



PELVIC RADIATION DISEASE ASSOCIATION

Safeguarding Adults at Risk (Vulnerable Person)

The aim

The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for paid staff and volunteers of the Pelvic Radiation Disease Association (PRDA) to contribute to the safeguarding of adults at risk through raising awareness and providing a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.

It is aimed at protecting the adult at risk and volunteers or staff members. The policy covers all staff, Trustees, and volunteers with specific guidance for those regularly in contact with adults at risk. This policy is applicable across the UK.

What is meant by the term 'Vulnerable Person?'

The Department of Health defines a vulnerable person as an adult aged 18 or over who may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age, or illness. In Scotland a vulnerable adult is a person aged 16 or over.

A person is also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse.

So, a vulnerable person may be someone who:

- is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability, or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a sensory impairment
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long-term illness/condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is a carer, such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse
- is unable to show the capacity to decide the needs of care and support

This list is not prescriptive, therefore other variations should be considered.

All children (up to the age of 18 years, or 16 years in Scotland) are potentially vulnerable to abuse.

Details of legislation and guidance about safeguarding children in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland can be found on the NSPCC website www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/policyandpublicaffairs/ppa_wda48585.html

What do we mean by abuse?

Abuse is a violation of human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be planned or unplanned. It may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence, or ignorance. It may happen when an adult at risk is persuaded to enter into a transaction that they are unable to consent or have not consented to.

Abuse can take many forms and includes but is not limited to:

- physical - being hit, pushed, or restrained, burnt, cut, punched
- financial/material - stealing money or misusing money
- sexual - indecent exposure, sexual harassment, and rape
- psychological/emotional - humiliation, isolation, shouting, bullying, swearing
- discriminatory - derogatory remarks of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation
- neglect - not providing enough food or the right medicines or helping them wash

Our duty of care

While PRDA has no statutory responsibility to act in cases of abuse, it does have a duty of care for our service users, volunteers, and staff. To exercise our duty of care we work within the following framework:

- our procedures aim to make sure that the safety, needs and interests of adults at risk are always respected and given priority.
- we believe people should be empowered and supported to make their own choices, while being protected from harm.
- we will assess the safeguarding risks that adults at risk/protected persons meet in their association with PRDA and take all necessary steps to manage them, while also ensuring staff and volunteers take steps where necessary to look after themselves in all their activities.
- we will inform everyone we work with, including our staff and volunteers, how to voice concerns about any safeguarding situations.

- we will regularly update our policies, procedures, and guidelines to take account of UK safeguarding legislation and good practice.
- we expect staff and volunteers to understand their duty to report concerns.
- we will ensure we keep high standards in our staff and volunteer safeguarding approach through recruitment, training, support, and supervision. We will apply this policy to internal and external partners, and other agencies acting on our behalf
 - we will check criminal disclosures where appropriate and legally entitled to do so, in line with our staff and volunteer recruitment policies.

When we refer to external partners and or agencies this may include organisations acting on our behalf including those providing support to our Service Users.

Statutory agencies involved in safeguarding – primarily the Police, Local Authorities, and the Health Service – have explicit expectations of staff and volunteers in voluntary organisations and these are based on a clear definition of who should be considered an ‘adult at risk.’

Put simply the expectation is that:

- all staff and volunteers from any service or setting should know about the safeguarding policy and procedures and how to access the most up to date information and guidance.
- all staff and volunteers from any service or setting who have contact with adults at risk have a responsibility to be aware of issues of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- all staff and volunteers have a duty to act promptly, ideally on the same or next working day on any concern or suspicion that an adult, who is at risk of being abused, neglected, or exploited and to ensure that the situation is assessed and referred to safeguarding authorities, as appropriate.

It is important to note that where an ‘adult at risk’ is considered to be in immediate danger we will involve the emergency services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual.

A safeguarding concern

It is recognised that there need to be several routes to report any safeguarding concerns. This may be if an adult experiencing abuse or neglect confides in you, or if you have concerns regarding an ‘adult at risks’ behaviour or changes in state of mind. If you are a volunteer or member of staff or are a home-based member of staff, please contact your line manager.

Please inform your relevant contact of your concerns and they will be able to make a judgment using the information given on whether the concern should be referred on to an adult safeguarding agency.

If your relevant contact is not available contact one of PRDA's Board Members [Trustees and Patrons - PRDA](#)

Consent and capacity

Issues of consent and capacity underpin our approach to safeguarding. The role of PRDA does not include conducting investigations, but it is important to understand these issues and consider the way in which they may affect the decision making in relation to a reported concern.

An individual's consent should always be looked for when sharing information with other parties, i.e., the staff contact and external safeguarding agencies. A person's wishes will be respected as far as possible while judging this against our duty of care towards individuals.

PRDA should only act once consent has been given by the 'adult at risk,' except in exceptional circumstances. We will record where consent has been given.

'Mental capacity' refers to an individual's ability to make decisions for themselves. We will always assume that an individual has the mental capacity to make their own decisions unless it is known otherwise. Staff and volunteers are not expected to assess capacity. When we refer to exceptional circumstances this may include if the individual is thought to be in immediate danger, or unable to make a decision themselves, then the safety and wellbeing of the individual is the first concern.

Emergency services should be contacted where necessary; however, the individual should be informed of this action and the reason for this wherever possible.