



Protecting Vulnerable Adults

Policy and Guidelines

of the
Free Church of Scotland
15 North Bank Street
Edinburgh
EH1 2LS

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The Free Church Offices, 15 North Bank Street, The Mound, EDINBURGH EH1 2LS.

Note 1: The terms ‘Free Church of Scotland’ and ‘Free Church’ are used interchangeably, and are to be construed as referring to the same organisation.

Note 2: The term ‘Vulnerable Adults’ in England is roughly equivalent in Scotland to ‘Adults at Risk’ [*The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Scotland) Regulations 2006, SSI No. 96 Section 10*] and under the *Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007* legislation a similar group will be called ‘Protected Adults’.

The term ‘vulnerable adult’ is used in this document in a general sense whilst the term ‘Adult at Risk’ is used in the more specific sense of SSI 96 – see Appendix 1.

Contents

The Policy	Chapter 1	page 1
Mission Statement	1.1	1
Policy Statement	1.2	2
Oversight of the Policy	2	3
General	2.1	3
Kirk Session	2.2	3
Co-ordinator	2.3	4
Recruitment	3	5
General	3.1	5
Job Description	3.2	6
Application	3.3	6
Self-Declaration	3.4	6
Interview	3.5	7
Disclosures	3.6	7
Support	3.7	7
Supervision	3.8	7
Abuse and Reporting	4	8
Types of Abuse	4.1	8
Action to Take	4.2	13
Appendix 1	Definition of AAR	15
Appendix 2	Summary Policy Statement	16
Appendix 3	Review	17
Appendix 4	Photo-copiable Forms	Separate bundle

1.1 Mission Statement

- The Free Church of Scotland recognises all are created in God's image and are to be valued, respected and afforded nurture and protection.
- In particular the Free Church of Scotland is committed to protecting vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being; it acknowledges that they can be the victims of abuse, neglect and discrimination of a physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial or material nature, and seeks to provide a safe and caring environment for them;
- The Free Church of Scotland recognises vulnerable adults have a right to privacy, the protection of the law, to be able to choose how they lead their lives, to be treated with dignity and respect, and all regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age and religious and cultural background.
- It is the responsibility of each individual who acts on behalf of the Free Church of Scotland to help prevent these forms of abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that is discovered or suspected to the relevant authorities;
- The Free Church of Scotland recognises that it is unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might contribute to any form of abuse;
- The Free Church of Scotland undertakes to adopt safe recruitment procedures, and to provide supervision and training for all those working with Adults at Risk within the Free Church of Scotland;
- The Free Church of Scotland undertakes to support those who have been affected by abuse in the Church;
- The Free Church of Scotland undertakes to maintain good links with the statutory authorities and other relevant organisations.

1.2 Policy Statement

The Free Church of Scotland undertakes to:

1. meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and all other relevant legislation, and to be welcoming and inclusive;
2. adopt a policy on safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults;
3. plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults may occur;
4. introduce a system whereby an independent person (the Adult at Risk Co-ordinator - AARC) oversees on behalf of the Kirk Session Adults at Risk issues in the Congregation;
5. apply agreed procedures, aimed at protecting Adults at Risk, to all paid staff and volunteers;
6. provide all paid staff and volunteers with clear roles;
7. gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's work, if any, with Adults at Risk and who can give a character reference;
8. explore in an interview before appointment all applicants' experience of working with or having contact with Adults at Risk;
9. find out whether an applicant has any convictions for criminal offences against Adults at Risk;
10. make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period;
11. issue guidelines on how to deal with allegations of abuse, and the disclosure or discovery of abuse;
12. train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors and policy makers in the protection of Adults at Risk;
13. review this Policy and Guidelines document regularly (see Appendix 3), to communicate them to every person in the Church involved in work with vulnerable adults, and to oversee their implementation.

Note: Clauses 7, 8 and 10 do not apply to the selection and appointment of individuals to the offices of Minister, Elder or Deacon as such appointments are subject to a separate process. However, it is important that clause 9 is adhered to in all cases.

