

GL11 Community Hub Safeguarding Children Policy

1. Purpose of Policy

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for staff and volunteers to contribute to the prevention of abuse of children, raise awareness and provide a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.
- 1.2 The policy covers all colleagues (staff, trustees, trainees, and volunteers) whose role involves regular contact with children.
- 1.3 GL11 Community Hub (from herein referred to as GL11 CH) considers it the duty of all colleagues to protect children with whom they come into contact from abuse.
- 1.4 This policy relates to all those under the age of 18. A person is a “child” until they reach 18 years of age. For adults 18 years and older please see the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- 1.5 This Safeguarding Children Policy should be read in conjunction with:

Code of Conduct Policy
Data Protection Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Recruitment Policy
Safer Recruitment Policy

2. Introductions

- 2.1 This policy is based on the ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ document, the national guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect children from abuse (2018).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- *protecting children from maltreatment;*
- *preventing impairment of children’s health or development;*
- *ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and*
- *taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.*

- 2.2 GL11 CH has an obligation to protect children who it may believe to be abused or at risk of

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abuse or neglect.

- 2.3 The policy and procedures have been developed to assist colleagues in acting on reported or suspected abuse.
- 2.4 Depending upon the nature of particular services or the requirements of particular funders or partner agencies, the policy and procedures may be enhanced by their requirements.

3. Responsibilities of GL11 Community Hub

3.1 It is the responsibility of GL11 CH to:

- 3.1.1 Identify a senior member of staff who will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of safeguarding children, including training and the monitoring and reviewing of policies and procedures.
- 3.1.2 Ensure that all staff and volunteers have the appropriate support, training and supervision to carry out their role as detailed in the Code of Conduct within this policy and the GL11 Safeguarding Children Policy in a competent manner.
- 3.1.3 Ensure that all staff & volunteers have relevant qualifications and an in date DBS check prior to commencement of their role.
- 3.1.4 Have policies and procedures that define staff responsibilities in the recognition and reporting of any suspicions they may have about abuse and neglect.
- 3.1.5 Supervise and monitor all staff and volunteers working with children.
- 3.1.6 Ensure the member of staff responsible for safeguarding children is aware that all allegations of abuse and neglect must be reported to the Gloucestershire County Council Children's Helpdesk. (Contact numbers are contained in the Safeguarding Children Procedures.)
- 3.1.7 Ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children undertake safeguarding children awareness and procedure training.
- 3.1.8 Share information with staff on a need-to-know basis when it is in the best interest of the child.
- 3.1.9 Keep clear, up to date and accurate records.
- 3.1.10 Ensure that appropriate records have been kept of any concern and the outcome of the initial enquiries. These records may become part of the investigation process.
- 3.1.11 Ensure the immediate safety of the child(ren) concerned.

3.2 The member of staff in charge of safeguarding children should not:

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- 3.2.1 Interview the alleged victim(s) other than if there is a need to clarify the basis of the concern raised.
- 3.2.2 Interfere with or otherwise contaminate evidence which should be preserved.
- 3.2.3 Initiate any investigation into the allegation.
- 3.3 Staff, visitors, relatives or other professionals may have concerns about the way in which GL11 CH discharges its responsibilities towards the welfare and care of children. These concerns will be dealt with in exactly the same way as any other allegation of abuse or neglect.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 For safeguarding children purposes this policy refers to any child aged 0 – 17 inclusive.
- 4.2 A **parent** is defined as any person who has parental responsibilities over a child. For example: a mother or father. We include those who may have substantial care of a child, for example foster carers, other family members and carers.
- 4.3 A **childcare professional**: These people may not have specific parental responsibilities but nonetheless have a duty of care for the child. This is **inclusive** of GL11 colleagues.

5. What is Child Abuse?

- 5.1 Child Abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are intentionally or inadvertently harmed, or placed or left at risk of harm, usually by adults, and often by people that they trust.

