

Policy Document	
Date Approved by Board of Trustees	March 2018
Updated and approved by Board of Trustees	
Review Date	

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

This policy applies to everyone working for or on behalf of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales (WTSWW) or its subsidiaries, hereafter referred to as WTSWW. It applies to all staff, including senior managers, Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of WTSWW.

Legal framework:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect vulnerable adults, including Charity Commission Guidance and advice from the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

- Data Protection Act 1998,
- Human Rights Act 1998,
- Sexual Offences Act 2003,
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006,
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012,
- Children and Families Act 2004,
- Special Educational needs and disability code of practice 2014
- Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 (and associated regulations and guidance)
- Fundraising Regulator Code of Practice 2017

WTSWW is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all vulnerable adults engaged in the breadth of its activities. WTSWW acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect.

A separate “Safeguarding Children & Young People” policy exists and should be referred to for all safeguarding for under 18s.

The purpose of this document:

- To protect vulnerable adults who receive WTSWWs services.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to protecting vulnerable adults from abuse;
- to protect staff by having a clear framework, robust procedures and transparent reporting

We recognise that:

- the welfare of vulnerable adults involved in our services is paramount;
- all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- Working in partnership with vulnerable adults, their carers and other agencies is essential in ensuring their welfare.

We will seek to keep vulnerable adults safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- adopting appropriate practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- working with other agencies within the framework of the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 (and associated regulations and guidance).
- acting within our confidentiality policy and will usually gain permission from service users before sharing information about them with another agency.
- informing service users that where a person is in danger, a child is at risk or a crime has been committed then a decision may be taken to pass information to another agency without the service user's consent.
- making a safeguarding adults referral to the appropriate County Council team.
- keeping up to date with national developments relating to preventing abuse and welfare of adults.

This policy and associated procedures are kept on the shared drive under All Staff Files/ Health and Safety/ Children and Vulnerable Adults/Vulnerable Adults.

Glossary of terms

Vulnerable Adult - An “adult at risk”, is an adult who—

- (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect,
- (b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and
- (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

(Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014)

All Appropriate Staff - Refers to all staff that either work face to face with children or vulnerable adults or manage/support this work as defined by their job description.

Appropriate Volunteers – Refers to all volunteers who undertake activity face to face with children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Trust or support this work as defined by their role description.

All Staff – Refers to everyone in paid employment/receiving remuneration for work with WTSWW, this includes sessional workers. They may or may not have contact with children or vulnerable adults as part of their job description.

Children – refers to all persons under the age of 18.

Safeguarding Procedure

WTSWW endeavours to encourage vigilance and awareness of the issues surrounding the protection and safety of vulnerable adults when accessing our services and/or facilities. These procedures have been designed to ensure the wellbeing and protection of any vulnerable adult who accesses them. WTSWW is committed to the belief that the protection of adults at risk from harm and abuse is everybody's responsibility and the aim of these procedures is to ensure that all senior managers, Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of WTSWW act appropriately in response to any concern of adult abuse.

The Trust is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the services that it offers and that all those involved will be treated with respect. We will monitor emerging legislation and evolving best practice to ensure necessary policies and procedural guidelines are appropriate, up to date and accessible.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:-

- **Equal Opportunities/ Respect Code of Conduct**
- **Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People**
- **Working with Volunteers**
- **Volunteer Discipline and Grievance**
- **The Staff Handbook (covering issues such as Complaints, Whistleblowing, Disciplinary and Grievance)**
- **Data Protection**
- **Email and Internet Acceptable Use**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Fundraising Regulator Rulebook (Private Sites) Fundraising Regulator 2017**

Appropriate risk management processes will be applied to all contact with vulnerable adults.

To deliver the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy we will:

Keep policies and procedural guidelines appropriate, up to date and accessible:-

- There will be a Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead (**See Appendix A**) who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection or welfare of vulnerable adults. This person is Diana Clark with Sarah Kessell in place as deputy.
- There will be a nominated Trustee for Safeguarding who will be responsible for reviewing the policy together with the Designated Safeguarding Person. This person is Shirley Matthews.
- Safeguarding procedures will be reviewed and updated every 2 years or as necessary with new legislation.
- The Safeguarding policy and procedure will be available on the shared drive under All Staff Files/ Health and Safety/ Children and Vulnerable Adults/Vulnerable Adults.

