

**Safeguarding  
Children and  
Vulnerable Adults  
Protection Policy &  
Procedures**



# About this policy

This policy covers Healthbox CIC's responsibility to safeguard participants and staff.

## Who should read and understand this policy?

All Healthbox CIC staff including full and part time staff, sessional staff, volunteers and placement students or interns.

## What is the purpose of the policy?

All Healthbox CIC staff need to be able to promote the wellbeing and welfare of the children and adults we provide services for; understand our responsibilities in dealing with safeguarding reports and how to action and handle these concerns or incidents; and encourage good practice in all we do.

## This document also explains:

- ✓ Types of abuse
- ✓ Consequences of abuse
- ✓ Evidence of abuse
- ✓ The law
- ✓ Procedures for dealing with a safeguarding issue
- ✓ Safer recruitment and DBS checks

## Remember:

"Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility"

# Policy Statement

Healthbox CIC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults that it comes into contact with in the course of its working activities. The purpose of this policy and related procedures is to:

- ✓ promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm
- ✓ ensure the safe recruitment of staff and conduct of staff and sessional staff
- ✓ identify staff responsibilities in dealing with reports or suspicions of abuse and to provide clear and robust guidance on how to handle these concerns
- ✓ encourage good practice in all aspects of promotion and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults

## **Healthbox CIC recognises that the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult is paramount;**

- ✓ **all children and vulnerable adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs**
- ✓ We will Investigate and respond to all suspicions and allegations of abuse
- ✓ this policy is approved and endorsed by the company directors and applies to all directors, employees and sessional staff of Healthbox CIC.
- ✓ children and parents are informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate
- ✓ all concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by directors, staff and sessional staff and will be responded to appropriately – this may require a referral to children’s services, informing GPs, the appropriate Local Safeguarding Board and in emergencies, the Police and or ambulance service
- ✓ Healthbox CIC is committed to safe recruitment, selection and vetting
- ✓ **The policy and procedures will be subject to review every two years**

# Safeguarding definitions

**Safeguarding** is defined by the **Children Act 1989** and Joint Chief Inspectors Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children (2002) as meaning that:

**'Agencies (and organisations) working with children and young people take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to the individual's welfare are and where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies (and organisations) take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures, working in partnership with other local agencies.'**

**Vulnerable Adult:** This is a person aged 18 years and over who may be unable to take care of or protect themselves because they have a physical or mental health problem, disability or are elderly.

**Emotional Abuse:** Persistent lack of love and affection, where a child/vulnerable adult may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, may make the child/vulnerable adult nervous or withdrawn. Emotional abuse may also occur if there is constant overprotection, or there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse.

**Psychological/Mental Abuse:** This type of abuse is similar to emotional abuse and can be in the form of threats, intimidation, harassment, stopping a child/vulnerable adult from seeing friends and family or invasion of privacy.

**Neglect:** This is when the child/vulnerable adult's basic needs such as food, warmth, and adequate clothing are not provided, as well as a failure or refusal to give love, affection and attention. It can also occur when there is inadequate supervision or the child/vulnerable adult is left alone.

**Physical Abuse:** Where adults physically hurt or injure children/vulnerable adults by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, and biting or use excessive force when trying to restrain a child/vulnerable adult, or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs etc.

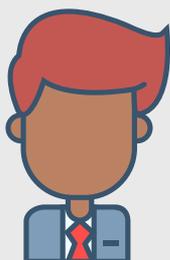


**Sexual Abuse:** Some adults – both male and female – may seek to satisfy their own sexual needs by abusing girls, boys and vulnerable adults. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children/vulnerable adults pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse.

**Financial Abuse:** This includes: fraud; stealing; pressuring a child/vulnerable adult to part with money, benefits, possessions or property. Abuse may involve/occur in one or more of the above.

## Consequences of Abuse

Abuse in all forms can affect a person at any age. The effects are so damaging that, if not tackled, they can affect an individual for the rest of their life. For example, an adult who has been abused as a child may find it difficult or impossible to maintain a stable trusting relationship, become involved with drugs or prostitution, attempt suicide or even go on to be an abuser themselves. The effects on disabled children/vulnerable adults may have an increased impact on their lives, as these groups already suffer from many additional disadvantages. There have been a number of studies which have shown that disabled children are at an increased risk of abuse through various factors, such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and an inability to protect themselves or they may have difficulty communicating the fact that abuse has occurred. Children from ethnic minorities, who may experience racial discrimination, could be doubly at risk.



The next section of the policy will outline some of the signs of abuse to be aware of when working in the community.

