

## 1. Policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone, including children, young people and adults at risk of harm or abuse, who take part in our activities and/or use our services, can do so in a safe environment. This policy outlines the extra care that staff and volunteers need to take in working with people who are at a particular risk of harm.

## 2. Policy scope

Our safeguarding policy, guidance and procedures apply to all staff, volunteers, Trustees and everyone working or contracted on behalf of Crohn's & Colitis UK, either in a paid or voluntary capacity. We require external providers and partners we work with to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place when appropriate. Children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

## 3. Policy description

We have legal responsibilities and a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of all service users, particularly children, young people and adults at risk. An adult at risk is 'any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support' (*Care Act 2014 [England]*). We recognise that harm can come in many forms including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, neglect or bullying. We have safeguarding guidance and procedures for staff and volunteers in place alongside this policy.

We also have a duty of care to our staff and volunteers. All staff and volunteers should recognise that their behaviour with children, young people and/or adults at risk must always be appropriate and professional to ensure they do not put themselves at risk, for example through behaviour that could be misinterpreted. All allegations against staff or volunteers will be managed in accordance with the safeguarding policy and other related Crohn's & Colitis UK policies, including but not limited to our fundraising and whistleblowing policies.

Some examples of activities where staff and volunteers may come into contact with children, young people and adults at risk include:

- provision of information and support via our Helplines and online chat facilities
- hosting online forums
- hosting virtual events
- hosting events in the community, including those involving local networks, community volunteers and fundraising activities

Where there are concerns about the welfare of any child, young person or adult at risk all staff and volunteers are expected to share those concerns without delay. We have a duty to report any concerns in relation to children, young people and adults at risk.

The Senior Leadership Team of the charity will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of everyone using our services
- ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of and comply with safeguarding policy, guidance and procedures including reporting any concerns without delay
- ensure procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against, and concerns about, any staff or volunteers

### ***Confidentiality & information sharing***

This policy is in line with government guidance about confidentiality and should be read in conjunction with our confidentiality statement and privacy policy. The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk overrides any obligations of confidentiality we may hold to others. No one working, or involved, with our organisation can promise absolute confidentiality as information may need to be disclosed in the event of a safeguarding concern. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a “need to know” basis.

Timely and accurate written records play an essential role in safeguarding individuals, who may have suffered, are suffering or are at significant risk of suffering harm. It is important that records are shared at the appropriate time with necessary agencies. Within our organisation the decision to share written information, and with whom, will be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Senior Lead for safeguarding.

Where relevant, we will ensure we fulfil our obligations under Child Care Law in terms of parental responsibility and Mental Capacity Legislation on supporting, where possible, the individual's right to make their own decisions. When consent is required for any care, activity or intervention we will, unless it is an emergency, obtain consent from the individual if of sufficient age and/or capacity for understanding.

### ***Whistleblowing and safeguarding***

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a person or practice within the organisation, which will affect others in an illegal and/or harmful way. Our organisation promotes the sharing of any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk as soon as possible with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Senior Lead for Safeguarding.

If individuals reporting their concerns within our organisation do not feel they have been acted upon then we support their right to report these concerns to social care services, the police, and /or the relevant Regulatory Authority e.g. Ofsted, CQC, Charity Commission under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 in line with our policy.

All media enquiries relating to a safeguarding concern will be referred to the Senior Safeguarding Lead and the CEO.

### ***Young people who work in our organisation***

All young people (defined as those under 18) who are undertaking volunteer work, apprenticeships or work experience within our organisation are included within this policy and their safeguarding as individuals given the same importance as all young people we come into contact with. Any disclosures, observations of possible harm or disturbing behaviour must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Senior Lead immediately.

#### **4. Policy responsibility and accountability**

The People and Organisational Development Committee is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the formulation and assurance of this policy. The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the formulation and implementation of the policy.

#### **5. Review date**

Crohn's & Colitis UK undertakes to review the policy:

- as a minimum every 3 years
- following change in legislation or best practice guidance
- if any changes are required following review of a serious incident or report

Changes to this policy will be approved by the People and Organisational Development Committee. In the event of substantial change the policy will be agreed by the Board of Trustees.

#### **6. Policy date**

This policy was agreed by the Crohn's & Colitis UK Board on Thursday 23 February 2023.