Ensure that all staff and volunteers are properly informed, supported, managed and trained:-

- All appropriate Staff and Volunteers will be carefully selected and vetted to try and ensure they do not pose a risk to vulnerable adults to include the taking up of 2 written references, clear role description and responsibilities.
- All appropriate Staff & Volunteers will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check as defined by **Appendix B**. DBS checks will be repeated every 3 years or for those subscribing to the update service, annual updates carried out.
- All appropriate Staff & Volunteers will receive the “Reporting Guidance for Staff & Volunteers” (**Appendix C**). Updates and refreshers will be provided through the Designated Lead.
- All appropriate staff will receive ‘Recognising Signs and Symptoms of Abuse’ (**Appendix D**)

Have clear processes for reporting and addressing any concerns or allegations relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults:-

- Have in place clear, written processes for reporting, recording and addressing concerns or allegations relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- There will be a clear system for reporting and processing allegations against staff and volunteers

Run safe activities for Vulnerable Adults

- All staff and volunteers involved in running an activity will have clear roles and responsibilities; this applies to equally to 'external' staff or assistants attending with school or other visiting groups.
- Risk management for activities targeting and including vulnerable adults will recognise the specific needs of each group within risk assessments.
- All appropriate staff and volunteers will be made aware of issues of particular vulnerability arising from an individual's background or abilities e.g. those facing barriers in communication or who are dependent on others for personal care.
- All Staff and volunteers will be suitably qualified and/or experienced to supervise and deliver the activities they undertake and will have up to date Competency records.

APPENDIX A

WTSWW will have a Designated member of staff and a deputy to take responsibility for safeguarding. In the Interim Period, this will be:

Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead: Diana Clark

Email: d.clark@welshwildlife.org

Mobile Number: 01656 724100

Emergency Contact Number: 07966 596836

Deputy Adult Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Kessell

Email: s.kessell@welshwildlife.org

Mobile Number: 07966 596836

Emergency Contact Number: 07966 596836

Both staff will attend the Safeguarding Board Level 3 training, have an Enhanced + barred List DBS check undertaken and 2 references taken up.

Their role is to:

- Ensure the Trust's safeguarding policies and procedures are followed.
- Ensure they know how to make contact with Adult Care/Social Care teams in each Local Authority area.
- Report any concerns to the Adult Care/Social Care teams or the police. (N.B. Urgent concerns should be reported immediately by those aware of them even if the designated person is not available.)
- Act as a source of advice on all safeguarding matters and seek further advice and guidance from local statutory agencies as needed.
- WTSWW is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information will be shared only with those who need to know. The Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure that a record is kept of any concerns about a vulnerable adult or worker and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies. These records will be secure and will comply with data protection. They will report to the Health and Safety committee any action taken.
- Maintain and regularly update their knowledge of safeguarding through relevant training, including refreshing their Level 3 Safeguarding training every 3 years.
- Conduct regular audit activity to ensure the organisation is working in line with current practice.

APPENDIX B

Guidance on DBS Checks

Certain posts (both paid & voluntary) within WTSWW are exempt from some provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 because they involve working with children or vulnerable adults. In these cases, the Trust is entitled to ask for details of all spent and unspent convictions.

Staff and volunteers where the above applies will be required to submit personal details for the purpose of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Any offer of employment or confirmation of a voluntary role where the provisions apply will be subject to DBS clearance.

The DBS helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. It has three levels of checks, including a 'barred list check'.

All staff and volunteers who regularly work unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults are to be checked against the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) national register.

General

The Trust implements the approved disclosure procedure for criminal record checking for all staff and volunteers who work regularly with children or vulnerable adults through the Disclosure and Barring Service. In implementing this procedure the Trust will ensure that they comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations and any other legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.