# Evidence of Abuse

Evidence that a child/vulnerable adult may be being abused could include:

-  Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if sustained on part of a body not normally prone to such injuries
-  A situation in which the explanation for an injury seems inconsistent or unlikely
-  The child/vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
-  Unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
-  Inappropriate sexual awareness
-  Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
-  Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
-  Difficulty in making friends
-  Not socialising with their peers
-  Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
-  Loss of weight for no apparent reason
-  Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not proof that abuse is taking place.

# Understanding the law and legislative framework



## The Children Act 1989

This act provided legislation to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including their need to be protected from harm.

## The Police Act 1997

This act contained the provision to set up the Criminal Records Bureau for England and Wales.

Under this act it is a criminal offence for an employer to

- not check an employee working with children or vulnerable adults
- give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children or vulnerable adults when they know this to be case.

## The Protection of Children Act 1999

Under this act, childcare organisations (defined as those that are **'concerned with the provision of accommodation, social services or health care services to children or the supervision of children'**) must make use of the Disclosure Service in their recruitment and reporting processes and urges other organisations working with children to also do so.

## Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

This act covers Disclosures and child protection issues. It contains the list of convictions that bar offenders from working with children in **'regulated positions'**.

These types of 'regulated positions' are defined in this act and include:

- any employment in schools, children's homes, day care premises where children are present
- caring for, training, supervising, or being in sole charge of children
- unsupervised contact with children
- other positions which give the kind of access or influence which could put children
- at risk if held by a disqualified person (e.g. management committee members).

# Understanding the law continued

## Care Standards Act 2000

A CRB (now DBS) disclosure is required for most roles in organisations providing care or health services regulated under this act. This act also sets out the Protection of Vulnerable Adults scheme.

## Disclosure & Barring Service 2013

Criminal record checks: guidance for employers – How employers or organisations can request criminal records checks on potential employees from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

## Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004

In September 2003 the Government set out in the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' its proposals for a radical reorganisation of children's services – from hospitals and schools, to police and **voluntary groups**. Subsequently 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' was issued and the Children Act 2004 was passed. It sets out the Government's approach to the well-being of children and young people from **birth to age 19**.

Every local authority will lead on integrated delivery of services for children and young people through multi-agency children's trusts. Local authorities are also required to set up statutory **Local Safeguarding Children Boards** which are replacing the non-statutory Area Child Protection Committees. The Children's Trusts are a direct response to Lord Laming's report of the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié, which highlighted the extent to which better working together and better communication was crucial.

The Every Child Matters agenda has been further developed through publication of the Children's Plan in December 2007, which aims to improve educational outcomes for children, improve children's health, reduce offending rates among young people and eradicate child poverty by 2020. Further details from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

## Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Introduced the new Vetting and Barring Scheme and the role of the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The Act places a statutory duty on all those working with vulnerable groups to register and undergo an advanced vetting process with criminal sanctions for non-compliance.

## The Care Act 2014 – statutory guidance

The Care Act introduces new responsibilities for local authorities. It also has major implications for adult care and support providers, people who use services, carers and advocates. It replaces No Secrets and puts adult safeguarding on a statutory footing.

## Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014

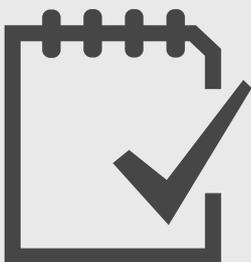
This guide is intended to support councils and their partners to develop outcome-focused, person-centred safeguarding practice.

# Staff Training

As a member of the Healthbox CIC team, it is important that you feel confident and understand your responsibilities to help keep all our participants and staff members safe.

Depending on your role you will either complete a Level 2 or Level 3 Safeguarding qualification. This may be for safeguarding vulnerable adults or for working with children or for both.

This qualification will require refreshing/updating every 2-3 years.



To arrange your safeguarding training please speak to your line manager or one of the directors.

You can find out about the company procedures and how to action a safeguarding concern in the next section.

# 6 Principles of Safeguarding

First introduced by the Department of Health in 2011, but now embedded in the Care Act, these six principles apply to all health and care settings and are a good basis for working in the community and with partners.

## 1. Empowerment

People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

## 2. Prevention

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

## 3. Proportionality

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

## 4. Protection

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

## 5. Partnership

Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

## 6. Accountability

Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice



# Safeguarding Procedures

**Simon Sandford** is the nominated Director with responsibility for safeguarding and protection.

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Laura Turner

## Overview

If any member of the team has any concerns, they must be immediately communicated to Simon Sandford, who will then conduct a full debriefing with that team member. He will then require an immediate and full report from the individual team member who has raised concerns, which must be concise, contain only known factual information, and contain dates, times and the contact details of all concerned.

