



POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy title: **SAFEGUARDING 'ADULTS AT RISK' POLICY**

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Document control

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WELLSPRING SETTLEMENT – SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

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1. Designated Adults Safeguarding Leads

Designated Adults Safeguarding Leads have been appointed as responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of adults identified as ‘adults at risk’ (see adults at risk definition 3.1) using Wellspring Settlement’s services. The term ‘adult at risk’ has replaced ‘vulnerable adult’. The term ‘adult at risk’ is detailed in the Care Act 2014.

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Out of hours - call the **Duty Number on: 07507 205664**

This policy outlines steps to take with adults registered as Wellspring Settlement service users who fit within the definition of an Adult at Risk (Definition 3.1) and where there is a concern of abuse (Definition 3.2). Working with adults who do not fall within the Adult at Risk definition 3.1 who present in crisis fall under the Wellspring Settlement Crisis Management Policy [insert link](#).

If you have a concern or you’re in any doubt about the safety of an adult, please speak to your line manager. In the event that your line manager is not available please speak to any of the Hub Managers or Deputy CEO’s, in the event that none of these are available please speak to one of the Safeguarding Leads.

This policy also works alongside the Bristol City Council Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures.

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/33728/Bristol%20Safeguarding%20Adults%20Policy2015.pdf/d16da726-f468-48e3-9bc1-da9927b2061a>

Further information about reporting suspected abuse within Bristol can be found

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/report-suspected-abuse>

2. Statement of Purpose

Wellspring Settlement is a multi-purpose organisation with charitable status operating over two sites: Barton Hill Settlement, Ducie Road and Wellspring Healthy Living Centre, Beam Street. It is community-led and has a vision that there is a strong, confident, safe and cohesive local community, where people are able to work together to deal with the issues that affect their lives, can achieve their full potential, have the best opportunities and resources to reach their goals in education, employment and family life, and are financially secure.

Wellspring Settlement (WS) recognises that all people regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious beliefs, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse and is committed to safeguarding the welfare of adults that we are working with. It also recognises that good safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with the Wellspring Settlement's work, including staff, volunteers and trustees, as this policy can help protect them from erroneous or malicious allegations.

All staff and volunteers working at the Wellspring Settlement are required to:

- Recognise and accept their responsibilities when working directly or indirectly with adults (someone age 18+).
- Familiarise themselves with this Safeguarding Adults At Risk policy and procedure and the Crisis Management policy and their responsibilities within it.
- Develop awareness and recognition of the signs and indicators of the issues which can cause harm and/or constitute abuse.
- Adults, whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation have the right to safeguarding from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse to the named designated Safeguarding Leads following the procedures in this policy.

Wellspring Settlement will endeavour to Safeguard Adults At Risk by:

- Ensure that all managers, employees and volunteers have access to and are familiar with this Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and understand their role and responsibilities within it.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers receive training in relation to safeguarding and crisis management and at a level commensurate with their role.

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- Ensuring all staff and volunteers complete a DBS check and register to the update service where applicable to their role.
- Ensuring all incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Reporting concerns to the authorities and relevant organisations, and work with them and their procedures.
- Carefully following a procedure for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- All staff, volunteers, contractors and trustees, and anyone in paid or unpaid work on behalf of the Wellspring Settlement with access to children will be vetted through the Recruitment Policy and Procedures and will complete a DBS check where applicable. All staff will discuss safeguarding practices and identify training needs as part of their supervision, and this will be recorded in supervision notes.
- Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through support and training.
- Ensure there are two named designated people to promote safeguarding awareness and practice within the organisation.
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of GDPR.

3. Policy Definitions

3.1 Who is an 'Adult at risk'

The Care Act 2014 states that adult safeguarding duties apply to an adult at risk identified as aged 18 or over, who:

- has needs for care and support* (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) **and**
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, **and**
- because of the care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Care and support* is the mixture of practical, financial and emotional support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives and be independent - including older people, people with a disability or long-term illness, people with mental health problems, and carers. Care and support includes assessment of people's needs, provision of services and the allocation of funds to enable a person to purchase their own care and support. It could include care home, home care, personal assistants, day services, or the provision of aids and adaptations.

