**ADULT SAFEGUARDING**

**Recognition and Reporting**

Counsellors/ Counsellors in Training may encounter adult clients who are vulnerable or who are at risk. As professionals, there is an ethical duty to safeguard adults who are vulnerable. Where an adult is vulnerable, there is also a need to consider the safety and welfare of any child for whom they have responsibility.

**Adult Safeguarding applies to any adult 18+ who;**

* Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
* Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
* As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

This includes adults with learning difficulties, adults with physical disabilities who depend on others to care for them, or adults with certain mental illnesses who lack the capacity to care for themselves. It is recognised that people in this group are vulnerable to abuse and neglect from carers, family members, and institutions as well as from strangers.

**Safeguarding concerns could also include;**

* Domestic violence or abuse
* Suicidal ideation or high risk of self-harm
* Serious mental illness such as psychosis, depression or severe post-natal depression
* High risk substance misuse
* Adults who have disclosed that they have harmed, or at risk of harming either a child or another adult
* Honour-based violence or forced marriage
* Any concerns about radicalisation and extremist views of behaviours must also be reported as a safeguarding concern.

This list is not an exhaustive list, but provides Counsellors / Counsellors in Training with examples of situations where they would need to consider safeguarding issues in relation to an adult.

If an adult discloses that they were abused as a child, and the Counsellor / Counsellor in Training suspects that the perpetrator continues to present a risk to children, this must also be raised as a safeguarding concern.

Our Statement of Understanding explains at the outset of therapy where it may be necessary to share information where there are serious concerns about a client’s welfare or safety, or where there are child protection concerns.

**Types of abuse / neglect include;**

* Physical abuse
* Domestic violence or abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Psychological or emotional abuse
* Financial or material abuse
* Modern slavery
* Neglect or acts of omission
* Discriminatory abuse
* Organisational or institutional abuse
* Self-neglect or abuse

**Other safeguarding concerns include;**

* Female genital mutilation (FGM)
* Forced marriage
* Honour based violence

Where a Counsellor / Counsellor in Training is concerned about the safety or welfare of an adult, the following steps must be taken;

1. Wherever possible discuss the concerns with the client and seek to empower the client to take action themselves. There should be a discussion about the sharing of information and the reasons for this, and consent should be obtained if possible. If the Counsellor / Counsellor in Training is to relay information about a client to a GP for example, they should seek the adult’s consent to the information being shared.
2. If a Counsellor / Counsellor in Training is concerned about their own safety or well-being they must contact the Safeguarding Manager (Lucy Shepherd) immediately, and inform their own Supervisor
3. The Counsellor / Counsellor in Training must complete a Safeguarding Form immediately after the session

The following courses of action should be considered;

* Refer to a GP
* Referral to a Community Mental Health Team
* Referral to a Health Visitor
* Referral to the Police
* Referral to Adult Social Care
* Referral to other agencies, such substance misuse teams, or a domestic violence service

It must always be discussed with the client if there are any child protection issues which need addressing.