Chapter 2

OVERSIGHT OF THE POLICY

2.1 General

The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland has the general oversight of the Policy which is issued by its authority. The General Assembly delegates this oversight on an on-going basis to the Compliance, Audit and Risk Management Committee of the Board of Trustees, but **the responsibility for the administration of the Policy in individual Congregations rests with the Kirk Session.**

2.2 The Kirk Session

The Kirk Session's duties are to:

- **implement fully the *Policy and Guidelines* in each Congregation.**
- **appoint** an Adult at Risk Co-ordinator (AARC), and where possible a Depute, to act on behalf of the Kirk Session and to help ensure that *Policy and Guidelines* are implemented at a practical level (for form for registering Co-ordinators, see App. 4.1, 2). The same person can be appointed to the post of AARC and Child Protection Co-ordinator, although it is expected that in larger congregations the posts would be separate;
- **facilitate and promote safe working practices** by encouraging 'workers' to examine their personal practice and as a team to identify possible areas of risk and seek creative solutions to these;
- **ensure that all voluntary and paid 'workers' are recruited via the procedures** set out in the relevant articles of the *Policy and Guidelines*;
- **ensure that the names of all 'workers' in this area are recorded in a congregational register**, and that it is kept up to date;
- **ensure that procedures are followed and records maintained** to the satisfaction of the Presbytery. This will involve providing evidence of the implementation of the *Policy and Guidelines* for Quinquennial checks;
- **encourage** voluntary and paid 'workers' and the Congregational Co-ordinators to participate in **relevant training**;
- **be available to people** in the Congregation who may wish to express concerns relating to persons or procedures;
- **ensure** that when incidents of abuse are reported the Free Church's **reporting procedure is effectively implemented**;
- **liaise with groups** who wish to use congregational premises to ensure compliance with the *Policy and Guidelines*.

2.3 The Adults at Risk Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator's role focuses on the following areas:-

- generally to **oversee** and **monitor** the **implementation** of the Church's Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy in the Congregation on behalf of the Kirk Session;
- to obtain, promote and disseminate **information** on risk management and on the protection of Adults at Risk ;
- to advise and promote **training** for all who are engaged directly or indirectly in work with Adults at Risk;
- to facilitate **vetting procedures** required for those who work with Adults at Risk;
- to **keep** accurate records and **maintain a register** of all 'workers' on behalf of the Kirk Session;
- to **record** and keep accurate accounts of incidents and allegations;
- where an allegation or disclosure occurs to **report** to Social Work and/or the Police, and forward a **report** to the Free Church Offices within 48 hours; there the report will be securely logged;
- to **liaise** with professionals from the relevant agencies;
- to **be available** to leaders and concerned adults within the Congregation who may wish to express views relating to persons or procedures;
- to **liaise** with those responsible for lets and hires of congregation facilities ensuring all comply with our Protecting Vulnerable Adults *Policy and Guidelines*.

3.1 General

At the time of drafting this PVA Policy there is still no legal requirement to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure for work with Adults at Risk, but there is no doubt that best practice indicates that we go through a 'recruitment' procedure similar to that for Child Protection.

- 3.1.1 The term 'Vulnerable Adults' in England is roughly equivalent in Scotland to 'Adults at Risk' [*The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Scotland) Regulations 2006, SSI No. 96 Section 10*] and under the *Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007* legislation a similar group will be called 'Protected Adults'.
- 3.1.2 SSI 96 section 10 defines who 'Adults at Risk' are by virtue of their condition **and** the type of 'service' they receive; however there is still debate as to whether the term 'social care service' (para. 6) will include some services the Church may provide. (See Appendix 1).
- 3.1.3 More importantly, there is the statement in SSI 96 Schedule 10, paragraph 2: '*This regulation applies to a position if it is a kind which enables a person in the course of his or her **duties** to **have contact with an adult at risk***'.
- 3.1.4 This Policy assumes:
- 'duties' implies that the person has been appointed by the Church (Presbytery/Kirk Session/Deacons' Court) to a position which allows him/her to engage at a **significant** level in this type of work on its behalf; **and**
 - 'contact' is **significant** contact, ie. non-incidental. (See App.1)
- 3.1.5 It is strongly recommended that Kirk Sessions make informed decisions regarding whether Ministers, Elders and Deacons **already in post** who regularly have significant contact with 'Adults at Risk' on a one-to-one basis go through the 'recruitment' process, including applying for an AAR Enhanced Disclosure Certificate, outlined in the rest of this chapter.

