

Timescales

Every effort should be made to resolve matters at the earliest opportunity and cases will be reviewed at least monthly.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity.

Support

Staff who are the subject of an allegation will benefit from support and this should be identified at the earliest opportunity. This could be through Occupational Health or Employee Welfare Arrangements etc.

Record Keeping

It is important that employers keep a summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and details of any action taken and decisions reached, on a person's confidential personnel file. The summary should be made available to the staff member.

Further Guidance

More detailed guidance can be found on the North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board website. www.SaferNEL.co.uk

Experience shows that adults at risk of abuse/neglect can be subjected to abuse by those who are supposed to be caring for them. It is essential that adults at risk of abuse/neglect do not feel inhibited from reporting abuse against them by carers or others. Adults at risk of abuse/neglect have a right to be treated properly and any incident where an adult feels that a trusted adult has crossed the boundary of acceptable behaviour should be reported.

All individuals who work with adults at risk of abuse/neglect must ensure that the environment they work or live in encourages adults at risk of abuse/neglect to make truthful reports of unacceptable behaviour.

This leaflet provides a brief guide to the process that should be followed, but if faced with an allegation against a staff member or volunteer, you are strongly advised to consult the DASM at the earliest opportunity.

Designated Adult Safeguarding Managers are contactable via:

Email: SABenquiries@nelincs.gov.uk

Safeguarding Adults: Dealing with allegations of abuse against carers and other staff

Introduction

All allegations should be reported to the Care Manager immediately unless that person is the subject of the allegation in which case it should be reported to the Single Point of Access on (01472) 256256.

Managers, you will have a key role to play should an allegation be made, from any source, that a care worker, staff member or volunteer has;

- behaved in a way that has harmed an adult at risk of abuse/neglect, or may have harmed an adult at risk of abuse/neglect;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to an adult at risk of abuse/neglect; or,
- behaved towards an adult or adults at risk of abuse/neglect in a way that indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm to adults at risk of abuse/neglect.



Initial Action

The person receiving the initial allegation should not promise total confidentiality to the person making an allegation. They should be advised that the matter will be reported on to staff who can help. A written record of information should be made.

Managers should obtain and countersign the record made by the person who first received the allegation, and then consult the Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (DASM). The subject of the allegation should not be informed unless this has been agreed with the DASM as the Police or People & Communities Directorate may need to be consulted.

Details of the case should not be discussed with other staff, as this might prejudice future criminal or disciplinary process. You should only share information on a need to know basis.

Out of Hours

If the Manager is told about a serious allegation outside normal working hours, and the DASM is not available, they should contact the Out of Hours Team on (01472) 256256 and inform the DASM on the next working day.

Gathering Information

Subject to the advice from the DASM, Managers should obtain information about the date and location of the alleged incident and the names of any witnesses. Managers can clarify any points they are unsure about, but should not interview the adult, any possible witnesses (including staff members/volunteers) or ask them to write an account of what happened. The “Allegations Against Staff Reporting Form” has been designed to assist Managers to collect and record information regarding allegations. It is the job of the Police and People & Communities Directorate to investigate an allegation of abuse.

Care Organisations should not conduct their own investigations.

The organisation’s Designated Person or deputy should be able to assist with details of the adult and whether they have made allegations previously.

Strategy Meeting/Allegations Management Meeting

Unless the allegation is demonstrably false, a multi-agency strategy meeting/discussion should take place, either by phone or meeting, in order to share relevant information and determine whether an investigation needs to be undertaken, and if so by whom. Managers are likely to be invited to take part, and the DASM can provide advice on what to expect and what information they may be asked to provide.

Suspension

Suspension should be considered in cases where:

- there is cause to suspect an adult is at risk of significant harm, and/or
- a police investigation is warranted, and/or
- the allegation is so serious, it might be grounds for dismissal

Suspension is normally delegated to the Manager, or a care home owner where the allegation is made against the Manager, so as to avoid the risk of prejudicing any future proceedings. The Manager can decide whether or not to suspend if delay would be seriously detrimental to the Home, residents, their families or staff.

Suspension should not, however, be an automatic response and alternatives may be appropriate.

Safeguarding Adult Board

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