

Vulnerable Persons Policy

(Policy under review during the development of the Safeguarding Policy)

see Multi-agency Policy, Local Joint Working Protocol, and Procedures & Guidance

1) General Statement

- a) Heart for Chorley is providing services to vulnerable people with a goal of reducing their vulnerabilities. This policy sets out the intent and purpose to always protect all beneficiaries under the guidance of Heart for Chorley policy and procedures.
- b) This policy is to help workers understand the scope of the role of Heart for Chorley in working with vulnerable adults. Any concerns over the safeguarding of vulnerable persons such as vulnerable persons being misused, taken advantage of or abused, should consult the Safeguarding Policy.
- c) Directly related policies: Lone/ Remote Workers Policy – Safeguarding Policy – Prevention of Harassment.

2) Personal and Relationship Boundaries

- a) For the purpose of protection, it should be assumed that each individual who accesses the services of Heart for Chorley is a vulnerable adult, whether it is in a residential setting or otherwise. Therefore, this policy must be strictly adhered to.
- b) Levels of vulnerability may change and be periodically reassessed depending on the level of service accessed. The nature of the relationship between beneficiaries and Heart for Chorley workers should remain professional and not personal.
- c) Nature of Relationships examples (this list is not exhaustive and is under review):
 - i) Professional – Under the terms of engaging with Heart for Chorley
 - (1) Coaching
 - (2) Advocating
 - (3) Supporting
 - (4) Training
 - (5) Drug/ Alcohol testing
 - (6) Actions of greeting such as handshake, fist-bump, high five
 - ii) Personal – Not under the terms of engaging with Heart for Chorley

- (1) Private visits
 - (2) Intimate contact with or without sexual intent
 - (3) Playful engagement
 - (4) Breaching personal space inc play fighting, tickling, touching
 - (5) Exchanging goods/ property either by gift, swap or purchase
- iii) Situations needing assessment to identify their nature:
- (1) Socialising inc events
 - (2) Connecting with or visiting friends or relatives
 - (3) Visiting workplaces
 - (4) Visiting personal spaces such as homes, family/ friends' homes
 - (5) Actions of greeting that breach personal space such as hugging, hand holding, embracing
- d) Any behaviours or interactions not listed in this table will be assessed and managed under its titles and measured against the assessed vulnerability level of the beneficiary.
- e) Anyone in breach of this policy will invoke the disciplinary procedure.
- f) All Heart for Chorley workers and beneficiaries should be aware that the professional work of the Charity includes the personal development of all individuals. Personal boundaries will be breached, and the understanding and assessment of these breaches will be focused on the helpful benefit of the beneficiaries and the protection of everybody's [potential] vulnerabilities.
- g) The sharing of personal information and experience (often called 'testimony') will be done with caution and measured against Heart for Chorley policy and procedures for protection of all. Any doubt should result in caution and accountability with colleagues or management being sought.
- h) If there is concern after the fact that personal boundaries may have been breached this should be expressed to colleagues or management for everybody's protection and accountability.
- 3) Self-Harm and Suicide
- a) Higher levels of vulnerability such as a history of self-harming or suicidal thoughts/ attempts will require much closer monitoring and support but without undermining personal boundaries. Support from relevant professional agencies for all vulnerable issues is vital for the protection of beneficiaries.

- b) Admission to residential services may be declined when risk assessments show that vulnerabilities are outside the scope of the support programme offered or they are deemed as having a high probability of bringing unmanageable risk to the other residents, the house, the workers or the community. Coaching services will focus on encouraging the beneficiary to access the appropriate professional services.

4) Reporting

- a) All workers are aware of professional requirements through induction and ongoing training which highlight that in any and all areas of uncertainty caution will be exercised with beneficiaries and openness with colleagues. Concerns should be expressed to colleagues or management for everybody's protection and accountability.
- b) If behaviours are identified that are a cause for concern for vulnerable people that are beyond the scope or capability of the beneficiaries, workers or charity to manage they should be reported to the relevant agencies or professional bodies such as mental health services, drug and alcohol services, the police, ambulance etc.