

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Local Healthwatch has a key part to play in sharing the public's experience of health and social care services. This includes any suspected cases of abuse or neglect, or failure to safeguard. It is important for Healthwatch to have a clear policy for staff and volunteers about what action to take if they suspect someone is in danger of abuse or they feel safeguarding procedures are inadequate.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If they feel a vulnerable adult or child is in danger of abuse or neglect, they need to report it to the relevant Authority.

Definition

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

Abuse can include:

- Physical
- Financial
- Material
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Discriminatory
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetrated by anyone.

Reporting

If a vulnerable Adult is suspected of being in IMMEDIATE DANGER:

- Call the Police on 999 – reporting a vulnerable adult in danger

If you believe a vulnerable Adult is at risk of harm or abuse, but NOT in IMMEDIATE danger you should call:

- Rutland Social Services Prevention & Safeguarding Team – 01572 758341

Out of Hours

- Adults Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland - 0116 255 1606

If you believe a child or young person is suspected of being in IMMEDIATE DANGER

- Call the Police on 999 – reporting a vulnerable child or young person in danger

If you believe a child or young person is at risk or harm or abuse, but NOT in IMMEDIATE danger you should call:

- Rutland County Council – Children’s Duty Team – 01572 758407

Out of Hours

- Children’s Emergency Duty Team (EDT) - 0116 305 0005

In either case AFTER the above action you must also raise your concerns with the Healthwatch Rutland CEO who, if it is appropriate, will raise the issue with the Care Quality Commission on 03000 616161 or email enquires@cqc.org.uk

Recruitment, Selection & Training of Staff & Volunteers

All staff and volunteers at Healthwatch Rutland require an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The check will be requested prior to the applicant taking up post.

An introduction to safeguarding will be given to all staff and volunteers in line with the local Leicestershire and Rutland Multi Agency Safeguarding policies and procedures. Updates and ongoing training will be provided at a level commensurate with the staff or volunteer role.

Responsibilities & Reporting Procedures

- It is the responsibility of Healthwatch Rutland volunteers and staff to raise all cases of suspected or alleged abuse in line with the procedures identified in this policy and the Leicestershire and Rutland Multi Agency policy (details can be found on their website <http://www.lradultsafeguarding.co.uk/>).
- It is the responsibility of Healthwatch Rutland volunteers and staff to report suspected abuse as soon as reasonably possible.
- All Safeguarding concerns received directly to Healthwatch staff should be logged and reported immediately, (preferably) through the CEO using the reporting procedures above.
- Failure to report concerns may put a vulnerable adult or child at risk.
- It is **not** the responsibility of Healthwatch to make any decision as to whether abuse has occurred or not. Once reported, this responsibility lies with the Adult or Children’s Social Services Team.
- It is the responsibility of Healthwatch Rutland, once a report has been made, to follow up and track the actions made by the relevant agency.

- If a service user raises a suspicion or makes a claim of abuse, if circumstances allow, care should be taken to explain that following their disclosure the process within this policy will be followed and it will not always be possible for Healthwatch Rutland to maintain all aspects of confidentiality.
- Any safeguarding allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer should be reported to the CEO of Healthwatch Rutland who will report and investigate in line with the Multi Agency Policy and take the appropriate action as per the Policy reporting procedures and also internal disciplinary /governance procedures. Any allegation made against the Chief Executive of Healthwatch Rutland, should be reported to the Chair of Healthwatch Rutland Community Interest Company Board of Trustees.
- Healthwatch Rutland has an identified Lead for Safeguarding. This is the CEO, contactable through the Healthwatch office.

Fig 1. Healthwatch Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Reporting Process

