

Safeguarding Policy

1. Background

- 1.1. The Charity Commission has stated that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities, regardless of size, type, or income, not just those charities working with children or vulnerable adults. It has also stated that it is essential for Charity Trustees to have and implement safeguarding policies and procedures that are adequate and appropriate for the charity's particular circumstances.
- 1.2. The charitable activities carried out by The Menopause Charity (TMC) mean that there are a range of employees and volunteers who may come into contact with people who are at risk of harm, including those who the law says are vulnerable.

2. Aims / Objectives

- 2.1. TMC is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all beneficiaries, employees and volunteers who are involved in or affected by our work. All children and adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse and the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- 2.2. All employees, contractors and volunteers have a duty to prevent the abuse of children and adults and report any safeguarding concerns to the relevant person.
- 2.3. This policy sets out our approach to removing, reducing and managing risks across our work and the agreed action that staff, contractors and volunteers are required to take to follow best practice in dealing with Safeguarding concerns.
- 2.4. The charity recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It adopts a "zero-tolerance" policy of abuse within the Charity. Failure to follow this policy will be treated as a very serious matter.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all staff (including contractors) and volunteers of the Charity.
- 3.2. For ease of reference all employees and workers will be referred to as 'staff' in this document and 'volunteers' includes the Charity's Trustees.

4. Safe recruitment

- 4.1. TMC will seek to recruit staff and volunteers using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks.
- 4.2. The Charity will take up at least two references for all staff posts and volunteer roles prior to appointment.
- 4.3. The Charity will provide an induction programme for all new volunteers and staff, and appropriate training and ongoing/refresher training for them at regular intervals, to enable all volunteers and staff to undertake their roles safely, effectively and confidently. The induction will make it clear to them that they have an obligation to implement this Policy and to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities.
- 4.4. Where the Charity should do so, it will use the Disclosure & Barring Service ("DBS") checks to help it to assess suitability of a candidate for a particular volunteer or staff role which is treated by the DBS as Regulated Activity and is therefore subject to a barring list check. In relation to a post or role which is eligible for an enhanced DBS check, where it considers it appropriate it will

carry out an enhanced DBS check. The Charity will assess any criminal record information that is disclosed in line with its data protection and equalities (treating ex-offenders fairly) policies.

- 4.5. The Charity will regularly review its recruitment and other human resources procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to the Charity, e.g. DBS and barring list checks.

5. Safeguarding Officer

- 5.1. The CEO will act as the Safeguarding Officer for TMC. They will have access to appropriate training to support them in this role.
- 5.2. They will be available to all staff, volunteers and beneficiaries to speak with when they have any concerns, issues or complaints regarding the safety, well-being or conduct of beneficiaries, volunteers or staff.
- 5.3. The Safeguarding Officer will liaise with appropriate local and national agencies, contribute to appropriate policies, maintain records, keep confidentiality, adhere to and promote this Policy within the Charity, and support or provide access to support for individuals suffering harm or abuse.

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1. All reports and logs (including personnel records) will be kept securely and confidentially according to the Charity's Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy or in line with the DBS Code of Practice for Registered Bodies if appropriate or unless it is necessary to share this material with the appropriate agencies. Information will be shared by the Charity on a "need-to-know" basis only.

7. Reports of possible or actual harm

- 7.1. The Charity supports and encourages all beneficiaries, volunteers and staff to promptly speak up and contact the Safeguarding Officer where there is a concern (i.e. a worry, issue or doubt about practice or about treatment of a beneficiary, or colleague, or their circumstances), or a disclosure (i.e. information about a person at risk of or suffering from Significant Harm) or an allegation of an incident or a possibility that a volunteer or staff member has caused harm or could cause harm to a person in their care.
- 7.2. Staff or volunteers can report, and have a responsibility to report, something that they become aware of if they suspect or discover that it is not right or is illegal or if it appears to them that someone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone's health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. They may become aware of any of these things from what they see or hear or from something another person has disclosed to them.
- 7.3. In the first instance the staff or volunteer making a report should speak to their line manager who will then liaise with the Safeguarding Officer. However, if the report implicates their line manager, the staff member or volunteer making the report should instead speak directly to Safeguarding Officer or a Trustee.
- 7.4. The Charity prefers that anyone should use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral, in their own right as a private individual, to statutory agencies such as social services or the police.
- 7.5. The Charity cannot promise confidentiality to staff or volunteers making an internal report to the Safeguarding Officer where it is has to be shared with any statutory agencies.

7.6. The Charity also supports its staff or volunteers to raise concerns or to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice - whistle-blowing (disclosure in the public interest).

8. Safeguarding Officer's action

8.1. Where there is risk of Significant Harm to any beneficiary, volunteers or staff, the Safeguarding Officer has the power to act as necessary and, in particular, as follows:

- log all conversations regarding the issue
- sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with senior staff / Chair of the Board of trustees
- share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as social services or the police, as appropriate to the circumstances
- make a referral to the DBS regarding staff or volunteers in Regulated Activity whose conduct is harmful to beneficiaries and refer them to DBS when they are removed from Regulated Activity.

9. Communication by the Charity about safeguarding and this Policy

9.1. All staff and volunteers have an obligation to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities.

9.2. The Charity will communicate this Policy (using appropriate methods, formats and language to communicate the substance of it) to all of its staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries, and it will also make it available to the public. The CEO will be responsible to the Board of trustees for communicating this Policy to them.

9.3. To encourage everyone involved in the Charity to understand that safeguarding is the business of everyone, and to assist all staff and volunteers to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities, the Charity will place safeguarding on the agenda for meetings of the Board of trustees and provide other opportunities for discussion about issues and concerns, policy and procedures to reflect, review and to continue to learn and improve in relation to the Charity's safeguarding responsibilities.