5.2 Categories of Abuse

- **Physical Injury**: This is defined as any injury inflicted or knowingly not prevented by any person having custody or care of a child. Physical abuse is often defined by injuries that cannot be explained by the normal play activities of a child and is defined as hitting or hurting a child on purpose.
- **Neglect**: This is defined as the wilful failure to meet the basic needs of a child, for example, not clothing, feeding or caring for a child adequately and leaving them without adequate supervision.
- **Emotional Abuse**: This is defined as any abuse or torment which would have an effect on the mental health and wellbeing of a child. Most commonly emotional abuse is categorised as shouting at a child, making a child feel worthless, exposing a child to inappropriate punishment and inconsistency of behaviour towards a child.
- **Sexual Abuse**: This is defined as the exploitation of children in order to meet the

needs of adults or other children of either sex. Sexual abuse may include: involvement of children in masturbation, involvement of children in pornographic activity, including taking pornographic photographs and involving children in watching or viewing pornographic materials, involvement of children in sexual activity, including; rape, sodomy, oral sex and sexual intercourse with a child, even with their consent. Sexual abuse can also happen online.

6. Recognition

- 6.1 It is not in the remit of members of staff at GL11 to identify the specific category of abuse that a child may be experiencing but rather to highlight any causes for concern to the appropriate person and organisations.

7. Recording and Reporting an Incident

- 7.1 If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of harm there are a number of steps that must be taken:

1. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In the event that the DSL is not available then staff should inform the Chief Executive Officer who will refer to the local authority child protection guidelines for details of their local social work area office or the out of hours telephone number.
2. Report the specific concerns that they have to the DSL or in their absence the Chief Executive Officer.
3. Staff must record suspicions and give them to the DSL or in their absence the Chief Executive Officer. Records of suspicions must include the following information:
 - The nature of the suspicion
 - Details of any injury
 - Times, dates and any other relevant information
 - Dates, times and names of other adults involved with the child who may substantiate the suspicion
 - The DSL or in their absence the Chief Executive Officer will then determine the situation and refer the case to Social Work Children and Families or the Police.

8. Disclosure

- 8.1 At GL11 CH if a child discloses something of concern to you, you should:

1. Inform the child that in order to help them you have to tell your line manager, the member of staff should tell the child who this person is and reassure the child.

2. Listen to the child and note down what they say to you **in their own words**. It is important at this stage that you do not interrupt the child and you do not ask questions.
3. Report the disclosure to the DSL or in their absence the Chief Executive Officer at GL11 CH. The DSL or in their absence the CEO will then contact the relevant agency.
4. If the DSL or in their absence the member of staff dealing with the situation at the time thinks that the case requires it they will contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger the DSL or member of staff should contact the Police.
5. It should be noted that if a member of staff or volunteer is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be as discrete as possible and inform the Chief Executive Officer as soon as possible. In addition to this if a member of staff observes another member of staff harming a child they should report this to the Chief Executive Officer.
6. In addition to this, if the DSL or in their absence the Chief Executive Officer is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be discrete and contact the correct authorities.

8.2 GL11 CH recognises that it can be a traumatic experience for a member of staff to be witness to a child's disclosure of abuse; therefore all staff will be offered information on counselling services to help them through this time.

9. **Responding to a Child who confides in you**

- Stay Calm
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Offer reassurance and support
- Immediately tell your line manager
- Record the facts and discussion in the child's own words and give a copy to your manager
- Do not take control of the situation yourself
- Maintain confidentiality
- Keep records
- Talk to the right people

10. **End Note**

All parents should be aware that members of staff attend regular child protection training.

The staff at GL11 have a duty to report any suspicions of abuse and neglect to any of the contacts below who have a duty to investigate such matters:

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- Children & Families Team (Gloucester) - 01452 426565
- Gloucestershire Police – 101

Child Protection Code of Conduct

At GL11 Community Hub all members of staff are required to abide by the code of conduct as detailed below.

All Members of Staff Should:

- Play their part in helping to develop an ethos where all people are treated with equality, respect and dignity.
- Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of a child first.
- Respect a child's right to be involved in making choices and decisions which directly affect them.
- Listen attentively to any ideas and views a child wants to share with you.
- Respect a child's culture (for example, their faith and beliefs)
- Respect a child's right to privacy and personal space.
- Respond sensitively to children who seem anxious about participating in certain activities.
- Speak to a member of staff immediately if you suspect a child is experiencing bullying or harassment.
- Be aware of the vulnerability of some groups of children to being isolated and hurt.
- Ensure that when you are working with children you are at least within sight or hearing of other adults.
- Listen carefully when a child 'tells you' (sometimes through drawings and behaviour as well as words) that they are being harmed and report what you have discovered immediately to your line manager.
- Report immediately any suspicion that a child may be at risk of harm or abuse.
- Never dismiss what a child tells you as lies or exaggeration.
- Only restrain a child who is in imminent danger of inflicting harm to themselves or others.
- Never underestimate the contribution that you can make to the development of safe communities for children.
- Not exaggerate or trivialise another worker's concerns about a child or ignore an allegation or suspicion of abuse in the hope that it will either go away or that someone else will deal with it.
- Not discuss personal issues about a child or their family with other people except where it concerns the wellbeing of the child.
- Not be drawn into making derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people.
- Not allow a child or young person to be bullied or harmed by anyone else in the organisation.
- Not allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Never engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never allow others to, or yourself engage in, touching a child in a sexually provocative manner.

- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Never engage in rough or physical contact unless it is permitted within the rules of a game or sports activity or conforms to the guidance on appropriate physical restraint.
- Never form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children.
- Never harass or intimidate a child or worker because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic status or disability.
- Never invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

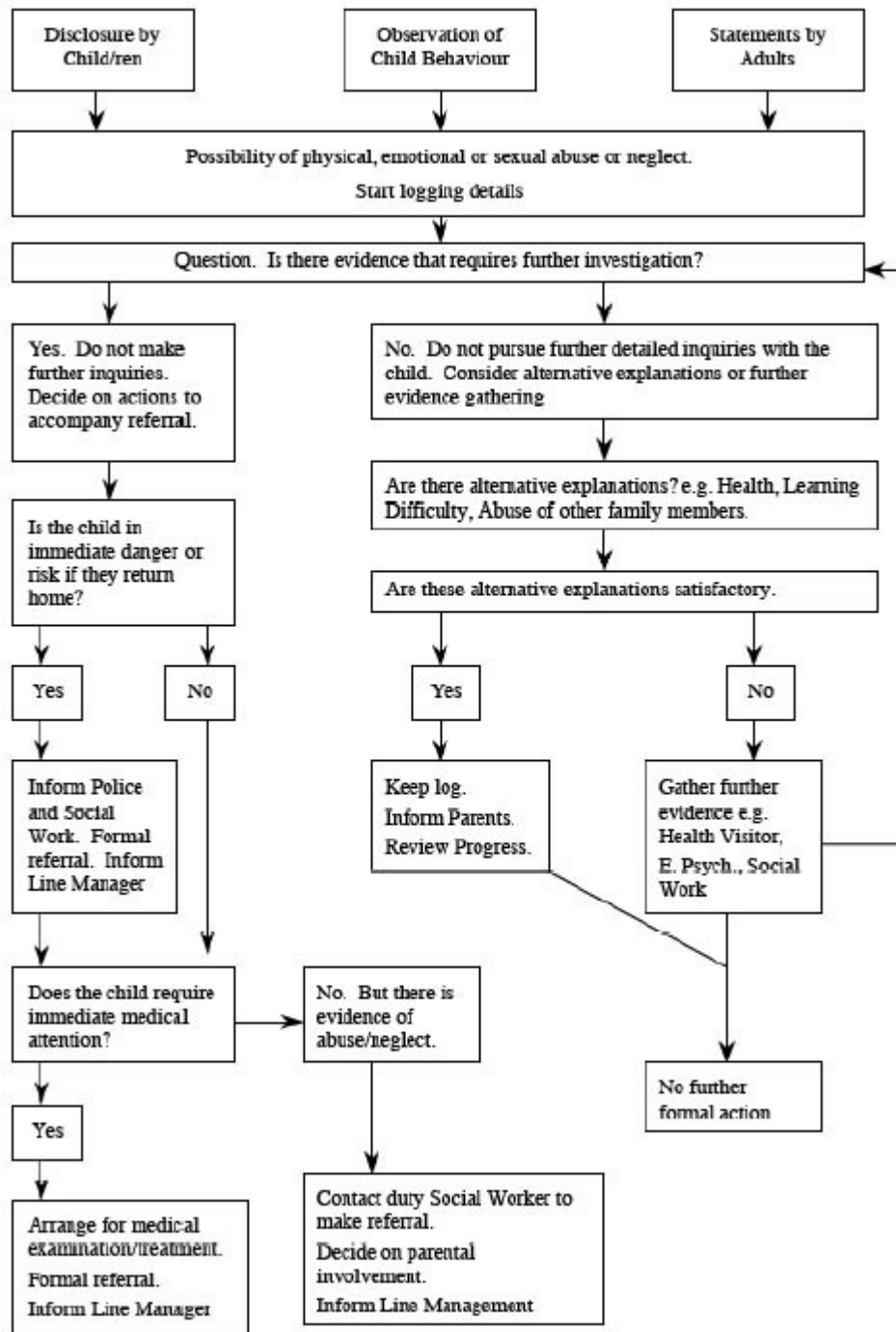
Where members of staff invite or allow children to enter their own homes (for example, when playing with the staff member's own children or upon request of the child's parents), this must be done with the express permission of the child's parents or carer. In addition, the member of staff should inform the Safeguarding Coordinator or in their absence the CEO of the arrangement and follow the Safeguarding Children Policy and the code of conduct as expressed above at all times.

