



## Scope

It is the policy of M4RD to safeguard the welfare of all those connected with it. Protecting them from all forms of abuse, we are committed to:

- Taking into account in all its considerations and activities the interests and well-being of all members and those who come into contact with M4RD
- Respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of all with whom M4RD is dealing
- Taking all reasonable and practicable steps to protect all from abuse
- Promoting the welfare and protection of all so that they feel secure, valued and listened to

M4RD as a rule does not work directly with children and adults at risk. On rare occasions a child or vulnerable adult may be invited to take part in M4RD activities e.g. as a guest speaker however this will always be when working in collaboration with a patient advocacy group who have a good relationship with the child or the adult at risk. M4RD will not liaise directly or work directly with children or adults at risk.

However the M4RD Board of Trustees and staff team recognise that anyone can be vulnerable to abuse and it is our collective responsibility to safeguard the welfare of everyone the charity is connected to. Therefore M4RD this policy is not only to set out the role of M4RD and its team but also to provide general guidance on what abuse is, when to suspect someone is being abused and what to do in this circumstance.

## We aim to do this by:

All employees, volunteers within M4RD and the Trustee responsible for safeguarding will have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check **prior to commencing any work with children or vulnerable adults.**

M4RD will signpost to trusted safeguarding education and training to all employees and the Trustee responsible for safeguarding, to enable them to protect children and themselves plus enable them to recognise and respond to any indications of abuse/neglect of children and Adults at Risk who they have access to.

M4RD has a nominated Trustee responsible for safeguarding along with a named employee. This will be reviewed annually at the M4RD Strategy Meeting.

Volunteers will be made aware of the safeguarding policy and given education and guidance on it prior to commencing work with M4RD.

Every employee, Board Member, Trustee and volunteer will be given a copy of this policy.

### *Definition of a Child*

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. (HM Government, July 2014)

### *Definition of an 'Adult at Risk' (Care Act 2014)*

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves

### *Definition of Abuse*

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.' (No Secrets, DOH, 2015)

## **DIFFERENT FORMS OF ABUSE**

Below are some definitions of abuse and identification factors.

### *FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL ABUSE*

Signs to look out for:

- Unexplained/inability to pay bills
- Unexplained/sudden withdrawals of money.
- Interest in others of the affairs and assets of the vulnerable person

### *DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE*

Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as **'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010**)

Signs to look out for:

- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- Expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety
- The support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic

### *PHYSICAL ABUSE*

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise physical harm to a person.

Signs to look out for:

- A history of unexplained falls or injuries

- Bruising in hidden areas or clusters from repeated hitting/finger marks
- Burn in non-obvious places
- Injuries at different stages of healing/similar shape to an object
- Avoidance of, or repeated change of GP or agency supports
- Weight loss/malnutrition or rapid weight gain
- Ulcers, bed sores, being left in wet or soiled clothes
- Drowsiness due to too much medication or lack of medication
- Recurring hospital admissions
- Changes in behaviour

### *SEXUAL ABUSE*

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Signs to look out for:

- Disclosure or partial disclosure
- Problems such as pain or itching in the genital/anal area.
- Bruising or bleeding in genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy
- Disturbed behaviour such as depression, being withdrawn, sleeplessness, nightmares, self-injury, aggression
- Sudden inappropriate sexual behaviour

### *NEGLECT/ACTS OF OMISSION*

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet an individual's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the individual's health or development.

Signs to look out for:

- Poor physical condition
- Inadequate diet/starvation
- Poor personal hygiene
- Loss of weight or constantly under weight
- Inappropriate clothing
- Untreated injuries or medical problems
- Behavioural changes

### *EMOTIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE*

Signs to look out for:

- Isolation
- Poor hygiene personal appearance

- Changes in behaviour: withdrawn, agitated, anxious, paranoia, displaying signs of obsessive compulsive behaviour
- Loss of appetite
- Sleeplessness
- Tearfulness

### *ORGANISATIONAL or INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE*

Signs to look out for:

- Lack of flexibility and choice for people using the service
- Inadequate staffing levels
- People being hungry or dehydrated
- Poor standards of care
- Lack of personal clothing and possessions and communal use of personal items
- Lack of adequate procedures and record keeping
- Absence of visitors
- Few social, recreational and educational activities
- Public discussion of personal matters
- Unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet
- Absence of individual care plans
- Lack of management overview and support

### *SELF NEGLECT (Adults at Risk only)*

Signs to look out for:

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- Neglecting household maintenance
- Hoarding
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury

### *MODERN SLAVERY*

Signs to look out for:

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Always wearing the same clothes

- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of law enforcers

### **Action to be taken**

If you suspect abuse; if a child or vulnerable adult confides/discloses information to you; or a complaint is made about any adult or yourself it is your duty to report the concern.

*In an emergency (child or vulnerable adult at imminent risk of significant harm) contact police or social service/work department directly. Inform the Trustee / named employee responsible for Safeguarding of the action you have taken (by phone / email safeguarding form)*

Please note that in the case of someone who is 18 years or older we do not have the right to report disclosures to the police or social services without their express permission unless that person is recognised as a vulnerable adult over 18 or there is a risk to someone under 18 years. Once a disclosure has been made, the Chief Executive will make the decision as to whether the person over 18 is recognised as a vulnerable adult, and will then make the decision as to whether the disclosure can be reported to the authorities.

