

Safeguarding Vulnerable Children Policy

CM34

Date Written	
Author(s)	
Version	
Date Signed Off	
Reviewed by	

Date: []

Review Data

Initial Production

Name	Role/Department	RACI	Date

R = Responsible for writing the policy; **A** = Accountable; **C** = Consulted; **I** = Informed

Change History

Version	Date	Details of Change	Author

Emergency Contact Details

Name	Email	Mobile

CQC Fundamental Standards

Regulation Number	Regulation Details
Regulation 13: Safeguarding service users from abuse and improper treatment	Providers must have robust procedures and processes to prevent people using the service from being abused by staff or other people they may have contact with when using the service, including visitors.

Key Lines of Enquiry

KLOE	How this applies to Safeguarding
Safe	This Safeguarding policy is an aspect of 'Safe' as it is designed to ensure staff understand the company's processes for safeguarding children, and realising our duty of care. In order to practice safeguarding effectively, it is important that staff at Careville Ltd. understand and can recognise what abuse is, as well as any signs of abuse or neglect, and the way to report any sign of abuse.

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

1. CM12 - Consent Policy
2. CM33 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
3. CM10 - Confidentiality Policy



Policy Aims

- To protect vulnerable children from harm.
- To help nursing staff and domiciliary care workers to recognise and identify the warning signs of abuse.
- To raise awareness and clarify the roles and responsibilities of staff and all care workers working with Careville Ltd in the prevention of abuse of vulnerable children and young people.
- To provide guidance for all Care workers working for Careville Ltd, whether working directly with children and young people, or where their lives or jobs impact on children.
- To describe how to find further information for support and advice within Careville and the Health and Local Authorities that employees work in.
- To outline practice and procedures for all parties within the scope of the policy.
- To provide a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.

Introduction and Key Legislation

This policy identifies the roles and responsibilities of Careville Ltd in relation to Safeguarding

Adults and Children. It complies with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Care Act 2014, Working Together 2013, the London Child Protection Procedures 2014 and the NHS CB "Arrangements to Secure children and adult safeguarding in the future NHS – a new accountability and assurance framework-Interim Advice September 2012".

Lead Responsibility

The Managing Director of Careville Ltd. has Lead Responsibility and Accountability for ensuring that all operations are carried out in compliance with this Policy and that any concerns that arise are dealt with in accordance with the reporting procedures outlined in this Policy. Day to day responsibilities may be delegated to the Service Manager for Social Care at Careville Ltd.

Background

This guidance is based on the Royal College of Nursing's recommendations for safe practice and the protection of vulnerable young people.

Cases such as that of Victoria Climbié highlighted the importance of child safety and caused a tightening of governance and governmental action when children fall victim to sustained abuse.

Such cases evidenced the need to address:

- Poor communication and information sharing between regulating authorities and professionals.
- Inadequate training and support.
- Failure to listen to children.



Key Question: How do you identify a vulnerable child or young person?

Nurses and domiciliary workers are well placed to identify the risk factors discussed in this policy.

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger." (HM Government (2006) *Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*. London: the Stationary Office.)

The following factors can indicate that a child might be vulnerable:

- Children with physical disabilities or language difficulties may be more vulnerable than those who can communicate their distress more clearly.

Signs of harm

It is important to recognise the possible signs of harm that may pose a potential risk to child safety. These may manifest or present themselves in the following manners:

Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and is like to result in impairment of the child development.
- Neglect may occur as early as pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse i.e. alcoholism or drug misuse and abuse.
- Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
- Provide adequate shelter, food and clothing.
- Ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure adequate access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, scalding, burning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. This could also include a parent or carer deliberately inducing illness or symptoms in a child.

Emotional abuse

Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of maltreatment of children, although it may also occur on its own. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, which may affect their development. This may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are unloved, worthless, and inadequate or are only valuable as far as they meet the needs of the other person.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations of children.
- Seeing or hearing of the ill treatment of others.
- Serious bullying causing the child to feel they are in danger or feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to partake in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative activities. i.e. rape, oral sex or buggery, as well as involving children in watching sexual acts.

