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Adult Safeguarding Policy

Department	Governance
Policy Owner	Director (Legal and Governance)
Approved Date	November 2021
Date for Renewal	November 2024
Version Number	1.0

Purpose

To help protect tenants and occupiers of Flagship Group properties who are subject to, or are at risk of abuse and neglect.

To help protect tenants and occupiers of Flagship Group properties right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

To raise awareness and understanding of safeguarding adults.

Definitions

An adult is anyone who is 18yrs or older.

Safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has care or support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing or is 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 (including self-neglect)

Safeguarding adults at risk means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect (Statutory guidance under the Care Act 2014).

An adult with care and support needs may be an older person, a person with a disability, learning difficulty or a mental impairment such as dementia. Someone with a mental health condition or illness, a person with a physical long-term health condition.

Someone who is dependent on others to maintain their quality of life or someone who misuses alcohol or drugs to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day to day living.

Abuse is defined as "the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person" and can take the following forms:

Physical abuse

Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions. This may include female genital mutilation.

Domestic abuse

Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, coercion and control, stalking, or so called 'honour' based violence. Domestic abuse can occur within a relationship or after a relationship has ended.

Sexual abuse

Including rape, sexual assault, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography (including revenge porn), subjection

to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, online bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. This may include Hate and 'mate' crime.

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. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

County Lines/Cuckooing

The exploitation of individuals in relation to the trafficking, storage and supply of illegal drugs including where a vulnerable adult's home is taken over (cuckooing).

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, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission

Including ignoring medical, emotional 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

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

We take all concerns, whether current or historical seriously and will refer as appropriate.

Principles

The Care Act 2014 sets out six key principles that underpin all adult safeguarding work:

Empowerment - Presumption of person led decisions and informed consent

Protection - Support and representation for those in greatest need

Prevention - It is better to act before harm occurs

Proportionality – Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented

Partnership - Solutions through services and agencies working with their communities and with each other. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse

Accountability - Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

We fully recognise and uphold the 5 key principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in all aspects of our work by:

- Presuming each adult at risk has capacity
- Supporting individuals to make their own decisions
- Recognising the right for individuals to make their own decisions, even if they may seem unwise
- Making sure what we do for adults at risk (without capacity) is in their best interests
- Making sure that anything we do is the least restrictive action for the individual

Policy objectives

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Help protect tenants and occupiers of Flagship Group properties who are subject to or at risk of abuse and neglect.
- Recognise and report safeguarding concerns regarding adults at risk.
- Record safeguarding concerns centrally.
- Provide relevant safeguarding information to Local Authorities when requested.
- Co-operate with local authorities, the Police, social services and other relevant agencies on safeguarding issues.

Further detail

We will provide appropriate induction, role specific and refresher training on recognising and reporting abuse or neglect, to all relevant staff. All safeguarding Leads will be provided with Lead specific training.

We will share information with relevant agencies if we are concerned that an adult at risk is being abused or neglected, or if we believe there is a risk of this happening in the future. Upon identifying a safeguarding concern, a referral will be made to the appropriate agency through their referral mechanisms.

We will not investigate individual vulnerable adult protection cases but will make referrals to the appropriate statutory agency. We will however continue to work with those agencies and that adult as part of a co-ordinated agency response where needed. All staff should follow safeguarding procedures to ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect or significant harm to any vulnerable adults are externally referred and recorded on our central system.

The reasons for referrals made or action taken, or not taken, by Flagship Group will be clearly recorded.

We will participate in multi-agency case conferences where needed.

We will keep a record of all safeguarding concerns, referrals and outcomes.

Flagship will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others (subsidiaries, volunteers, contractors etc.) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and where necessary, to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes.

This policy applies to all Flagship Group staff.

This Policy is supported by the Safeguarding Children Policy, Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Data Protection Policy and ASB Policy.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed as necessary, and at least every three years by the Director (Legal and Governance) and any changes will be approved by the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee.

Measures

- The number of safeguarding referrals to assess demand and awareness of safeguarding
- The source and nature of safeguarding referrals to assess awareness and effectiveness of the reporting system and training requirements

These measures will be monitored by the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee within their Annual Safeguarding Review.