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Adult Safeguarding Procedures & Guidance

This document must be read alongside the Hopian Adult Safeguarding Policy. The Policy sets the framework, principles, and legal duties. These Procedures explain how colleagues, students, trustees, volunteers and contractors carry out those duties in practice.

The Hopian Adult Safeguarding Policy can be found here: <https://hopian.org.uk/Hopian-Safeguarding-Adult-Policy-261.pdf>

(JB-note it is not uploaded yet so link will not work for now)

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1. Introduction & Purpose

These Procedures translate our Policy commitments into clear, practical steps for **preventing, identifying, reporting and responding** to abuse or neglect of adults at risk. They reflect the Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance, local multi-agency procedures, and national best practice, and will be reviewed at least annually.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you are unsure what to do, follow the "Quick Start" steps below and contact a manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

2. Scope

Applies to **all** Hopian colleagues, students, trustees, volunteers, and contractors, including those involved in recruitment and service delivery.

3. Working in Line with the Care & Support Statutory Guidance

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance (issued under the Care Act 2014) sets out the national expectations for how safeguarding adults must be carried out. Hopian follows this guidance in all safeguarding practices.

This means that colleagues must:

Apply the Six Safeguarding Principles

Every action and decision must reflect the statutory principles of:

1. Empowerment,
2. Prevention,
3. Proportionality,
4. Protection,
5. Partnership and
6. Accountability.

Follow the Making Safeguarding Personal Approach

Colleagues must:

- ✓ Ask the adult what they want to happen.
- ✓ Support their involvement in decision-making.
- ✓ Respect their views as far as possible while still ensuring safety.

Understand When Safeguarding Duties Apply

A safeguarding enquiry must be considered when the adult:

- ✔ Has care and support needs;
- ✔ Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect;
- ✔ Cannot protect themselves because of those needs. (Section 42 Care Act criteria.)

Colleagues must report concerns the same day and must not wait for supervision discussions.

Work with Partner Agencies

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance requires partnership with:

- ✔ Local Authority Adult Social Care
- ✔ Police
- ✔ National Health Service South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- ✔ Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board

Colleagues must share information lawfully, proportionately and without undue delay when needed to prevent harm.

Record to National Standards

Recording must be:

- ✔ Timely
- ✔ Factual
- ✔ Person-centred
- ✔ Outcome-focused
- ✔ Suitable for multi-agency use

Participate in Multi-Agency Processes

This includes:

- ✔ Safeguarding Adults Reviews
- ✔ Vulnerability and Risk Management (VARM) for self-neglect
- ✔ Multi-agency meetings or enquiries

By following these expectations, Hopian ensures that local practice meets the national standards required under the Care Act 2014 and its statutory guidance.

4. Principles: For Everyday Practice

- ✔ **Empowerment; Prevention; Proportionality; Protection; Partnership; Accountability** (Care Act safeguarding principles). Apply them in every action and decision.
- ✔ **Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)**: focus on the adult's wishes, views, and outcomes.
- ✔ **Trauma-informed and anti-discriminatory practice**: safe, respectful, and accessible for everyone.

5. Quick Start: What You Must Do **Right Now** If You're Worried

If there is immediate danger: call 999 for Police or Ambulance. Then inform your line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If not an emergency:

1. **Ensure immediate safety**: stay with the person if appropriate; move to a safer space.
2. **Listen and reassure**: believe them; do not promise confidentiality. Explain you must pass on concerns to keep people safe.
3. **Record**: write a factual note as soon as possible: what happened, time, date, who was present, exact words used, your actions.
4. **Report internally**: tell a manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Officer **immediately**. Do not delay reporting to external services if needed.
5. **Refer externally**: if the Care Act Section 42 criteria appear met, make or support a referral to the Local Authority Adults Social Care the same working day. Police non-emergency: **101**. Adults Social Care (First Contact Team): **01709 822330**.

Remember: Your role is to **recognise, respond, record, report, and refer**. It is not your role to investigate.