The production of images, or encouraging the child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Identifying the signs of child abuse

All staff need to be aware of the potential signs of child abuse. Listed below are some common indicators of abuse and neglect:

- Physical signs such as hand-slap marks, bruising in unusual places, bite marks, and bruised eyes.
- Poor physical care and inadequate hygiene, inappropriate dress or failure to seek appropriate health care.
- Unrealistic parental expectations and over-protection of a child.
- A child's behaviour may also indicate that they have been abused. For example if they show fear of certain adults when they approach them, display aggressive behaviour and deliberate self-harm and substance abuse.
- The adult consistently provide inconsistent stories relating to the nature and occurrence of injuries.

Roles, rights and responsibilities

Health care practitioners have a duty of care to all patients. In this instance, if a nurse or care worker has direct or indirect contact with children they must be able to identify children and young people who might be vulnerable or at risk of harm or abuse and, following the correct protocols and procedures, act accordingly.

A child's protection is paramount in every respect, regardless of whether employees feel sympathy for the parent or carer. Employees must always act on the child's behalf and voice their concerns. This means first knowing how to identify the children who are at risk and know where to seek advice and support.

Responsibilities of Careville Ltd are:

- To ensure staff/care workers are aware of the Child Protection Policy and are adequately trained.
- To notify the appropriate authorities if abuse is identified or suspected.
- To support, and where possible, secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services and authorities have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability.
- To promote the principles and good practice to all care workers.
- To DBS check all care workers who have access to or work with children.

The responsibilities of staff members are:

- To be familiar with the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- To take appropriate action in line with the policies of Careville Ltd.
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions. Failure to do so will be regarded as gross misconduct in accordance with our policy of disclosure.

Good practice

Our recruitment procedures and policies of care workers includes:

- Enhanced Disclosure & Barring System checks with lists during the selection process.

- Occupational Health checks.
- Ensuring that applicant's mandatory training is up-to-date.
- Ensuring that references are obtained and identities confirmed.
- Risk assessment of role.
- Completion of Careville Ltd application forms, which state the prospective or current staff member's duty to declare any existing or subsequent convictions.

Training

Training/Induction includes familiarisation with all Careville Ltd policies and procedures and the Safeguarding Children – Basic Awareness in Protection of Vulnerable children section of the Staff Handbook.

Specific Child Protection and Safeguarding training is available to staff, either delivered in-house or by external providers.

Record Keeping

Written record of any concerns will be kept on file. This confidential information will be stored securely and appropriately, and will be kept for as long as deemed necessary, in line with Data Protection principles and procedures.

All incidents should be discussed in supervision with the Team Leader. Records kept should only include:

- Contacts made.
- Referrals made, including date, time, reasons and referral agency.

Careville Ltd may be involved in specific projects in which more detailed records are necessary. These will be identified by the Team Leader and made known to the team.



Key Question: What should I do if I have an E-Safety concern?

Care workers should inform the nominated independent person within Careville Ltd as soon as possible to discuss their responsibilities to report and liaise directly with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board for the local Health Authority.

Reporting Procedures

Reporting a Suspicion or Incident

- Any member of staff who suspects abuse or notices any of the signs must immediately make their concerns known to Careville Ltd.
- Action should also be taken if it is felt that colleagues are not following the Careville Ltd Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children Policy and guidelines.
- Note your concerns and any information given to you or witnessed by you.
- Report concerns to the appropriate Team Leader.

- It is not necessary or advisable to seek evidence. By reporting the incident involving the Vulnerable Child and carefully logging any information given to you at this stage, you will lay the foundations for an effective formal investigation.
- Understand the need not to contaminate, or to preserve evidence if a crime may have been committed.
- A reminder that employees should regard their own safety and leave the situation if it is not safe.