*If the allegation is from a child or an adult at risk about somebody else:*

- Allow them to speak without interruption accepting what is said
- Offer immediate understanding and reassurance, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will try to offer support but confidentiality cannot be promised and that you must pass information on to the designated Trustee responsible for
- Safeguarding
- Immediately inform the Trustee / employee responsible for Safeguarding
- Write careful notes of what is said; use actual words wherever possible (the form found at the end of the policy may be helpful)
- Sign date and pass this form / information on to the Trustee / employee responsible for Safeguarding
- Place this information in a sealed envelope and file in the locked cabinet in the office
- Ensure that no situation arises that could cause any further concern

### **If you have a concern about a child or vulnerable adults safety and well-being:**

- Immediately inform the Trustee / employee responsible for Safeguarding

- Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or was told (the form at the end of policy may be helpful)
- Sign, date and pass on your notes to the Trustee / employee responsible for Safeguarding
- Ensure that no situation arises that could cause any further concern

### **If you receive a complaint or allegation about any adult or yourself:**

- Immediately tell the Trustee / employee responsible for Safeguarding
- Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or was told (the form at the end of this policy may be helpful)
- Sign date and pass your notes to the Trustee for Safeguarding
- Ensure that no situation arises that could cause any further concern

## **You MUST refer; not investigate.**

### **Support**

Any member of staff or volunteer dealing with a disclosure is advised to seek support for themselves and discuss this with the CEO and the Trustee for Safeguarding.

### **The responsibility of the Trustee for Safeguarding**

All allegations or suspicion of abuse regarding children and vulnerable adults, no matter how insignificant they might seem to be or when they occur, must be referred to the Trustee or employee responsible for Safeguarding. Nothing must be withheld or filtered.

If the Trustee or employee responsible for Safeguarding is implicated in any way the referral must be made direct to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

The Trustee or employee responsible for Safeguarding must then follow the procedures laid out below.

No investigation or questioning will be undertaken. Swift reporting will enable the correct authorities to give advice and take appropriate action.

### *Procedures Following Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse of a Child or an Adult at Risk*

Trustee or employee responsible for Safeguarding is to take the following action as soon as possible:

#### **1. Write down notes**

Dates, times, facts, observations (verbatim speech if possible)

#### **2. Ensure correct details are given**

Child or vulnerable adult's name and address, name and address of parent or carer (form at the end of the policy might be useful)

### **3. Contact Social Services/Social Work Department of the local authority**

Ask for duty Officer and say that you wish to discuss a matter of Safeguarding (stating child or vulnerable adult as appropriate)

Ask for the name of the person to whom you are speaking

Discuss all the information you have (nothing is to be withheld or filtered)

Ask if anyone else should be informed

Keep a record of your conversation and any advice given

### **4. Inform the Chairman of the Board**

### **5. Follow the advice from Social Services/ Social Work Department**

Take no other action unless advised to do so by Social services/work Department

### **6. Prepare a confidential report**

- Record all notes, all conversations, advice given by social services/social work department.
- Ensure you sign, date and time your notes.

### *Procedures for the Disclosure of Information*

In the event that a child under the age of eighteen years, or those who are considered vulnerable make a disclosure to you, you must take the following action as soon as possible:

1. **Write down notes** - Listen carefully and document exactly what was said and their response (the form at the end of this policy may be useful). Dates, times, facts, observations (verbatim speech if possible)
2. **Offer comfort and be sympathetic**
3. **Do not make them tell anyone else** - they may have to be formally interviewed later
4. **Do not promise to keep information confidential** - this will need to be explained to them
5. **Explain with whom this information will be shared** in order to provide help and support
6. **Contact Social Services/Social Work Department of the local Authority**  
Initially and pending discussion with the social worker respect a child's or vulnerable adult's request that parents / carers are not told
7. **The child or vulnerable adult will be informed before any subsequent action is taken** in a way appropriate to their age and understanding
8. **Inform the Chairman of the Board**
9. **Prepare a confidential report**

Record all notes, all conversations, advice given by the social services/social work department.

**Safeguarding incident/concern recording sheet**

In the event of a disclosure, all staff should behave in the following way:

- Stay calm;
- Do not press for information by questioning the individual. Encourage the person to talk, listen and remember what they say;
- Do not express disbelief, anger, embarrassment, shock or fear;
- Reassure the individual and tell them you are glad they are speaking to you and that you know it is not their fault;
- Never promise to keep a secret;
- When appropriate write down what has happened on the safeguarding incident form and where possible, recount any conversations verbatim;
- Inform your superior at the earliest opportunity and hand in this form to them.

PLEASE NOTE – THE DETAILS RECORDED IN THIS FORM WILL BE STORED IN A CONFIDENTIAL FILE. DETAILS INCLUDED IN THIS RECORDING SHEET WILL ONLY BE SHARED WHEN NECESSARY FOR THE PROTECTION ON THE INDIVIDUAL.

<b>Date of recording</b>	<b>Name of staff Reporting :</b> <b>Project Name:</b>
<b>Date of incident (if applicable) :</b>	<b>Location:</b>

**Nature of concern**  
PLEASE PROVIDE AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE.



<b>Actions taken</b>	
<b>Outcome</b> (to be completed by the lead safeguarding officer)	

<b>Review of procedures</b>	

- Review safeguarding assessment.
- Review Risk assessment.
- Check DBS for each Project Leader and regular volunteer.