



Safeguarding Policy

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Mission Statement

HAHAV is a volunteer led charity supporting adults with life-limiting diagnoses across Ceredigion. The Charity runs a sitting service where clients are matched with suitable trained volunteers to provide companionship and help. HAHAV also provides a bereavement support service, complementary therapies, group activities and facilitates peer support groups from our Living Well centre at Plas Antaron, Southgate, Aberystwyth.

Due to the nature of our work, volunteers and employees may work with adults who are at risk of abuse or neglect due to age, illness or disability.

Abuse may be defined as physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial. Neglect is defined as a failure to meet a person's basic needs physical, emotional, social or psychological needs.

HAHAV aims to protect our clients from all forms of abuse and/or neglect.

HAHAV will work with external agencies to ensure robust safeguarding practice, including CYSUR (Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Board), the NHS, Dyfed-Powys Police, Social Services, Ceredigion County Council and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

HAHAV's board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for safeguarding in the charity.

Legislative framework for safeguarding

Safeguarding work in Wales is underpinned by legislation including –

- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Safeguarding Boards (Functions and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2015
- Domestic Abuse (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The European Convention of Human Rights
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005.

As a relevant partner for NHS primary and secondary care services, HAHAV works with adults at risk of abuse and neglect and has a duty to report any safeguarding concerns.

Safer Recruitment

HAHAV's Recruitment Policy mandates that selection and interviewing of candidates must be carried out jointly by the line manager and a Board member.

The Charity's will seek at least two written references, one of which must be from a previous employer. The Charity may seek the applicant's agreement to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for a criminal record check; this may be a Standard Disclosure or an Enhanced Disclosure, as appropriate for the particular role. The Charity reserves the right to withdraw an offer of employment if checks reveal information which the Charity reasonably believes makes an applicant unsuitable for the job role.

HAHAV employees and volunteers who are carrying out or managing others who are carrying out regulated activities such as counselling, assistance with general household matters, shopping and conveying clients, require an Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS.

HAHAV seeks to provide a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity and that is free from harassment and bullying based upon age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins and caste), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. The Charity also has a set of Conduct Policies for employees.

The Charity is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees; relevant procedures and systems are set out in the charity's Health and Safety policy.

Where lone working is necessary, whether on a regular or occasional basis, employees and volunteers are required to follow procedures set out in HAHAV's Lone Worker Policy. These procedures will be revised in the event of a change in relevant legislation or guidance and are subject to routine review every two years.

Volunteers

HAHAV's volunteers are required to undertake mandatory induction training prior to starting their roles. A 3 month trial period follows to give both the Charity and volunteer time to discover if there is a match in expectations. The volunteer meets with the Volunteer Coordinator for one-to-one meetings to monitor how their volunteering role is developing.

HAHAV values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in ways which are encouraging, enjoyable, rewarding and supportive. The Charity sets out its principles in its Volunteer Policy, which is available on request:

- Our volunteers are treated with dignity and respect.
- Our volunteers receive support, supervision and training to help them fulfil their role and to develop skills and experience.
- Our volunteers are valued and their contributions to HAHAV are appreciated.

HAHAV's expectations of volunteering for the charity are set out in our Volunteer Charter.

Safeguarding Officer

HAAV's Safeguarding Officer is Amelia Quinlan.

Her contact details are:

Email: coordinator@hahav.org.uk

Tel: 01970 611 550

The Safeguarding Officer has enhanced training and responsibilities regarding safeguarding. Their main responsibilities are:

- Being available for employees and volunteers to discuss any safeguarding issues or concerns.
- Ensuring that cases of suspected or actual abuse / neglect or safeguarding concerns are referred to the appropriate agencies.
- Ensuring that all employees and volunteers are trained in safeguarding and know how to spot and raise concerns.
- Ensuring that the charity's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date with the most recent statutory guidance.

The role of the Safeguarding Officer is explained in employee/volunteer Induction training and updates, and contact information for the officer is to be included in HAAV's volunteer newsletter.

