

## MAITS Policy on Safeguarding Vulnerable Recipients

*'Children with disabilities are almost four times more likely to experience violence than non-disabled children (WHO, 2012).'*

### **Introduction**

Multi Agency International Training and Support ("MAITS") is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to safeguard all children and individuals with disabilities from abuse by staff or volunteers employed by MAITS. This includes behaviour that is abusive, could allow abuse to occur, or could be interpreted by children, their families or other adults as constituting, or leading to abuse.

MAITS believes that everyone has the right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, language, religious belief or sexual orientation, and that every individual who accesses our services has a right to a life free from fear, to be treated with dignity and respect, to have their choice respected and not to be forced to do anything against their will.

A hard copy of this policy is to be made available at all trainings. Trainers should inform participants of this at the start of the training programme.

### **Definitions**

#### **Vulnerable recipients:**

People who may be included in a definition of a 'Vulnerable Person':

- People with learning disability
- People with physical disabilities
- People with sensory impairment
- People with mental health needs including dementia
- People who misuse substances or alcohol
- People who are physically or mentally frail

Service users outside these definitions may also be vulnerable due to low self-esteem, social exclusion, offending history, homelessness, domestic abuse, ethnicity etc.

The Hillingdon Hospital (NHS Trust), June 2005. Hillingdon Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults, Policy & Procedure.

Available from: [http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/pdf/h/1/safeguarding\\_adults\\_policy.pdf](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/pdf/h/1/safeguarding_adults_policy.pdf)  
(Assessed on: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013)

**Abuse:**

'Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm' (NSPCC, 2011)<sup>ii</sup>.

**Underlying principles**

This policy is based on principles advocated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), as follows:

- (a) Every child has the right to protection from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- (b) Discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity and worth of the human person.
- (c) The welfare of the child should be safeguarded and promoted; as should the human rights of all persons with disabilities, including those who require more intensive support.
- (d) When there is a conflict of interest the needs of the child or person with disabilities are paramount.

MAITS recognizes the need for flexibility when defining abuse in other parts of the world, and the need to pay attention to local understanding of abuse.

**How MAITS will achieve this****Management systems**

MAITS will:

- Listen to, value, encourage and support those we work with.
- Provide clear internal procedures for identifying and dealing with concerns about possible abuse, and ensure their implementation.
- Provide effective management for volunteers and staff through effective communication.
- Adopt and promote a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Recruit safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Share information about adult protection and good practice with service users, staff, and volunteers.
- Develop and maintain effective information sharing with other agencies, involving service users as appropriate
- Conduct continuous risk assessments of all work undertaken by MAITS.

This also includes ensuring that:

- Every effort is made to ensure that trustees, staff, and volunteers recruited to work for MAITS are suitable to do so.
- All staff and volunteers, whether recruited from the UK or abroad, can show a current Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure certificate or provide equivalent proof of criminal history. In

the case of staff and volunteers recruited from outside the UK, all possible efforts will be made to obtain equivalent proof of criminal history.

- All staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and have access to a copy.
- Where available, MAITS volunteers will have access to relevant policies belonging to the host organization.
- Safeguarding considerations are taken into account when planning activities involving other agencies and organisations. We will ensure that those bodies either have appropriate client protection policies or are aware of the appropriate national/international policies on human rights.

This policy applies to all vulnerable people with whom we work and to all trustees, staff, students and volunteers.

### **Reporting procedures**

- Volunteers acting on behalf of MAITS are required to report any incidents or disclosures of abuse taking place within an organisation they have been appointed to, to their trip coordinator, as soon as possible.
- An annual report on any incidents recorded that relate to abuse towards vulnerable persons is made to the trustees.

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<sup>i</sup> Mentioned in relation to Jones, L; Bellis, M.A; Wood, S et al. (2012) Prevalence and risk of violence against children with disabilities: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies [Online], *The Lancet* , 380 (9845), 899-907, Available from:

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(12\)60692-8/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(12)60692-8/abstract)

<sup>ii</sup> NSPCC (2011), defining child abuse [Online]:

[http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu/helpandadvice/organisations/defining/definingchildabuse\\_wda60692.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu/helpandadvice/organisations/defining/definingchildabuse_wda60692.html)

[Last accessed 02 October 2012].