

Central Wellbeing SCIO - Policy on Protecting People

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1. Overview

This is the Protecting People Policy for Central Wellbeing SCIO (thereafter referred to as Central Wellbeing in this document).

Policies support staff, associates, volunteers, individuals, family members and carers participating in activities, events and projects facilitated by Central Wellbeing.

We believe that everyone can contribute to their community and to society if they have the right encouragement and support. Everyone's experience and ideas matter. Some people may need more support to participate safely.

We do not describe people as vulnerable. They may have characteristics or are in situations that may make them more at risk of harm but characteristics such as age, gender and disability in itself does not make someone vulnerable.

2. Context

Whilst we don't describe people as vulnerable, we work within the law and abide by what the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 definition of vulnerable people. It includes children and some adults.

An adult at risk of harm is a person (aged 16 years or over) who:

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

A Child is a person who has not yet reached their 16th birthday.

Central Wellbeing does not work with children, but we might come into contact with children through our work with adults.

Regulated work with Protected adults

Disclosure checks are not legal requirements, but voluntary arrangements available as part of a safe recruitment practice. Central Wellbeing SCIO will always aim to follow best practice. Additionally, it is against the law for an organisation to employ someone to work with children or protected adults if they're barred from doing it.

Disclosure Scotland provides disclosure certificates of varying levels. The appropriate level of disclosure will depend on the normal duties of the role. As such, it is the responsibility of the employer to assess this to determine the appropriate level in line with the current legislation.

The law in Scotland requires people carrying out regulated work with Protected adults to obtain a PVG certificate.

Simply working with a vulnerable group does not automatically mean that an individual will be eligible for the PVG scheme for this work. The PVG scheme deals with protected adults rather than vulnerable adults, this is a service based definition rather than labelling individuals due to the fact that they have a particular vulnerability, such as being elderly.

A protected adult is defined as an individual aged 16 or over who is provided with (and receives) a type of care, support or welfare service. An individual is only deemed to be a protected adult for the duration of the time they are receiving the relevant service. There are four categories of services receipt of any one of which makes an individual a protected adult:

1. Registered care services

A service by a person carrying on:

- (a.) a support service
- (b.) an adult placement service
- (c.) a care home service, or
- (d.) a housing support service.

2. Health services

A service provided or secured by a public health body concerning the treatment, care and support of, and provision of advice and assistance to individuals in relation to health and well-being, or similar services provided by an independent health care service provider .

3. Community care services

Social work and mental health services provided or secured by a council, or self-directed support paid for by a council. The most recent guidance on this states a community care service is defined in the Social Work Scotland Act 1968 as:

4. Welfare services

A welfare includes any service which provides support, assistance, advice or counselling to individuals with particular needs, meeting the following conditions. The service must be a service that:

- (a.) is provided in the course of work to one or more persons aged 16 or over.
- (b.) is delivered on behalf of an organisation
- (c.) requires training to be undertaken by the person delivering the service
- (d.) has a frequency and formality attached to the service, and
- (e.) either
 - (i.) requires a contract to be agreed between the service provider and the recipient of the service prior to the service being carried out, or
 - (ii.) is personalised to an individual adult's needs.

Furthermore in order to be eligible for the PVG Scheme an individual may be doing regulated work with adults if their work involves any of the following activities (as part of their normal duties):

- ▯ Caring for protected adults.
- ▯ Teaching, instructing, training or supervising protected adults.
- ▯ Being in sole charge of protected adults.
- ▯ Providing assistance, advice or guidance to a protected adult or particular protected adults which relates to physical or emotional well-being, education or training.
- ▯ Inspecting adult care services (including inspecting any premises used for the purposes of providing such services)

Most of our work is providing peer support groups who may be vulnerable, but it does not come into the scope of "regulated work" as defined by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. We do not have unsupervised or alone contact with people and our groups are open to the public.

Central Wellbeing takes advice on the arrangements for protection and supporting vulnerable people including determining if a post would be carrying out regulated work or an applicant for a paid or volunteer post needs to join the PVG Scheme.

We are also aware that many people involved in the communities and projects we work on may need support and help to participate safely.

3. Our Practice

The care and protection of people is one of the key values and principles that underpin our practice as an organisation.

Across all our activities, we work in ways that promote the rights of all and reflect the values, principles and good practice that underpin protecting the safety and wellbeing of people, especially vulnerable people.

All individuals who come into contact with Central Wellbeing will be treated with dignity, respect, equality and fairness and will be communicated with in a manner that ensures their inclusion, supports understanding and participation and respects and retains their dignity as follows:

- We build in good practice to the work we do with groups and projects, to minimise risks of harm to the people we work alongside.
- Most projects have a significant element of peer support.
- Staff and sessional workers work alongside individual or small groups of vulnerable people in situations such as focus groups, planning and organising

events and when supporting service user involvement and similar work.

