

Supporting vulnerable customers in community settings

Purpose

RNIB has a legal duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of vulnerable adults and children in our care. It is recognised that vulnerable adults and children may be at greater risk of harm when accessing the community either individually or in a group.

The following policy is designed to provide direction on the action all staff and group volunteers must take to ensure that vulnerable people can access the community safely.

Scope

This policy covers RNIB and any third party providing a service on our behalf.

It applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors.

Review

This policy is due for review every 36 months or following any legislative changes, whichever comes first. This means it expires on in August 2020.

The policy will be reviewed by the RNIB Safeguarding and Compliance Manager (Debbie Lynch). The final draft of the policy will then go to the Head of Business Support and compliance for approval.

Principles

The following principles underpin this policy. Vulnerable people using RNIB services have the right to:

- be safe
- be valued as an individual

- be treated with dignity and respect
- be involved and consulted in their own activity planning to the best of their abilities
- express their views on their own activity planning and to have such views taken into account
- have levels of supervision whilst accessing the community that are appropriate and safe.

Failure to comply with this policy and/or local service specific procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Roles & Responsibilities

Employees must:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and complete any service specific training identified by management
- Familiarise themselves and comply with service specific procedures
- Report any concerns regarding breaches of safeguarding and safety procedures to their line manager as soon as is practical.

Managers & supervisors must:

- Explain the policy to their staff and group volunteers
- Develop, implement and explain service specific supervision of vulnerable people procedures to their staff, group volunteers and people who use their services
- Ensure that support and supervision sessions occur frequently and that the set agenda offers an opportunity to discuss concerns in respect of safeguarding and safety
- Ensure that all concerns are taken seriously, reported through safeguarding procedures and investigated
- Ensure this policy and service specific procedures are followed in practice, monitored and reviewed.

Safeguarding and compliance manager and monitoring consultants:

- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and service specific procedures
- Review this policy every three years as a standard or more frequently if necessary

- Provide advice on development of service specific procedures
- Monitor incidence of concerns, identify trends / issues and report to senior managers to inform future practice.

Service specific procedures

RNIB operates many different services and people carry out many activities which present a variety of risks in relation to the type of hazards that might be present. It would therefore be impossible to determine overarching procedures to cover every eventuality.

However RNIB has assessed the risks associated with off site activities as high and has therefore developed a specific risk assessment for managers to use.

The General risk assessment: Part 7 Care / Support can be found on iSite on the Health and Safety page. This risk assessment includes the control measures managers must implement to ensure that staff and group volunteers can carry out their roles safely and that people who use our services can do so free from harm. Managers must ensure that this assessment is completed and reviewed yearly as a standard.

Managers must ensure that service specific procedures in relation to vulnerable people accessing the community include the following information as a minimum.

- Roles & responsibilities
- How often the service specific procedure will be reviewed
- Training requirements
- A statement reflecting the principles outlined in section 1 of this policy.
- Arrangements for carrying out the general risk assessment part 7 Care/Support
- Arrangements for carrying out individual, activity and venue risk assessments
- Arrangements for vulnerable adults who lack capacity to give or refuse consent which includes a statement that the principles of 'best interest' must apply (If applicable)
- Arrangements for ensuring that vulnerable adults who have capacity are able to exercise choice and independence wherever possible (If applicable)

- Arrangements for ensuring that people understand deprivation of liberty safeguards and comply with legislative requirements if they apply (If applicable)
- Arrangements for ensuring that people are aware of and comply with measures to reduce the likelihood of people being harmed whilst accessing the community
- Arrangements for gaining consent from parents for children (If applicable)
- Arrangements for reporting concerns / adverse incidents
- Arrangements for ensuring that RNIB policies and service specific procedures are followed in practice, monitored and reviewed
- Arrangements for management review of incidents / concerns
- Arrangements for ensuring that all concerns / incidents are reported using the accident / incident system
- Related policies and procedures

RNIB Related Policies, Procedures & Documents

- Recognising and responding to child abuse
- Recognising and responding to adult abuse and neglect
- Recognising and responding to low level concerns
- Safeguarding policy
- Safeguarding prevention standards
- Disciplinary policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Customer complaints and feedback policy
- General risk assessment policy and guidance
- Lone working guidance
- Care and education risk assessment framework

5. Further information

For further information contact the RNIB Safeguarding and Compliance Manager at safeguarding@rnib.org.uk

6. Version control

Version Number	Date	Author & Job Title	Status & Level of Approval	Changes made
V1	April 2013	Debbie Lynch, Safeguarding and Compliance Manager	Approved by the Director of Health and Social Care	First written
V2	December 2014	Debbie Lynch, Safeguarding and Compliance Manager	Approved by the Director of Health and Social Care	None
V3	August 2017	Debbie Lynch, Safeguarding and Compliance Manager	Awaiting approval	Change to reflect structural changes