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Guide to Safeguarding for volunteers

Created in Partnership with



What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is something everyone should be aware of.

- Safeguarding is the name professionals give to a set of practice and behaviour which keeps people who may be at risk of serious harm, safe.
- Safeguarding is all about identifying, preventing, and treating the cause of problems which may hurt people physically, mentally, or emotionally.
- Safeguarding concerns can be difficult to recognise, therefore professionals can advise, and will either record their concerns or take it to those who can help.
- When people's actions or behaviour cause others harm, this is called abuse.
- If you have suspicions, or someone acts differently to their usual behaviour, these may be because of a safeguarding concern.
- Safeguarding aims to protect and support those who need help, some people may not know that they need help.

Why do we need Safeguarding?

Everyone is at risk of abuse

(which is when people's actions or behaviour cause others harm.)

Some people have more risks than others.

Some reasons people may be more at risk of abuse than others are:

- Age.
- Cultural status.
- Disabilities or neurodivergence
- Support network or lack of support.
- Mental health.

By being safeguarding aware, we can help to keep everyone in society safer from risks of things that might harm them physically, emotionally, or mentally. In order to ensure people's needs are met, it is recommended to write, refer to, and review personal risk assessments.

Where do we use it?

Safeguarding may be needed anywhere.

It is important to know who to talk to if you have a concern.

When looking at the usual risk factors, safeguarding is a priority in the following places (although it is important everywhere):

- Schools
- Hospitals
- Doctors surgeries
- Community groups
- Play settings
- Childcare
- Any form of social care.

Who can help?

- There are people who are responsible to help if you are worried about yourself or others- they are called Safeguarding Leads
- Can you name some professional people you can trust who might be able to help you if you have a safeguarding question about yourself or others?
- Professionals who can help might be your named worker, employment support, teacher, GP, supported home staff, volunteer manager, or supervisor.
- They **should not be your friends** as professionals will have a 'duty of care' that your friends do not. These are called 'professional working relationships'.

When should you make a safeguarding report?

If you have a safeguarding worry, you have a Duty of Care to inform to your manager

If you are a manager, speak to your safeguarding lead.

If it's not written down, it didn't happen.

Having a record is very important to keep people safe.

The professional should record and resolve the issue or pass it onto another professional who can.

If the person you are worried about doesn't have 'capacity' (which means they're not able to make decisions for themselves), decisions will be made for them.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Confidentiality means keeping things private, not secret

- If someone asks you to keep a secret, that is not appropriate
- Keeping things private means not sharing it with other people who don't need to know- professionals may need to know, but it might be a difficult thing to discuss with your friends and family.
- Confidentiality means private, except for when safeguarding is concerned. If someone tells you something in confidence, and you are a professional supporting someone, you have a 'Duty of Care' to share with other appropriate professionals who can help.

Appropriate questions

If you have a safeguarding need, you might have, and be asked, lots of questions.

These questions should always be 'appropriate' and not leading (this means not asking you questions about details).

- Some questions you might be asked are:
 - How does it make you feel?
 - Who can you speak to about this?
 - What do you think you might need help with?

You should not be asked for, or share, details of safeguarding needs unless speaking to a professional who is helping when it first is talked about.

If someone is the first professional to help you, they may need to ask the basic questions to find out whether or not they need to tell more professionals.

They might ask "When did it happen, is it still happening?"

This is to find out if you are still at risk of harm- if you are at risk, it will be investigated.

If you are not at risk, it will be recorded that you have been at risk, which means you are more at risk in the future.

More appropriate questions:

Some of the questions you might ask are:

- Why did this happen?
- Why was it me?
- How could I have changed things?

It isn't your fault.

Safeguarding can happen before or after an event, but professionals can help you know what is right and wrong.