6. Definitions You Will Use in Practice

- ✔ **Adult at risk**: an adult aged 18+ with care and support needs, experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and unable to protect themselves because of those needs.
- ✔ **Abuse and neglect categories**: physical; domestic abuse; sexual; psychological; financial/material; modern slavery; discriminatory; organisational; neglect and acts of omission; self-neglect. Include awareness of technology-facilitated harm (e.g., online coercion, deep fakes, scams).
- ✔ **Section 42 Care Act criteria (three-part test)**: care and support needs; experiencing or at risk of abuse/neglect; unable to protect themselves as a result of those needs.

7. Roles & Who Does What

- ✔ **All colleagues, students, volunteers, contractors:** recognise, respond, record, report, and refer; act the same day; follow information-sharing rules; complete training and refreshers.
- ✔ **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) and Management:** ensure colleagues follow these Procedures; provide immediate advice and support; quality-check records; escalate concerns promptly, oversee training, and learning.
- ✔ **Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership:** provide oversight, resources, and assurance; ensure these Procedures are implemented and reviewed.

8. The Step-by-Step Safeguarding Process: Follow This Every Time

8.1. Recognise

Notice indicators: injuries inconsistent with explanations; fearfulness; isolation; missing medication; financial anomalies; self-neglect or hoarding; digital abuse; controlling or coercive behaviour; signs of modern slavery.

8.2. Respond

- ✔ Keep the person safe and **explain your duty of care**. Seek their views and what outcomes they want.
- ✔ Do not interview, investigate or contact alleged perpetrators yourself.

8.3. Record

Write a factual note on the same working day:

- ✔ Time and date;
- ✔ Who was present;
- ✔ What was said;
- ✔ What you observed;
- ✔ The adult's wishes;
- ✔ Actions taken;
- ✔ Who you informed;
- ✔ What will happen next.

Sign and date your record.

8.4. Report

Tell your line manager, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Officer **immediately**. If you cannot reach them and you believe the Section 42 criteria may be met, **you must refer directly** to Adults Social Care the same day.

8.5. Refer

- ✔ Adults Social Care (First Contact Team): **01709 822330**. If in doubt, call for advice and document their guidance.
- ✔ Emergency: Police **999**.
- ✔ Non-emergency police: **101**.

8.6. Review & Support

- ✔ **Safety plan with the adult**; check whether the outcomes they wanted are being achieved (Making Safeguarding Personal).
- ✔ Provide or signpost ongoing support.

9. Special Situations You May Encounter

9.1. Self-Neglect & Hoarding

Use the **Vulnerability and Risk Management (VARM)** multi-agency process when there is significant risk, including where the adult has capacity but is self-neglecting. Follow Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board self-neglect guidance.

9.2. Domestic Abuse

Includes controlling, coercive, threatening or violent behaviour between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members. Consider safeguarding duties, criminal thresholds, and safe information sharing. Where children may be impacted, follow children's safeguarding routes.

9.3. Mental Capacity, Consent & Liberty

- ✔ Presume capacity; support decision-making; assess capacity where you reasonably suspect impairment, in line with the **Mental Capacity Act 2005**.
- ✔ If the person lacks capacity for the specific decision, **act in their best interests**.
- ✔ Be alert to potential **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards issues** and the government's plans for **Liberty Protection Safeguards**; the Policy and Procedures will be updated as national reforms progress.

9.4. Technology-Facilitated Abuse

Include online coercion, non-consensual image sharing, deep fakes, fraud and scams. Treat as safeguarding and consider both criminal and safeguarding pathways.

9.5. Suicide, Self-Harm & Immediate Risk to Life

Although suicide and self-harm are not always caused by abuse, they are **safeguarding concerns** because they involve significant risk of harm to an adult. Colleagues must treat suicidal thoughts, intent or behaviour with the same seriousness as any other safeguarding risk.