3.2 Job Descriptions

It is strongly recommended that the 'worker' is given a written statement describing the work that is expected of him/her, and that s/he signs to say s/he agrees with the statement of work to be undertaken and has read the Policy. (See App 4.3)

3.3 Job Application

Note that Ministers, Elders and Deacons are not applying for their posts as Ministers, Elders and Deacons but for the particular area of work relating to 'Adults at Risk'.

The confidential Application Form asks for some personal details such as names, date of birth (optional), address history, any relevant experience, and referees. (See App 4.4)

3.4 Self-Declaration

This confidential form asks whether the person has ever been charged with or convicted of a criminal offence; and whether s/he has been the subject of allegations made regarding Adults at Risk and should be completed in full by all 'workers'. (See App 4.5)

3.5 Interview

Note that Ministers, Elders and Deacons are not applying for their posts as Ministers, Elders and Deacons but for particular area of work relating to 'Adults at Risk'. The Kirk Session or a small committee of the Kirk Session which may include the AARC should consider the content of the above forms, including **references** (see App. 4.6), and interview the prospective 'worker' to determine his/her suitability for the work to be undertaken. It should be a 2-way process, so that the applicant is clear as to the duties and responsibilities expected of him/her, and the support available.

3.6 Disclosure

If all the above is satisfactory the 'worker' is asked to complete an Enhanced Disclosure in the category AAR as Minister, Elder, Deacon, member of Pastoral Team or similar. Guidance for completing a Disclosure Application form is to be found in Appendix 4.7.

3.7 Support, Supervision and Training of 'Workers'

The Free Church will ensure all those working with Adults at Risk will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in the relevant government guidelines.

3.8 Supervision of Activities with Adults at Risk

Each congregation of the Free Church will provide on request details of supervision arrangements for work with Adults at Risk.

Chapter 4

ABUSE AND REPORTING

4.1 TYPES AND FORMS OF ABUSE

Much of this section is adapted from the relevant chapter in the Scottish Episcopal Church's Vulnerable Adults Policy, and is reproduced with their permission, kindly granted.

Many people have heard of child abuse, but the abuse of vulnerable adults does not receive as much media attention. However, adult abuse does take place in varying degrees and it is widespread.

Abuse can, and does, take many forms. Some adults at risk are subjected to multiple forms of abuse, others to one. Some are subject to single incidents, and others 'serial abuse'. The following descriptions are the most common.

4.1.1 PHYSICAL ABUSE - the deliberate infliction of pain, physical harm or injury, for example:

- hitting, slapping, punching, pushing, kicking, hair-pulling
- misuse or withholding medication
- misuse of restraint
- use of inappropriate sanctions.

Indicators include:

- bruising
- a history of unexplained falls and/or minor injuries
- fractures not consistent with falls or explanations of the injury
- finger marks
- burns not consistent with possible explanations
- excessive consumption of alcohol, which is unusual for the person.

There can be rare circumstances where some restraint is necessary to ensure the safety of the vulnerable adult. A relative being cared for at home might be locked in while the carer goes out for a short time, to prevent the relative from wandering, for instance.

4.1.2 SEXUAL ABUSE - any act with a sexual content carried out to which a vulnerable adult has not given consent, or could not consent, or was pressurised into consenting to and may include:

- rape or sexual assault
- sexual intercourse
- fondling or inappropriate touching
- sexual innuendoes
- offensive or suggestive language
- sexual activity or viewing sexually explicit materials.

Indicators include:

- unexplained behaviour change - becoming aggressive, withdrawn, moody
- unwillingness to be with a particular person
- difficulties in walking
- indicators that will only be apparent to medical, nursing or someone entrusted with personal care.

4.1.3 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE - any pattern of behaviour by another person that results in the psychological harm to a vulnerable adult and may include:

- threats of harm or abandonment, insults, ridicule, bullying, humiliation, blaming
- enforced isolation, deprivation of contact, lack of privacy or choice
- denial of dignity, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment
- verbal abuse
- withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Indicators include:

- strain within the relationship
- indications that the abuser acts differently with another person present than when alone with the vulnerable adult
- an air of silence when the alleged abuser is present
- a general lack of consideration for the needs of the vulnerable adult
- refusal to allow the vulnerable adult an opinion of their own
- denial of privacy in relation to care, feelings or other aspects of life
- denial of access to services or support especially where the vulnerable adult is in need of assistance which they will consequently not receive
- denial of freedom of movement, for example locking the person in a room or tying them to a chair
- alterations in the psychological state, possible withdrawal or fear.

