

PhysCap Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

PhysCap is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

PhysCap volunteers come into contact with children and vulnerable adults when assessing them for funding and during events.

This policy seeks to ensure that PhysCap undertakes its responsibilities with regards to protection of children and vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support our volunteers in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers, trustees, and anyone working on behalf of PhysCap.

Policy Statement

PhysCap believes that:

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount.

All individuals, 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.

Working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the charity to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults wherever possible. Child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.

It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Neglect

- Financial (or material) abuse

Definition of a child:

A child is under the age of 18

Definition of Vulnerable Adults:

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

Responsibilities:

All volunteers have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all volunteers to promote good practice by being excellent role models, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional specific responsibilities:

The Designated Safeguarding person is Chloe Mitchell (chloe@physcap.org).

This person's responsibilities are;

- Ensuring the policy is in place and appropriate.
- The policy is accessible
- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed
- Ensuring volunteers have access to appropriate training/information
- Receive any concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately
- Take forward any concerns

Safe recruitment

Safe practices are used to recruit and select new volunteers, introduce them to their role and help them carry out their duties safely.

During our recruitment, selection and induction, our processes help to show new members how much we value vulnerable people.

Communications training and support for volunteers

PhysCap commits resources for induction and training of volunteers, effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding

Induction includes;

- Discussion of the Safeguarding Policy (and confirmation of understanding)
- Discussion of other relevant policies
- Ensuring familiarity with reporting processes

Training

All Volunteers will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level. Sources and types of training will include

- One to one meetings
- Team meetings
- Participation in joint client visits

Chloe Mitchell will attend relevant courses and report back to the team as part of refresh training.

The training aims to help the rest of the team to identify any risks which may lead to abuse and to feel able to raise concerns.

Communications and discussion of safeguarding issues

Commitment to the following communication methods will ensure effective communication of safeguarding issues and practice:

- Provision of a clear and effective reporting procedure which encourages reporting of concerns
- Encouraging open discussion (e.g. during team meetings) to identify any barriers to reporting so that they can be addressed.

Typical support mechanisms would include:

- Debriefing support for volunteers so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with.
- Seeking further support as appropriate e.g. access to counselling.
- Anyone who has initiated protection concerns will be contacted by Chloe Mitchell within 48 hours

Reporting and allegations

- Remain calm, no shock or disbelief
- Say it was the right thing to do
- Ask the person to explain and describe
- Listen
- Don't ask probing questions
- Be empathetic

DO NOT

- Put yourself at risk
- Contact the alleged perpetrator
- Be judgemental
- Make promises you can't keep
- Tell anyone who doesn't need to know
- Stage an interview

Immediate Actions

- Is anyone at immediate risk? Call an ambulance/GP/Police
- Separate the perpetrator and victim
- Preserve evidence where possible (discourage washing or drinks; in case of swabs)
- Do not handle evidence
- Following the organisations procedures eg verbal report to Safeguarding Manager
- Make a written account as soon as possible with facts, not opinion, date and sign it

PhysCap recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its volunteers within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

First step: Any member of PhysCap is required to report any concerns in the first instance to Chloe Mitchell (the safeguarding manager). 'A written record of the concern will be completed by the safeguarding manager. If the complaint is concerning Chloe Mitchell please report to Daniel Gray (daniel@physcap.org).

Second step- contact the local authority for advice.

Third step – follow the advice provided

PhysCap recognises its legal duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of its volunteers to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), according to the ISA referral guidance document

Some abusive behaviour has become culturally acceptable as 'challenging behaviour'.

- Abusive acts must be logged and monitored
- Assess the immediate risk
- Contact the relevant therapist/ Social Services

All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only as judged by the Executive Committee.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise service users or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets.

Communicating and reviewing

PhysCap will make clients aware of the Safeguarding Policy through a statement which is displayed on the website; www.physcap.org.

Reviewing of the policy i.e. looking at the policy, checking it is still appropriate and making changes as necessary will take place once a year unless there are changes in circumstances or legal requirements.

This policy will be reviewed by Chloe Mitchell, every year and when there are changes in legislation.