

PROTECTION FROM ABUSE

Phoenix House operates in accordance with the “*No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse*”, published by the Department of Health in 2000, and the ‘Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998’.

What is abuse

Abuse may:

- ◇ Consist of a single act or repeated acts
- ◇ Be physical, verbal or psychological
- ◇ Be an act of neglect or an omission to act
- ◇ Occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subject to it.

Types of Abuse

Physical – may include assault, battery, for example, hitting, slapping, physical restraint, inappropriate use of medication

Emotional or Psychological – Any act or omission that causes severe emotional distress, for example, shouting, ignoring, and threatening

Financial – Taking money or property without consent, misuse of assets

Sexual – A sexual act without consent. Non contact or contact (may include use of the internet)

Neglect – Failure to provide care and stimulation, for example, personal hygiene, health care, protect from hazards

Institutional- Mistreatment or abuse by practices or rules of the individuals within an institution. Individuals compelled to sacrifice their preferred lifestyles and cultural diversity.

Discriminatory- Based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

The Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures apply to people who are considered to be vulnerable.

Who might abuse you

Abuse could come from basically anyone. This includes Support staff, friends, family, volunteers, visitors, neighbours and other service users.

Reporting Abuse

Abuse, harassment or bullying is not acceptable and Phoenix House operates a zero tolerance on abuse. If you have reason to believe that you are being abused, or if you suspect that someone else is being abused you are to report it straight away using the following procedure or our complaints procedure.

Disclosure Procedure

Information or actions which a service user reasonably believes tends to show one or more of the above should promptly be reported to the Service Manager so that any appropriate action can be taken. If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to the manager, that is, if you believe you are being abused by the manager then you should speak to:

- Sandwell Supporting People Team
Kingston House, 1st Floor
438 High Street, West Bromwich
B70 9LD
Telephone: 0121 569 5231/5004/5003/5378

- Vulnerable Person Officer
Community Safety Bureau
West Bromwich Police
Telephone: 0845 113 5000 Ext. 6643
- Sandwell Advocacy
0121 502 8070
- Voice Advocacy
0121 525 3355

Phoenix House will report all cases of abuse to the relevant agencies such as our funding and monitoring body, Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board, and the police if a crime has been committed. Phoenix House is committed to working in accordance with the Sandwell Vulnerable Adults Protection (VAP) Procedure.

As a procedure Phoenix House will contact the Advocacy service and the Victim Support Unit to support all victims of abuse. Their contact details are listed below.

- Victim Support
Tel: 0121 569 7980 (between 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday)
Select House
2nd Floor
Popes Lane
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 4PA
www.vswmsandwell.co.uk
- Voice Advocacy
Hallam Street Hospital

Hallam Street
West Bromwich
B71 4NH
0121 612 8681

- Sandwell Advocacy
Sandwell Advocacy
28 Wood Street, Tipton West Midlands DY4 9BQ
0121 520 8070 E-mail: sandwelladvocacy@btconnect.com

Should the need arise, Phoenix House will make all reasonable efforts to relocate victims of abuse to a suitable and safe environment.

In some cases, depending on the seriousness of the reported case, Phoenix House may work with the perpetrators to prevent further abuse.

Where a staff is accused of abusing a service user, the staff will be suspended while a thorough investigation takes place. Should a staff be found guilty of abusing a service user, Phoenix House Disciplinary Procedure will be followed. Depending on the case, Phoenix House may terminate the staff contract of employment with immediate effect.

If you need further explanation about this policy or abuse in general, please ask your key support worker or any member of staff. If you believe that you are being abused but you are not sure, please make a report straight away to any of the following:

- any member of staff
- the service manager
- your social worker
- your CPN.
- or any of the people listed above.