

**BEREFT'S POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR SAFEGUARDING OUR CLIENTS, STAFF  
AND VOLUNTEER COUNSELLORS**

**POLICY**

**BEREFT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To ensure that all staff, supervisors and volunteers are aware of this policy for the protection of vulnerable adults in order to recognise and respond to concerns or allegations of abuse.
- To ensure that concerns or allegations of abuse are taken seriously
- To support clients, volunteers and members of staff who are reporting concerns.
- To notify the appropriate agencies if abuse is identified or suspected.
- To ensure that all staff and counsellors receive training in relation to safeguarding adults at a level commensurate with their role.
- To ensure that clients have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of abuse
- To name a Safeguarding Lead and a Trustee responsible for Safeguarding
- To review this safeguarding policy annually
- To achieve best practice in respect of the safe recruitment of employees and volunteers
- To adhere to best practice as established by the Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS)

**WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action' (Care and Support Statutory Guidance, DH, 2016).

The Care Act (2014) statutory guidance defines adult safeguarding as: 'Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'

**PROCEDURE FOR SAFEGUARDING CLIENTS\***

**WHAT TO DO**

Bereft counsellors agree to abide by the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) Code of Ethics.

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\*Our clients are aged sixteen or over.

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### Generally

Any concerns of current or recent suspected /actual abuse of a client should be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

As soon as they are aware of the situation, Bereft volunteer counsellors should report these concerns by contacting their Bereft Counselling Supervisor. In turn, they will then report these concerns to the Bereft Safeguarding Lead and the Bereft Safeguarding Trustee so the matter can be forwarded to the Statutory Authorities if appropriate.

The counsellor should be kept informed of the current situation and the client must be made aware that this is happening, and that Bereft will support them for as long as counselling continues.

- A Safeguarding Incident form (see Appendix 3) should be completed and will be securely kept by the Bereft office. It may be shared, with the client's knowledge, with the Statutory Authority if appropriate.

NB: The client should be made aware of this policy before counselling begins through the standard letter each client receives prior to counselling.

### If a client asks us not to intervene, or does not consent to the sharing of information:

Whilst their wishes must be respected, nevertheless counsellors must report concerns to their Supervisor and the Bereft Safeguarding Lead to discuss if there are grounds for sharing the information. The Trustee responsible for Safeguarding must also be kept informed. (*See Appendix 2 – Information Sharing*)

Counsellors are advised to:

- Explore the reasons for the client's objections to the sharing of information – what are they worried about? Reporting to the Authorities may have consequences that are unwanted or threatening to the client
- Discuss the concerns about Abuse and together explore the possible benefits, to them or others, of sharing information. Help to find sources of help and support if they wish.

### Could someone come to harm?

The client's decision that Bereft should not intervene should be respected unless the following apply:

- Emergency situations (such as risk of serious harm or threat to life) necessitate calling emergency services.
- Others (besides the client) are deemed at risk (including children) and sharing information could prevent a serious crime
- A serious crime has been committed
- The risk is serious and immediate.

### Disclosure of Non-recent Abuse

If a client reports an incident of abuse that occurred during their childhood or at times of previous vulnerability, it is important that they should be made aware that they have a right to report previous abuse should they wish to and that they will have the relevant support to make such a report. Irrespective of how long ago the abuse took place or if the current whereabouts of the

alleged perpetrator are known or not, the client has the right to report what happened to the Police or other appropriate statutory agency.

Disclosures alleging non-recent abuse should be reported to a Bereft Supervisor and the Manager, as well as the Trustee Safeguarding Lead. Such disclosures will need to be documented. They must be clear, factual and state the advice given to the client pertaining to making a report. The client may be resolute that they do not wish to report the abuse to statutory services but this may have to be overridden in situations where the client or other persons may be at risk

If the alleged perpetrator is dead and therefore there is no known risk posed to others or to the client then there are no grounds on which to take the matter forward to the police or relevant authority.

### Ways we protect our clients

- All our counsellors and staff hold a DBS Enhanced Assessment (Police check). No counsellor works with a client unless they hold a current DBS.
- The venues where we see our clients, including our office, are inspected by Bereft staff to ensure that they conform to Health and Safety Standards.
- If you suspect a client is harming themselves or others the counsellor should contact their Supervisor or a member of Staff asap.
- Trustees hold a Risk Register.

