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Distribution Level:	All Care Staff, DSM, RM and above
Document Scope:	<p>This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone involved with The Meath Epilepsy Charity.</p> <p>Safeguarding (in this policy) applies to adults who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are 18 or older. • Have care and support needs. • Are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse or neglect. • Are unable to protect themselves due to care and support needs.

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1. Policy Statement

The Meath Epilepsy Charity is fully committed to

- protecting adults with care and support needs from harm, abuse and neglect
- safeguarding being central to our mission of providing inclusive, empowering care for individuals with complex epilepsy and associated disabilities
- ensuring that our safeguarding practices reflect our statutory responsibilities, government guidelines and complies with best practice

The legislation and guidance that supports this statement and our Safeguarding policy is The Care Act 2014, the Care and Support Statutory Guidance and the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board Policy.

The Meath believes that everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all adults in our care, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We will give equal priority to keeping all our residents safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We recognise that our residents may be additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

WHAT WE ARE COMMITTED TO DOING

- listening to and being observant of our residents and valuing and respecting their experiences and concerns
- promoting and prioritising the safety and wellbeing of our residents and their families
- adopting safeguarding best practice through our policies and procedures
- providing written and detailed protection procedures
- making sure that all staff and volunteers understand and follow our safeguarding policy and procedures, are given regular training and understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
- appointing designated safeguarding leads from both the Meath's senior management team and the Board of Trustees who take responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the Meath
- ensuring our residents and their families know about the Meath's safeguarding and protection policies and what to do if they have a concern
- building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers, residents and families know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns
- preventing the employment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers carefully, ensuring all necessary controls and checks are made
- investigate any concerns made about our staff and volunteers in an open and transparent manner

Our policy aligns with the Care Act 2014, Care Quality Commission regulations, Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board guidance, and Making Safeguarding Personal principles.

2. Aims and Objectives

The policy aims to:

1. **Prevent harm:** Embed proactive practices that minimise risks.
2. **Respond effectively:** Act swiftly and appropriately to concerns.
3. **Empower individuals:** Support adults to make informed decisions.
4. **Collaborate:** Work closely with safeguarding authorities and other stakeholders.
5. **Promote transparency:** Foster an open culture where safeguarding is prioritised.

To achieve these aims, we will:

- Provide comprehensive safeguarding training and resources.
 - Ensure safeguarding procedures are consistently applied.
 - Regularly review and update policies based on feedback and incidents.
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3. Scope of the Policy

Who is Covered?

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone involved with *The Meath Epilepsy Charity*.

Safeguarding (in this policy) applies to adults who:

- Are 18 or older.
 - Have care and support needs.
 - Are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse or neglect.
 - Are unable to protect themselves due to care and support needs.
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4. Key Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Safeguarding Lead (ESL)

The ESL oversees all safeguarding activities, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks. The ESL has responsibility for reporting to the Safeguarding Committee/Board of Trustees on all safeguarding matters within the organisation. The CEO fulfils this ESL duty.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL supports the ESL and assumes responsibilities in their absence. In addition, the responsibilities of the DSL include:

- Acting as the central point for safeguarding concerns in each service.
- Liaising with external agencies, including the Local Authority and police.
- Ensuring safeguarding records are securely maintained.
- Delivering safeguarding training and support.

Safeguarding Concerns Manager

Each Registered Manager is responsible for evaluating and escalating safeguarding concerns.

All Staff and Volunteers

All personnel must:

- Recognise signs of abuse and neglect.
 - Respond promptly and appropriately to concerns.
 - Participate in safeguarding training relevant to their roles.
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5. Types and Indicators of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms. Examples include:

1. **Physical abuse** includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, unlawful or inappropriate restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
2. **Sexual abuse** includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
3. **Psychological abuse** includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
4. **Financial and material abuse** includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
5. **Neglect and acts of omission includes** ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating, not following care plans eg correct amount of checks each night
6. **Discriminatory abuse** includes abuse based on a person's race, sex, disability, faith, sexual orientation, or age; other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment or hate crime/hate incident.
7. **Organisational abuse** includes neglect and poor practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
8. **Self-neglect** covers a wide range of behaviours, such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding. A safeguarding response in relation to self-neglect may be appropriate where a person is declining assistance in relation to their care and support needs and/or the impact of their decision, has or is likely to have a substantial impact on their overall individual wellbeing.

6. Reporting Concerns

6.1 Immediate Action

If an adult is in immediate danger:

- Call **999** for emergency assistance.
- Notify the RM or DSM without delay.

6.2 Reporting a Concern

1. **Recognise:** Identify indicators of abuse or neglect.
2. **Respond:** Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault. Never promise that you will keep the things they're telling you a secret. Explain that you need to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help. Listen without judgment.
3. **Record:** Document facts using the PCS electronic incident form and relevant Local Authority online reporting form
4. **Report:** Notify the relevant DSL or Safeguarding Concerns Manager immediately.
5. **Confidentiality:** information should only be shared with people who need to know.