The Trust will also ensure that it complies with any legislation relating to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Definition of Regulated Activity

WTSWW will work within the definition of working with children and vulnerable adults as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (SVG) Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Regulated activity is work a barred person cannot do. For WTSWW, this is principally our educational work – “teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children” carried out by the Conservation Team.

In order for such activity to be classed as regulated activity, and therefore a legitimate DBS check, each activity must be carried out on a regular basis – at least weekly, or four times within a four week period, or if it involves an overnight stay. It must also be unsupervised, or without a reasonable amount of supervision.

WSWW also works with adults with learning difficulties or mental health issues, through its wellbeing and volunteering work. The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 repealed previous legislation which labelled adults as vulnerable because of their personal characteristics or circumstances. It focused instead on the types of activities which might render someone vulnerable – e.g. provision of health care or personal care.

At present, the Trust's work with adults does not fall into one of these categories - we do not assist with personal or intimate support. As such, if a person with learning difficulties attends a practical volunteer group, this would not be considered a regulated activity.

There is a grey area when working with people with mental health challenges as to whether our work is therapeutic and could then be seen to be some form of "health care...the provision of psychotherapy and counselling..under the direction or supervision of a health care professional".

The advice from Disclosure and Barring Services is that although our staff are providing therapeutic activities, they are not providing psychotherapy or counselling, and so the activity is not a regulated one.

However, we do have our own guidance on working with adults with learning difficulties or mental health issues (see below) and need to be aware that such individuals may be vulnerable to abuse in other settings, which they may theoretically disclose to us during the course of our work.

Enhanced Disclosures

Enhanced disclosures will be sought for the following:

- All staff and volunteers leading children's activities as agreed with, and on behalf of WTSWW, unsupervised at least weekly, four times in a thirty day period or overnight.
- All staff and volunteers providing "regulated" activities to adults
- Those roles providing day to day management or supervision on a regular basis of a person providing this activity which would be regulated if unsupervised.

Any potential education/school volunteer will be able to "shadow" a member of staff who has been previously checked, or until their disclosure has been completed.

DBS checks do not have an expiry date – they show a person's status at the time of application.

Individuals can now choose to join the Update Service, which allows them to reuse their DBS check for similar positions.

All new staff and volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults will be supervised by an experienced member of staff during their probation period, to observe any inappropriate behaviour.

System for Enhanced DBS checks

Before recruitment of any staff or volunteer, the appropriate member of SMT will assess whether the role requires Enhanced Disclosure in liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensure the necessity for Enhanced Disclosure is put in the role description.

After the post is offered the individual will be asked to provide the identity information required and complete a DBS check. The results of the DBS check are sent to the individual, with a digital copy sent to HR. The reference number & results are recorded on a DBS-checked spreadsheet and also noted on individual staff files. If anything is found on the DBS check, the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officers will be informed and in liaison with the Chief Executive and relevant line manager they will make a decision of whether an individual should be allowed to work / volunteer in that role, or be considered for an alternative role. The final decision will be recorded on the staff/volunteer file.

After completing the noting process, the copy of the Disclosure form must be immediately deleted if the DBS check is clear. In the event of anything appearing on the check, the Disclosure form may be kept securely for a maximum of 6 months, if necessary.

If a member of staff or volunteer is found guilty of perpetrating abuse, WTSWW has the responsibility to inform DBS within one month of their conviction.

APPENDIX C

Reporting Guidance for Staff and Volunteers

WTSWW believes that **EVERYONE** has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults from harm. Please read this guidance carefully. It will tell you what you need to know to safeguard vulnerable adults. All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this guidance.

The Designated Lead staff WTSWW are listed in Appendix A. below. If you have any queries around the welfare of any vulnerable adult please contact them to discuss your concerns.

Managing a Disclosure or Suspicion of Abuse

If a vulnerable person discloses that they are being abused or any service user discloses that they are involved in abuse of a vulnerable person, action must proceed urgently and without delay.