3.2 Mental Capacity

People must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions. Where an adult is found to lack capacity to make a decision then any action taken, or any decision made for, or on their behalf, must be made in their best interests. The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 is a legal framework which protects people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. The act says that: “... a person lacks capacity in relation to a matter if at the material time he is unable to make a decision for himself in relation to the matter because of an impairment of, or disturbance in the functioning of the mind or brain.”

The presumption is that adults have mental capacity to make informed choices about their safety and how they live their lives. Mental capacity and a person’s ability to give informed consent are at the heart of decisions and actions taken under this safeguarding policy.

If you have a concern or you’re in any doubt about the safety of an adult, are unclear if they fit the criteria for an Adult at Risk or the Crisis Management Policy and/or if they have the mental capacity to make their own decisions, please speak to your line manager.

For more information follow link below - Governments Office of Public Guardian
Safeguarding Policy pub date 11/15

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934858/SD8-Office_of-the-Public-Guardian-safeguarding-policy.pdf

3.3 Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs)

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) is part of the MCA and is a legal framework for individuals who lack the capacity to consent to be accommodated in a hospital or care home to receive care and treatment. Under the Human Rights Act 1998 there is a duty to ensure people are protected from unlawful deprivation of liberty. The term ‘deprivation of liberty’ is not a negative one and does not always mean that someone is doing something wrong. Restrictions on someone’s liberty are sometimes necessary to keep them safe, for example, it may be necessary for a person to reside in a care home, hospital, or supported living placement and receive a care package to meet their care needs and keep them safe. A person’s liberty can only be taken away under the Mental Capacity Act if an individual lacks the capacity to agree to restrictions. At present although a deprivation of liberty can occur in other community settings such as supported living, it cannot be assessed under the usual DoLS procedures.

3.4 What is “Abuse”?

Abuse is the violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It may be something that is done to the person, or something not done when it should have been. It does not necessarily have to be intentional - if the vulnerable person experiences it as abusive it is considered abuse.

It may be:

- **Physical abuse**, which includes hitting, pushing, inappropriate use of medication, sanctions or restraint.
- **Domestic abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, ‘honour’ based violence.
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Emotional**, is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a person’s emotional well being. It may involve conveying to adults at risks that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.
- **Psychological/emotional abuse**, which includes threats, intimidation, coercion, harassment.
- **Financial and material abuse**, which includes theft, and pressure in connection with wills or property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect**, which includes ignoring medical or physical needs, not providing access to appropriate health or social care, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse**, which includes all forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment based on a person’s disability, ethnic origin, gender, age or sexuality (often called “hate crime”).
- **Institutional abuse**, which can include repeated instances of poor care, ill treatment of adults at risks, and unsatisfactory professional practice. This is often an indicator of more serious problems within a paid and/or regulated care environment.
- **Radicalisation as a form of abuse**, defined as causing someone to become an advocate of radical political or social reform by supporting terrorism and violent extremism.
- **Modern slavery**, including human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude and inhuman treatment.
- **Self neglect**, including a range of behaviours, such as neglecting care for personal hygiene, health or surroundings and including such behaviours as hoarding. A safeguarding response in relation to self-neglect may be appropriate where:
 - a person is declining assistance in relation to their care and support needs, and

- the impact of their decision, has or is likely to have a substantial impact on their overall individual wellbeing

This list is not exhaustive but gives an illustrative guide as to the sorts of behaviours that could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

3.5 Awareness

As a Wellspring Settlement member of staff, trustee, service user, volunteer etc., you are not responsible for diagnosing abuse. However, you have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with an adult and understand the policies and procedures in place to guide best practice. Not all concerns about an adult relate to abuse - there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what you know about the person and their circumstances. Wellspring Settlements ethos is the relationship between the worker and adult is key, with the wider staff team available to support.

Abuse can happen in any setting - at home, in sheltered housing, in supported living settings, at day centres and other day services, in care homes, in hospitals, wherever people are dependent on the care of others for their wellbeing.

