



Penn & Tylers Green Village Care

Safeguarding Policy & Code of Conduct

Penn & Tylers Green Village Care (Charity number 1043310) has a duty to protect those people, who come into contact with the charity through its work, from abuse or mistreatment of any kind

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly “at risk adults”, beneficiaries of assistance and drivers, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Village Care; and to provide volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all volunteers, including the Trustees, working on behalf of Village Care.

The policy lays out the commitments made by Village Care, and informs volunteers and clients of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect¹

In Village Care, we understand it to mean protecting people, including “at risk adults”, our clients and drivers, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our organisation.

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult, an “at risk adult” is a person who is or may be in need of care 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 exploitation.

Policy Statement

Village Care believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Village Care will never condone abuse and exploitation of any kind and has a duty of care to its vulnerable clients and volunteers.

Village Care commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention

Village Care will:

- Ensure all drivers and volunteers have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities as stated within this policy.
- Ensure drivers and other volunteers receive guidance on safeguarding as part of their induction.

¹ NHS 'What is Safeguarding? Easy Read' 2011

- Obtain Enhanced DBS checks for drivers, Trustees and the Client Coordinator on a regular basis.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

Drivers and other volunteers must not:

- Subject an “at risk adult” to physical, emotional or psychological abuse or neglect; exploit “at risk adults”; or engage in any physical contact that may be seen as unnecessary or inappropriate.

Drivers must:

- Obtain an Enhanced DBS disclosure certificate (via the Village Care Drivers Coordinator) and renew their DBS Certificate every three years².
- Ensure that their vehicle is roadworthy (with MOT, if applicable), taxed and suitably insured and that they have a valid driving license.

Reporting

Drivers and other volunteers must report to a Trustee any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations (whether undertaken by a Village Care volunteer or client).

Village Care will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to the communities we work with.

Volunteers or clients who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to a Trustee of Village Care, who then has a responsibility to confidentially report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Alternatively, the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be contacted directly, and confidentially, at villagecare.treasurer@outlook.com. Complaints that are raised verbally will be documented on the complainant’s behalf by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will ask the complainant to confirm it has been documented accurately.

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times in accordance with data protection policies.

Response

Village Care will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns, according to legal and statutory obligations, with the Chairman acting as independent reviewer and reporting to appropriate agencies as required.

Village Care will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour by, or against, any of our volunteers or clients.

Review

This policy is the responsibility of the Trustees and will be reviewed by the Trustees annually.

2. Village Care is required by law to notify the Disclosure & Barring Service if it has dismissed or removed any volunteer or employee (or would have if they had not already resigned) because they have been cautioned or convicted for a relevant offence; or engaged in action or inaction (neglect) that has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm; or satisfied the Harm Test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults.

Further Guidance:

1. What is a vulnerable adult?

- A vulnerable adult is someone who may be in need of care services by reason of disability, age or illness; or may be unable to protect him or herself against harm or exploitation.
- Abuse is any action that harms another person whether caused deliberately, through neglect or through failing to take the right action.

2. What to do if you suspect a client or volunteer is being abused

- Take great care when reporting suspected abuse. It is important not to make a subjective judgement.
- Explain to the client/volunteer that you have an obligation to report what you have seen or what they have said to you. Explain that you will report the abuse to the Trustees accurately and appropriately.
- It is important to report the facts only, including name, date, time, what was said to you and who else was present.
- The Trustees will investigate and ensure the client's confidentiality unless it is decided that the abuse must be reported to an appropriate authority. This will be discussed with the client in advance.
- It is important that volunteers do not help a vulnerable adult conceal abuse.
- If a client/volunteer approaches you regarding alleged abuse by a volunteer, the abuse must be reported to a Trustee.

3. How to react if a client is telling you about abuse

- Stay calm and do not show shock. Actively listen to what is being said.
- Don't tamper with the evidence, ask leading questions or pressurise for details.
- Try and substantiate details – when, where, what, how, why.
- Don't promise to keep the abuse a secret.

4. Don't...

- Give out your home number freely; all journeys should be arranged through the coordinator.
- Leave your passenger alone during the journey – eg fill up with fuel before the trip starts.
- Get too involved in your passenger's problems.
- Struggle – if you feel that you are being treated unfairly or are uncomfortable with what you are being asked to do, speak to the Drivers' Coordinator.