4.1.4 FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE - the misappropriation of the funds, theft or misuse of property of a vulnerable adult and may include:

- misuse of finances
- theft or fraudulent use of money
- theft of property
- embezzlement
- pressure in connection with wills or property or inheritance or financial transactions
- misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Indicators include:

- situations where, despite having a personal income/pension, the adult is without money soon after its receipt, particularly where that person is not able to spend money without assistance
- unexplained shortage of money despite a seemingly adequate income
- unexplained withdrawals from savings accounts
- unexplained disappearance of financial documents, for example building society books and bank statements and pension book.

We need to be aware that a symptom of a person's increasing confusion or dementia may be an allegation of misuse of property or misuse of finances and may not be financial abuse. Such allegations should not be dismissed, but should be investigated having regard to the possibility that it may not be true.

4.1.5 NEGLECT AND ACTS OF OMISSION - may be deliberate or by default where the abuser is not able to provide the care needed and may not recognise the need for that care to be given. The carer may also be neglecting her/himself.

Indicators include:

- persistent hunger, loss of weight, constant fatigue or listlessness
- poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
- consistent lack of supervision for long periods, especially during activities which hold danger for the individual
- denial of religious or cultural needs
- physical problems and medical needs that are not addressed
- failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services
- withholding the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

4.1.6 DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE - can occur in many ways and frequently will include a combination of forms of abuse. What differentiates it from the other categories is that the abuse is motivated by a prejudice and discrimination against the individual because he or she is perceived to belong to a specific group or groups. These may be:

- age, gender, sexual orientation, disability
- religion, cultural background, race.

Abuse may include:

- bullying, humiliation, harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

4.1.7 INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE/ABUSIVE REGIMES - Institutions may develop practices that may intentionally or unintentionally cause the abuse of service users/residents/patients. It is abuse that has become commonplace in a service or institutional setting and which restricts the freedom of service users, harms them or denies them human rights. This includes:

- under provision or under funding of care
- management of cleanliness and issues such as incontinence and personal hygiene
- ignoring people's beliefs
- expecting them to conform to the majority
- disregarding special diets
- providing a minimum 'standard' service and disregarding the individual needs of a person
- running the service for the benefit of the staff rather than the service users.

In residential and nursing homes and hospitals indicators may include:

- lack of flexibility and choice for residents in waking/bed times
- lack of opportunity to obtain drinks and snacks
- lack of choice of meals
- lack of appropriate bedding and/or heating
- lack of personal possessions
- lack of procedures in financial management, medical requirements and other matters pertaining to the person's care

- lack of privacy in personal care, such as toileting, bathing, dressing, editing mail, restricting visits
- derogatory remarks
- public discussion of matters private to residents
- restraint of residents which cannot be justified
- lack of action to deal with abuse
- odours arising from poor management of incontinence
- unwillingness to consider the requests of relatives or nominated representatives or advocates in regard to the person's needs.

In supported and sheltered housing indicators may include:

- staff using master keys without due cause
- staff entering flats/rooms without permission or not waiting for reply after knocking
- breaches of residents' confidentiality
- restrictive practices in the use of communal facilities.

More than one of these types of abuse may occur at one time though only one may present itself initially.

4.1.8 SPIRITUAL ABUSE - forcing people to accept religious ideas or values including the misuse of authority or leadership, leading to discipline, oppressive teaching, obtrusive healing or deliverance ministries, and extreme pastoral interference in personal matters which may reduce individual choice and responsibility. Vulnerable adults may be more susceptible to suggestion. Care is required when interpreting their wishes on spiritual matters.

4.1.9 CIRCUMSTANCES, SETTINGS AND ENVIRONMENTS where abuse is most likely to occur:

WHERE?

- The person's own home
- Another person's home
- A residential care home or nursing home or other institutional setting
- A day centre, community centre or other non-residential group setting, such as groups meeting on Church premises
- On any form of transport
- Whilst on holiday
- Supported housing schemes
- Whilst out and about in the street, in a public area or when in a social, church or work environment

WHO MIGHT ABUSE? Abusers may be individuals, groups or organisations:

Individual Abusers:

Potentially anyone could be an abuser of an adult. Abuse will sometimes be deliberate, but it may also be an unintended consequence of ignorance or lack of awareness or alternatively arise from frustration or lack of support. The following is a check-list of some of the possible people who may abuse:

