

Safeguarding Policy

Merseyside Health abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, children and young people and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the welfare of patients is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- All patients, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some patients are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Definitions

The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, is a member of the armed forces or is in hospital.

Adult at Risk: Is any adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Child and Adult Abuse: Children and adults may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their daily lives. There are 4 main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect.

Training and Awareness:

Merseyside Health will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its Employees and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g. self-employed associates).

This awareness training will enable them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding patients.
- Recognize a patient potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding Alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with patients.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Merseyside Health expects all employees and/or linked persons, to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a patient is deemed to be at risk of harm or **contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed**. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding refer to awareness training and any specific policies published by your local authority.

Recording and Record Keeping:

A written record must be kept about any concern regarding a patient with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decisions made and why they were made.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the policy of the clinic.

Safe Recruitment & Selection:

Merseyside Health is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to patients from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

Merseyside Health has policies and procedures that that cover the recruitment of all employees and self-employed associates.

Social Media:

All employees and volunteers should be aware of Merseyside Health social media policy and procedures and the code of conduct for behaviour towards the patients we support.

Use of Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology:

All employees, and self-employed associates should be aware of Merseyside Health policy and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology and understand that it is unlawful to video or photograph patients without their explicit consent, or in the case of children, the consent of the person with parental responsibilities

Whistleblowing:

It is important that people within Merseyside Health have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong- doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or self-employed associate. There is also a requirement by Merseyside Health to protect whistleblowers.

Please Contact:

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