

## Adult Safeguarding Policy

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**Alternative Formats**

This documentation can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, disk, audio tape or in an ethnic-minority language upon request. Requests for alternative formats can be made to the Probation Board using the following contact information:

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## Contents

<b>Section</b>		<b>Page</b>
1.	Rationale	4
2.	Policy Aim	4
3.	Objective	4
4.	Programmes and Projects	4
5.	Definitions	4
6.	Resources	6
7.	Communication	6
8.	Monitoring and Evaluation	7
9.	Review	7
10.	Implications of Non Compliance	7

## 1. Rationale

All adults have a right to live in safety, free from harm and neglect. PBNI is committed to working in partnership with other agencies to help prevent the abuse of vulnerable adults.

## 2. Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to promote the safeguarding and welfare of vulnerable adults.

## 3. Objectives

- To ensure there is clear guidance for Probation Officers as to how to respond if they suspect an adult is experiencing (or is likely to experience) harm or abuse;
- To ensure there is close cooperation between agencies and coordination of services across agencies

## 4. Programmes and Projects

PBNI Procedures containing guidance for Probation Officers are in place.

## 5. Definitions

### 5.1 Adult at Risk of Harm

An '**adult at risk of harm**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal characteristics and/or life circumstances.

**Personal characteristics** may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. **Life circumstances** may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

### 5.2 Adult in Need of Protection

An 'adult in need of protection' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- A) personal characteristics  
and/or
- B) life circumstances

**AND**

**C)** who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests;

**AND**

**D)** where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' either (A) or (B) must be present, in addition to both elements (C) and (D).

### **5.3 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is considered a form of physical and sexual abuse.

### **5.4 Sexual violence and abuse**

Sexual abuse is 'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability). Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping). Sexual violence can be found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background or sexual orientation.

### **5.5 Psychological / Emotional Abuse**

Psychological / emotional abuse is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.

### **5.6 Financial Abuse**

Financial abuse is actual or attempted theft, fraud or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion or deception. This may

include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property or inheritance.

## **5.7 Institutional Abuse**

Institutional abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in settings which adults who may be at risk reside in or use. This can occur in any organisation, within and outside Health and Social Care (HSC) provision. Institutional abuse may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm. Institutional abuse may occur within a culture that denies, restricts or curtails privacy, dignity, choice and independence. It involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services, and includes a failure to ensure that the necessary preventative and/or protective measures are in place.

## **5.8 Neglect**

Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time. It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, heating or clothing, or failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk.

## **6. Resources**

Implementation of this policy will be within existing resources.

Awareness raising of this policy will include:

- Existing operational staff
- All new operational staff and students as part of their induction to PBNI

## **7. Communication**

This policy is available on PBNI's intranet and will be communicated to all staff.

**8. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The policy will be kept under review to ensure it is in keeping with current legislation and practice guidance. The operation of the policy will be monitored through staff supervision.

**9. Review**

This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of approval, interim reviews may be prompted by feedback, identified changes in legislation or other policy initiatives.

**10. Implications of non-compliance**

Where this policy is not implemented PBNI will seek to understand the reasons why and to address to ensure appropriate compliance. Breach of the Board's Policy and Procedures by employees may merit consideration under the Board's Disciplinary Policy.