- medical, care or nursing staff in care homes, nursing homes, hospitals, general practice, day centres, supported housing services or people from domiciliary support services
- health care workers in a health care setting, in the person's home or a care setting
- social workers
- relatives of the vulnerable person including husband, wife, partner, son, daughter, etc. This will sometimes include a relative who is the main carer.
- church members, whether voluntary (undertaking tasks on behalf of the church with a vulnerable person) or professional (a minister or other paid church worker)
- visitors to a vulnerable person, neighbours, lawyers
- people who are themselves vulnerable or are users of a care service
- complete strangers who seek out vulnerable people for the purposes of abusing them
- confidence tricksters and salespeople who prey on vulnerable people in their own homes.

Abuse by groups and organisations

Abuse can and does occur because of the failure of groups or organisations providing support or services to vulnerable adults. This may be a direct failure to provide an appropriate service or an indirect failure because it has failed to train, support, supervise or monitor those providing the service on their behalf.

Other circumstances where abuse might occur:

- relationships where there is domestic violence
- situations of fear where the vulnerable person may be afraid of the perpetrator of the abuse or may be afraid of threats of other acts from the perpetrator
- situations where there is use or abuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances
- during counselling the bereaved/distressed.

Relatives who are main carers will often experience stress, distress, frustration and lack of respite from the caring role. This may lead to the unintended abuse of the person for whom they are providing care. Relatives who are main carers may be subject to abuse by the person for whom they are providing care. This abuse is often endured for long periods, is unreported and unnoticed.

4.2 ACTION TO TAKE

4.2.1 General

- **Under no circumstances should a worker carry out his/her own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.**
- The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the vulnerable adult and if medical attention is required this should be sought immediately. If the person is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the emergency services, informing them of the circumstances.
- You can contact CCPAS or the Social Work Adults at Risk Team for advice;

CCPAS, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ,
tel: 0845 120 4550

The Social Work Adults at Risk Team

tel no: 9.00am to 5.00pm,
and out of office hours.

Alternatively contact the Police, tel. no.....

- The Free Church through its Kirk Sessions and relevant Committees will support the AARC and Depute in their roles, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly confidential and limited way on a need-to-know basis.
- Any information gained about an adult at risk should be handled with sensitivity and should not be disclosed to others except on a 'need-to-know' basis. It will be necessary to provide relevant information to the person to whom you are responsible for your work and in particular to give details of any concerns about an adult especially if you think the person may be a victim of abuse. The person who discloses the alleged abuse should be made aware of this. The wishes of the person who may be experiencing abuse will be respected, unless there is a responsibility to override them.
- An individual's wishes cannot undermine an organisation's legal duty to act. This would need to be explained.
- Where a person does not have the mental capacity to decide how to protect her/himself from abuse an independent advocate should be sought to represent their interests during protection procedures.
- Any intervention in a person's life, including that for immediate protection and its result, should match the wishes, where known, of that person as closely as possible.
- Information shared between organisations for the purposes of protecting an adult at risk will be done according to an information sharing protocol.

4.2.2 Suspicions of Abuse

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If you suspect that some form of abuse is or has taken place you should speak to the 'AARC' (Adults At Risk Co-ordinator). Advice can be obtained from CCPAS, Social Work or the Police who will advise how to proceed.

4.2.3 Allegations or Disclosure of Abuse

- Allegations or disclosures must be reported as soon as possible to the 'AARC' (Adults At Risk Co-ordinator) who is nominated by the Free Church to act on its behalf to deal with the allegation, disclosure or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the AARC, or if the allegation or disclosure in any way involves the AARC then the report should be made to the Depute. If they implicate both the AARC and the Depute, then the report should be made directly to the Social Work Adults at Risk Team.
- Suspicions, allegations or disclosures must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. However, as the Kirk Session has overall responsibility for the operation of the Policy, the Session Clerk and Minister should be informed of the fact that the statutory authorities have been notified [that an allegation/disclosure has been made]. If the allegation/disclosure involves either of them the other should be informed of the fact, but not the detail at this stage.
- A written record of the concerns, allegations or disclosure should be made and kept in a secure place until called for by the appropriate agencies. The note should include the words which are used, recording the time, date and location that the disclosure was made and the time, date and location and nature of the alleged abuse. This should be done as soon as possible after the disclosure is made.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the AARC, the absence of the AARC or Depute should not delay referral to the Social Work Department or Police.
- It is of course the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the statutory agencies or seek advice from CCPAS, although the Free Church hopes that all associated with the Free Church will use the above procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the AARC has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the AARC as to the appropriateness of a referral they should contact the outside agency directly.
- As mentioned above, if the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury the emergency services should be contacted immediately, informing them of the circumstances.