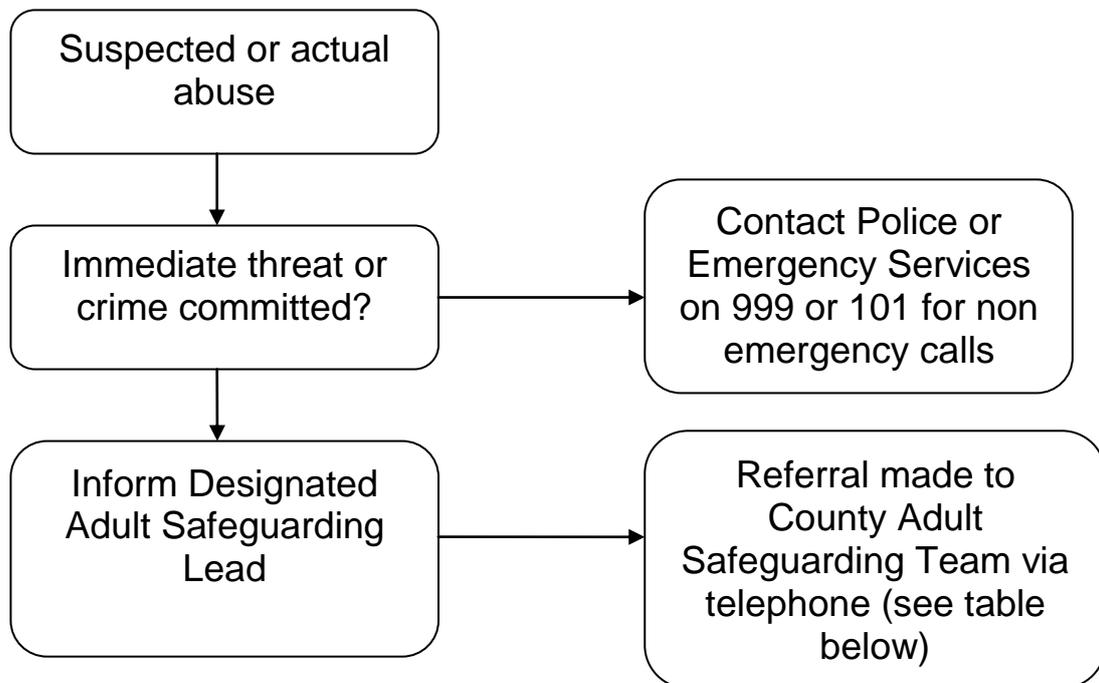
There may be circumstances when a volunteer or member of staff suspects that a vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected. It is vital that any anyone who suspects this is the case discuss the situation immediately with the Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy.

What to do when abuse is disclosed by a Vulnerable Adult:

Do	Don't
Listen carefully, stay calm and make notes of what they say using their own words.	Question, put pressure on the person for more details, start your own investigation or take photographs.
Be aware that medical evidence may be needed	Act in a way that may prevent the person talking about the abuse in future.
Reassure the person that the information will be treated seriously.	Promise to keep secrets.
Help the person to understand that whatever has happened is not their fault.	Make any promises that you may not be able to keep (e.g. 'It won't happen again').
Explain the referral process and that others will need to be made aware.	Question the alleged abuser.
Explain that the matter will have to be referred on even if they do not consent	Agree not to refer because the Vulnerable Adult withholds consent.

but that their wishes will be made clear if this happens.	
Make the referral immediately.	Wait to discuss with colleagues or gather more information.
Always record in writing concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare, whether or not further action is taken	
Additionally, all action taken following a disclosure of abuse should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (but the referral should not be delayed if you do not get the opportunity to discuss first).	