Role of the Board of Trustees

Because HAAV works with adults at risk, Board members may be required to make welfare decisions about children and/or adults at risk and so will individually be subject to an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for an Enhanced Disclosure (criminal record check).

<INSERT NAME>, a member of HAAV's Board of Trustees, has special responsibility for Safeguarding procedures within the charity and updating the Board on relevant safeguarding issues. This includes reporting responsibilities to the Charity Commission in the event of a serious safeguarding risk as outlined above.

The Volunteer Coordinator or Chief Operating Officer can support volunteers and employees in gathering information to support a Safeguarding report.

Awareness of harm and abuse

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines an adult at risk as an adult who:

- Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect,
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
- Abuse can be physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial (includes theft, fraud, pressure about money, misuse of money)
- take place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place.

HAHAV will report to one or more of the following agencies, if incidents of abuse, poor practice and harm occur:

In emergencies – 999

Ceredigion Social Services

During Office Hours: Contact Centre – Tel: 01545 574 000

Email: contact-socservs@ceredigion.gov.uk

Outside of Office Hours: Emergency Duty Team – Tel: 0845 601 5392

The Police – Tel: 101

Action on Elder Abuse

Helpline number: 0808 808 8141

Website: <http://elderabuse.org.uk/cymru/>

Safeguarding training is included in HAHAV's employee/volunteer Induction training and updates, and contact information for the Safeguarding officer is to be included in HAHAV's volunteer newsletter. HAHAV also strongly recommends the use of the [Wales Safeguarding Procedures app](#) and promotes its use during volunteer and employee induction training, and beyond, for reference and guidance.

Suspected incidents of abuse, neglect or of harm

In an emergency, always telephone 999.

If an adult tells a volunteer or employee that they're being abused

- Listen and show that you are taking the matter seriously
- Write down what you have heard using the exact words where possible
- Explain that you will need to share what you have been told with someone who knows about protecting adults
- Consult with HAHAV's Safeguarding Officer who will escalate to Social Services or the Police

If a volunteer or employee is worried about someone's behaviour towards an adult, or, adult at risk:

- Consult with HAHAV's Safeguarding Officer who will advise or escalate to Social Services or the Police

HAHAV's Safeguarding Officer can provide guidance and support to employees and volunteers.

The Charity's Board of Trustees will make a report to the Charity Commission if a serious safeguarding risk materialises. The criteria for reporting such incidents are detailed in The Charity Commission's guidance, available online - [Guidance for charity trustees about serious incidents: how to spot them and how to report.](#)

Confidentiality and consent

Consent – informed consent should be sought from any person about whom you are considering making a safeguarding report. The mental capacity to make this decision should be assumed unless the individual has been formally assessed to lack capacity. Please see Appendix 1 – Responding to Disclosures for detailed guidance.

NB Exceptions: consent is not required to report a crime or to call for emergency medical help – 999 Police or Ambulance.

Client, volunteer and employee records will be kept securely and confidentially according HAHAV's data protection policy and confidentiality statement, or in line with DBS Code of Practice if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared on a "need-to-know" basis only.

We will communicate this policy to all employees, volunteers, clients and their families / carers, using appropriate methods, formats and language to get the essence across. We support and encourage all service users, volunteers and staff to speak up and contact the named Safeguarding Officer or deputy where there is

- a *concern* about practice or treatment of a client or colleague, or
- a *disclosure* about a person at risk of or suffering from significant harm or
- an *allegation* that a volunteer or staff member could cause harm to a person in their care

Employees or volunteers can report things that aren't right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone's health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. In the first instance, HAHAV encourages them to speak with the Safeguarding Officer, Amelia Quinlan, however this does not prevent them from making a report or referral to statutory agencies, in their own right as a private individual.