This is to be immediately communicated to the **Local Safeguarding Board**. If the concerns are raised out of normal office hours, the matter will be referred to the Social Services Emergency Duty Team via the local police. Under no circumstances will the concerns be raised or discussed with anyone other than the directors and the local authority to avoid any risk of alerting any alleged abuser or breaching confidentiality.

-  If any member of the Healthbox CIC team has a suspicion or is aware that a child/young person/vulnerable adult is being abused they must act quickly and appropriately.
-  Healthbox CIC personnel and all sessional staff are obliged to take action whilst ensuring at all times that the welfare of the child/young person/vulnerable adult is paramount and the interests of the person against whom the allegation has been made are protected.
-  Staff should immediately report any suspicion or allegation of abuse immediately to Simon Sandford in the first instance.
-  Staff should not attempt to assess whether or not the allegations are true and must not attempt to deal with any suspicion or report themselves. The nominated Director will not decide if a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. This is the task of the statutory services.

# Actioning a safeguarding concern

Healthbox CIC delivers services (counselling and social prescribing) which can involve individuals disclosing information that will trigger a safeguarding concern.

If you work in these teams it is vital you know how to correctly respond to any disclosures.

If you are speaking to a client accessing the above services who discloses any report of suffering abuse or neglect of any kind or an intention to risk the safety of themselves or others, a safeguarding report must be actioned.

## How to handle the situation when speaking to the client

-  Remain calm and listen carefully
-  Find an appropriate, early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared. Staff **must not** promise to keep confidentiality
-  Allow the person to continue at their own pace
-  Ask questions for clarification only and at all other times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
-  Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing in making the allegation/disclosing any intention to harm themselves
-  Contact the nominated Director at the earliest opportunity



**LISTEN**



**CLARIFY**



**REPORT**

# Emergency safeguarding: suicidal intention

Establish whether the person has suicidal **thoughts** or a **plan**



If the individual has **suicidal thoughts** they will need **risk assessing** and **monitoring**



1. With their permission - inform their GP (counsellors/link workers)

2. Use the MHFA **ALGEE** approach if you are trained to do so

3. complete Healthbox CIC safeguarding risk reporting form



4. **contact Healthbox CIC safeguarding lead** and present safeguarding report for any further action required

i.e. onwards contact with Local Safeguarding partnership/GP



**If the individual has a plan**

1. Keep them calm

2. clarify are they planning immediate action or not?



If they are at **immediate risk** call **999 ambulance**

If they are **not** at immediate risk call the **Crisis Line 0800 145 6485**



3. complete Healthbox CIC safeguarding risk reporting form



# Safeguarding Risk Reporting Form

## Counselling/Social Prescribing Link Workers Services

Date:

Member of staff completing this form:

### Client details

Full name:

DOB:

Address:

Contact details:

Tel

Email

Name of GP:

GP Practice:

### Reason for contact with the client

### Type of safeguarding risk (Please tick all that apply)

Vulnerable adult

Physical abuse

Vulnerable child

Sexual abuse

Emotional abuse

Financial abuse

Mental/psychological abuse

Neglect

### Details of client disclosure/safeguarding concern

## ACTIONS TAKEN BY SAFEGUARDING MANAGER/LEAD

This should include who the safeguarding concern/risk has been reported to (internal/external) and dates and times this occurred.

Action	Date/timescale
Action 1:	
Action 2:	
Action 3:	
Action/ongoing:	

## External agencies contacted/involved in managing the safeguarding risk:

Agencies Alerted	Date	Actions/notes
Local Safeguarding Adults Partnership		
Local Safeguarding Children Partnership		
GP		
GP practice safeguarding lead (if known)		
Police		
Ambulance		
Crisis Team		
School		
Other (please detail)		

Has the safeguarding risk/concern been appropriately dealt with/escalated to appropriate agencies and closed from Healthbox CIC ongoing involvement?

Outcome	Date	Reporting staff signature	Safeguarding manager signature
<b>Yes</b> - Risk dealt with and closed			
<b>Yes</b> - Dealt with, but with ongoing involvement with client for other reasons			
<b>No</b> -Ongoing safeguarding issues with client (plan to be put in place with appropriate agencies - must be risk assessed)			

# Reporting Concerns to the Local Safeguarding Partnerships

## Report a concern about a child (Cheshire West)

**website:** <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/>

Office Hours: **0300 123 7047**

Monday - Thursday: 8:30am-5pm

Friday: 8:30am-4:30pm

**Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)**

**01244 977 277**

**Cheshire police - 0845 458 0000**

**999 in an emergency**

## Report a concern about a child (Cheshire East)

**email:** [CHECS@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:CHECS@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

