

## Healthwatch Isle of Wight Safeguarding Policy

*This policy and procedures apply to all Board members, staff, volunteers and people associated with Healthwatch Isle of Wight and should be used in conjunction with local safeguarding/making safeguarding personal training.*

### **Introduction**

Healthwatch Isle of Wight is committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children and believe that safeguarding is 'everybody's business'. Healthwatch has a key role to play in sharing people's experience of local health and social care services. Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. This is fundamental to creating high quality health and social care. Healthwatch Isle of Wight will take every possible step to ensure the safety, protection and welfare of children and adults at risk and will implement this through its policies, procedures, practice and training.

We endorse the CQC's approach to safeguarding:

*'Safeguarding is a key priority for CQC and people who use services are at the heart of what we do. Every organisation and person who comes into contact with a child or adult has a responsibility and a role to play to help keep children and adults safe.'*

Care Quality Commission, *Statement on CQC's role and responsibilities for safeguarding children and adults* June 2015.

We also fully endorse the multi-agency SHIP (Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth) Safeguarding Adults Policy.

### **What is safeguarding and who does it apply to?**

*Safeguarding means protecting a person'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 risk and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the person's well-being is promoted.*

Adults at risk are defined as people aged 18 or over who need more help than others to stay safe.

The official definition is given below:

*'a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation'*

### ***The aims of this policy is to:***

- Prevent abuse or neglect from happening
- Protect children or adults at risk if abuse is already occurring
- Clearly describe the procedure to be followed by Healthwatch Isle of Wight staff and volunteers when concerns or suspicions of abuse are raised.
- Follow the principles of 'Making Safeguarding Personal' by putting the person at the centre of all decision making processes.
- Raise awareness that everyone has the right to take risks as long as the risk is recognised and understood by all concerned.

### ***Principles of Safeguarding***

The Healthwatch Isle of Wight policy is based on the six principles of Safeguarding which were formalised within the Care Act 2014

1. **Empowerment:** people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent
2. **Prevention:** it is better to take action before harm occurs
3. **Proportionality:** the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
4. **Protection:** support and representation for those in greatest need
5. **Partnership:** local solutions through services working with their communities – communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
6. **Accountability:** accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice

### ***What is abuse?***

Abuse of a person at risk may consist of a single act or repeated acts affecting more than one person.

It may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks.

It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they do not, or cannot, consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and any setting and may result in harm to or exploitation of, the individual.

In many cases, abuse may be a criminal offence.

Intent is not an issue at the point of deciding whether an act or a failure to act is abuse; it is the impact of the act on the person and the harm or risk of harm to that individual.

Abuse can take many forms. The following is a list of the main types of abuse:

**Physical abuse can include:** Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

**Sexual abuse can include:** Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Psychological abuse can include:** Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

**Financial or material abuse can include:** Theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Neglect and acts of omission can include:** Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care, welfare benefits or educational services, withholding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Discriminatory abuse can include:** Racism, sexism or acts based on a person's disability, age or sexual orientation. It also includes other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment such as disability hate crime.

**Domestic abuse can include:** Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and so called 'honour' based violence.

**Organisational abuse can include:** Neglect and poor care practice within a care setting such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in someone's own home ranging from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be neglect or poor practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within a care setting.

**Modern slavery can include:** Encompassing 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.

**Self –neglect can include:** a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and behaviour such as hoarding.

### ***Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedure - what to do:***

If you witness the abuse of an adult at risk, you suspect that someone is at risk or you have seen changes in behaviour or living patterns that make you suspect that someone is being abused, it is important that you don't ignore what you have seen or suspect. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse of any kind and there is support and assistance available to put a stop to it.