Receiving suspicion or allegations

Staff members should:

- Stay calm
- Listen patiently
- Reassure the child they are doing the right thing by telling you
- Explain what you are going to do
- Report to relevant Manager
- Write a factual account of what you have seen or happened, immediately.

Staff members should not:

- Appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry.
- Make comments or judgments other than to show concern.
- Press the child or young person for details (unless requested to do so).
- Promise to keep secrets.
- Confront the abuser.
- Risk contaminating evidence.

All allegations or suspicions are to be treated seriously.

The following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Write down the details of the incident.
- Pass this report on to the appropriate registered manager or Team Leader/ Compliance Consultant or a Senior Manager at the earliest opportunity.
- The Team Leader/Compliance Consultant or a Senior Manager should then take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child and any other person(s) who may be at risk, and then proceed with investigating the allegation.
- If the matter relates to poor practice, procedures relating to misconduct should be followed. If the matter relates to abuse, the matter should be referred to Social Services who may involve the Police, and the employee must be suspended pending the outcome of an investigation into the allegations, carried out by Social Services.
- Careville Ltd acknowledges that this is an extremely sensitive issue for staff and assures all staff and persons working on its behalf that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is, or might be, abusing vulnerable child.

- Issues of confidentiality must be clarified early on. For example, staff must make it clear that they will have to discuss the concerns with their supervisor.

Support for those who report abuse

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they are staff, service users, carers or members of the general public, should be reassured that:

They will be taken seriously and their comments will be treated confidentially. However, their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk.

In such instances, clients/service users will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation. If staff, they will be given support and afforded protection if necessary in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Careville Ltd also guarantees that all documentation will be protected through the Caldicott Principles and adherence to data protection policy and regulations.

Recording Procedures

In all situations, including those in which the cause for concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, it is vitally important to record the details of an allegation or reported incident, regardless of whether or not the concerns are shared with a statutory agency.

As far as possible an accurate note should be made of:

- The full name of the person(s) reporting and to whom reported.
- Observations and discussions as they happen.
- Any judgements, actions and decisions.
- Details of health care contacts and any outcomes.
- Results of using a body map to identify specific anatomical areas, marks or injuries.
- The date and time of the incident and disclosure, chronologically recorded.
- The parties who were/might be involved.

The report should be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know.

All referrals made to Social Services or the Police, should be confirmed in writing and followed up with a copy of the incident report within 24 hrs. Social Services should acknowledge any written referral within one working day of receipt. If no response has been received within 3 working days, contact Social Services again.

Record names, dates and times of subsequent calls, emails and letters made to any Social Services staff to whom concerns have been passed.

These procedures not only serve to protect Vulnerable Child but also protect employees.

Information requested by another organisation

The safety and wellbeing of the Vulnerable Child overrides considerations of confidentiality. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned, both when the allegation is made and during investigations.

Careville Ltd has a duty to share information with other agencies and authorities if requested in connection with an assessment of a Vulnerable Child or in connection with court proceedings.

The Data Protection Act 2018, Human Rights Act 1998 or Child Protection Act must be considered and would normally override the need to keep the information confidential.

Discussion, Consideration and Action

Discussion and consideration should include ascertaining:

- Whether or not the situation falls within the definitions of abuse as outlined in this policy
- Whether or not an advocate or appropriate adult is necessary
- Any immediate action required
- Whether or not an investigation is necessary, in accordance with internal personnel policies and procedures

Where abuse is suspected, conclude that a referral should be made to the appropriate agencies/authorities.

