

# WEALDEN AND EASTBOURNE LIFELINE

## Adult Protection Policy

### 1. Introduction

Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline recognises that many of its customers are potentially vulnerable and seeks to ensure that all vulnerable adults who come into contact with the Company and its employees are protected and treated with respect. At the same time Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline works to protect its employees from the risk of unfounded allegations of abuse of vulnerable adults. All staff involved in providing services to vulnerable adults should know what to do if there are any concerns about abuse and what procedures/guidelines they should follow. In addition all staff coming into contact with vulnerable adults whilst working in the community should be aware of this policy. For the purposes of this policy a vulnerable adult is defined as any person aged 18 years and over who:

**“..... is or 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 or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation”.**

### 2. Policy Statement

The Company will implement its policy on protection by:-

- ◆ Making sure our staff and volunteers who have regular, direct and unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults are carefully selected, trained, accredited and supervised.
- ◆ Requiring that our contractors who have regular, direct and unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults have similar appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- ◆ Requiring that all organisations that contract services from the Company that involve the care of vulnerable adults have an effective policy and procedures in place on vulnerable adult protection.
- ◆ Giving service users, employees and contractors information about what they can expect from us in relation to protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- ◆ Enable service users, employees and contractors to voice any concerns they may have through the established procedures.

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### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and directors (whilst carrying out their functions for the Company) regardless of whether or not they are in **regular** contact with vulnerable adults.

#### **4. Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures**

A comprehensive set of policy guidelines, procedures and good practice guides exist, having been written by East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove Council and have been adopted by many of the relevant local organisations such as the NHS Trusts in East Sussex and Sussex Police. The Company supports this multi agency protocol and will ensure that staff, customers and contractors are aware of its requirements.

The multi-agency policy should be used for information on the following:

- Definitions
- Recognition of Adult Abuse
- Investigation
- Managing Adult Protection
- Practice Guidelines

There are certain procedures that are specific in their detail to Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline and these are listed below.

#### **5. Employment Issues**

##### **5.1 Recruitment and Selection**

- 5.1.1** Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline will take all reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people working with vulnerable adults. These procedures are deployed consistently for all staff – whether in full time, part time employment and whether paid or voluntary staff. Job Descriptions will stipulate the nature of the work with vulnerable adults and for posts which require a criminal records check this will be clearly stated. Criminal records checks are carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau, a Government body set up to provide identity and criminal records checks at basic, standard or enhanced level. Posts within Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline which require CRB clearance are listed at appendix 1. This list will be subject to annual review in December.
- 5.1.2** All staff (or volunteers recruited by the Company) working with vulnerable adults complete an application form. These forms provide information about applicants' past, including any gaps in employment history.
- 5.1.3** At least two references should be taken up (in writing), and where the post holder is to work with vulnerable adults, both must assess the applicant's work with vulnerable adults and their suitability for the post. References should cover at least the past three years. For student leavers, appropriate references from principal, head teacher or other senior teacher would be acceptable.
- 5.1.4** Consent should be obtained from paid job applicants for appropriate levels of CRB disclosure to be sought, using the form provided. Where disclosure is

needed for a specific role with vulnerable adults, it must be obtained prior to commencement of work. All candidates should demonstrate a willingness to undertake training, relating specifically to vulnerable adult protection issues.

- 5.1.5** Corporate policies on the Security of CRB Records and on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act must be complied with to ensure the confidentiality of information received in relation to applicants.

## **6. Training**

- 6.1** All staff who regularly have direct and unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults should receive training induction to raise their awareness of adult protection issues. They should also receive clear instructions on how to report concerns or suspicions and training in good practice methods of working to ensure vulnerable adults' welfare, safety and protection and minimise the risk of unfounded allegations being made. This training will also be made available to staff whose jobs develop over time to include working with vulnerable adults.

## **7. The responsibility of staff to report incidents and alleged or suspected incidents of abuse of vulnerable adults**

### **7.1 When to take action**

Recognition of adult abuse is covered in section 2 page 7 of the multi-agency policy.

### **7.2 The next steps- if there are concerns**

All staff should report incidents or allegations to the Duty Manager who will be identified to the member of staff at the start of their employment. The Duty Manager will then pass on the information to the Corporate Services Manager or Managing Director who will contact the Social Services as described in section 1 page 15 of the multi-agency policy.

## **8. Recording Information**

Recording information early and accurately is very important and must be done without delay by the member of staff who has raised the concern and then passed on to Corporate Services Manager or Managing Director. Further advice on what to record is available in Practice Guidelines number 5 in the multi-agency policy.

## **9. Allegations Against Staff / Volunteers**

- 9.1** Allegations may be about anyone directly employed by Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline in a paid or voluntary capacity working with vulnerable adults. Further guidance is available on page 17 of the multi-agency policy.