1. If you believe that someone is being abused and is in immediate danger, ensure the immediate safety of yourself and the individual.
2. Ring the police calling 999
3. In order to make sure that the incident is recalled accurately, writing down the date, time, name of the abuser and what you saw is very important. It may also be necessary to write down what has happened, as described in the abuse victim's own words. In these circumstances it is essential to make a clear distinction between facts or observations and subjective opinions. This should be done as soon as possible after the event.
4. If you believe an adult at risk may be at risk of harm of abuse, but is not in immediate danger, report any concerns immediately to the HealthWatch Isle of Wight Safeguarding Lead  
Joanna Smith – [Joanna.smith@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk](mailto:Joanna.smith@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk) or 01983 522609.
5. Inform the person that you will have to share your concerns with the Healthwatch Isle of Wight Safeguarding Lead, but information will only be given on a need to know basis.
6. Ensure that your response promotes the involvement, choice and control of the person concerned, working on the basis that people are experts in their own lives and have the right to make decisions about their own health and wellbeing.
7. The safeguarding lead will refer safeguarding concerns to the adult safeguarding team through Adult First Response on 01983 814980. If it is out of hours, the emergency duty team will be contacted on 01983 821105.  
Safeguarding concerns will also be referred to the Care Quality Commission on 03000 616161 or [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)
8. The name of the person expressing the concern can be kept confidential.

## ***Child Protection***

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm.

Abuse (also called significant harm) can happen to a child at any age. Abusers can be adults but not just parents or carers, abuse often occurs within a relationship of trust e.g. a teacher, carer, family friend or youth leader.

### **There are four main types of child abuse:**

**Physical abuse can include:** hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. Physical abuse in sport may be when a child is forced into training and competition which exceeds the capacity of his or her immature and growing body; or where the child is given drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty.

**Sexual abuse can include:** forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Emotional abuse can include:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved. Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they have to say or how they communicate. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, serious bullying or the exploitation of a child.

**Neglect can include:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

## ***Children`s Safeguarding procedure - What to do***

**If the situation is an emergency you must dial 999. The police have the power to intervene if a child is in immediate danger.**

Children who report abuse **must** be listened to and **heard**; whatever form their attempts to communicate their worries may take. The following procedure should be followed should a child make a disclosure:

1. The child should be **listened to but not interviewed or asked to repeat the account**. Avoid questions, particularly leading questions. **‘Listened to’ means just that; on no account should suggestions be made to children as to alternative explanations for their worries.**  
The child should not be interrupted when recalling significant events.
2. Ensure that the child understands that you cannot keep the disclosure a secret and may need to tell the Healthwatch Isle of Wight Safeguarding Lead.
3. All information should be noted carefully, including details such as timing, setting, who was present and what was said, in the child’s own words. The account obtained should be recorded verbatim or as near as possible.  
Care should be taken not to make assumptions about what the child is saying or to make interpretations.  
The written record of the disclosure should be signed and dated by the person who received them as soon as practicable. An accurate record of all that has happened must be made, stating the facts of any injury, times, explanation and action taken. A careful note should be taken of what was observed, and when this occurred.
4. This should then be given to the Healthwatch Isle of Wight Safeguarding Lead who will take necessary action and store documents securely.
5. The Healthwatch Isle of Wight safeguarding lead will report any concerns about the wellbeing of a child to Hants Direct on 0300 300 0117
6. Safeguarding concerns will also be referred to the Care Quality Commission on 03000 616161 or [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

### ***Healthwatch Isle of Wight safeguarding obligations:***

All staff and volunteers are obliged to follow the procedures as set out in this policy and the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy Guidance and Toolkit Dec 2016.

People who share their experiences with Healthwatch Isle of Wight have the right to expect that the information they give will be handled in a confidential manner and only used for the purpose for which it was intended to be used.

However, it is essential that if Healthwatch Isle of Wight staff or volunteers are concerned about the safety of a child or an adult at risk, then they have a duty to report this to the safeguarding lead who will contact the appropriate authority to ensure the safety of the individual and/or others.

Due to the nature of our service, it is not a realistic expectation that Healthwatch Isle of Wight staff or volunteers or anyone associated with providing a Healthwatch Isle of Wight service, is responsible for deciding whether an adult at risk has the capacity to consent to the sharing of information. The responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred, will remain with the IOW Council Adult Safeguarding Team, not with Healthwatch Isle of Wight staff or volunteers.

Any safeguarding allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer should be reported to the Healthwatch Isle of Wight safeguarding lead who will report and investigate in line with the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy Guidance and Toolkit Dec 2016.

Any allegation made against the Safeguarding lead should be reported to the Chair of Healthwatch Isle of Wight.

