



New Life Community Church

New Life Medway

Vulnerable Adult - Safeguarding Policy

New Life Community Church (South Gillingham), herein after referred to as New Life Medway, is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees, volunteers and visitors who attend our premises, or who participate in New Life Medway activities located elsewhere, as far as is reasonable and practicable.

This New Life Medway policy relates specifically to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and commits to;

- To identify risks, and to control those risks wherever practicable
- To provide a safe and nurturing environment for those considered vulnerable
- To provide adequate information and instruction to employees and volunteers in relation to safeguarding
- To provide adequate support and supervision to all employees and volunteers carrying out New Life Medway business
- To review this policy and associated procedures on a regular basis (at least annually) and revise policy and procedures as the need arises.

Signed:

Date:

Name: Mr James Bellchambers

Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

New Life Medway

Review date: January 2025

Vulnerable Adult - Safeguarding Policy

Definition (for this document)

Vulnerable adult:

A person who is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation¹.

Vulnerable adults are entitled to: privacy; be treated with dignity; lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so; can choose how they lead their lives; the protection of the law; have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.

POLICY STATEMENT

As the **New Life Medway leadership** team, we want to restore dignity and revive hope to people from all walks of life. We are concerned with individuals and their circumstances and actively encourage an inclusive environment throughout all our **meetings**.

We seek to ensure that all our **workers, both employees and volunteers**, are aware of what is required from them under the vulnerable adult policy, and **to** make sure that it is practised always.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults.

We commit ourselves to co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting official investigations into physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults or young people (by an adult or young person).

This statement is to be brought to the attention of all **employees** and volunteers when **enlisted**, as part of their induction. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all **workers**.

¹ March 2000. 'No secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse', Department of Health. (The broad definition of a 'vulnerable adult' referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper *Who decides?* issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department.

Implementation

New Life Medway SHALL:

Plan its **meetings** to minimise situations where abuse might occur.

Although the number of people who actively seek to abuse vulnerable adults and children is **extremely** small, **New Life Medway** can reduce opportunities for abuse in various ways. We will, for instance:

- Ensure that there is adequate supervision for all vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that any vulnerable adult working **or volunteering within New Life Medway** is aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns.
- Make sure the designated person has up-to-date **'safeguarding' information**.
- Ensure **employees** and volunteers supervising vulnerable adults **have access to up-to-date 'safeguarding' information**.

Designated person and their role

New Life Medway has a designated person who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of vulnerable adults. The designated person for **NLCC** is **Mark Anderton**.

New Life Medway also has a secondary safeguarding officer who is responsible for dealing with any related concerns if the designated person is ill, on holiday or an allegation of abuse is made about him/her. This person is **Carol Lunniss**

The designated person will be available for vulnerable adults to speak with should they feel the need to talk with someone about an incident which has happened whilst working for or receiving assistance from **New Life Medway**, particularly if they feel they have been physically, sexually or emotionally abused.

Recording

The designated person will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they or another **employee/volunteer** has and seek advice from the Social Services Department or the Police.

New Life Medway employees and volunteers must ensure that their recording of facts, incidents, assessments, referrals, and case discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, dated, and factual. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence. Any supporting evidence should be preserved and clearly labelled. These records must be stored in an individual file and stored securely in a manner that safeguards the individual's right to privacy and security. These records are available to individuals on request (not third-party information) and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.

Whistleblowing

New Life Medway employees and volunteers are encouraged to **report any suspicions of abuse occurring within NLCC** no matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is. **New Life Medway** will not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused.

Workers and volunteers have a responsibility to report any occurrences or suspicions of abuse. Workers and volunteers who report abuse are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

REMEMBER

It is important that everyone in **New Life Medway** is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional vulnerable adult and child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about someone.

Additional points

Displaying Information

Display the name of the designated person.

Make sure all workers **and volunteers** in **New Life Medway** know the name of the designated person **and the secondary safeguarding officer** and how they might be contacted.

Agreed procedures for protecting vulnerable adults and children

It is possible to be lulled into a false sense of security, believing that those who work **or volunteer** alongside vulnerable adults in **New Life Medway** will never be guilty of abuse because they are part of a Christian organisation. It is not safe to assume that all others are automatically safe to be with vulnerable adults.

For this reason, all procedures set in place to protect vulnerable adults should apply to all those in contact with them. This is not the same as treating each person who relates to a vulnerable **adult** as being under suspicion, but a matter of taking sensible measures to protect vulnerable adults, which are then observed by everyone. This will involve thought and planning within each **New Life Medway** group to minimise the risk.

If any **New Life Medway employee** or volunteer has concerns, please raise them with the designated person. If it is brought to the attention of the designated person and not adequately dealt with the next step is to talk to the **leadership** team of **New Life Medway** for advice, or contact Social Services/the Police as a private citizen to discuss your concerns.

Disclosure of Information

There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All personal and delicate information disclosed to us is confidential, but may not always be secret.

Personal and delicate information about **employees** and volunteers will be:

- Confidential to **New Life Medway**, but can be shared with **employees** and volunteers on a 'need to know basis' and
- Can be shared with another agency when:
 - Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held.
 - There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent.
 - The law requires it.

Clear roles

All **New Life Medway** employees and volunteers are required to comply with the **New Life Medway 'vulnerable adult'** safeguarding policy so as to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults, and to assist in protecting their right to privacy, dignity and to an independent life, regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background, when attending **New Life Medway meetings**.

It is **New Life Medway** policy to not engage in regulated activities (close or personal tasks such as washing, dressing, or accompanying to the lavatory) with vulnerable adults: **employees** and volunteers are therefore ineligible for DBS checks

Supervision as a means of protection

All **New Life Medway** employees and volunteers are required to raise and fully discuss any suspicions or issues of potential abuse of a vulnerable adult with the **New Life Medway designated person**. When receiving feedback the designated person should give particular attention to any situation or suggestion that a vulnerable adult is being highly favoured or harshly treated, as these are signs of abuse.

Within **New Life Medway** our main area of concern about protecting people lies with the **character/respectability** of **New Life Medway employees** and volunteers. Where possible, the **New Life Medway leadership team** should take opportunities to observe those vulnerable adults for whom **New Life Medway's employees and volunteers** are responsible.

In all decisions concerning the **appointment** of **employees and volunteers**, an informal interview/extended conversation shall be held to explore in more detail the **candidate's** experience, **suitability** and motivation for volunteering/**working with vulnerable adults**. Details of criminal convictions (except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) must be **requested of/provided by the candidate so that** an adequate risk assessment can be undertaken. (**New Life Medway** reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer and/or ban them from the property should they feel it is necessary.)

Training/Instruction

Employees and volunteers are required to read and assimilate the following available 'safeguarding' information provided free of charge via the local authority website hyperlinks:

How to recognise abuse and what to do about it -

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/information-for-professionals/adult-protection/kent-and-medway-safeguarding-adults-board/safeguarding-awareness-week>

Abuse and what to do about it -

https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/13514/Adult-Abuse-easy-read-leaflet.pdf

General

All workers driving any vehicle which transports vulnerable adults must hold a valid driver's licence for the type/class of vehicle they are driving.

All vehicles used in the transportation of vulnerable adults must have a valid road fund licence, be appropriately insured, have a valid MOT certificate and comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations. Seat sharing is not permitted and seat belts must be worn.

Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there are any legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies.