# Safeguarding Adults

##### **Introduction**

This document is intended to give guidance on protecting customers from abuse and responding to any evidence or suspicion of the abuse of a Vulnerable Adult.

***Who is a Vulnerable Adult?***

*A vulnerable adult is someone over the age of 18, ‘who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness and who is or maybe unable to take care of his or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation’ (Law Commission Report 1997).*

***What is Abuse?***

*‘Abuse* is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person/s’ (No Secrets – Guidance on Developing Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse)

Abuse can constitute the following:

* Physical Abuse
* Emotional or Psychological Abuse
* Discrimination – colour, sex, age, disability, sexuality, religion, status
* Financial Abuse
* Neglect / Deprivation
* Sexual Abuse

#### What is a Sanction?

###### ‘The withholding of freedom of choice as a form of punishment or motivation’

##### **Policy**

All staff employed at My Support and Care Services Ltd will have a DBS.

All staff at My Support and Care Services Ltd will attend training on the safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults and Children and will be expected to read and understand the following documents:

* No Secrets – Guidance on Developing Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse
* Multi Agency Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse

All staff employed by My Support and Care Services Ltd must be aware of the potential for the abuse of its customers.

Staff who become aware of any “loop-holes” which may allow abuse, or have any concerns or queries, are to identify their concerns to the service manager at the earliest opportunity. The service manager will take measures to close these “loop-holes” by producing guidelines and / or changing procedures.

Abuse of a customer, in any form, by a employee of My Support and Care Services Ltd will be considered as gross misconduct and will be dealt with following the *‘Disciplinary and Grievance Policy and Procedures’* document.

A customer, victim of any form of alleged abuse will be fully supported by My Support and Care Services Ltd to access appropriate support such as legal advice, counselling, victim support, alternative accommodation etc.

The use sanctions on customers will be considered by My Support and Care Services Ltd as Abuse.

##### **Procedures**

#### Evidence or Suspicion of Abuse

An employee of My Support and Care Services Ltd having evidence or suspicion of the abuse of a customer, whether by:

* Staff
* Other customers
* Persons external to the company

MUST inform the service manager or the nominated staff member in their absence, immediately.

The service manager or nominated staff member in their absence will:

* Ensure the safety and protection any customer deemed ‘at risk’
* Follow the procedures and guidance as laid down in the document ‘Multi Agency Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse’
* Advise the ***Adult Protection Co-ordinator for Devon;***

Room 108,

The Annexe

County Hall, Topsham Road

Exeter

Tel 0845 1551007

www.devon.gov.uk/adult-protection.

The safeguarding team will advise on actions to take and appropriate persons to contact.

* Inform the customers care manager
* Inform the Director of the company

##### **Guidance**

#### Disclosure or Discovery of Abuse

Staff may become aware of the potential abuse of a customer by the following:

* Their own or suspicion or that of others
* Disclosure from the victim
* Disclosure from the abuser

It is important that staff respond to such disclosers in a supportive way to the customer:

* Remain calm
* Listen carefully to what you are being told
* Reassure the person by telling them that they have done the right thing by telling you
* Explain that you are obliged to share the information with the service manager, or the deputy manager in their absence.
* Let them know that measures will be taken to support and protect them and that they will be kept informed

It is important for staff to gather as much information about the alleged abuse as possible i.e. dates, times, location, persons involved etc., sequence of events.

The following should be taken into account:

* Take care not to ask any leading questions
* Find out what the customers views are
* Be aware of the possible need for forensic evidence and try to ensure the protection of this evidence

## *Whistle Blowing*

Please refer to *‘whistle blowing’* policy.

**Safeguarding of Children & young people**

Please refer to the Safeguarding Children and Young People policy