ALSO, See our Data Protection and Privacy Policy

### **PROCEDURE FOR SAFEGUARDING – COUNSELLORS AND SUPERVISORS**

- As with our clients, if concerns come to light that either counsellors or supervisors are being abused within Bereft, the Bereft Safeguarding Lead should be notified, as well as the Bereft Designated Safeguarding Trustee.
- The matter must be investigated and the complainant informed of their rights to report their concerns to the Statutory Authorities if they wish. A Safeguarding Incident Form (Appendix 3) should be completed

### **PROCEDURE FOR SAFEGUARDING – STAFF**

- If a member of the Bereft Staff has concerns about being abused, they should report them directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will investigate the matter and also inform them of their rights to report their concerns to the Statutory Authorities if they wish.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### Definitions of Abuse

#### **What is 'abuse'?**

Abuse pertains to the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may consist of a single or repeated act. It may be an act of neglect (abuse by omission) or it may occur when a vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter in to a financial transaction or sexual act to which he / she has not consented or whose consent was deemed diminished due to a lack of understanding. Abuse results in significant harm, or exploitation of, the vulnerable adult. It may be perpetrated by anyone who has power over the person whether they are a carer, relative, paid member of staff, volunteer or spouse, or as a result of persistently poor care or a rigid and oppressive regime.

The main forms of abuse are:

- Physical – includes: hitting, punching, misuse of medication, poisoning, severe restraint, inappropriate sanctions, burning, biting, (FGM) etc.
- Domestic Violence or Abuse – is an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality (Home Office, 2013). Domestic violence and abuse may include psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse; as well as so called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
  - Sexual – This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, taking sexual photographs, making someone look at pornography or watch sexual acts, sexual assault or sexual acts the adult didn't consent to or was pressured into consenting. includes: threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, etc. CONT/
  - Psychological or emotional, includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, etc.
  - Financial or Material – includes: theft, fraud, exploitation for financial gain, pressure to alter wills, property or financial transactions, the misuse or misappropriation of property/possessions/benefits
- Neglect and Acts of Omission – includes: ignoring medical, emotional or physical care, withholding the necessities of life, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care.
- Modern slavery – This covers slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.
- Organisational or Institutional - This includes neglect and poor care in an institution or care setting such as a hospital or care home, or if an organisation provides care in someone's home. The abuse can be a one-off incident or repeated on-going ill treatment. The abuse can be through neglect or poor professional practice, which might be because of structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

- Discriminatory – This includes types of harassment or insults because of someone’s race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- Self-neglect – This covers a wide range of behaviour which shows that someone isn’t caring for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.
- Exploitation: Sexual exploitation involves exploitative situations and relationships where people receive 'something' (e.g. accommodation, alcohol, affection, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual activities. Exploitation however includes all types of abusive “grooming” of any individual towards activities that may cause them harm, including radicalisation that may result in acts of terrorism. Examples such as domestic abuse, including factors such as honour based violence (HBV) and forced marriages (FM), can include elements of all or many of the above types of abuse.
- Forced Marriages - Laws and human rights documents generally describe forced marriage as a union that lacks the free and full consent of both parties. The European Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1468 “Forced Marriages and Child Marriages” (2005)
- Honour Based Violence - Honour based violence and abuse can take many forms, e.g. threatening behaviour, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, threats to kill and false imprisonment committed due to so called ‘honour’. Murders in the name of ‘so-called’ honour, (often called Honour killings) are murders in which predominantly women are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour which is deemed to have brought shame on the family. Some examples nationally of honour based murders have been for trivial reasons for example, dressing or behaving too westernised, falling in love with somebody not chosen by their family, rejecting forced marriage or being LGBT ( <https://www.haloproject.org.uk/definition-of-honourbased-violence-W21page-47> ). Abuse can take many forms. It might not comfortably fit into any of these categories, or it might fit into more than one. Abuse can be carried out by one adult at risk towards another. This is still abuse and should be dealt with. The adult at risk who abuses may also be neglecting him/herself which could also be regarded as a Safeguarding matter.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **When and how to share information** *(from HM Government - Information Sharing, July 2018)*

When asked to share information, you should consider the following questions to help you decide if, and when, to share. If the decision is taken to share, you should consider how best to effectively share the information. A flowchart follows the text.

