

# TRINITY MONEY ADVICE LEICESTER

## VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY

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### Mission

Trinity Money Advice Leicester (“TMAL”) is committed to ensuring the protection of vulnerable adults through the development and implementation of effective policies and best practice.

Members of TMAL Management Committee, staff and volunteers, recognise and accept the responsibility to develop and raise awareness of the issues involved in working with vulnerable adults.

### Definition

A vulnerable adult is defined as follows:

*‘A person who is eighteen years of age or over, and who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation.’*

(“Who Decides”:1997, Lord Chancellor’s department)

The characteristics of adult abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or embarrassed to raise any complaint and also may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others.

### Objectives

- To provide an environment in which vulnerable adults feel safe and valued.
- To ensure that Management Committee members, staff and volunteers take responsibility to protect vulnerable adults from harm at all times.
- To elect a member of the Management Committee as the designated representative for all vulnerable adult matters, and to identify appropriate training opportunities for that member.
- To develop and adopt a set of guidelines/code of conduct for working with vulnerable adults, which all members, staff and volunteers are aware of and adhere to.
- To exercise a *Duty of Care* and, when necessary, share information and/or concerns in a confidential manner with the appropriate outside agency e.g. Social Services.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with, or have responsibility for, vulnerable adults are checked under the Disclosure Baring Scheme in accordance with the specific requirement of DBS for our service.
- To ensure all new staff and volunteers are introduced to guidelines for working with vulnerable adults and policy and procedures.
- To review and update this policy and practice annually.

Updated: 17/10/2018



## Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

- Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint.
- Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism.
- Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation.
- Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over or give money for the advice received.
- Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment.
- Personal exploitation - involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will.
- Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions.

## Rights of vulnerable adults

The vulnerable adults have the right to:

- be made aware of this policy.
- have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously.
- receive fair and respectful treatment throughout.
- be involved in any process as appropriate.
- receive information about any outcomes.

## Reporting procedure

All those making a complaint, allegation, or expression of concern, whether staff, clients or members of the public should be reassured that:

- they will be taken seriously.
- their comments will usually be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk.
- they will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation (if they are clients).
- they will be given support and afforded protection (if they are staff/volunteers).

If an allegation is made towards a volunteer or there is a suspicion of abuse then they should inform the Centre Manager as soon as possible and the following procedure undertaken:

- The Centre Manager should interview the volunteer and/or staff member with a witness present.
- The Centre Manager should make arrangements for interviewing the suspected victim. This should be done with a different TMAL volunteer or staff member present, along with a support worker for the victim.
- The purpose of the meeting is not to investigate but to establish whether there are grounds for the allegation.
- The Centre Manager or another member of TMAL should make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse and contact Leicester City Social Care and Safeguarding 0116 454 1004 (Mon - Fri 8am - 6pm) or the Emergency Team (out of hours only 5pm - 8.30am) on 0116 255 1606 if there are any grounds for the allegation.

If a staff member/volunteer has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the person to make a referral. However, the gaining of the consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

- The scale of the abuse.
- The risk of harm to others.
- The capacity of the victim to understand the issues of abuse and consent.

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Social Services then it should be reported.

In emergency situations or where a crime has been committed and immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services must be contacted.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is crucial to TMAL's work and relationships and the TMAL confidentiality policy should be adhered to except where the welfare of vulnerable clients is at risk. All concerns relating to potential abuse of vulnerable adults should be reported.

Confidentiality may NOT be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the adult.

### **Contact information**

Allegation of any abuse occurring when the victim is over 18 falls under the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and needs to be reported to Social Services Adult Care Duty Officer on 0116 454 1004.

TMAL recognises that:

- Adult Social Care has the lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

TMAL will review this policy annually.

Signed by: ..... Position in organisation: .....

Date to be updated: .....

### **Local Contacts**

1. Social Services Adult Helpdesk or Care Duty Officer, Leicester, Telephone: 0116 454 1004.
2. Police (Central Leicester), email: [centralleicester.npa@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:centralleicester.npa@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk) telephone: 101

<b>Record of Concern / Disclosure Form</b> Name of vulnerable adult:
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Address:
Telephone number:
<b>A}</b> Please give an account of your concern(s) and why you are concerned:
<b>B}</b> Please give an accurate and factual account of any disclosure:
Are the other people/agencies aware?
Reported by (name & contact details)
Date:
Reported to (Staff member):
Date:
Action taken:
Staff member's signature: _____

## Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults (SOVA) Procedure