A. When Suicide Risk is a Safeguarding Concern

Suicide risk becomes a safeguarding issue when:

- ✔ The adult is at immediate risk of harming themselves;
- ✔ There is evidence of coercion, abuse or exploitation linked to the risk;
- ✔ Self-neglect or inability to protect themselves is evident;
- ✔ The adult has care and support needs that impact their safety.

(These align with the Care Act Section 42 safeguarding criteria.)

B. Immediate Actions

If an adult expresses suicidal thoughts **and**:

- ✔ Has a plan,
- ✔ Has intent,
- ✔ Has taken action, or
- ✔ Is unable to stay safe

Then you must:

1. **Call 999 immediately** for emergency assistance.
2. Stay with the adult if safe to do so until emergency services arrive.
3. Inform your line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.
4. Record the incident factually on the same working day.

C. If Risk Is Present but Not Immediate

Where the adult is experiencing suicidal thoughts but is not judged to be at imminent risk:

- ✔ Explore what the adult wants to happen (Making Safeguarding Personal).
- ✔ Conduct a suicide risk assessment using Hopian's approved tool.
- ✔ Consult with a manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead for advice.
- ✔ Consider referral to:
 - Crisis mental health team.
 - Adult Social Care if Section 42 duties may apply.
- ✔ Document all actions, decisions and the adult's wishes.

D. Self-Neglect & Suicide Risk

If the adult is engaging in extreme self-neglect with suicidal elements, you must activate the **Vulnerability and Risk Management (VARM)** process or consult with the Local Authority.

E. Information Sharing During Suicide Risk

Sharing information is justified where there is:

- ✔ Risk of serious harm,
- ✔ Threat to life, or
- ✔ Inability of the adult to protect themselves.

This is consistent with the Care and Support Statutory Guidance requirements for proportional and necessary information sharing to prevent harm.

F. Recording Requirements

Record:

- ✔ Exact words used by the adult.
- ✔ Level of risk observed.
- ✔ Your actions and rationale.
- ✔ Who you contacted and when.
- ✔ Follow-up arrangements.

Clear, contemporaneous recording protects both the adult and the colleague.

G. Support for Colleagues

Managers and the Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure colleagues involved in suicide-related incidents receive appropriate emotional and professional support.

9.6 When a Colleague Is or Becomes an Adult at Risk

Hopian recognises that safeguarding duties apply to all adults, including colleagues, students, volunteers, trustees and contractors. An individual working for Hopian may become an adult at risk due to changes in their health, personal circumstances, coercion, abuse, exploitation, mental health crisis, domestic abuse or other vulnerabilities. In these circumstances, Hopian has two responsibilities:

1. **A safeguarding responsibility** toward the colleague themselves.
2. **A practice and organisational responsibility** to ensure safe, competent and ethical service delivery.

Identifying When a Colleague May Be an Adult at Risk

A colleague may be considered an adult at risk if they:

- ✔ Have care and support needs (temporary or ongoing).
- ✔ Are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect, coercion or exploitation.
- ✔ Are unable to protect themselves because of those needs

(These are the Care Act Section 42 criteria.)

Examples may include:

- ✔ Domestic abuse or coercive control.
- ✔ Severe mental health deterioration.
- ✔ Suicidal ideation or self-harm behaviour.
- ✔ Cognitive impairment or neurological injury.
- ✔ Homelessness, financial exploitation or family crisis.
- ✔ Severe self-neglect or hoarding (VARM may be relevant) .
- ✔ Online exploitation or technology-facilitated abuse.

Reporting Concerns About a Colleague Who May Be an Adult at Risk

Any Colleague who has concerns about a colleague must:

- ✔ Report the concern to their **line manager** or the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** immediately.
- ✔ Record facts, observations or disclosures the same working day.
- ✔ Maintain confidentiality and dignity for the colleague concerned.
- ✔ Avoid confrontation or investigation; this is not the role of the colleague.

If the concern involves **immediate risk of harm** or **suicidal intent**, call **999**.

What the Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead Must Do

The line manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

A) Check immediate safety.

Clarify whether the colleague is currently safe and whether urgent action is needed (e.g., Police or Ambulance).

B) Consider whether Section 42 Care Act criteria are met.

If so, a safeguarding referral must be made to Adult Social Care the same day.

C) Provide organisational support.

This may include:

- ✔ Adjustments to duties or workload.
- ✔ Signposting to specialist domestic abuse or mental health services.
- ✔ Safety planning.

D) Assess any practice implications.

Leaders must consider:

- ✔ Can the colleague continue frontline work safely?
- ✔ Do temporary adjustments need to be made?
- ✔ Do risks affect service users or other colleagues?

This is a **supportive**, not punitive, **assessment**.

E) Maintain confidentiality.

Only those who need to know (e.g., manager, DSL, CEO, HR) will be informed.

When a Colleagues Situation Creates a Practice Concern

A safeguarding issue involving a colleague **does not automatically** mean there is a concern about their professional conduct.

However, a practice concern may arise if:

- ✔ Their ability to carry out duties safely is compromised.
- ✔ They are subject to coercion affecting their decision-making at work.
- ✔ There is a conflict of interest involving perpetrators or service users.
- ✔ Their circumstances pose risk to others.
- ✔ They fail to report risks that affect service delivery.

If a practice concern exists, the manager must follow:

- ✔ Supervision pathways.
- ✔ Human Resources policies.
- ✔ Capability or disciplinary processes where appropriate.
- ✔ The Code of Conduct.

(These run alongside, not instead of, safeguarding actions.)

When to Report to External Agencies

A Section 42 safeguarding referral must be made if:

- ✔ The Care Act criteria apply; and
- ✔ There is significant risk that the colleague cannot protect themselves.

Other referrals may include:

- ✔ Police (crime, immediate risk).
- ✔ Mental health crisis team (suicide risk, acute deterioration).
- ✔ National Health Service South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board if linked to partnership duties.

Recording

Records must follow safeguarding standards:

- ✔ Factual.
- ✔ Timestamped.
- ✔ Clear rationale for decisions.
- ✔ Actions and next steps.
- ✔ Confidential and stored securely.

Colleague Support & Wellbeing

Hopian recognises that an colleague who becomes an adult at risk may experience distress, trauma or crisis.

Support may include:

- ✔ Emotional support from managers or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- ✔ Referral to counselling or mental health services.
- ✔ Adjusted duties.
- ✔ Regular wellbeing check-ins.
- ✔ Safety planning.
- ✔ Reasonable adjustments under equality legislation (where relevant).

This support must be compassionate, non-judgemental and confidential.

Summary of Required Actions

If a colleague is at **immediate risk**:

- ✔ Call **999**.
- ✔ Contact line manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- ✔ Record.
- ✔ Follow safety actions.

If a colleague **meets or may meet Care Act criteria**:

- ✔ Discuss with line manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- ✔ Make a safeguarding referral the same day.

If **practice concerns arise**:

- ✔ Follow Code of Conduct, supervision and HR processes..
- ✔ Implement safe working adjustments.

10. Information Sharing & Confidentiality: What You Can Share & When

Share information **lawfully, proportionately and without undue delay** when it is necessary to safeguard an adult or others. You **may share without consent** when there is risk of serious harm, a crime, or where seeking consent would place someone at increased risk. Document your decision and rationale.

Follow Hopian's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy. GDPR considerations do not prevent sharing for safeguarding where justified; they guide **how to share**.

11. Recording Standards: What Good Looks Like

- ✓ Factual, timely, and objective.
- ✓ Dated, timed, signed.
- ✓ The adult's own words and wishes.
- ✓ Clear actions taken and why.
- ✓ Who you informed and when.
- ✓ Next steps and safety plan.
- ✓ Stored securely and retrievable for multi-agency work, Safeguarding Adults Reviews and audits.

12. Support for Colleagues, Students & Volunteers

- ✓ Managers and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide advice, debrief and support after incidents or referrals.
- ✓ If the Police or Local Authority require information, agree with your manager who will respond and how.
- ✓ Where allegations are made against a colleague, Hopian will cooperate with statutory agencies and manage internal processes fairly and promptly.

