyber bullying

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Possible indicators of psychological or emotional abuse

- An air of silence when a particular person is present
- Withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person
- Insomnia
- Low self-esteem
- Uncooperative and aggressive behaviour
- A change of appetite, weight loss/gain
- Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger
- Apparent false claims, by someone involved with the person, to attract unnecessary treatment

Financial or material abuse

Types of financial or material abuse

- Theft of money or possessions
- Fraud, scamming
- Preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets
- Employees taking a loan from a person using the service
- Undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- Arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise inheritance
- Denying assistance to manage/monitor financial affairs
- Denying assistance to access benefits
- Misuse of personal allowance in a care home
- Misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home
- Someone moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress
- False representation, using another person's bank account, cards or documents
- Exploitation of a person's money or assets, e.g. unauthorised use of a car
- Misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority
- Rogue trading – e.g. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs and failure to carry out agreed repairs or poor workmanship

Possible indicators of financial or material abuse

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- Missing personal possessions
- Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle
- Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts
- Power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity
- Failure to register an LPA after the person has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so
- The person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative
- The family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person
- Signs of financial hardship in cases where the person's financial affairs are being managed by a court appointed deputy, attorney or LPA
- Recent changes in deeds or title to property
- Rent arrears and eviction notices
- A lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service
- Failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person
- Disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g. insufficient food in the house
- Unnecessary property repairs

Modern Slavery

Types of modern slavery

- Human trafficking
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography
- Debt bondage – being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to

Possible indicators of modern slavery

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address

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- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Always wearing the same clothes
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of law enforcers

Further information on identifying and reporting modern slavery can be found on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk)

Discriminatory abuse

Types of discriminatory abuse

- Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as **'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010**)
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic
- Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader
- Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Denying basic rights to healthcare, education, employment and criminal justice relating to a protected characteristic
- Substandard service provision relating to a protected characteristic

Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse

- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- Expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety
- The support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic

Organisational or institutional abuse

Types of organisational or institutional abuse

- Discouraging visits or the involvement of relatives or friends
- Run-down or overcrowded establishment
- Authoritarian management or rigid regimes
- Lack of leadership and supervision
- Insufficient staff or high turnover resulting in poor quality care

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- Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Lack of respect for dignity and privacy
- Failure to manage residents with abusive behaviour
- Not providing adequate food and drink, or assistance with eating
- Not offering choice or promoting independence
- Misuse of medication
- Failure to provide care with dentures, spectacles or hearing aids
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Failure to respond to abuse appropriately
- Interference with personal correspondence or communication
- Failure to respond to complaints

Possible indicators of organisational or institutional abuse

- Lack of flexibility and choice for people using the service
- Inadequate staffing levels
- People being hungry or dehydrated
- Poor standards of care
- Lack of personal clothing and possessions and communal use of personal items
- Lack of adequate procedures
- Poor record-keeping and missing documents
- Absence of visitors
- Few social, recreational and educational activities
- Public discussion of personal matters
- Unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet
- Absence of individual care plans
- Lack of management overview and support

Neglect and acts of omission

Types of neglect and acts of omission

- Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care
- Providing care in a way that the person dislikes
- Failure to administer medication as prescribed
- Refusal of access to visitors
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Not taking account of educational, social and recreational needs

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- Ignoring or isolating the person
- Preventing the person from making their own decisions
- Preventing access to glasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc.
- Failure to ensure privacy and dignity

Possible indicators of neglect and acts of omission

- Poor environment – dirty or unhygienic
- Poor physical condition and/or personal hygiene
- Pressure sores or ulcers
- Malnutrition or unexplained weight loss
- Untreated injuries and medical problems
- Inconsistent or reluctant contact with medical and social care organisations
- Accumulation of untaken medication
- Uncharacteristic failure to engage in social interaction
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing

Self-neglect

Types of self-neglect

- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
- Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings
- Inability to avoid self-harm
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs

Indicators of self-neglect

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- Neglecting household maintenance
- Hoarding
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury



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In addition, the Care Act statutory guidance 2014 formally recognises self-neglect as a category of abuse and neglect and within that category identifies hoarding.

If you feel you have come across something which may be abuse but are not sure, please ensure you discuss this with your line manager and/or the Hear Us designated safeguarding lead.



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Version #	Author	Date	Version Notes
HU-V4	Claire Hawkes	16/08/22	Reviewed policy – no changes (in legislation etc). Updated Chair of trustees
HU-V5	T Oldham	14/04/2023	New Revision – annual review
HU-V6	Claire Hawkes	14/04/2024	New revision. New guidelines and system for making safeguarding referrals.
HU-V7	Claire Hawkes	11/09/2024	New revision to clarify Hear Us internal procedure. Volunteers. Flow chart added to associated policies
		Click or tap to enter a date.	