

27. VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

27.1 Protecting Vulnerable Adults

- (a) Cerebral Palsy Scotland takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of adults who attend the centre.
- (b) Any member of staff who is aware or suspects an adult may be at risk of harm should inform their line manager immediately.

27.2 Who are 'adults at risk?'

- (a) 'Adults at risk' are individuals, aged 16 years or over, who:
 - are unable to safeguard themselves, their property, rights or other interests;
 - are at risk of harm; and
 - because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than others who are not so affected.
- (b) The presence of a particular condition does not automatically mean an adult is an "adult at risk". Someone could have a disability but be able to safeguard their well-being etc. It is important to stress that all three elements of this definition must be met. It is the whole of an adult's particular circumstances which can combine to make them more susceptible to harm than others.

27.3 What is meant by 'harm?'

- (a) 'Harm' includes all harmful conduct and, in particular, includes:
 - conduct which causes physical harm;
 - conduct which causes psychological harm (e.g. by causing fear, alarm or distress);
 - unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (e.g. theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion); and
 - conduct which causes self-harm.

27.4 Consent

- (a) Examination or treatment without valid consent may be held in law to be assault. For consent to be valid, it must be:
 - Informed, i.e. the person consenting must be aware of the nature of what is being consented to, and the consequences of consenting, and possible alternatives.
 - Voluntary, i.e. without fear, threats or coercion

27.5 Failure to Obtain Consent

- (a) If consent cannot be obtained, the following possibilities exist:
 - Examination/treatment without consent if this can be justified by necessity, e.g. in cases of emergency or severe injury.
 - Consultation with the social services department to determine whether further action to obtain consent is required.

27.6 Confidentiality

- (a) Please see the confidentiality policy.
- (b) With regard to safeguarding issues, confidentiality is qualified and not absolute. The needs of the vulnerable adult should always be paramount.

CEREBRAL PALSY SCOTLAND ADULT PROTECTION FLOWCHART

The following steps are suggested when any form of harm is suspected:

