



Changing Lives - Challenging Attitudes
Working to end domestic abuse

Adult Protection Policy

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Key Principles	3
1 Aims of the Policy	3
2 Duty of Care	3
3 Roles & Responsibilities	4
Good Practice: Do's and Don'ts	4
4 Information Sharing: Consent	5
5 Note Taking and Record Keeping	5
6 Internet Safety: Social Media/New Technologies/ Photography / Video Recording	6
7 Safe Recruitment: Selection/Induction (including volunteers and part time staff)	6
8 Allegations against staff	6
9 Whistle Blowing and Support	6
10 Staff Training and Development	7
11 Links to Key Legislation / Guidance	7
12 Version Control	8

Key Principles

WAEML recognises that due to the nature of its work staff and volunteers may come into contact with people who are at risk of harm.

This policy aims to implement responsibility in respect of keeping adults safe.

WAEML recognises it has a duty of care to protect people who are at risk of harm and that all members of staff and volunteers have responsibilities in relation to the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

WAEML will follow the local procedures as set out in the ***Adult Support and protection: Ensuring rights and preventing Harm Multi Agency Guidelines*** and by the local arrangements through the East and Midlothian Public protection Office.

1 Aims of the Policy

WAEML is committed to protecting all adults at risk from harm.

Definition of Adult at Risk

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 has a three point test. It defines an 'adults at risk' as any individuals, aged 16 or over, who:

- a) are **unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests;**
- b) are **at risk of harm;** and
- c) **because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed** than adults who are not so affected.

The Act defines Risk of Harm as:

- a) **another person's conduct** is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed; or
- b) the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) **self-harm.**

Section 53 of the Act says that the definition includes **all harmful conduct**, such as:

- conduct which causes **physical harm, psychological harm, or self harm;**
- harm through **neglect and other failures to act;**
- **unlawful conduct concerning property, rights or interests.**

2 Duty of Care

Anyone working within WAEML is responsible to share concerns with the designated Adult Protection Officer.

Support will be offered to staff through their line manager during and following any adult protection process.

3 Roles & Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of anyone working within WAEML to share concerns where harm is suspected, evidenced or witnessed.

The designated adult protection officer must be kept informed of any adult protection concerns so that she can determine that WAEML has fully met its duty to keep adults at risk from harm.

Where workers identify adult support and protection issues, the relevant statutory agencies will be informed the same or next day. Wherever possible this will be done in consultation with the adult at risk but where undue pressure is suspected, consent is not required.

Where workers inform statutory agencies of adult protection issues by telephone or in person, this must be followed up in writing.

WAEML staff are responsible to inform and explain the Adult Protection Policy to women using the service. The policy must be outlined to the woman as close to the start of her support as possible. This explanation should be provided in accessible language to ensure the content and implications of the policy are understood by the service user receiving support.

All service users using the services of WAEML have the right to be listened to and respected. It is important to be honest with the service user and to let them know of the earliest opportunity during any disclosure of abuse that others will have to be informed. Where there is any suspicion of criminality this will be shared with Police Scotland.

Good Practice: Do's & Don'ts

WAEML staff will:

- Listen, support and respect;
- Re-assure the adult that they have done the right thing by making the disclosure
- Report any concerns immediately
- Record information gathered as soon as possible
- Be mindful of changes in behaviour, both physical and emotional presentation and any increased vulnerabilities

WAEML staff will not:

- Make false promises
- Promise confidentiality
- Interview the adult or ask any leading questions
- Assume that someone else will share the concern
- Take any further action unless instructed to do so.

4 Information Sharing: Consent

Women should be given a copy of the organisation's information sharing policy and consent form. This document must be signed to confirm the user has read and/or understood it. WAEML has a duty to refer suspicions about the well-being of adults to the appropriate statutory agencies (including Police Scotland, Social Work (duty unless there is an allocated Social Worker)). Any suspicion of criminality will be shared with Police Scotland.

Concerns about an adult at risk must be shared with the workers line manager and the nominated Adult Protection Officer within WAEML who will determine that all actions necessary have been taken in line with this policy.

If a worker has a concern about the safety or wellbeing of an adult at risk, this concern will be referred on to the appropriate statutory agency. It is WAEML's preferred approach to do this with the consent of the adult although where undue pressure is suspected consent will not be required.

WAEML staff will fully cooperate with enquiries to provide relevant information about any particular incidents or adult welfare / protection concerns.

5 Note taking and Record Keeping

WAEML's data protection policy outlines the arrangements in place for the secure storage of all information recorded and held by the organisation, including adult protection information/records.

Information regarding adult protection concerns must be noted on OASIS and highlighted in the risk tab. The following information must be documented:

- Details of the suspected abuse and source of the information, it is important the details should differentiate between fact and what is opinion
- Details of disclosures should be documented using the own words of the person making that disclosure
- The worker should document the presentation and emotional state of the person making the disclosure
- Name and date of birth of adult concerned
- Details of the perpetrator
- Anyone else involved including anyone else who may be at risk
- GP/Health Visitor
- Detail the action taken by WAEML
- Responses to concerns by any of the statutory agencies, including what the worker has been told, who they have spoken to, actions agreed and reasons for these.

6 Internet Safety: Social Media / New Technologies / Photography / Video Recording

WAEML staff will not photograph or film service users without their express and written permission.

Written guidance for Safe Internet use is available and will be shared with any service user using technology within WAEML's premises.

Written guidance for staff is contained within the staff handbook regarding the safe boundaries WAEML expects of staff in relation to the use of social media.

7 Safe Recruitment: Selection/Induction

WAEML is committed to providing a service delivery environment which is free from abuse therefore we will:

- Undertake PVG checks on all workers, management committee members, unpaid workers and Students at the recruitment stage through Disclosure Scotland. PVG checks will be kept up to date and refreshed a minimum of every three years.
- Two references will be sought and verified for anyone working within WAEML prior to appointment, one reference will include the most recent employer.
- Staff will not have direct access to service users or their records until PVG or references have been received and verified.
- All staff will receive and induction and support for adult protection that follows national and organisational guidance, policy and legislation.

8 Allegations against WAEML staff

WAEML will respond to any complaint or enquiry as quickly and responsively as possible and will be investigated utilising WAEML's complaints policy.

Complaints in respect of adult protection are immediately progressed to Stage 2 complaints and are dealt with immediately.

If required, WAEML will take reasonable and necessary action against workers, volunteers, management committee members or service users who use their positions, or any influence, power or authority they may have to abuse adults at risk using the services of WAEML.

9 Whistle Blowing and Support

Where staff have reasonable suspicion that a form of abuse is taking place they have right to use WAEML's Whistle Blowing policy.

10 Staff training and development

WAEML will provide training, support and supervision to workers along with clear policies and procedures to which they must work.

We offer staff training in Adults at Risk and Child Protection through the East and Midlothian Public Protection Office (EMPO). The EMPO training calendar is regularly distributed (minimum quarterly) to staff who are supported to attend all training relevant to their role.

It is a mandatory requirement that staff complete the following training as part of their initial induction (within first six months of employment with WAEML).

ALL STAFF: Adult Support & Protection Training - Level One

ALL SUPPORT WORKER & MANAGEMENT STAFF - Adult Support & Protection Training – Level 2

NOMINATED ADULT PROTECTION OFFICERS – enhanced AP training, including topics on capacity and consent

WAEML requires staff to update their adult at risk training every two years, staff are required to log their training completed on our OASIS staff database and this is reviewed during annual performance appraisal. Where staff are due to complete refresher training this will be scheduled as part of their personal development plan.

11 Links to Key Legislation / Guidance / Procedures

- [Adult Support and Protection - Ensuring rights and preventing harm - multi-agency guidelines \(Aug 2013\)](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/ELBEG_-_Adult_Support__Protection_Multi-agency_Guidelines_-_August_2013.pdf) http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/ELBEG_-_Adult_Support__Protection_Multi-agency_Guidelines_-_August_2013.pdf
- [EMPPC - Adult Support and Protection Policy and Procedures \(v2.1\)](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_UPDATED_-_Adult_Support_Protection_Policy_Procedures_-_27-07-17_v2.1.pdf) [http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC - UPDATED - Adult Support Protection Policy Procedures - 27-07-17 v2.1.pdf](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_UPDATED_-_Adult_Support_Protection_Policy_Procedures_-_27-07-17_v2.1.pdf)
- [EMPPC - Large Scale Investigation Protocol](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_Large_Scale_Investigation_Protocol_-_22-01-16_v1.pdf) [http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC - Large Scale Investigation Protocol - 22-01-16 v1.pdf](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_Large_Scale_Investigation_Protocol_-_22-01-16_v1.pdf)
- **Adult Support & Protection Ensuring rights and preventing harm Information Booklet:**
http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/Adult_Support_Protection_info_Booklet.pdf
- [Adult Support and Protection Act Against Harm website](http://www.actagainstharm.org/)
<http://www.actagainstharm.org/>

- [EMPPC - A practitioners guide to information sharing to support the wellbeing of adults](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_A_practitioners_guide_to_information_sharing_to_support_the_wellbeing_of_adults_-_21-07-17_v1.pdf) http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_A_practitioners_guide_to_information_sharing_to_support_the_wellbeing_of_adults_-_21-07-17_v1.pdf
- [EMPPC - Practitioners Guidance on Financial Harm](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_Practitioners_Guidance_on_Financial_Harm_v1_-_27-03-18.pdf) http://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_Practitioners_Guidance_on_Financial_Harm_v1_-_27-03-18.pdf

12 Version Control

Version	Date	What was amended	Prepared/amended by	Approved by	Date issued/re-issued
1		Version 1	Susan Hunter	Board of Directors	15.03.2016
2	06.06.18	Review and re-format	Julie Watson, CEO	Board of Directors	06.06.2018
3	07.04.21	Re-format and updated named personnel	Julie Watson, CEO	Board of Directors	21.04.2021