GL11 CH accepts no responsibility for the actions of its employees when they are outside their working hours. Parents and carers should be aware that where they request a member of staff to look after their children away from GL11 CH, this is done by personal arrangement and is outside of GL11 CH's responsibility.

Child Protection Procedures Flowchart

This chart is to be used as a guide to the organisational procedures for The Protection of Children. For further information please refer to the internal policy for Child Protection and the local authority Child Protection Guidelines.

Taken from GSCB Child Protection Guidelines



GL11 Community Hub Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. Aim of this Policy

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for staff and volunteers to contribute to preventing abuse of vulnerable adults, raise awareness and provide a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.
- 1.3 The policy covers all staff and volunteers (from herein referred to as colleagues) whose role involves regular contact with service users who may be considered “vulnerable adults”.
- 1.3 GL11 Community Hub (from herein referred to as GL11 CH) considers it the duty of all colleagues to protect “vulnerable adults” with whom they come into contact from abuse.
- 1.5 This policy relates to adults of 18 years of age or over. A person is a “child” until they reach 18 years of age. For children under the age of 18 please see the Safeguarding Children Policy.

All safeguarding work with adults should be based on the following principles: • **The empowerment of adults underpins all safeguarding adults work.** The focus of safeguarding adults should always be to identify and endeavour to meet the desired outcomes of the adult.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This policy also follows guidelines as stated in the Care Act 2014 “to protect vulnerable adults from mistreatment and improve their quality of life”.
- 2.2 GL11 CH has an obligation to protect vulnerable adults who it may believe to be abused or at risk of abuse or neglect.
- 2.3 The policy and procedures have been developed to assist colleagues in acting on reported or suspected abuse.
- 2.4 Depending upon the nature of particular services or the requirements of particular funders or partner agencies, the policy and procedures may be supplemented by local procedures.

3. Responsibilities of GL11 Community Hub

3.1 It is the responsibility of GL11 CH to:

- 3.1.1 Identify a senior member of staff who will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of safeguarding adults, including training and the monitoring and reviewing of policies and procedures. (Designated Safeguarding Lead. DSL)
- 3.1.2 Ensure that all colleagues have the appropriate support, training and supervision to carry out their role detailed in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedure within this policy and the GL11 Safeguarding Adults Policy in a competent manner.
- 3.1.3 Ensure that all staff & volunteers have relevant qualifications and an in date DBS check prior to commencement of their role.
- 3.1.4 Have policies and procedures that define staff responsibilities in the recognition and reporting of any suspicions they may have about abuse and neglect.
- 3.1.5 Supervise and monitor all colleagues working with vulnerable adults.
- 3.1.6 Ensure the DSL is aware that all allegations of abuse and neglect must be reported to the Gloucestershire County Council Adult Social Care Helpdesk to raise the alert. (Contact numbers are contained in the Safeguarding Adults Procedures.)
- 3.1.7 Ensure that all staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults undertake safeguarding awareness and procedure training.
- 3.1.8 Share information on a need-to-know basis when it is in the best interest of the vulnerable adult.
- 3.1.9 Keep clear, up to date and accurate records.
- 3.1.10 Ensure that appropriate records have been kept of the concern and the outcome of the initial enquiries. These records may become part of the investigation process.
- 3.1.11 Ensure the immediate safety of the individual(s) concerned.

3.2 The DSL should not:

- 3.2.1 Interview the alleged victim(s) other than if there is a need to clarify the basis of the concern raised.
- 3.2.2 Interfere with or otherwise contaminate evidence which should be preserved.

3.2.3 Initiate internal investigations (e.g. by auditors of other “independent” people)

3.3 Staff, visitors, relatives or other professionals may have concerns about the way in which GL11 CH discharges its responsibilities towards the welfare and care of service users. These concerns will be dealt with in exactly the same way as any other allegation of abuse or neglect.

4. Definitions

4.1 A vulnerable adult is defined as:

‘A person (who is 18 years old or above) 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 may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.’

* Disability includes sensory impairment, physical impairment, learning difficulties etc.

4.2 Abuse is defined as:

‘Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.’ Section 2.5

‘Abuse can consist of a single act or repeated acts, either to one or more people in any relationship or service context and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.’ Section 2.6

5. Categories of Abuse

5.1

1. **Physical abuse** - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
2. **Sexual abuse** - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
3. **Psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
4. **Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in

connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;

5. **Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating;
6. **Discriminatory abuse** - including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment;
7. **Institutional abuse, neglect or poor professional practice** – including abuse that takes the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other.

6. Responsibilities of Colleagues

6.1 All colleagues have a duty to:

- 6.1.1 Alert the DSL, without delay, to any concern, suspicions or evidence of abuse that they may see or hear about.
- 6.1.2 Co-operate with any investigation of concerns of abuse by providing all the evidence that may be known,
- 6.1.3 Never prevent or persuade another person from raising concerns, suspicions or presenting evidence.
- 6.1.4 Record all factual information accurately and clearly, in line with this policy.
- 6.1.5 Follow the procedure within this policy for reporting concerns.

6.2 It is the responsibility of the DSL to:

- 6.2.1 Have a knowledge of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Multi Agency Policy and Procedures and be aware of any changes implemented.
- 6.2.2 Ensure that all staff and volunteers have the appropriate support, training and supervision to carry out their role within the above procedure and the GL11 Safeguarding Adults Policy in a competent manner.
- 6.2.3 Be aware that all allegations of abuse or neglect must be reported to the Gloucestershire County Council Adult Social Care Helpdesk to raise the alert.
- 6.2.4 Develop and implement a suitably robust Safeguarding Adults Procedure which is

clearly written and given to all staff as part of induction.

6.2.5 Ensure the immediate safety of the individual(s) concerned.

6.2.6 Prevent the intimidation of witnesses, including the individuals concerned and staff.

6.2.7 Ensure that appropriate records have been kept both of the concern and the outcome of the initial enquiries. These records may become part of the investigation process.

6.2.8 Ensure that where an offence may have been committed, Gloucestershire Police are notified as soon as possible to ensure that suitable advice and direction can be obtained

6.2.9 Ensure that external training providers using GL11 CH are aware of the safeguarding guidance and that they should follow the GL11 CH Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policies and Procedures.

6.3 The person responsible for the safeguarding of adults at GL11 CH should not:

6.3.1 Interview the victims(s) other than if there is a need to clarify the basis of the concern raised.

6.3.2 Interfere with or otherwise contaminate evidence which should be preserved.

6.3.3 Initiate internal investigations (e.g. by auditors of other “independent” people).

6.4 Staff, visitors, relatives of other professionals may have concerns about the way in which GL11 CH discharges its responsibilities towards the welfare and care of service users. These concerns will be dealt with in exactly the same way as any other allegation of abuse or neglect.

7. Responsibilities to carers, relatives and concerned others

7.1 Carers, relatives and concerned others are often in a better position to notice changes to someone in their family or a close friend or neighbour and will be supported by staff at GL11 CH to bring these concerns to the attention of someone who is in a position to help.

7.2 When a concern is raised carers, relatives and concerned others will be provided with information on where to go in order to report abuse. The Safeguarding Coordinator will encourage carers to report any concerns.

8. Recording

- 8.1 GL11 CH will keep clear and accurate records of all contacts and actions relating to cases of abuse. These records may need to be used to hold individuals/agencies legally to account and therefore should be complete.
- 8.2 These records may be required by a court, as well as requested by those about whom they are written. The DSL for adults will use professional language and be sensitive to diversity issues.
- 8.3 All records will be accurate and factual and be kept in a safe and secure location in accordance with the Confidentiality Policy.

GL11 Community Hub

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedure

1. Raising a Safeguarding Alert

1.1 Key Principles:

All those making a complaint, allegation or expression of concern, whether they are staff, adults in need of safeguarding, carers, or members of the public, can be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously;
- Their comments will be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk;
- If they are a service user they will be given immediate protection if necessary e.g. under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998;
- They will be dealt with fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner;
- They will be kept informed of action that has been taken and its outcome as far as possible.