13. Conduct, Boundaries & Touch

- ✓ Maintain professional boundaries; never rely on service users to meet your own emotional needs.
- ✓ Do not humiliate, ridicule or misuse power.
- ✓ Do not initiate touch unless failure to act would result in harm; if you do, **report and record** the rationale and discussion with your manager. (See Code of Conduct.)

14. Safer Recruitment & People Management

- ✓ Role-appropriate vetting and **Disclosure and Barring Service** checks; explore gaps in employment; take references; use structured interviews.
- ✓ Induction, supervision, performance management, and a clear Code of Conduct.
- ✓ Proportionate risk assessment for declared convictions; automatic exclusion applies where law and guidance require it.

15. Whistleblowing

- ✓ Hopian supports colleagues who raise safeguarding or conduct concerns in good faith.
- ✓ If your concern is not acted upon by your line manager, escalate to the Chief Executive Officer. Keep records of each step.

16. Training & Competence

ALL colleagues receive safeguarding induction and annual refreshers that cover: categories and indicators of abuse; Making Safeguarding Personal; Mental Capacity Act 2005; information sharing and recording; domestic abuse; technology-facilitated harm; self-neglect and Vulnerability and Risk Management.

Designated Safeguarding Lead, Designated Safeguarding Officers, and management require enhanced training.

17. Monitoring, Quality Assurance & Review

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Management will audit records, review themes and provide learning to teams and trustees.

These Procedures and the Policy will be reviewed **annually** or earlier if legislation or local procedures change.

18. Appendices

Appendix A: Practical Decision Guide

Concern identified: recognise indicators or receive a disclosure.

Immediate safety: ensure safety; call 999 if life or safety at risk.

Explain next steps: your duty of care; what will happen; ask what the adult wants to happen.

Record: same working day; facts; adult's words; actions; people informed.

Report internally: inform line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately or within 4 hours.

Section 42 check: consider the three-part test; if met or likely, **refer** to Adults Social Care same working day.

External contacts: Police 999 for emergencies; Police 101 non-emergency; Adults Social Care (First Contact Team) 01709 822330.

Review and support: agree safety plan; monitor risk; record outcomes the adult wants (Making Safeguarding Personal).

Appendix B: Abbreviations

DBS Disclosure and Barring Service

DSL Designated Safeguarding Lead

DSO Designated Safeguarding Officer

DoLS Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

GDPR General Data Protection Regulation

ICB National Health Service South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

LPS Liberty Protection Safeguards

- MCA** Mental Capacity Act 2005
- MSP** Making Safeguarding Personal
- RSAB** Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board
- SAB** Safeguarding Adults Board
- VARM** Vulnerability and Risk Management

Note: Former Clinical Commissioning Groups have been replaced by Integrated Care Boards; use **National Health Service South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board** in all documents.

Appendix C: Key Local Contacts

- ✔ Police: Emergency 999; Non-emergency 101.
- ✔ Adults Social Care (First Contact Team, Rotherham): 01709 822330.
- ✔ Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (children): 01709 336080

(Use these numbers for advice and referrals. Document all calls and guidance received.)

Appendix D: Minimum Record Template (for case notes)

- ✔ Date and time of incident or disclosure.
- ✔ Location.
- ✔ Adult's details and preferred communication needs.
- ✔ Exact words used by the adult.
- ✔ Observed indicators or injuries.
- ✔ Immediate actions taken to secure safety.
- ✔ Adult's wishes and desired outcomes.
- ✔ People informed internally (names, roles, time).
- ✔ External advice or referrals made (service, time, outcome).
- ✔ Next steps and review date.

19. Final Notes for Colleagues

If you are worried, **act now**: safety, record, report, refer.

Keep the adult at the centre: ask what they want to happen and check back on outcomes.

Share information where needed for safety; document your rationale.

Use the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers for advice and support at any stage.