Responding to allegations against a person within the organisation

An allegation related to a safeguarding concern against an employee or volunteer will be regarded as an act of gross misconduct and may result in dismissal from the organisation. In the event of serious or gross misconduct, a volunteer will be suspended from duties and an employee may be suspended on full basic pay while a full investigation is carried out. The processes for management of an allegation of gross misconduct are set out in HAHAV's Monitoring and Evaluation Policies. Staff may also refer to the WSP app section 5 procedures <https://www.safeguarding.wales/adu/index.a5.html>

Deliberate acts of harm (sexual, physical, emotional and financial) and neglect are abuses against the person and will incur disciplinary proceedings and require reports and referrals to social services, the police, other professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if in regulated activity.

Significant harm

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm to HAHAV clients, volunteers or staff, the Safeguarding Officer is empowered to act accordingly.

- To log all conversations regarding the issue
- To sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- Confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- Share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with Chair of the Board
- Share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as Social Services, as appropriate to the circumstances
- Make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service regarding staff or volunteers in regulated activity whose conduct is harmful to service users and when they are removed from regulated activity

Whistleblowing (disclosure in the public interest)

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters from being dismissed by the Charity or from being subjected to detrimental treatment or victimised by either the Charity or work colleagues as a result, provided certain criteria are met.

HAHAV encourages employees to make disclosures about fraud, misconduct, bribery or other wrongdoing to the Charity, without fear of reprisal, so that problems can be identified, dealt with and resolved quickly.

Qualifying disclosures - these are disclosures of information which you reasonably believe are made in the public interest and tend to show one or more of the following relevant failures is either currently happening, took place in the past, or is likely to happen in the future:

- the breach of a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- a danger to the health and safety of any individual
- damage to the environment
- deliberate concealment of information tending to show any of the above five matters.
- Provide a link to Prevent and what protection is available for employees who do “blow the whistle” appropriately

Other related policies

HAHAV policies that link to the Safeguarding Policy:

- Recruitment Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Dignity At Work Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Data Protection / GDPR Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti Slavery And Human Trafficking Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone working
- Confidentiality Policy

Appendix 1 – Responding to Disclosures

The role of consent in safeguarding

Consent – informed consent should be sought from any person about whom you are considering making a safeguarding report. This should be done giving due regard to treating people with respect, listening and providing reassurance. The mental capacity to make this decision should be assumed unless the individual has been formally assessed to lack capacity. In which case, a “best interests” decision should be made.

NB Exceptions: consent is not required to report a crime or to call for emergency medical help – 999 Police or Ambulance

The duty to report in theory overrides any withheld consent, but the practitioner should still seek consent from the individual, and where this is withheld, should explain why they are duty-bound to make a report. This is due to having reasonable cause to suspect abuse, which is the trigger to make a safeguarding report. Where there is no duty, it is the responsibility of all practitioners (workers or volunteers) and the expectation placed on all organisations that they should make a safeguarding report where a child or adult at risk is experiencing abuse. The practitioner should seek to keep the individual informed of the process which will follow. In some cases, this may mean a different contact person.

Child: be prepared to make a safeguarding report of suspected abuse and neglect - with or without the child’s consent – but ALWAYS try to gain consent from the child.

Where a child appears to have the capacity and understanding, they should be consulted, and their consent obtained to ensure their wishes and feelings are known.

Parent about a child:

When deciding whether to obtain parental consent before making a safeguarding report about a child, the overriding consideration is whether this places the child at (greater) risk of harm.

Try to obtain consent from the parent(s)/carer of the child, unless it would increase the risk of harm to the child. Aim to work in partnership with the parent(s) to safeguard the child and protect them from harm.

Adult:

An adult can choose to give or withhold consent to a safeguarding report being made about them. Always try to gain consent from the adult about whom you wish to make a safeguarding report.

A report can be made without their consent where:

- Other people may be placed at risk by the situation (e.g. known perpetrator having access to similarly at risk individuals, or to a child)

- Undue influence of another person is suspected (coercion, threat or pressure applied)

Each individual has the right to withhold consent and therefore should be fully informed of any actions you may still take regarding their safeguarding.

Reports made without consent should state this and explain why consent was not obtained, or sought, if this is the case. This should not affect the process of enquiries made by the local authority social services.