

Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy

August 2013

Cartwheel Arts is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use our services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. This policy should be used in conjunction with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Objectives

- To work in a preventive manner to protect vulnerable adults from being abused
- To respond sensitively, coherently and consistently to reported incidents of self neglect and abuse
- To co-ordinate action and services in order to best protect and assist vulnerable adults
- To ensure that Cartwheel's strategies, policies and services reflect legislation relevant to vulnerable adults

Definition

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

Abuse can include:

- physical,
- financial,
- material,
- sexual,
- psychological,
- discriminatory,
- emotional abuse
- and neglect.

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone. Volunteers, staff and Trustees have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

Support to volunteers and staff

The volunteers and staff reporting incidents of suspected or potential abuse may find that the victim and/or the other responsible adult concerned is upset or angry. Cartwheel Arts Director will support the victim or responsible adult. Other action may take the form of support provided by work colleagues or support or counselling provided by an outside body if required.

Volunteers and staff themselves may also be the subject of an allegation of abuse. While support will be offered, Cartwheel will ensure that Social Services or any other appropriate body are given all assistance pursuing any investigation. Suspension and/or discipline may be implemented.

Suspicion of abuse by a Cartwheel staff member or volunteer

Where a member staff or volunteer is suspected of abuse the following action should be taken:

The Director should interview the staff member or volunteer with a witness present.

The Director should make arrangements for interviewing the suspected victim. This should be done with a Cartwheel Trustee or staff member with a supporter for the victim present.

The purpose of the meeting is not to investigate but to establish whether there are grounds for the allegation after which time we will employ the Company's policy on managing allegations

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is crucial to all our work and relationships and the Cartwheel Arts confidentiality policy should normally be adhered to. However the welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount and takes precedence over it. Staff should not keep concerns relating to potential abuse of vulnerable adults to themselves.

Confidentiality may NOT be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the adult.