- 9.2** In all cases, if staff have concerns about another staff member they should report the matter to their line manager who will seek advice from the Corporate Services Manager or Managing Director. If the concern is about their immediate line manager, staff should report their concerns directly to the Managing Director.

**9.3** It should be acknowledged that an allegation against any member of staff will generate concern amongst other staff. There may be difficulties in reporting colleagues but the way in which they are dealt with should be professional and fair whilst protecting the welfare of the vulnerable adult.

**9.4** Staff need reassurance that they will be supported if they disclose information about a colleague. The policy on Official Conduct in the Conditions of Service booklet and the policy on Bullying and Harassment within the Personnel Standards manual may provide helpful guidance.

## **10. What Happens Now?**

**10.1** In the case of an adult protection/criminal event the investigation will be led by Social Services, the Police and involve any relevant member of staff.

**10.2** Led by the Managing Director in liaison with the Company's HR advisor and the Board of Directors the Company will implement procedures to deal with the outcome of any investigation including:

- ◆ Advice and reassurance to the public.
- ◆ Media attention.
- ◆ Counselling and support for staff in the event of allegations being unfounded.
- ◆ Dealing with staff should an allegation about a staff member be proven.
- ◆ Providing support to the member of staff who has reported the incident.

In dealing with any case or suspicion relating to abuse of vulnerable adults, all staff should be made aware that any breaches in confidentiality can be potentially very damaging to the person concerned, their family and any investigations which may take place. In addition it is important to maintain the confidentiality of the member of staff, as far as possible, to avoid any potential action by the alleged perpetrators of the abuse.

In an instance whereby enquiries arise from members of the public (including relatives) and any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff be briefed that they are not at liberty to make any comments regarding the case, but that they have been told to relay all enquiries to a designated senior member of staff (usually a supervisor or equivalent). The designated staff member should then meet all questions with the "no comment" response. It is important that the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information

## **11. Appendices**

The following appendices give further guidance on the application of the Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

APPENDIX 1 – Roles and Responsibilities  
APPENDIX 3 – Risk Assessment  
APPENDIX 4 – Multi-Agency Policy

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Recruitment**

All staff employed by the Company may come into contact with vulnerable adults or at least will have access to privileged information regarding the circumstances of vulnerable adults. Therefore it is the Corporate Services Manager's responsibility in liaison with the Company's HR advisor all staff receive an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. Any staff recruited through other channels, for example Agency staff where CRB check has not been carried out or staff commencing employment before receipt of their CRB check, must not be allowed to work unaccompanied with vulnerable adults.

#### **Procedures**

The Managing Director will ensure that up to date procedures are in force for the protection of vulnerable adults

#### **Training**

On starting employment with Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline all staff who occupy positions where a CRB check is considered appropriate will receive adult protection awareness training from their line manager.

Service areas within the Company where regular and direct access with vulnerable adults takes place will receive appropriate training arranged by the Corporate Services Manager.

It is recognised that a high proportion of customers are elderly people and specific attention should be given to the issue of elder abuse.

#### **Staff**

To follow policy and procedure and be alert to the issue of adult abuse.

#### **Managers**

- ◆ Will ensure that where appropriate all new staff receive awareness training.
- ◆ Will advise staff on how to deal with situations arising.
- ◆ Will provide support for the person reporting the incident.
- ◆ Will contact the Corporate Services Manager or Managing Director who will report the matter to Social Services/ Police.
- ◆ Will keep the reporting person informed of action taken.
- ◆ Will provide support to staff who have allegations made against them.
- ◆ Will keep a written record including:

- Date / Time
- Those present
- Actions taken
- Telephone / other conversations what was said / seen / done.

### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **Risk Assessment**

The protection of children is included in this appendix for the sake of inclusiveness although a separate policy exists in connection with this type of service user. For the purposes of this policy the type of work shown is indicative of the type of areas where protection of children and vulnerable adults should be considered. It is not intended to be comprehensive or exclusive. Managers of work areas have responsibility for identifying “at risk” staff.

**High Risk** Staff who enter people’s homes where children or vulnerable adults may be or have regular access to children/vulnerable adults,

**Medium Risk** Staff who supervise work placement students under 18 where the nature of the Means one to one access,

**Low Risk** Staff who work out of the office but have no direct contact with children /vulnerable adults but may have some indirect contact with them.

**No Risk** Staff who are office based and have no contact with children or vulnerable adults e.g.,

- ◆ Secretarial and Administrative staff
- ◆ Officers in support functions

<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	ADULT PROTECTION
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	MANAGING DIRECTOR
<b>DATED REVISED</b>	FEB 2006
<b>DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW</b>	FEB 2011