

## Appendix D

### Safeguarding Overview for Volunteers

This overview document does not replace the full Adult Safeguarding Policy to which you should refer if you have concerns of a safeguarding nature.

Read Easy upholds the 2014 Care Act values to make safeguarding personal, meaning it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It requires that the person is engaged in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that involves them and gives choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 people must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help to do so before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions. For adults, this means that if they have capacity they have the right to choose how they live and make decisions about their safety, even if we do not agree with certain decisions.

#### 1. An introduction to Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is everyone's business.
- Anybody can become a victim of abuse or neglect, but adults are generally considered capable of taking steps to protect themselves.
- REUK aims to provide a safe environment for all, however our safeguarding duties apply only to those who, because of their needs for care and support, are unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect. Your Safeguarding Champion can provide you with a list of organisations that you can signpost other Readers to if required, to enable them to access support for themselves.
- Volunteers should be alert to the possibility that their Readers *might be* experiencing abuse.
- Never take the attitude 'It couldn't happen here...'
- Only the Safeguarding Champion is responsible for following up concerns about abuse, or if they are away, the person who became aware of the concern who should refer to the full Adult Safeguarding policy for direction. Concerns should not be discussed with anyone else as a matter of confidentiality.
- Your Safeguarding Champion can provide you with a list of organisations that you can signpost your Reader to, so that they can access support independently for themselves if they wish to.

#### 2. What constitutes abuse

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Domestic violence
- Financial or material abuse



- Neglect and acts of omission
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Self-neglect

### 3. Responding to an abused person

- If anyone informs you that he/she has been a victim of abuse, please respond in the appropriate manner:
- Stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief.
- Listen very carefully.
- Be sympathetic.
- Don't promise to keep secrets,
- Do not be judgmental (for example, "Why didn't you run away?")
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing to tell you and explain that you will need to inform the Safeguarding Champion who will help them decide what happens next.
- Remember 'TED' – ask your Reader to 'tell, explain, describe' in their own words but refrain from starting to investigate by doing any of the following:
  - a) Asking leading questions such as "Did this make you feel...? or, Did ... happen? Were they doing...?" When cross examined in court this type of questioning can invalidate the evidence.
  - b) Pressing the person concerned for more details about the abuse. Too much pressure may result in them not wanting to tell you.
  - c) Contacting the alleged abuser yourself.
- If it's an emergency, call emergency services
- Make detailed, written, factual notes as soon as possible transferring these to a copy of the Read Easy Adult at Risk Cause for Concern Report Form, or at the very least ensure you write a report containing all information required within it. This form is in this handbook, available on the website as a document you can print and complete, or as an interactive pdf that you can fill out on the computer
- Report to Safeguarding Champion immediately, or if they are away please refer to the Adult Safeguarding Policy and Appendices on how to handle the situation yourself. This policy is always available online.
- Issues surrounding abuse or potential abuse are highly sensitive and to be treated as confidential. We ask that you respect the person's right to confidentiality and refrain from disclosing any information about the case to anyone who does not 'need to know.'