E-SAFETY

Careville Ltd is committed to enabling the children and young people with work with to use digital technologies safely and responsibly. Our e-safety aims are to:

- Recognize the importance of e-safety within the context of every child matters
- Recognize the importance of e-safety within the wider work of Geneva International
- Recognize that e-safety is not a technological issue
- Recognize the importance of education, training and information for all staff on e-safety
- Recognize the need to monitor the impact of the strategy

Careville Ltd will:

- Ensure Social Networks and inappropriate websites are blocked on our own computers and on any handheld devices used by members of staff.
- Ensure that all staff have an up-to-date understanding of digital and emerging technologies used by the children and young people with work with.
- Block any approaches through social media channels from all children and young people we work with.
- Provide awareness raising and education for all staff on the appropriate and safe use of social media and on their digital distribution of personal information



Key Question: What should I do if I have an E-Safety concern?

If you think a child or young person is speaking to a stranger online, has been contacted by someone while gaming or is at risk to meeting someone online or being trafficked outside of the UK, you should report this immediately to your registered manager. They will take advice from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre and, if appropriate, contact the police and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

If a child has viewed sexual abuse or violent images of themselves or someone they know, contact your registered manager who will notify the police and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

If a child or young person discloses concern over their online use, they should be referred to the thinkuknow website or the beat bullying website, unless illegal activities are occurring including sexting, racial harassment, grooming or threats of harm. In these instances, report this immediately to your registered manager.

Referral

The decision to refer or not to refer should be made by the Team Leader, General Manager or the Chief Executive.

When considering the decision as to whether to refer elsewhere (e.g. to Police, Social Services, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) or Care Quality Commission) the following should be taken into account:

- Known indicators of abuse.
- Definitions of abuse.
- Level of risk to the child.
- The seriousness of the abuse.
- The effect of the abuse on the child.
- Level of risk to others.
- The effect of the abuse on others.
- Whether or not a criminal offence has been committed.
- Whether or not other statutory obligations have been breached.
- Reporting the abuse or neglect as soon as possible.
- The ability of others (e.g. Police, Social Services) to make a positive contribution to the situation.

Who to Refer to, or Report Concerns to

Report concerns to Careville Ltd the first instance.

Also contact the emergency services and the Police, if there is an emergency where delay may result in serious harm to the Vulnerable Child or if the abuse may constitute a crime. Other agencies are:

- Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.
- Social Services.
- Registration bodies.
- Care Quality Commission.
- Emergency Social Services where there are issues relating to standards and regulations in care homes and domiciliary care agencies.
- Hospital Trusts/Primary Care Trusts, where there is a complaint of abuse by a member of staff.
- In situations of immediate danger, take urgent action by calling the relevant emergency services (e.g. Police, Ambulance and GP).