*When is there a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing information?*

- Yes – see next question
- No – do not share

*Do you have consent to share?*

- Yes – you can share but should consider how
- No – see next question

*Does the information enable an individual to be identified?*

- Yes – see next question
- No – you can share but should consider how

*Have you identified a lawful reason to share information without consent?*

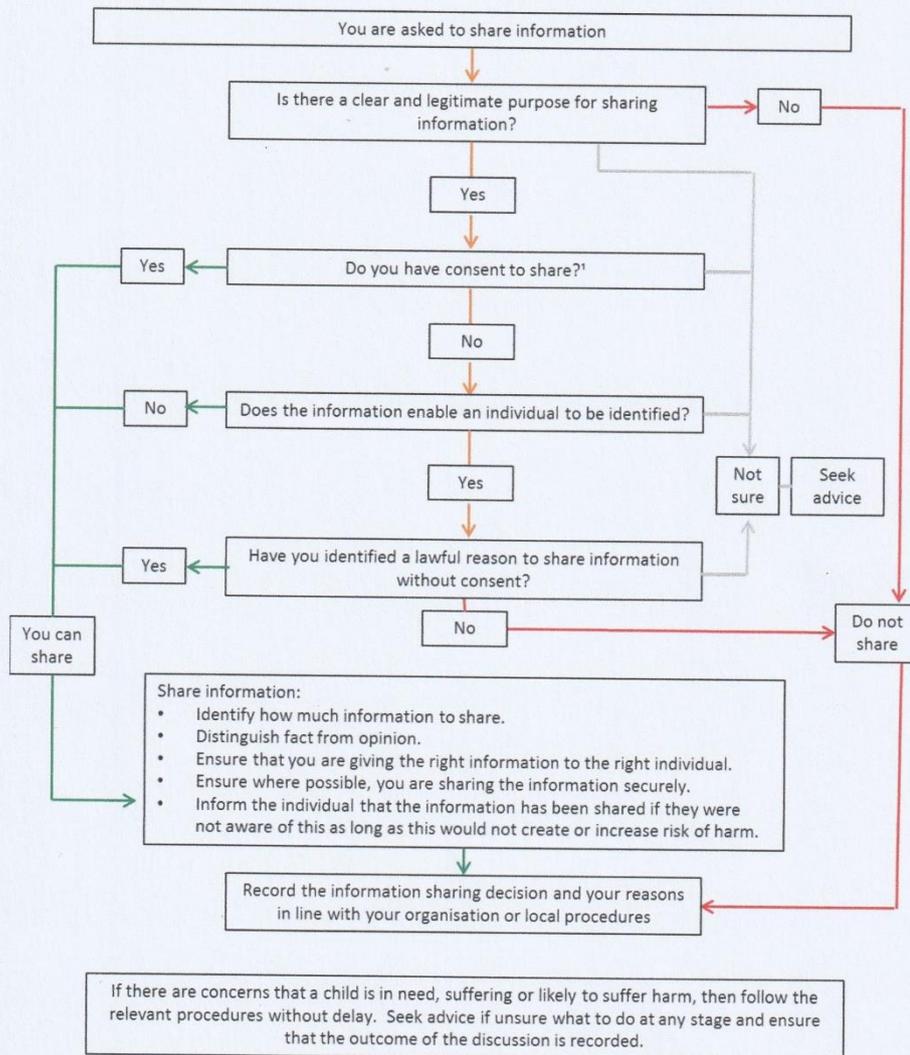
- Yes – you can share but should consider how
- No – do not share

*How*

- Identify how much information to share
- Distinguish fact from opinion
- Ensure that you are giving the right information to the right individual
- Ensure where possible that you are sharing the information securely
- Where possible, be transparent with the individual, informing them that that the information has been shared, as long as doing so does not create or increase the risk of harm to the individual.

All information sharing decisions and reasons **must be recorded** in line with Bereft's procedures.

**Flowchart of when and how to share information**



1. Consent, must be unambiguous, freely given and may be withdrawn at any time

<b>APPENDIX 3</b>	<b>BEREFT - SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM</b>
<p>Name of Safeguarding Lead</p> <p>Name of Trustee responsible for Safeguarding</p>	<p>Jennifer Pitt (Bereft Manager) Tel: 07973 234 166 <a href="mailto:bereftbereavementsupport@hotmail.co.uk">bereftbereavementsupport@hotmail.co.uk</a></p> <p>Deirdre McLellan Tel: 0208 567 4682 <a href="mailto:email@deirdremclellan.plus.com">email@deirdremclellan.plus.com</a></p>
<p>Name &amp; contact details of concerned person to whom disclosure was given</p>	
<p>Name and contact details of Individual who is the subject of Concern</p>	
<p><u>Incident/Incidents</u> What happened? (nature of concern or disclosure made, using person's own words when possible)</p>	
<p>When did it happen? (date/s, time)</p>	
<p>Where did it happen? (location/s where known)</p>	
<p>Who was allegedly involved and in what way? (include witnesses if applicable)</p>	
<p>Any action that has been taken? includes anyone who has been informed, date etc.</p>	
<p>Signature of Safeguarding Lead</p>	
<p>Signature of concerned person</p>	
<p>Date</p>	