Office Hours: **0300 123 5012**

Monday - Thursday: 8:30am-5pm

Friday: 8:30am-4:30pm

**EDT Out of hours**

**0300 123 5022**

**Cheshire police**

**101 or 999 in an emergency**

## Report a concern about a vulnerable adult (Cheshire West)

**email:** [accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Office Hours: **0300 123 7034**

Monday - Thursday: 8:30am-5pm

Friday: 8:30am-4:30pm

**Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)**

**01244 977 277**

**Cheshire police - 0845 458 0000**

**999 in an emergency**

## Report a concern about a vulnerable adult (Cheshire East)

**website:** <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/live/well/staying-safe/keeping-adults-safe/concerned-about-an-adult.aspx>

Office Hours: **0300 123 5010**

Monday - Thursday: 8:30am-5pm

Friday: 8:30am-4:30pm

**EDT Out of hours**

**0300 123 5022**

**Cheshire police**

**101 or 999 in an emergency**

# Other useful contacts

## CWP Mental Health Phone Line/Crisis Line



**0800 145 6485**

Urgent support: The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is open to people of all ages – including children and young people. The phone line is now the first port of call for mental health help – it is operated by people in your local area who will know how best to support you.

## Number 71



**01244 393139**



**[enquiries.chester@spiderproject.org.uk](mailto:enquiries.chester@spiderproject.org.uk)**

Number 71 is a new safe space for people struggling with emotional and psychological distress, and considering themselves to be in a self-defined crisis. The facility is hosted by professionals, volunteers and peers, including people with lived experience. It is open to all residents of Cheshire West and Chester aged 18+.

**[www.cwp.nhs.uk/services-and-locations/services/number-71/](http://www.cwp.nhs.uk/services-and-locations/services/number-71/)**

# Safe recruitment

## Data Barring Service

All Healthbox CIC staff and sessional staff working in the community must have an **enhanced current DBS** check and have been deemed suitable to deliver work for Healthbox CIC. The aim is to help protect children and vulnerable adults when recruiting people into positions of trust. Prior to delivering any work they must complete a DBS application.



Healthbox CIC will complete this during the new member of staff's recruitment process.

Healthbox CIC will be alerted if the check is clear and the individual will commence their employment contract.

If the check is not clear, the individual must share details of the convictions/allegations that have been returned on the DBS check. A decision will then be made in line with **Healthbox CIC's recruitment policy**, whether the individual's offer of employment will be withdrawn.

**Staff must keep their original DBS document in a safe and secure place and show this document to Healthbox CIC directors when asked.**

## The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

This act made any convictions 'spent' after a certain period and the convicted person would not normally have to reveal or admit the existence **of a spent conviction**. In most circumstances, an employer cannot refuse to employ someone, or dismiss them, on the basis of a 'spent' conviction. **However, under this act all applicants for positions which give them "substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis" to children, must declare all previous convictions whether spent or unspent, and all pending cases against them.**

# Recruitment Processes



Healthbox CIC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and confers an obligation upon all staff to share this commitment. To ensure that the risk of harm is minimised, we will employ a safe recruitment policy if the need to recruit staff who will work with these groups becomes necessary. We will take every precaution to ensure that we are satisfied that any new staff member is fit to work with such groups.

**All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.**

## **Procedure:**

Job adverts will clearly state that we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and that we expect all **staff and to share this commitment**. This will require all successful applicants to undertake a **DBS check**. In addition, employment records, references and qualifications will be confirmed.

Job descriptions will clearly state that the work involves contact with children/young people/vulnerable adults with a person specification which clearly states the qualities required in the individual and that at the interview stage, attitudes to and understanding of safeguarding and protection will be rigorously explored. Any unexplained employment breaks or very regular job changes will be thoroughly scrutinised.

References will be taken up after interview. Open references are not acceptable and all references will be verbally verified prior to the offer of a position. All successful candidates will be subject to a DBS check even if this has been recently carried out by a previous employer. Failure to reveal pertinent information at interview will lead to the job offer being withdrawn. Newly appointed staff will be required to undertake an induction in safeguarding and promoting principles and procedures. This will also include anti-bullying and equality and diversity training.

# Useful resources:

**<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-checklist>**

The **NSPCC Safeguarding and Child Protection Standards for the Voluntary and Community Sector** booklet is available within the safeguarding folder.

It contains information on incorporating 6 standards in the workplace to promote a safer working environment and strengthened safeguarding and child protection procedures.

**<https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/what-can-i-do-to-help-myself-cope/>**

**Mind** has some excellent resources for directing to clients to help them cope through times of crisis.

**<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding>**

**Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)**