6.3 Escalation Procedure

If concerns are not addressed:

1. Escalate to the relevant DSL, ESL/Chief Executive Officer and appropriate Registered Manager.
2. Refer to the Whistleblowing Policy if internal processes fail.
3. Contact Surrey's Adult Safeguarding Team or the CQC for unresolved issues.

The names of the people responsible for the management of safeguarding at The Meath are

Lee Bennett – CEO/ESL

Carole Brockwell – Senior Registered Manager at: (Bradbury Wing & Little Meath)

Tania Evans – Senior Registered Manager at: Hambledon, Thursley, Cedar View & The Cottages)

Katy Budd (Registered Manager at: Cedar View & The Cottages)

Sam Tytherleigh (Manager (pending CQC Registration) at: Bradbury House & Jeffrey Court)

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in each service

Emmie Baker – Interim Quality & Compliance Manager

Sally Wilson – Trustee & Co-Safeguarding Lead

Karen Thurston – Trustee & Co-Safeguarding Lead

7. Adult Safeguarding Enquiries

When is an Enquiry Required?

Under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, an enquiry is initiated when:

- An adult is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- They cannot protect themselves due to care and support needs.

Purpose of Enquiries:

- Establish facts and understand the individual's wishes.
- Ensure the adult is protected and supported.
- Decide and implement appropriate actions.

The DSLs will coordinate all enquiries for their service, in collaboration with the Local Authority.

8. Making Safeguarding Personal

Our safeguarding approach is person-centred, focusing on:

- Empowering individuals to express their desired outcomes.
 - Tailoring responses to individual needs and preferences.
 - Enhancing quality of life and personal safety.
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9. Training and Development

1. All staff and volunteers must complete safeguarding training annually.
2. Specialised training on the Mental Capacity Act, DoLS, and safe interventions is mandatory for relevant roles.
3. Induction programs for new staff include comprehensive safeguarding awareness, recognition and actions to take.
4. All new staff will be reminded during their induction training and subsequent training updates of their personal, moral and legal roles and responsibilities concerning safeguarding.

5. DSL roles require certification from an approved DSL training provider and will be provided when required.
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10. Policy Review and Continuous Improvement

1. This policy is reviewed annually, incorporating feedback and learning from safeguarding cases.
 2. Lessons learned from safeguarding reviews are shared with staff to improve practices.
 3. Updates from the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board are integrated into the policy.
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11. Safer Recruitment

The Meath has a stringent safer recruitment policy, in line with local authority and best practice guidance, please contact HR team for a copy of the latest policy. Some of the key aims of this policy are:

- Safeguarding people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices
- Identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults with care and support needs
- Responding to concerns about the suitability of applicants during the recruitment process
- Responding to concerns about the suitability of employees and volunteers once they have begun their role
- Ensuring all new staff and volunteers participate in an induction which includes the protection of vulnerable adults with care and support needs

12. Quality Assurance

Safeguarding referrals are reported at the monthly Quality Assurance monitoring meeting (QAMM) for robust oversight and assurance.

13. Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Surrey County Council, Safeguarding Adults Thresholds & Care Quality Concerns: Guidance for providers of Social Care and Support across Surrey. (link)
- [*Safeguarding Adults Thresholds and Care Quality Concerns: Guidance for providers of social care and support across Surrey*](#)
- **Appendix B:** Safeguarding Action Card
- **Appendix C:** 6 Principles of Safeguarding

- **Appendix B: Safeguarding Action Card**

	<p>If...</p> <p>Your observation leads to suspicion that someone is at risk (and/or)</p> <p>A Third party makes an allegation of an incident (and/or)</p> <p>A vulnerable person discloses/alleges they have been abused or are at risk</p>		
WITHIN 2 HOURS <i>Any Staff Member</i>	DO NOT	DO	
	<p>Discuss it with anyone other than your line manager, a DSL or the Snr on Call.</p>	<p>Make a record of events:</p> <p>Date</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Place alleged incident occurred</p> <p>Name of any others present</p> <p>Name of Resident</p> <p>The victim's details (if not resident)</p>	<p>Report to:</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Lead (RM Team)</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>Deputy Service Manager</p>
BY END OF DAY <i>DSL or Deputy</i>	<p>Using <i>Surrey County Council Safeguarding Adults Thresholds & Care Quality Concerns: Guidance for providers of Social Care and Support across Surrey</i> (Appendix A) decide whether a low-level concern should be raised to Surrey QA, or a safeguarding incident should be raised with MASH.</p> <p>Update Safeguarding Reporting Tracker</p> <p>Notify other DSLs / ESL of concern being raised (if required) -</p>		
WITHIN 24 HOURS <i>ESL or SLT</i>	<p>ESL to Notify Lead Trustee(s) for Safeguarding</p> <p>Establish a crime reference number (if required)</p> <p>Complete Duty of Candour, with verbal and written communication with Next of Kin.</p> <p>Complete CQC statutory Notification for all safeguarding raised using unique identifier code for residents and update internal safeguarding tracker</p>		

- **Appendix C: 6 Principles of Safeguarding**

Six Core Principles of Safeguarding