### ***Staff training***

Healthwatch Isle of Wight will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers receive training appropriate to their role within the organisation. All staff and volunteers will be introduced to the Safeguarding Policy during their induction and will receive safeguarding/making safeguarding personal training. This will be refreshed on an annual basis.

### ***Recruitment***

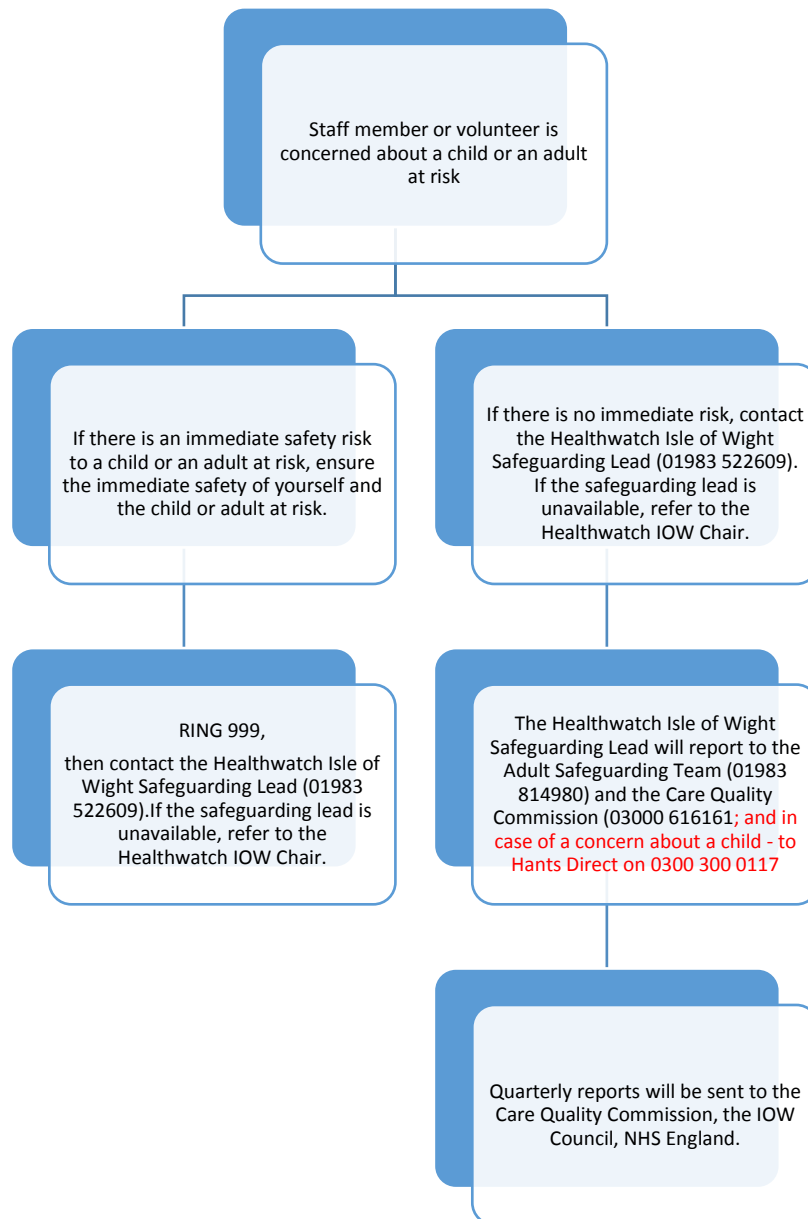
All staff and volunteers at Healthwatch Isle of Wight who may have regular contact with children or adults at risk, will be required to have an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Any recruitment decision will be dependent on two satisfactory references and an appropriate level of DBS check.

**SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR HEALTHWATCH ISLE OF WIGHT– Joanna Smith**

**[Joanna.smith@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk](mailto:Joanna.smith@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk)**

**Telephone: 01983 522609**

## Healthwatch Isle of Wight Safeguarding Flowchart



For more information, please refer to the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy Guidance and Toolkit Dec 2016. <https://www.iwight.com/azservices/documents/2880-February-2017-Multi-Agency-Safeguarding-Adults-Policy-and-Guidance-2nd-Edition-December-2016-v3HF000013546093.pdf>