

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **1) Overview**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and it's about people and organisations working together to reduce both the risks and experience of abuse, harm and neglect. Leukaemia UK does work with children from time to time as well as adults who are currently grieving and could therefore be classed as vulnerable. In this context Leukaemia UK recognises the possibility of abuse towards supporters, volunteers, and service users, recognises its safeguarding responsibilities and is committed to keeping vulnerable people safe.

This policy will be reviewed on every 2 years to ensure it remains relevant and up-to-date to support the charity's needs.

### **2) Scope**

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Leukaemia UK including paid employees, volunteers including trustees, agency staff and contractors. Where this policy refers to employees, staff or volunteers, it should be taken to refer to all of the above unless indicated otherwise.

### **3) Objective**

In the context of our work, Leukaemia UK has two distinct safeguarding responsibilities and the objective of this policy is to provide all employees and volunteers with information about the safeguarding approach to prevent and handle a safeguarding concern in each of these situations to protect the possibility of abuse towards supporters, volunteers, and service users.

- Where a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer suspects that abuse, harm or neglect is happening to an adult or child that they are working with
- Where a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer is suspected of abuse or harm towards an adult or child that they are working with (this is a breach or suspected breach of this policy and our Leukaemia UK code of conduct).

For information on our duty of care to our employees regarding wellbeing and conduct please refer to our Staff Handbook which sets out our Grievance Policy, Bullying & Harassment Policy, Dignity at Work Policy and Code of Conduct.

### **4) Roles and responsibilities**

Leukaemia UK is fully committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children. All those who work for Leukaemia UK, in any capacity, have a duty to safeguard vulnerable people with whom we work whether or not their role involves direct contact with services users, supporters and volunteers.

- The Director of Finance and Resources is accountable for this policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and adhered to in order to fulfil the charity's safeguarding responsibilities.
- All members of the SLT are responsible for upholding this policy and for taking appropriate action where an employee or volunteer has reported a safeguarding concern or is found to have acted in a way that is contrary to this policy.
- All managers are responsible for supporting employees to follow this policy and helping them to report safeguarding concerns in a timely manner, as well as their part in any action as appropriate.
- All employees are responsible for ensuring that they read and understand this policy, complete any training and act in line with this policy in all their interactions with supporters, volunteers, and service users.

- All trustees have a responsibility to make sure the charity fulfils their responsibility under this policy and appoints a Trustee as the Designated Speak Up Lead.
- The Designated Speak Up Lead (Trustee) will work with the Director of Finance and Resources to sponsor and advise on the policy and its effectiveness, leveraging the People & Culture Committee as a forum to discuss and develop the policy. They will also report on the policy as appropriate to the Board.
- The Designated Speak Up Lead is a point of contact to report a concern in the event that it is not appropriate for the employee to report the concern to their manager or SLT Director, or for example the individual is from outside of the organisation.

## 5) Definition

Safeguarding can be defined as protecting vulnerable individuals from abuse, neglect or any form of harm. Harm can come from adults, other children, or people working closely with these vulnerable individuals.

A child is defined as anyone who is below the age of 18. This type of safeguarding is protecting them from abuse, maltreatment or exploitation, as well as preventing any harm to their health or ability to develop. Individuals caring for children should also make sure they have safe and effective care and effective outcomes in life. Safeguarding a child means you are identifying and protecting them from harm.

A vulnerable adult is someone who is above the age of 18 and is unable to care for themselves and not able to protect themselves from harm. One of the differences with safeguarding adults is that while preventing them from risk of abuse or neglect, they also need support maintaining control of their own lives.

## 6) What is abuse, harm or neglect?

Abuse or harm may be a single incident or something that occurs over a long period of time. It can take many forms including, but not limited to:

- financial or material abuse
- physical abuse
- mental abuse
- neglect and failures to act
- sexual abuse
- threats of abuse or harm
- controlling or intimidating conduct
- self-neglect
- domestic abuse
- poor practices within an organisation providing care
- modern slavery.

The abuse may come from employees, volunteers, trustees, service users, relatives, neighbours, social workers, and or providers of support services. It could also present itself as peer to peer abuse. In line with the Equality Act 2010 vulnerable people have the same protection, regardless of their age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

## 7) Principles

Our approach is based on the following key principles

- We expect our staff and volunteers to treat all individuals we come into contact with in our work with respect and care, demonstrating professional standards of behaviour at all times.
- We foster a culture where people feel safe to speak up raise any concerns,
- We take safeguarding seriously and we build awareness amongst Leukaemia UK of what safeguarding means, what are our responsibilities, the process for dealing with disclosures and how we would manage allegations against staff and volunteers.
- We will never prioritise Leukaemia UK's campaigns over an individual's personal wellbeing.

## 8) Awareness

All employees and volunteers at Leukaemia UK will be taken through this policy as part of the induction process as well as our wider wellbeing and conduct policies as appropriate. This is to ensure our employees and volunteers understand our commitment and shared responsibility to protecting vulnerable children and adults, who we come into contact with in our work, from harm and abuse. We will work with the employee or volunteer to understand how safeguarding applies to their particular role and what process to follow if they have a concern to raise in their line of work.