Abuse happens to people in all sections of society.

3.6 Safeguarding

Safeguarding means being proactive by putting processes in place that minimise the risk of harm to adults at risk by ensuring that all staff, volunteers and trustees fully understand that they all have a duty of care to all service users accessing its services.

As part of Wellspring Settlement's Safeguarding process, it is policy that:

The organisation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving all Adults at Risk (Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy) and where there are concerns about an Adult's welfare (Crisis Management Policy). There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of all adults in accordance with these procedures.

3.7 6 Key Principles of Safeguarding Adults at Risk

The following six key principles must underpin all adult at risk safeguarding work:

- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent. *“I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens.”*
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs. *“I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.”*

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- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. *“I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed.”*
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need. *“I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”*
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. *“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”*
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding. *“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”*

It is vital that all staff within Wellspring Settlement recognise that adult at risk safeguarding arrangements are there to protect individuals. We all have different preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyles, so it is unhelpful to prescribe a process that must be followed whenever a concern is raised. **If any member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that abuse is or maybe taking place you have a responsibility to act on this information with your line manager.** It does not matter what your role is, doing nothing is not an option.

3.8 Training and Supervision

All staff and volunteers who have the potential to come into direct contact with an adult at risk must undertake training about safeguarding. This policy will be issued to all new staff as part of their induction.

HR, in consultation with the Safeguarding Leads, will ensure all staff and volunteers receive training in relation to safeguarding and adults at risk at a level commensurate with their role.

Space will be given in each supervision session for staff to discuss any concerns or issues that they may have with regards to adults at risk. Please refer to Wellspring Settlements Staff Supervision and Annual Appraisal Procedure.

Level	Regularity/Staff	Overview
1	Induction Staff Supervision All staff every 2 years INTERNAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand Wellspring Settlements Policies Safeguarding Adults at Risk & Crisis Management • Awareness of which adults at risk/factors increase the likelihood of being at risk from harm. • different categories of abuse/potential warning signs associated with each type. • Understand how to respond appropriately to a disclosure and know what to do next. • Know how to report concerns

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2	<p>Line Managers/Hub Managers/HR Staff</p> <p>Every 3 years</p> <p>EXTERNAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above + • Safeguarding Adults Legislation • Capacity to Make Decisions & Consent • Responding to disclosures and safer recruitment/DBS Checks
3	<p>Safeguarding Leads</p> <p>Every 5 years</p> <p>EXTERNAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above + • Post-disclosure practice and record keeping • Which statutory bodies have responsibilities? Allegations about members of staff • Complaints and whistleblowing • Staff responsibilities • Policies and procedure

4. Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures

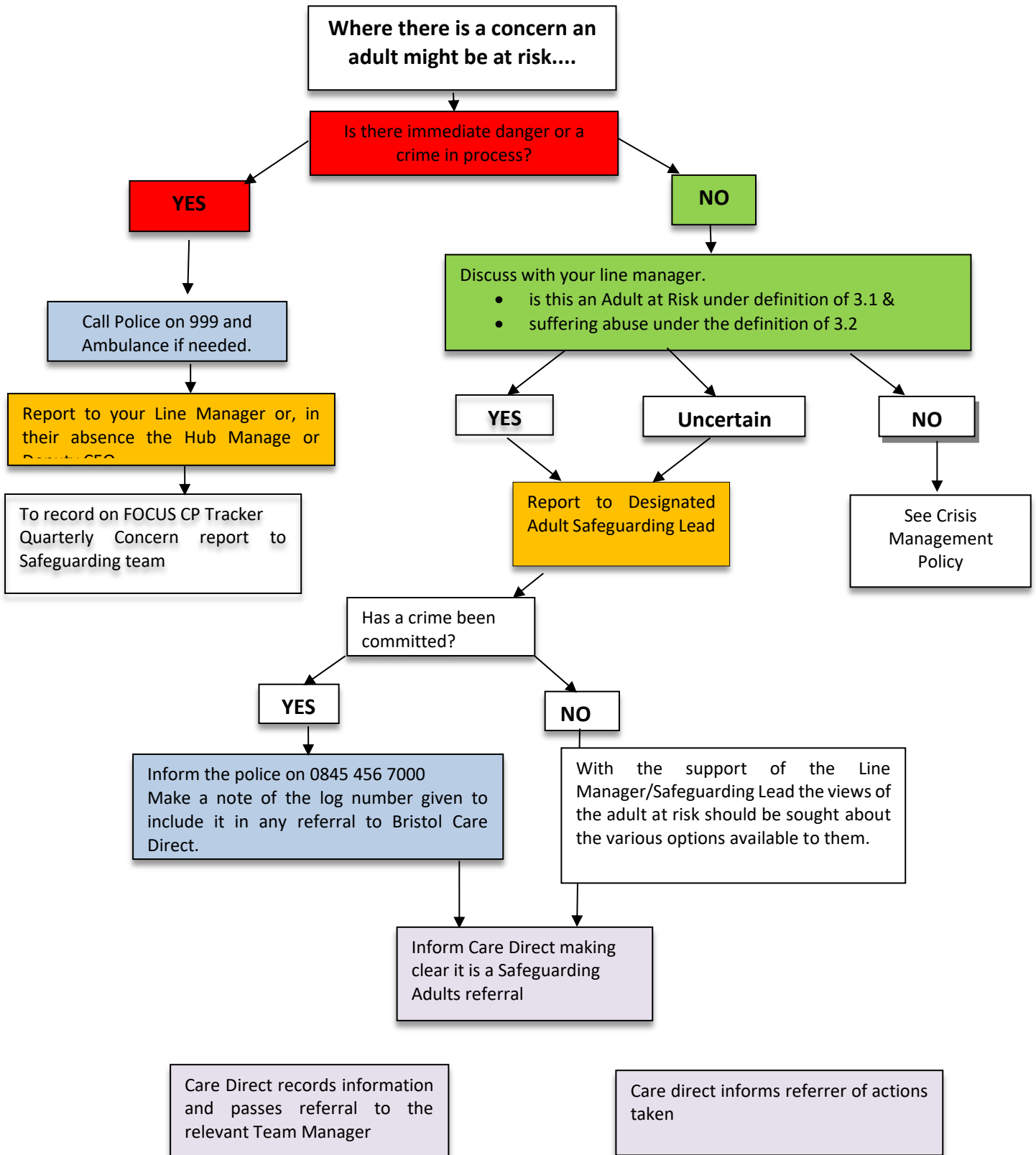
4.1 What to do if an adult discloses abuse or neglect:

Hearing allegations of abuse and reporting your concerns is not always easy, you may feel you are betraying someone's trust. Whatever the source of the information it must be treated seriously, **it is your duty to report your concerns with your line manager**, and it may be considered a disciplinary matter not to do so. Wellspring Settlement will support you and ensure the relevant policies are in place to protect and support you in taking action e.g. whistle-blowing policies.

It is recognised that an adult at risk may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect or talk spontaneously either individually or when in a group when you are present. In these situations, YOU MUST:

- LISTEN CAREFULLY, DO NOT directly question them.
- Give them time and attention.
- Allow them to give a spontaneous account; do not stop someone who is freely recalling significant events.
- Reassure them that: they have done the right thing in speaking out/telling you; reiterate they have not done anything wrong;
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.
- Tell them what you are going to do next and explain why.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the adults at risk's presentation as well as what was said.
- Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the adults at risk's own words where possible.
- Follow the procedure as set out in 4.2:

4.2 Reporting Procedures: What to do if you suspect someone is being abused:



If you consider an Adult to be at risk of immediate harm, then you should ring 999 for the Police.

4.3 What will happen when you raise a concern?

From the very first stage of concerns being identified, the views of the adult at risk should be sought. This will enable the adult to give their perspectives about the abuse or neglect concerns that have been raised, and what outcomes they would like to achieve. These views should directly inform what happens next. Involvement of adults in their own safeguarding has been prompted by a government lead initiative to improve the way that adults at risk are involved in their own safeguarding process engaging with people about how we might respond in safeguarding situations in a way that enhances their involvement, choice and control as well as improving their quality of life, wellbeing and safety; we must see people as experts in their own lives and work alongside them.

The adult must also be asked for their consent to report the concern. If consent is withheld but there are risks to others including children and other adults at risk, or the risk to the adult at risk is serious, a referral to adult care should still be made and the adult at risk informed that this has been done. There will be occasions where speaking to the adult could put them at further or increased risk of harm. This could be, for example, due to retaliation, or a risk of fleeing or removal of the adult from the local area, or an increase in threatening or controlling behaviour if the person causing the risk of harm were to know that the adult had told someone about the abuse or neglect, or that someone else was aware of it.

The safety of the adult and the potential for increasing the risk should always be considered when planning to speak to the person. Any situations where there is the potential for endangering safety or increasing risk should be assessed carefully and advice taken from your management.

If the adult with whom the concern is raised about is deemed to have the mental capacity to manage the situation you will be supported by your line manager to address the situation. This may mean identifying appropriate agencies to refer the individual to, or work to engage in with the individual around appropriate boundary keeping, assertion skills, clear communication guidelines and support. Your line manager will monitor the situation closely with you and request updates and give guidance and support. Either Designated Adult Safeguarding Leads can offer additional support, advice, and guidance.

If the adult with whom the concern is related to is an adult at risk (under definition of 3.1) and is suffering abuse (under the definition of 3.2) You will be supported and advised by your Line Manager and, if appropriate, by the Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead.

4.4 Reporting concerns to Care Direct:

Designated Adult Safeguarding leads can refer safeguarding concerns via Care Direct. Care Direct Contact Details Telephone: 0117 9222700 Fax: 0117 9036688. Details of the referral should be stored on the CP tracker tool in FOCUS in accordance with FOCUS Tracker Procedure.

When reporting concerns to Care Direct you will be expected to give relevant details of the person you seek to protect, alongside good organised information when you report the allegation or suspicion of abuse. It is useful to know:

- The adults name and date of birth if known
- circumstances, where they live and with whom
- services they receive and from whom also
- who is providing the information
- who was the person suspected or implicated in the abuse
- your concerns, and the reasons for those concerns

If you do not have all this information and the situation is urgent do not delay, report it first. If you are quoting someone else then be sure that you tell us this, it is important that the initial referral is clear, so try to recall what was said using the person's own words. Do sign and date the record. There should be no delay in reporting serious concerns. The information will be treated in the strictest confidence within the limits of the law, which requires that the police are informed where there is serious risk to life, or information about a serious crime is discovered.

4.5 What happens next?

1. A Safeguarding Adults referral will be given high priority. It indicates that there is a risk to an individual's physical, emotional, or mental well-being and is considered a critical or substantial risk to independence under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 (known as a section 42 enquiry). Bristol Health & Social Care (H&SC) have the duty to co-ordinate the interagency response to safeguarding adults' referrals and will consult with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the Police, and other relevant agencies where this is appropriate. If an investigation is indicated, they will convene a strategy discussion to decide the best way to investigate the allegation(s). Bristol senior practitioners as well as team managers coordinate Safeguarding enquiries ensuring that the allegation is dealt with properly.

4.6 What will happen if any allegation is made against you?

In the case of an allegation against a staff member, while support will be offered As a Wellspring Settlement member of staff, volunteer or Trustee, the terms of the wellspring Settlements Disciplinary Procedures, Volunteers Policy or Users Code of Conduct will be adhered to and suspension and/or disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

5. Whistleblowing

Any member of staff who raises an issue where they believe the employer, a fellow employee or any volunteer is acting in a way which is unlawful or falls below proper standards or contrary to this policy are protected by the Public Disclosure Act 1998, provided they comply with statutory procedures.

6. Other information

This policy will be reviewed and, where necessary, revised annually. Wellspring Settlement operates to a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisation and welcomes staff, volunteer and trustee feedback and learning from good practice on this policy.