

## APPENDIX 14: RESPONDING TO ABUSE – RECORDING GUIDANCE AND FORM

### A step-by-step approach

- At the time of the disclosure only make very brief notes if this does not interfere with the intimacy or flow of the disclosure. Try to focus on who, when, where, what and how.
- Write up your notes as soon as possible after the disclosure (preferably within one hour - always within 24 hours). Ensure you record the place, date and time the conversation took place and who was present.
- Be sure to record who it is about (names of all key people, including any potential witnesses.)
- What happened? (Where possible, use exact quotes from the source of the information, using quotation marks.)
- How did it happen? (For example, if physical violence is alleged, was this done using an implement or with a kick or a hit?)
- When and where did this take place?
- Record any explanations offered to you by those involved. However, **DO NOT INVESTIGATE OR ASK LEADING QUESTIONS. Never ask a victim of abuse why they think the abuse occurred.** Quite apart from anything else, this could sound as if you are blaming them.)
- What should happen next? (What actions will follow? What will you do next? What is X going to do? Create a reminder to follow up in Y days' time.)
- Record what did happen next and the checks made to ensure effective follow up. (Did X do what they said they were going to do?)
- Views/perspective of the person at risk should be included. Avoid giving your own opinion on the matter.
- Do not destroy your original notes.
- Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang.
- Depending on the age of the person, you might want to go through your written record with them afterwards to ensure you have captured everything correctly. They may or may not wish to do this or they may wish to add their own written notes too. Be led by the wishes of the person disclosing.
- You can record observable things but not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual. So, you might record that 'X was crying continually throughout the conversation'. However, you should avoid writing about emotional state, such as, 'X was very distressed throughout the conversation' as you may not know what distress looks like for X. Your observations may be shared with the person making the disclosure so you should be able to justify the reasoning for making any personal commentary. If a person is disclosing domestic abuse and they are wearing dirty, worn clothing and appear to have limited access to washing facilities etc. this might be relevant information about their current situation. If you offer your own analysis or opinion, rather than fact, this should be made clear in the record.
- If you have seen bruising or an injury, use a body map to record details. Again, ensure that the map is dated and attached to information relating to the person's comments about the injury.
- Save and date any drawings or artwork that formed part of the disclosure. Ensure these are submitted with the written report.
- Submit written record to relevant safeguarding lead/regulatory body/local authority/police without delay. Where concerns are raised for more than one individual in the same household a form must be completed for each person.
- Records must always be dated, and the author identified.

## Record of Concern

(For use by any staff/volunteers– This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible)

Name of Church/Group:

Name of Child/Adult:

Subject of Concern: (Physical abuse / Emotional abuse / Neglect / Sexual abuse / Financial abuse / Inappropriate conduct / Historical abuse)

Address

Date of Birth: (or approximate age)

Gender:

Name of person reporting incident

Phone contact number:

Email address:

Date and time alleged incident:

Time:

Other members of the household (There may be other victims/perpetrators):

Is this person aware of the allegation made? No [ ] Yes [ ] (Must not be contacted until/unless authority given by the Designated Safeguarding Officer)

### **The Concern: Sequence of events/actual words used/observations**

Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. (please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

How did the concern come to light?

What is the child/adult saying about what has happened?

<p>Subject of the allegation (where relevant the name and details of the alleged perpetrator)</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Relationship to the person about whom the concern is being raised:</p> <p>Position: (Minister, church officer, church member etc.):</p>	
<p>Are you aware of any previous concerns relating to this person? If yes, please give details</p>	
<p>Is this person aware of the allegation made? No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (Must not be contacted until/unless authority given by the Designated Safeguarding Officer)</p>	
<p>Action Taken (including person(s) contacted):</p>	
<p>Date and time of writing this report:</p>	
<p>Date and time of discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Pastor:</p>	
<p>Notes</p>	
<p>Signature:</p>   <p>Name:</p>	<p>Role/Job Title:</p>   <p>Date:</p>

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

**Please pass this form to your Safeguarding Coordinator without delay**

## Action Taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible

Information received by DSL:	Date:	Time completed:	From whom:		
Any advice <b>sought</b> , if applicable	Date:	Time completed:	Source of advice: name/organisation:		
	Advice received:				
Advice received about informing parents or in the case of adults, seeking consent/capacity <sup>1</sup> :					
Initial Assessment of concern following advice <sup>2</sup>					
Action taken with reasons recorded (e.g. Referral completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff, etc)	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
	Referral		To whom		
	Signposting to other community resources				
	Pastoral Care and other support from church				
	Ongoing Monitoring				
Parent/carer informed?	<b>Y</b>	Who spoken to:	Date:	Time:	By whom:
	<b>N</b>	Detail reason:			
Any other relevant information					
Name of Safeguarding Lead:			Signature:		

Any other relevant information			
Name of Safeguarding Coordinator:		Signature:	

**OVERVIEW OF ACTIONS**

Ref. no.	Date	Outcome (if known)	Service currently involved	Ongoing support offered by church (this can include monitoring)- include dates

Guidance notes:

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form(s)

1. Importance of consent from parents/carer or adults (in the light of mental capacity) – With regards to children, consent of the parents is considered important before a referral is made to external agencies, unless of course doing so will place the child(ren) at greater risk of harm. With regards to adults, it is important to be aware that their consent is crucial before reporting concerns onto statutory agencies. The individual's mental capacity will also be a significant factor to consider at this stage. You can always seek the advice of local authority social services.
2. Initial assessment- Based on the advice you may have received from relevant individuals/agencies (i.e. this could be school/thirtyone:eight/Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP) etc), what are the concerns categorised as?
3. Overview of actions - Includes a summary of the actions taken so far and who holds responsibility for it. You can use this section to add on information gathered when monitoring the situation or offering pastoral care over a defined period of time.