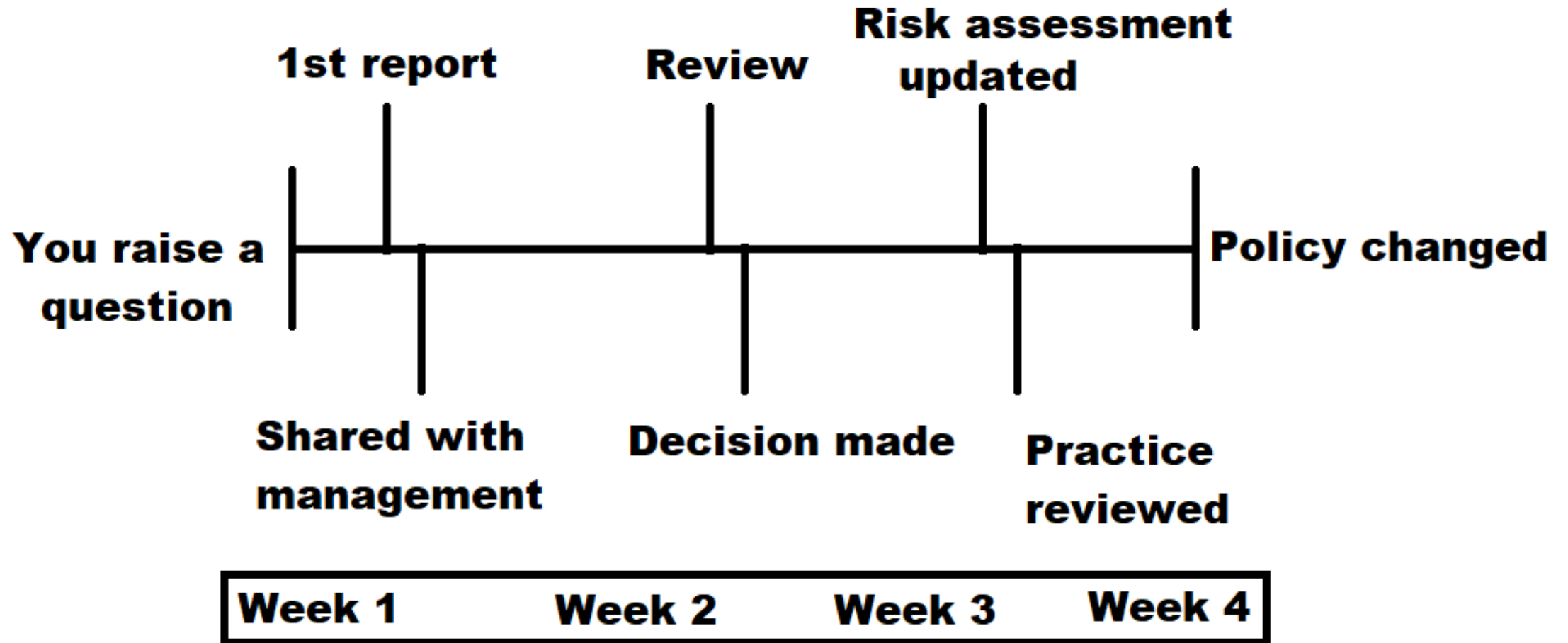
You might have questions that take time to answer. You might ask professionals who don't have the answers, to questions like:

- What happens next?
- Will someone get in trouble?
- Will other people know about this or the details surrounding it?

What should happen.....

- If you have any safeguarding questions, you've chosen your professionals who can help.
- If you have any questions, or anything changes, one of your professionals should be able to tell you and explain what is happening.
 - You have a right to be told that the issue is still being talked about by professionals and has not just 'gone away'.
- **You may feel ignored. Every safeguarding issue is taken seriously- a professional should be able to tell you that there WILL be an 'end' to the situation.**
- An 'end to the safeguarding situation' will mean that your concern has been looked at, and many people will seek to ensure it doesn't happen again to cause anyone else harm or risk of harm.

Timeline of Safeguarding:



Confidentiality Policy Example:

Cultural Services

Confidentiality (Volunteers)

In the course of your volunteering you may have access to information which is confidential.

It is important that any such information, whether it relates to people, processes, plans or any other matter, should not be passed to or discussed with anyone

Information gained in the course of your volunteering must not be used for personal gain or benefit nor may you pass on to others who might use it in a similar way.

If you are unsure about the confidentiality status of any information, please consult your supervisor.

Declaration:

I have read and understood the above and undertake to maintain confidentiality at all times

Name Signature.....

Date.....

Find out more:

- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/>
- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf>
- <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/safeguarding/>
- <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/health-and-care/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults-at-risk/>
- <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/health-and-care/children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/>

Or, talk to your named worker.