The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 SSI No. 96

Section 10 – Enhanced Criminal Record Certificates – suitability for positions

- (2) This regulation applies to a position if it is a kind which enables a person in the course of his or her duties to **have contact with** an adult at risk.
- (3) In paragraph (2) “**adults at risk**” means a person aged 18 or over who in consequence of a condition of a type listed in paragraph (4) has a disability of the type listed in paragraph (5) and who is receiving services of a type listed in paragraph (6).
- (4) **The types of condition** referred to in paragraph (3) are –
- (a) a learning or physical disability;
 - (b) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
 - (c) a reduction in physical or mental capacity.
- (5) **The types of disability** referred to in paragraph (3) are –
- (a) a dependency upon others in the performance of, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of, basic physical functions;
 - (b) severe impairment in the ability of a person to protect themselves from assault, abuse or neglect.
- (6) **The types of service** referred to in paragraph (3) are –
- (a) care-home services;
 - (b) personal care or nursing or support to live independently at home;
 - (c) any services provided by an independent hospital, independent clinic, independent medical agency or health body;
 - (d) social care services; or
 - (e) any services provided in an establishment catering for a person with learning difficulties.
- (7) In this regulation “care-home services”, “independent clinic”, “independent hospital”, “independent medical agency” and “health body” have the same meanings as in the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 (a).

To give some help to Kirk Sessions the following guidance is given.

As stated in the main Policy at chapter 3.1.4 referring to point (2) above:

1. 'Duties' implies that the person has been appointed by the Church (Presbytery/Kirk Session/Deacons' Court) to a position which allows him/her to engage at a **significant** level in AAR work on its behalf;
and
2. 'contact' is **significant** contact, ie. non-incidental.

The present thinking is that the following types of work would **not** fall within the scope of chapter 3:

- Church people as friends visiting the elderly in their homes;
- Church people visiting a Care Home as a group, for example, to conduct worship;
- Elders speaking to an 'adult at risk' in the pew;

and that the following types of work **would** generally fall within the scope of this chapter:

- Visiting on behalf of the Church to provide some form of 'service' at home for an 'Adult at Risk' such as advice and support whether of a spiritual or practical nature; for example, regular pastoral visiting, financial advice, regular help with cooking, washing, shopping, errands and gardening, etc.;
- Providing clubs, lunches, teas, classes, advice and support, etc. in the Church specifically for 'Adults at Risk' including those seeking help in overcoming addictions;
- Visiting a Care Home to act as Volunteer Helpers (with library, games, entertainment, etc.), or to conduct a Christianity Explored course, primarily for residents who would be deemed to be 'Adults at Risk'.

Of course the above begs the question – how do we know someone is an 'adult at risk'? As usual the advice is to err on the side of caution and apply for an AAR Enhanced Disclosure if there is any likelihood of having significant contact with an 'adult at risk'.

However, remember, for example, that not all elderly people in our congregations are 'adults at risk' as defined in Section 10 above.

Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy Summary Statement
(To be displayed in a prominent place)

Name of Free Church Congregation:

The following statement was agreed by the Kirk Session on

- The Free Church Congregation of is committed to protecting vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with vulnerable adults/Adults at Risk.

We are committed to:

- following statutory and specialist guidelines in relation to protecting vulnerable adults and will ensure that as a Church all those working with Adults at Risk will work within the agreed procedure of our Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy and Guidelines;
- implementing the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and all other relevant legislation;
- supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work;
- ensuring that we are keeping up-to-date with national and local developments relating to protecting adults;

We recognise:

- Social Work and/or the Police has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse;
- where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the Police will be contacted as a matter of urgency;

We will review this statement annually.

If you have any concerns for a vulnerable adult then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Adult at Risk Co-ordinators for this place of worship:

..... AAR Co-ordinator

..... Depute AAR Co-ordinator

A copy of the Free Church Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy can be obtained from either of the above.

Signed by Session Clerk Date

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed next on (date)

Signed: Date:

Print name: Position held:

This policy will be reviewed next on (date)

Signed: Date:

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