1.2 Raising a safeguarding alert involves recording the concern, ensuring the immediate safety of the vulnerable adult(s) and logging the alert with the Adult Social Care Helpdesk.

1.3 An alert must be raised on the same day as the safeguarding concern is raised.

1.4 The following steps are to be followed by any staff member/volunteer when abuse of a vulnerable adult is suspected:

- You must inform the complainant that concerns of a serious nature may need to be shared with another agency to safeguard them or the person they are concerned about;
- Make sure no one is in immediate danger;
- Call for Police/ambulance if it is an emergency situation;
- Remain calm – do not over-react or be judgemental;

- If the abuse is recent, do not do anything that could disturb any possible forensic evidence;
- Record details of what has happened, in line with this policy;
- Raise an alert with the DSL.

1.5 All alerts will be taken seriously by those receiving them.

1.6 Usually the DSL will be alerted. If this is not appropriate, for example where that person is the alleged perpetrator or the member of staff is not available, concerns will be reported to the GL11 Chief Executive Officer or the Chair of Trustees. Guidance for dealing with situations of this nature can be found in the Whistleblowing policy.

1.7 Following an alert being raised, the DSL, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer if necessary, will collate all information and assess whether any individual is in immediate danger or any urgent action is necessary, and log the alert at the Adult Social Care Helpdesk.

1.8 If the incident is recent and/or serious and the alleged victim has injuries or is in severe distress, the priority for all staff is to:

- Ensure the alleged victim is as safe and comfortable as possible;
- Ensure they get any emergency medical treatment they need promptly;
- Contact the Police if any crime is suspected;
- Ensure that any evidence of abuse is left undisturbed as there may be forensic evidence that would be pertinent to a Police investigation; for instance, care needs to be taken about tidying up an area after an assault or offering baths or showers following a sexual assault; the Police will advise on this.

2. Allegations that Appear to Involve Criminal Behaviour

2.1 Both Police and adult social care should be contacted if the abuse/neglect constitutes a criminal offence.

2.2 If the Police are contacted initially, the incident and/or crime reference number should be passed on to Adult Social Care Services.

2.3 If adult social care services are contacted initially, a discussion should take place as to who is best placed to contact the Police.

2.4 All staff need to recognise that the alleged victim may not wish a particular incident of

disclosure to be further investigated or reported to the Police. Where the alleged victim states that they do not want the situation disclosed further or reported to the Police, the situation should be discussed with the GL11 Chief Executive Officer and, where appropriate, multi-agency colleagues at the earliest opportunity.

3. Consent

- 3.1 Where the person who is thought to be experiencing abuse or neglect has mental capacity, consent must be granted for the alert to be raised unless:
 - There is an overriding public duty to act, because a crime has been committed and/or others may be at risk, or
 - gaining consent would put the person at further risk.
- 3.2 If there are overriding duties to act, the person should be informed that the alert will be raised except where this could jeopardise the safety of others who may also be at risk.
- 3.3 Where the person lacks mental capacity and is at risk of abuse or neglect the situation should be phoned into the Adult Social Care Helpdesk, if it is deemed to be in their best interests.
- 3.4 Where the DSL is unclear they should seek “in principle” advice from the Adult Social Care Helpdesk before making a decision to raise an alert.

4. Raising an Alert

- 4.1 When raising an alert with the Adult Social Care Team Helpdesk, staff should be prepared to give as much of the following factual information as possible:
 - Name(s) by which the person is known, date of birth, address, language spoken and method of communication, ethnicity and current whereabouts of the vulnerable adult.
 - Your name(s) and involvement.
 - What happened, where and when?
 - Details of the alleged perpetrator, such as name, date of birth, address, language spoken/method of communication, current whereabouts and his/her relationship to the person being referred.
 - Whether there are any other people, **including** children, who may be at risk.
 - Details of other agencies involved with the vulnerable adult.

- Confirmation that the person being referred and their carer/s are aware that staff are sharing details and raising an Alert. It is also important to pass on the feelings of the abused person regarding sharing this Alert.

5. Telephone Numbers:

- **Adult Social Care Helpdesk: 01452 426868**
- **Out of hours - Emergency Duty Team: 01452 614194**
- **Gloucestershire Constabulary: 0845 0901234**
- **Police if there is an immediate risk: 999**