Information required when referring

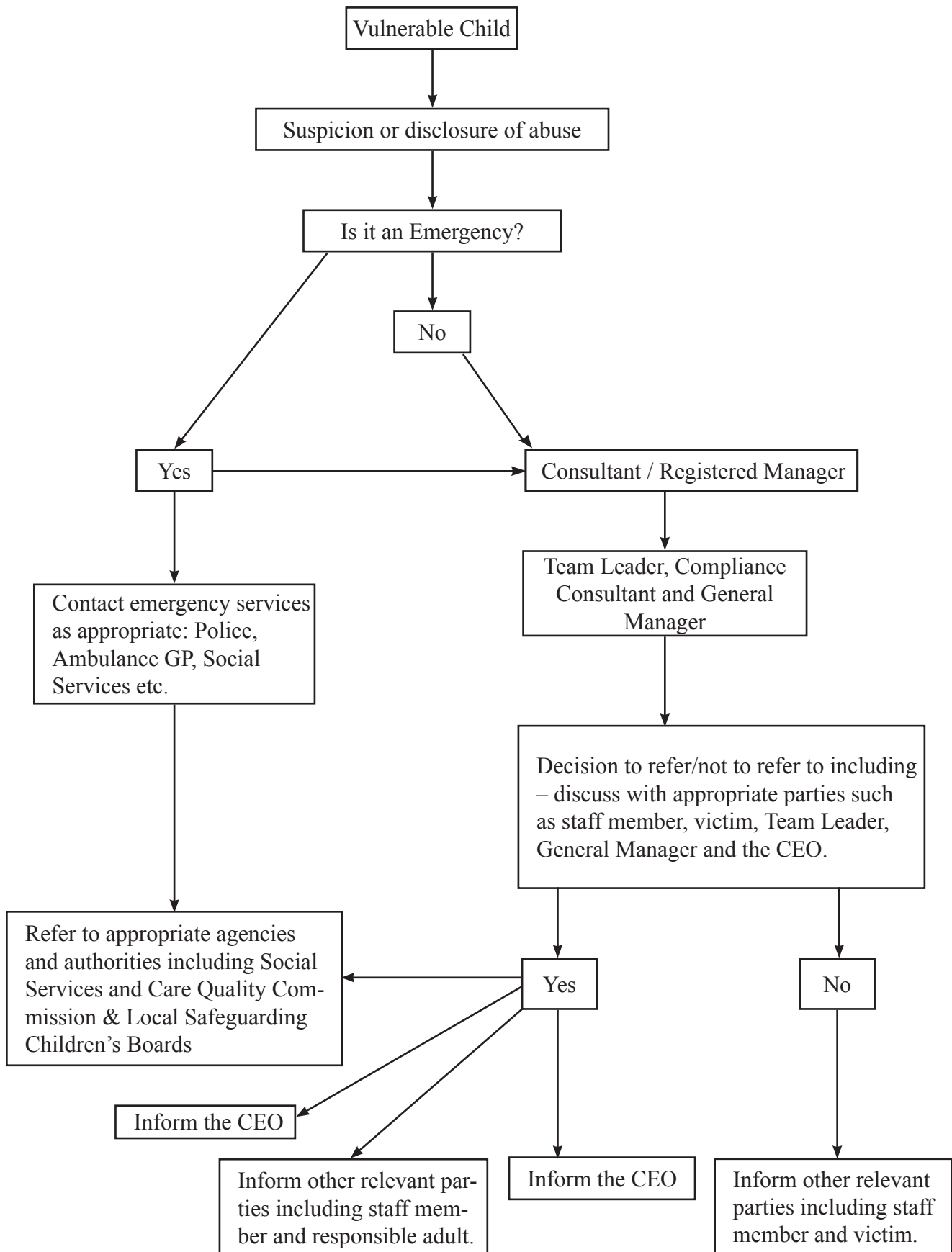
Information, if known, which will be required when you make a referral or report your concerns:

- Details of alleged victim – name, address, age, gender, ethnic background including principle language spoken, details of any disability.
- Details of GP and any known medication.
- If appropriate, advise agency on environment or preferred/advised method when approaching the alleged victim or perpetrator.
- Reasons for concerns, and therefore this referral.
- Details of how these concerns came to light.
- Details of the alleged perpetrator.
- Details of abuse and information about suspicions.
- Details of any other background information.
- An impression of how serious the situation might be.
- Any specific information relating to these concerns.
- Details of any other professional involved.
- Details of carers and any significant family members, neighbours, friends etc.
- Details of any arrangements, which have already been made for the protection of the Vulnerable Child, or any immediate action taken.
- Details of anyone else to whom this referral has also been made.

Information passed on must be relevant, necessary and up-to-date

Confirm in writing any information given verbally.

Guidance Flow Chart





Key Points to Take Away

- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.
- A child's protection is paramount in every respect, regardless of whether employees feel sympathy for the parent or carer. Employees must always act on the child's behalf and voice their concerns. This means first knowing how to identify the children who are at risk and know where to seek advice and support.
- Written record of any concerns will be kept on file. This confidential information will be stored securely and appropriately, and will be kept for as long as deemed necessary, in line with Data Protection principles and procedures.
- Any member of staff who suspects abuse or notices any of the signs must immediately make their concerns known to Careville Ltd.

Authorisation and Signature

This Policy is the authorised version agreed by the Directors of Careville Ltd. All employees are expected to follow this policy and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Director's Signature

Director