

Safeguarding Quick Guide for Contractors

What is safeguarding and who does it apply to?

Adult safeguarding is the process of protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect. **Child safeguarding** is the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding procedures apply to adults who have care and support needs that may mean that the person is unable to take steps to prevent them from being the victims of abuse. Safeguarding procedures apply to children as due to their age they are not able to take steps to prevent abuse from occurring.

People using and/or living at St Mungo's services/sites will usually have needs for care and support. Tenants of Real Lettings (also part of St Mungo's) may have needs that St Mungo's are not aware of.

People who are likely to have care and support needs include those who:

- are elderly, with poor health, a physical disability or cognitive impairment (e.g. dementia)
- have a learning disability or developmental disorder (e.g. autism)
- have a physical disability and/or sensory impairment
- have mental health needs including depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder
- have a long term illness/condition
- use substances or alcohol
- are carers, providing unpaid care to a family member or friend
- do not have the mental capacity to make all decisions for themselves.

St Mungo's has a legal and moral duty to protect our clients from abuse. This duty extends to contractors who carry out any work within a St Mungo's service or directly with St Mungo's clients.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons'. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a person with care and support needs is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Safeguarding legislation covers 14 categories of abuse for adults and 18 for children. These categories include (but are not limited to):

- Physical abuse (such as hitting, punching, restraint, biting)
- Psychological or emotional abuse (such as harassment and bullying)
- Sexual abuse (such as rape, inappropriate intimate touching, coercing someone to engage in sexual activity)
- Financial or material abuse (such as stealing money or possessions, taking out credit in a persons' name without their consent)
- Neglect or acts of omission (such as self-neglect, self-harm, hoarding, medication errors, not reporting safeguarding concerns)
- Discriminatory abuse (such as calling a person names due to a disability, ethnicity or religion)
- Organisational abuse (such as encouraging restrictive practice)

- Hate crime (i.e. any crime perceived to be racist, homophobic, transphobic or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability)
- Modern slavery (e.g. forced labour, human trafficking)

Additional categories of abuse applying to children are:

- Child sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation
- Abuse via the internet
- Peer abuse

What signs might contractors see that might indicate abuse or a risk of abuse?

Signs might include:

- Disclosure of treatment by another/others that might constitute abuse, including partners or ex-partners
- Signs of physical injury, e.g. cuts, bruises, scars, bite marks, burns, fractures
- Someone borrowing or lending money (or seeking to persuade someone to do so)
- Someone expressing a keen interest in a client's financial situation
- Someone offering to accompany a client to the cashpoint or asking for their PIN
- Silence or signs of discomfort when a particular person interacts with a client
- Reluctance to be alone with someone else
- Verbal abuse, which may or may not relate to someone's race, gender, age, sexuality or disability
- Denial of a person's communication needs e.g. access to a sign language interpreter
- Denial of visitors or phone calls
- Signs of fear of another person e.g. withdrawal, silence, looking around for others
- Refusal to tell staff or other professionals about an injury, theft or other crime or sign of harm
- Inability to access food or drink

What action you should take if you have a concern?

If you have any concerns about any abuse or the risk of abuse to a St Mungo's client, any other adult you think is likely to have care and support needs or a child, you should report your concerns to:

- Any member of staff; or
- If the contractor suspects a staff member might be involved in the suspected abuse, or may otherwise pose a risk to a St Mungo's client, to the Manager; or
- If the contractor suspects the Manager may pose a risk, to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Lead (contact details below).

If you still have concerns after going through this process, you can use the St Mungo's Whistleblowing Procedure. If further advice is needed please contact quality@mungos.org.

What happens if St Mungo's has concerns about abuse perpetrated by contractors?

St Mungo's is very clear that in cases where we suspect that a contractor has been involved in perpetrating abuse, we will work with the contractor's employer to ensure a full investigation is carried out. We will always refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Police where necessary.

Key Contacts

If you have any queries, please contact one of the following:

quality@mungos.org

St Mungo's Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Claire.tuffin@mungos.org

St Mungo's Safeguarding Lead: Dominic.williamson@mungos.org