

Safeguarding Adults Procedure

Background

The aim of this procedure is to ensure each service has procedures to provide a speedy and effective response for dealing with concerns about an adult who may be vulnerable or at risk.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who needs care and support regardless of whether they are receiving them, and because of those needs are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect.

The welfare of our clients is paramount. Adherence to this procedure protects vulnerable adults and PACT workers and the reputation of the service. PACT believes in working in partnership with other agencies and will always cooperate in investigations raised by a PACT worker or about a PACT worker as appropriate.

Policy Statement

It is recognized that PACT staff often work with adults who are vulnerable and unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect. Adults regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or beliefs, have the right to be protected from abuse and PACT will take all allegations of abuse against a vulnerable adult seriously.

PACT is committed to ensuring that such clients are protected from any potential form of abuse whilst using our services.

Where allegations of abuse against a vulnerable adult are made, these will be reported to PACT's Designated Safeguarding Officer (a Senior Manager) and the steps outlined in the Cause for Concern Flowchart will be followed.

Procedures following allegation, suspicion of abuse or concern that a vulnerable person may be at risk of harm to themselves or others:

The Service Director is the designated person for safeguarding within PACT; she/he is responsible for managing allegations of abuse against vulnerable adults. If she/he is not available, the CEO will be able to give advice and guidance.

People with care and support needs, such as older people or people with disabilities, are more likely to be abused or neglected. They may be seen as an easy target and

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may be less likely to identify abuse themselves or to report it. People with communication difficulties can be particularly at risk because they may not be able to alert others. Sometimes people may not even be aware that they are being abused, and this is especially likely if they have a cognitive impairment.

Types of abuse include (but are not limited to):

1. Physical abuse.

Possible indicators include No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened; frequent injuries; bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps; Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP.

2. Domestic violence or abuse

Within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, 'Abusive behaviour' is defined in the act as any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

Domestic violence and abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It also includes economic abuse, so called 'honour' -based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Possible indicators include Low self-esteem, feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not; verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others; fear of outside intervention; damage to home or property; isolation – not seeing friends and family; limited access to money.

3. Sexual abuse

Possible indicators include bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck; bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area; unusual difficulty in walking or sitting; self-harming; poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance; excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships.

4. Psychological or emotional abuse

Possible indicators include an air of silence when a particular person is present; withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person; insomnia; low self-esteem; uncooperative and aggressive behaviour; signs of distress: tearfulness, anger.

5. Financial or material abuse

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Possible indicators include missing personal possessions; unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle; rent arrears and eviction notices

6. Modern slavery

Indicators of modern slavery may include 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

7. Self-neglect

Possible indicators include very poor personal hygiene; unkempt appearance; lack of essential food, clothing or shelter; malnutrition and/or dehydration; living in squalid or unsanitary conditions; hoarding; inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury.

The above list is not exhaustive and people may be subject to a number of abuse types at the same time. Many types of abuse are also criminal offences and should be treated as such.

If you are concerned that an adult may be at risk of abuse from others or that they may harm themselves, discuss your concerns with your Line Manager without delay. A Cause for Concern report will be completed and sent to the DSO within 24 hours, with actions discussed agreed and recorded on file.

A vulnerable adult may disclose abuse to you, or a third party may tell you of the abuse or suspected abuse.

1. The PACT worker will make a note of the time and date that the allegation or disclosure was made, who made the allegation, and the nature of the allegation
2. The PACT worker will record only the facts, preferably in the language/words used by the person making the allegation, and will not ask any questions which may seem to be 'leading'
3. The PACT worker will then report the allegation to their Line Manager immediately and the Cause for Concern system activated (outlined in the Cause for Concern Flowchart).
4. The person making the allegation or disclosure will be informed of what will happen; they will be told that the Line Manager will not automatically report the allegation to the authorities, but that this is a possibility.
5. The Manager will inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
6. The service will not participate in any form of 'investigation', i.e., must not start a process of 'fact finding'. If the service is subsequently required to take part in a criminal investigation or a Serious Case Review, the Senior Manager will take appropriate advice

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7. In the majority of cases the service should offer to support the person making the disclosure/allegation and make them aware of the options that are available to them for example contacting the local adult social care team or police. In some cases, the PACT worker may offer to help them make initial contact with these agencies.
8. If, however, there is a clear and immediate danger to an individual then confidentiality will be broken, and priority given to the safety of that individual.
9. Equally if a client or third party makes an allegation of abuse, and it becomes clear to the service that no further action has been taken since first discussed, then it may be that the service decides to take steps to report the allegation.

If the Manager is considering reporting allegations of abuse and/or breaching confidentiality, this will first be discussed with the DSO.