- We ensure that staff and sessional workers have the necessary communication skills (verbal and non-verbal) to support people safely and understand the barriers to communication that can arise for individuals who may have sensory, physical or cognitive issues such as dementia.
- There are volunteer roles in projects where Central Wellbeing takes responsibility for safely supporting the volunteers in specific tasks and encouraging individuals to contribute in their community.
- At the date of this policy our current work does not include activities or roles that are within the current scope of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme.
- When we do work in situations that come within the scope of the PVG Scheme we will comply with these procedures and standards of the Scheme.
- Central Wellbeing will provide a safe, welcoming and person centred environment within our groups and within our project work and work in a safe manner that is consistent with all relevant legislation and by carrying out required risk assessments as required by our Health and Safety Policy.

4. Staff, Volunteers and Sessional workers

Central Wellbeing aims to ensure that all people are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff, associates and volunteers in this organisation.

In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff, sessional workers and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Job descriptions will indicate if the post holder will require to join the PVG Scheme.

Selection

As part of a safe recruitment process

- All applicants to our organisation will complete an application form, or will provide equivalent information about their previous roles and experience.
- Short listed applicants for staff posts and sessional work will be asked to attend interview.

- Short listed applicants will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment.
- Volunteers and sessional workers will also be asked to provide references.

Screening

- Where relevant to the post, appointments will be conditional upon Protection of Vulnerable Groups membership or other appropriate disclosure and checks. Disclosures will be requested prior to the applicant taking up post or role.
- All staff may be asked to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme if the work they are doing comes within its scope. Failure to join the PVG scheme when asked to do so is Gross Misconduct.

Training

- The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure.
- Relevant training and support will be provided on an on-going basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practicing the range of skills needed for the work.
- Training on specific areas such as health and safety procedures, confidentiality, roles and responsibilities in protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm and abuse, identifying and reporting abuse or concerns about someone being at risk of harm, will be given as a priority to new staff, associates and volunteers. Need for further training will be regularly reviewed at team meetings and performance reviews.

Supervision

- All staff, sessional workers and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support.
- Supervision and planning for all projects will include reviewing and identifying ways to work safely with people, and support their wider health and wellbeing.
- Every member of staff, sessional worker and volunteer will attend an annual review, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. Annual reviews will be recorded and copies made available to the person.
- The role of sessional workers and volunteers will be reviewed regularly: the timing of this will reflect the circumstances of the projects on which they are working.

5. Planning work with projects

- Part of planning for each project includes identifying any risks to participants' well-being or safety.
- Staff should be aware of the national sources of information, including the Act against Harm website and resources: www.actagainstharm.org.uk
- When planning work that will involve people with dementia, Central Wellbeing will be guided by the "Core Principles for Involving People with Dementia in Research" (Scottish Dementia Working Group Research Sub-Group 2013).
- For each project where this is relevant, the member of staff with lead responsibility should be aware of local policies, sources of advice and contacts they can use if they are concerned about someone's wellbeing at any point.
- Staff should also be aware of local sources of information and help which we can encourage people in this project to use. Examples include advocacy services, domestic abuse services, BME and LGBT projects.

6. Delivering community development support

- We include considering the well-being and safety of participants in projects as an integral part of routine project monitoring and planning.
- We include developing staff's knowledge and confidence around these aspects of the work as an integral part of work planning, professional development and supervision. We are aware that working alongside people who are vulnerable can be distressing or challenging for staff, especially if it reminds them of situations affecting them or their families.
- All staff, volunteers and associates should contact the Chief Executive of Central Wellbeing if they have any concerns about people.
- If the Chief Executive is not available and they need to talk a situation over with someone, they should contact the Central Wellbeing board member.

- If the situation they are concerned about involves an adult and needs to be dealt with quickly, they should contact the adult protection team in that local authority.
- Staff, volunteers and associates should contact the Chief Executive and the child protection team for that local authority if they have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.

7. Implementation and monitoring

Central Wellbeing will ensure that all staff, volunteers and associates involved in recruitment, training and supervision are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure it's full implementation.

Reports to the Board on projects will include the approach being taken to keep people safe.

The board members identified as the lead for each area of our work will have an understanding of the issues around safety of vulnerable people and for the people working alongside them.

The Board keeps the policy under review, to ensure that we reflect any changes in the law and in good practice, and the experience we gain through implementing the policy.

- Any changes in the law have immediate effect.
- The policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

8. Supporting policies

- Protecting Lone Workers Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Human Rights Policy
- Diversity and Equality Policy

8. Reference

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 (adults at risk of harm)

<http://www.actagainstharm.org/>

Disclosure Scotland website

<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/protectionservices/index.htm>

"Core Principles for Involving People with Dementia in Research" (Scottish Dementia Working Group Research Sub-Group 2013)

<http://dementivoices.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Involving-people-with-dementia-in-research1.pdf>

Next Review Date: October 2023

9. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for Protecting People:

Ania Sandland

Day to day responsibility for Protecting Vulnerable Adults:

All staff, associates and volunteers