Action to take:-



County	Contact Details
Brecknock (Powys)	Powys People Direct (Social Services Adults) – 01597 827666 Out of hours (emergency only) 01597 825275 or 0845 0544 847
Bridgend	01656 642477 Adult Safeguarding Team Innovation Centre, Technology Drive Bridgend Science Park, CF31 3NA
Caerphilly Adult Safeguarding is part of GWASB – Gwent-Wide Adult Safeguarding Board.	Tel: 0808 100 2500 Email: povateam@caerphilly.gov.uk or asdit@ caerphilly.gov.uk 0800 328 4432 out of hours
Cardiff	Adult Safeguarding Team: 029 2233 0888 in office hours 029 2078 8570 our of hours
Carmarthenshire	Dewis Sir Gar on 0300 333 2222 (available 24hrs, 7 days a week)
Ceredigion	Single Point of Access on: Office hours - 01545 574000 Outside of Office hours - 08456 015392
Merthyr Tydfil	Merthyr Tydfil Social Services: 01685 725000 Our of hours Emergency Duty Team: 01443 743665
Neath Port Talbot (N.B. no clear info on website)	Adult Safeguarding Team 01639 685378 01639 895455 out of hours
Pembrokeshire	Telephone 01437 764551 Out of Hours 03003 332222
Rhondda Cynon Taff (n.b. no clear info on website)	Adult Safeguarding Team: 01443 742940 01443 743665 out of hours
Swansea	To report suspected abuse, contact Social Services. 01792 636854 8.30 - 5.00 Monday - Thursday and 8.30 - 4.30 on Friday. Email: adult.safeguarding@swansea.gov.uk
Vale of Glamorgan	Contact 1 Vale 01446 700111 C1V@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk 029 20 788570 out of hours emergency

It is important for staff and volunteers to make written records of any incidents or concerns that they have as soon as possible and if appropriate to include sketches of sites and sizes of injuries. It is also important to make a record of conversations with the vulnerable person using the same language the vulnerable person used especially names used for body parts or sexual acts.

Full written records must be maintained of all disclosures and actions following disclosure.

If you have had to make an emergency referral, tell the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. They should follow up and take further advice if they think the action that Adult/Social Care Referral Team takes leaves the vulnerable adult in danger.

Support to Staff and Volunteers

We will support staff and volunteers in these circumstances. If social services need further involvement from staff or volunteers following a report of abuse, a member of the management team will discuss with the social services department the nature of their needs and how they might be met.

Allegation of Abuse Made Against a Staff Member or Volunteer

Staff and volunteers may be subject to abuse allegations. WTSWW will ensure that any allegations made against members of staff or volunteers will be dealt with swiftly. Where a member of staff/volunteer is thought to have committed a criminal offence the Police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the Police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the service whilst the investigation is undertaken.

The line manager and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the appropriate Adult Safeguarding Team to discuss the best course of action and to ensure that WTSWWs disciplinary procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation.

WTSWW has a **Whistleblowing** policy (included in the Staff Handbook) and staff are aware of this policy.

APPENDIX D

Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

WTSWW is committed to ensuring that all managers, staff and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. WTSWW will ensure that the Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead and other members of relevant staff or volunteers have access to higher levels of training around safeguarding adults.

WTSWW will not be limited in its view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of an individual case will always be considered.

Abuse includes:

- **Discriminatory**

Including forms of harassment, bullying, slurs, isolation, neglect, denial of access to services or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, religion or because someone is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. This includes racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia or any other form of hate incident or crime.

- **Domestic abuse or violence**

Including an incident or a pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexual orientation. This includes psychological/emotional, physical, sexual, financial abuse; so called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage or Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

- **Financial or material**

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, exploitation, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

- **Modern slavery**

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

- **Neglect and acts of omission**

Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to access appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

- **Organisational (sometimes referred to as institutional)**

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

- **Physical**

Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

- **Psychological (sometimes referred to as emotional)**

Including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber-bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

- **Sexual**

Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual assault, sexual acts, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting. It also includes sexual exploitation which is exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the person receives “something” (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, mobile phones, cigarettes, gifts, money) or perceived friendship/relationship as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing sexual acts.

- **Self-neglect**

Includes a person neglecting to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings; or an inability to provide essential food, clothing, shelter or medical care necessary to maintain their physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing and general safety. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and it may be a single act or repeated acts.

People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, staff members, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a vulnerable person. However, they are not responsible for diagnosing, investigating or providing a therapeutic response to abuse.