Protecting vulnerable adults from abuse and staff/volunteers from allegations of abuse:

PACT staff will not:

- Visit a vulnerable adult in their home unless on an official pre-arranged visit.
- Transport a vulnerable adult alone in their car unless prior arrangements have been made with a manager or in case of a medical emergency.
- Make any comments with sexual overtones, even in humour, or partake in any 'horse play' with a vulnerable adult.
- Allow a vulnerable adult into their home.
- Engage in rough physical games – apart from structured sports activities which may be part of a community event etc.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow a vulnerable adult to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Let allegations a vulnerable adult makes, whether current or historical, to not be taken seriously; the correct PACT procedure will be followed.
- Undertake personal care for vulnerable adults.
- Lend money to, or borrow money or possessions from, a vulnerable adult.
- Agree to make any purchases, or undertake any financial transactions, on behalf of the client.

Failure to comply with this policy could lead to action under PACT's disciplinary procedure.

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk/>

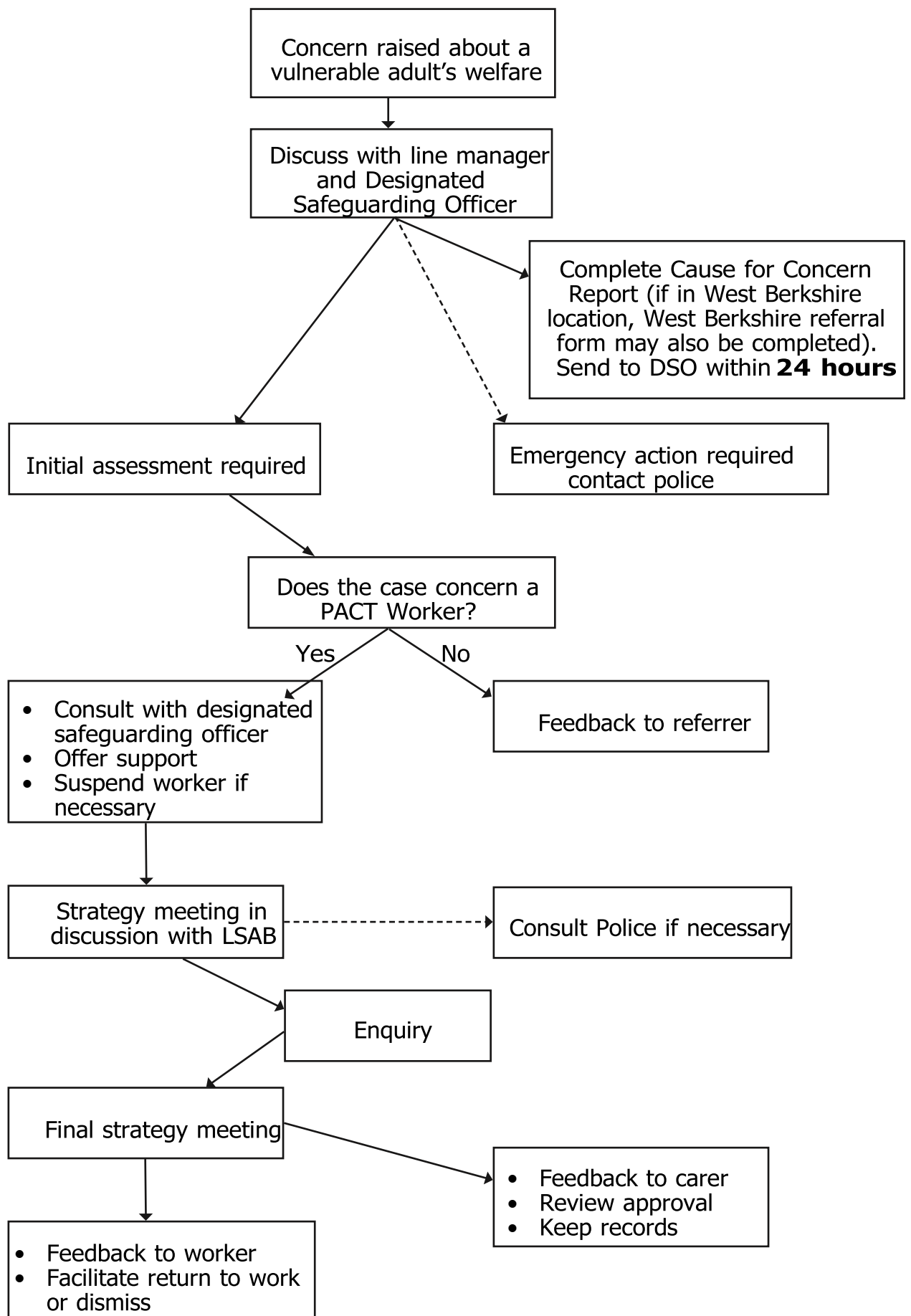
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Related documents

Safeguarding Policy

Historical Abuse procedure

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