

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

IntroEase's priority is to always ensure the safety and protection of adults at risk. It is the responsibility of everyone supporting adults at risk to promote good practice and prevent abuse. IntroEase recognises that Independent Care Professionals may be able to identify the possibility of abuse, therefore, they have the responsibility to pass on any concerns they have or any disclosures that are made to them.

IntroEase's definition of an adult at risk is a person aged 18 and over who is or may need community care service and who is unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation. The adult who is at risk of suffering abuse is the focus of intervention. He/she must be treated with dignity and respect and involved as much as is practicable. Where communication or other difficulties impede participation, reasonable steps must be taken to overcome them.

Vulnerable adults have rights to:

- Be safe, secure, and supported.
- Be listened to, informed, and included in the investigation process into abuse.
- Be taken seriously.
- Be told the outcome of any investigations.
- Have a disclosure recognised.
- Have investigations conducted by skilled appropriately trained people.

IntroEase uses the term '**Safeguarding**' where an adult has the right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect and this is at risk of being compromised.

It is IntroEase's policy that:

- Abuse or neglect is stopped wherever possible.
- That the risk of harm, abuse, or neglect to adults with care and support needs is prevented.
- Adults at risk are safeguarded in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Approaches that concentrate on improving lives are promoted.
- Staff are fully trained in preventing, identifying, and responding to abuse and neglect.
- They provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about safety and wellbeing.
- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect.
- Attempts will always be made to create an environment where abuse is less likely to happen and develop and implement procedures and strategies which are designed to protect adults at risk from abuse.

IntroEase recognises that the term '**abuse**' can be subject to wide interpretation and defines it as such; **Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.**

For adults at risk, this will focus upon others who have influence over them. A violation may be intentional or unintentional and may be a single act or repeated acts over a period and where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress.

The following six key principles underpin Caring Lodge's care and support service and the ways in which we work with adults at risk.

IntroEase recognises that safeguarding arrangements are there to protect individuals, recognising that they all have different preferences, histories, circumstances, and lifestyles. Therefore, we aim to make safeguarding person - led and outcome - focused. This includes enhancing involvement, choice and control and improving quality of life, wellbeing, and safety. Abuse may take many different forms but can be determined in the following ways:

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint and may be identified as bruises, injuries consistent with explanations offered, cluster of injuries, burns and scalds, weight loss, dehydration, nervous/fearful watchfulness, fear of physical contact.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse. This can also include so called 'honour based' violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, pressurised consent and may be identified by scratching/soreness/pain/unexplained rashes in the genital areas, stained/bloody underclothing, bruises on inner thighs and buttocks, discomfort when sitting or walking, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy when unable to consent, change in behaviour.

Psychological – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services which may be identified by unwarranted fear of people and places, bed-wetting when incontinence has not been initially diagnosed, distrust of people, depression, emotional withdrawal, high levels of anxiety.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs, which may be identified by sudden loss of cash or earnings, inability to afford basic services when the person is known to have financial means, theft of personal property, missing personal property, power of attorney obtained illegally, third party cashing benefits which do not appear to benefit the client, fraud involving wills property and other assets.

Modern Slavery – including forced labour, slavery, and domestic servitude, deceiving, and forcing individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory – including forms of harassment, racism, sexism, ageism, slurs and offensive remarks regarding ethnic origin, religion, culture, sex and age, discriminatory practices based upon the person's disabilities.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care within an organisation. This may range from one-off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice because of structure, policies, processes, and practices.

Neglect or acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs and failing to provide the correct care and support which may be identified by unauthorised withdrawal of basic services, persistent weight loss, emaciation, malnutrition, untreated bed sores, ulcers and other skin conditions, poor personal care, inadequate/inappropriate bedding/clothing, third party cashing benefits which do not appear to benefit the individual, and any withholding of the necessities of life or ignoring medical or physical care needs of the individual.

Self-neglect – an individual neglecting to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings and can include behaviour such as hoarding.

IntroEase recognises that these types of abuse are not mutually exclusive, and many situations will contain a combination of different kinds of abuse.

Legislation that protects adults at risk requires all Local Authorities to have a procedure and safeguarding board in place for reviewing allegations and reports of abuse. They must publish their procedure for investigating reports and IntroEase understand how important it is for all Independent Care Professionals who provide a service to be aware of this procedure. This procedure is usually led by the Local Authority and may involve other agencies like the Police, health service representatives or the Regulatory Body.

Working Practice

IntroEase is an introductory service that introduces independent care professional to care provides, who in turn provide services to vulnerable people.

- Independent care professionals are required to complete an online screening, making a declaration of any previous offences.
- Failure to disclose previous offences will be regarded as grounds for dismissal, non - allocation of work or for rejection of application.
- Independent care professional must provide at least two referees, including one of prior work. If they have worked with children or vulnerable adults, satisfactory verification is sought to understand why the individual left that place of work.

- Gaps in working history are checked.
- Satisfactory information of their physical or mental health conditions, relating to their ability to provide our services, is required prior to any introduction.
- An enhanced disclosure is undertaken, and this is checked against national barred lists.

Training

Adults at risk have the right to expect staff that support them to have the appropriate level of skill, this being particularly important in relation to extremely sensitive issues, such as suspected or alleged abuse. All independent care professionals complete Safeguarding training as part of their mandatory training program

Responding to Abuse

If an independent care professional knows or believes that abuse is occurring has an obligation to report it as quickly as possible to the care provider. If another member of staff is involved, this must also be in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy. If the victim requests that the matter should not be reported, the independent care professional must inform them that they have a responsibility to pass the information on an 'as needs to know' basis. Reassurance must be given to the individual that the matter will not be taken further than the care provider without their consent unless there are exceptional circumstances