## 9) Reporting a safeguarding concern

Where a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer suspects that abuse, harm or neglect is happening to an adult or child that they are working with (see section 5 & 6 for definitions of behaviour that could constitute abuse), the approach to follow is:

- It is not your role to investigate but it is your role to act responsibly in line with this policy.
- Without undue delay, inform your line manager of your concern. If you feel unable to speak to your line manager, for example, because the concern involves them, you should speak to your SLT Director. If feel unable to speak to your SLT Director, you should contact HR or our Designated Speak Up Lead from our Board of Trustees.
- It is important you provide a clear, accurate and factual account of your concern, which will be recorded by the appropriate manager, which you will be asked to sign and date.
- Your line manager will liaise with the SLT and our Designated Lead for Safeguarding regarding next steps and any action to be taken. You will be kept informed as appropriate.
- Where a crime has been, or may have been committed, it may be appropriate for Leukaemia UK to report this to the police.
- Any reports of safeguarding concerns will be logged centrally by HR and reported to the SLT, and to the People and Culture Committee and to the Board.

Where a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer is concerned that certain practices on the part of Leukaemia could lead to, or have led to, its practice being unsafe for the people Leukaemia UK works with, follow the reporting procedure above.

Where a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer has concerns about an employee or volunteer's behaviour towards a vulnerable adult or child, or a complaint is received from someone outside of the organisation against a member of Leukaemia staff, please refer to Section 11, **Safeguarding breach by a Leukaemia employee or volunteer**.

## 10) Responding to a safeguarding concern

We commit to the following principles in how we will respond to any allegation of abuse, harm or neglect raised through our reporting procedure:

- Never ignore anything that might indicate abuse is taking place.
- Always record everything clearly and accurately, including dates and times.
- Work collaboratively with other professionals as appropriate to the actioned agreed with the Senior Leadership Team and Designated Lead for Safeguarding.

- Consider every vulnerable adult or child as an individual.

If an adult or child discloses abuse to a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer

Do:

- listen and accept;
- try not to interrupt;
- tell them they've done the right thing by telling you and ask them what they would like to happen next;
- inform them of what you are going to do in line with Leukaemia UK reporting procedures;
- make accurate notes using their own words as soon as possible;
- inform your line manager, SLT member or Trustee in line with Leukaemia UK reporting procedures

Don't:

- promise confidentiality – you may need to share information with others to ensure that appropriate action is taken and the concern dealt with;
- investigate;
- ask leading questions;
- ask them to repeat the disclosure several times.

## **11) Safeguarding breach by an employee or volunteer**

Where a Leukaemia UK employee or volunteer is suspected of abuse or harm towards an adult or child that they are working with (see section 5 & 6 for definitions of behaviour that could constitute abuse), this is a breach or suspected breach of this policy and our Leukaemia UK code of conduct.

- This should be referred to either the line manager, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Designated Trustee Speak Up Lead without unreasonable delay who will instigate an investigation into the allegations in line with our disciplinary policy and procedure. Any allegation must be reported with as much information as possible regarding who is involved, what is alleged to have happened, as well as dates and times.
- Any allegations will be investigated under the disciplinary policy and all such reports are taken seriously. Employees or volunteers suspected of abuse will be suspended on full pay pending a full investigation of the complaints.
- If the investigation reveals that abuse has happened, or is happening, Leukaemia UK will set up a disciplinary hearing for the employee concerned. Abuse toward vulnerable adults and children is regarded by Leukaemia UK as an act of gross misconduct and the allegation could result in summary dismissal, in line with Leukaemia UK's disciplinary procedure.
- Notes of any investigation, disciplinary and appeal meetings will be kept securely on the individual's HR file. Records will be kept for the duration of employment and post-employment for a period of 7 years.

## **12) Duty of disclosure**

Leukaemia UK is legally required to send information to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Disclosure Scotland as appropriate, if a decision is taken to dismiss an employee or remove them from working in regulated activity/work. Leukaemia UK may also be required to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service if the organisation suspends an employee, or an employee resigns in suspicious circumstances. The organisation may also consider it necessary to inform the police of allegations under investigation.

## Appendix 1- Form to report a safeguarding concern

It is important for that any safeguarding concerns is reported verbally without any undue delay by an employee to their line manager, SLT Director or where appropriate to the Designated Speak Up Lead from our Board of Trustees. Thereafter the appropriate manager will liaise with the employee to record in writing the details of the safeguarding concern, using the form below. This will be held by HR confidentially and reported to the SLT, People and Culture Committee and to the Board.

Employee:		Dept:	
Reported to:		Date reported:	

### Details of the safeguarding concern

Please record as much as possible in relation to:

- What is the safeguarding concern and who is believed to be at risk?
- What exactly was observed / or what has been shared with you?
- Who was involved and how were they involved?
- Be precise on dates/ times?
- Were there any other witnesses and if so, names and contact details

Please give any other information which you feel is important

### Note to reporting Manager

Record here measures taken to ensure the wellbeing of the employee reporting the safeguarding concern

### Declaration:

- This is an accurate, factual and timely account of what I observed or was made aware of
- I understand that this may be shared with other authorities/ organisations as appropriate in order to safeguard vulnerable adults or children.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reporting Manger Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_