<u>Safeguarding Policy and Procedure</u>

PANDAS Pre and Postnatal Depression Advice and Support

<u>Useful Contact Details:</u>

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Person Responsible: Lauren Tonner (Safeguarding Manager)

Contents

This PANDAS safeguarding Policy and Procedure document follows guidelines set out in;

1. Law Commission for England and Wales (1995) Mental Incapacity, Report No. 231. London: HMSO;
2. The Children Act 2004;
3. Working Together 2018;
4. Guidance on Abuse of Vulnerable Adults (Management Executive, Department of Health and Social Services: 1996);
5. Protocol for Joint Investigation of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Abuse of Vulnerable Adults, December 2003;
6. Good Practice in Consent (Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety, 2003);
7. Mental Capacity Act 2005;
8. Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance for Vulnerable or Intimidated Witnesses, including Children (2003).
9. Care Act 2014
10. Human Rights Act 1998.
11. Female Genital Mutlilation Act (FGMA) 2004
12. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Purpose of this document

This document reflects the commitment of PANDAS in working to safeguard vulnerable adults with support needs in line with the above acts.

Charities working with vulnerable groups must make sure their service users are safe and protected from harm.

Charities may be set up to support individuals who could be vulnerable to abuse because of their age, health, physical or mental abilities.

PANDAS supports vulnerable adults who are primarily suffering from perinatal mental illness, along with their families and supporters.

PANDAS Foundation is committed to supporting the rights of adults at risk to be protected from abuse and to making sure that all volunteers, management, and Trustees work together, in line with all current legislation and safeguarding adults' policies and act promptly when dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse or risk of harm.

PANDAS think that: **SAFEGUARDING IS *EVERYBODY'S* CONCERN** –

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We will work together to prevent and minimise abuse or risk of harm, including self-harm or suicide.

If we have concerns that someone is being abused or is at risk of harm our loyalty to the vulnerable person comes before anything else for example, PANDAS, other service users, volunteers, Trustees, Management and the person's friends and family.

DOING NOTHING IS *NOT* AN OPTION –

If we know or suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, or is at risk of harm, we will do something about it and ensure our work is properly recorded. We will work within the boundaries of all Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.

Safeguards to protect our beneficiaries

Trustees of charities have a duty of care to their charity which, if they work with vulnerable groups, will include taking the necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for them.

PANDAS trustees have put safeguarding measures in place to protect vulnerable people from risk of harm abuse and prevent risk or abuse happening in the first place.

Safeguarding induction training is now mandatory for all those who work directly with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their families and/or carers.

PANDAS safeguards:

At PANDAS we have set up the following safeguarding procedures;

- Carrying out the appropriate level of DBS checks on all staff, volunteers and trustees before they have any contact with service users.
- Carrying out Safeguarding training on a yearly basis with all staff and volunteers.
- Employing a full time Safeguarding Manager.
- Having policies and procedures to help prevent abuse happening in the first place, for example a confidentiality policy, reporting abuse procedure and policy, respect in the work place and personal relationships in the workplace.
- Making trustees, staff and volunteers aware of what risk of harm and / or abuse is and how to spot it by completing vulnerable adult and child safeguarding training prior to commencement of their roles.
- Responding to reports/allegations/concerns of abuse rapidly and carrying out investigations confidentially.
- Preventing harm and abuse with a rigorous recruitment and interview process.
- Having a clear system of reporting concerns as soon as abuse is identified or suspected.

Having proper safeguards in place means PANDAS can promote a safe place for the service users and gives the public confidence in the charity and trustees.

Definition of a vulnerable adult

What is a vulnerable adult? The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who:
- Is or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness.
- AND is unable to take care of him / herself.
- OR is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation.

A vulnerable person may fall into any one of the following groups, people with:
- a mental health need
- a learning difficulty
- a physical impairment
- a sensory impairment
- people who are substance or alcohol dependent
- older and frail people
- or family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.

Definition of abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people and may be single or repeated acts. It can be:

- Physical: for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining or giving the wrong medication.
- Honour e.g., enforced marriage.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Psychological and emotional: for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse.

- Financial: including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.
- Sexual: such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent – this can occur in any relationship.
- Slavery.
- Discriminatory: including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks.
- Institutional: the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care. Neglect and acts of omission: including ignoring medical or physical care needs. These can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable person: for example, where a person is deprived of food, heat, clothing, comfort or essential medication, or failing to provide access to appropriate health or social care services.

How we might spot abuse:

Concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:

1. A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult.
2. An indirect disclosure by the vulnerable adult (i.e. hinting that something is wrong or using a scenario to ask questions.)
3. A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
4. An observation of the communication/behaviour of the vulnerable adult by the volunteer, member of staff or carer

Our Commitment to support vulnerable adults who are experiencing, or are at risk from, abuse,

PANDAS is committed to;

- Identifying the abuse of a vulnerable adult.
- Identifying the risk of harm, including to self, of a vulnerable adult.
- Responding effectively to any circumstances/or evidence giving grounds for concern, or where formal complaints or expressions of anxiety are expressed.
- Ensuring the active participation of individuals, families, groups and communities wherever possible and appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the extent of abuse or harm on vulnerable adults and its impact on them.
- Promoting and supporting work designed to reduce abuse and the fear of abuse as experienced by vulnerable adults.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices for protecting vulnerable adults are working.
- Making sure our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring our procedures are in line with Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures.
- Reviewing safeguarding policy and procedure on a regular basis.

Prevention and Confidentiality

All staff and volunteers will have DBS checks taken out before they will have direct contact with PANDAS vulnerable service users.

All staff and volunteers will be requested to undertake safeguarding training, covering issues such as confidentiality and when it may be appropriate to break said confidentiality. Volunteers will also be made aware of, and have on going guidance, as to the correct safeguarding procedures and policies to best support and keep safe the service user.

PANDAS will always work with vulnerable adults in a way that meets all the aspects of confidentiality in our different policies, but where abuse or risk of harm is alleged, suspected, reported or concerns are raised, the **Safeguarding Adults Procedure** must be followed in the first instance. The confidentiality of the vulnerable person will be respected wherever possible, and their consent obtained to share information. The vulnerable person should be made aware that staff cannot ignore issues around abuse and that steps will be taken to deal with them in as sensitive a manner as possible. **In all situations the welfare of the individual is paramount.**

Safeguarding Procedure

1. **You think any <u>form of abuse or risk of harm</u> may have or has occurred.**
2. **You think any <u>form of abuse or risk of harm</u> is likely to occur.**

Act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a vulnerable adult or child subjected to, or at risk of, abuse or harm to attempt to make them safe, ensuring that the immediate needs of the person are fulfilled.

As a PANDAS volunteer this means taking reasonable steps to ensure the service user is in no immediate danger and reporting immediately to the Safeguarding Manager (Lauren Tonner) and the Head of Charity (Annie Belasco).

- If the service user is in immediate danger the escalation policy must be used and help sought from emergency services i.e. police and paramedics where necessary. (As a volunteer you are not required to carry this out, this must be reported directly to the Safeguarding Manager who will contact the appropriate service.)

- If the service user is injured seeking medical treatment is a matter of urgency, you must encourage the service user to do this. (As a volunteer you may request support from the Safeguarding Manager).

- Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

- Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence for example, emails, messenger conversations or notes from the helpline etcetera.

- Where an assault of some kind is suspected ask the service user not to wash or bathe unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm.

- If the allegation is about a volunteer of PANDAS or any organisation that supports the service user, ensure that the allegation is properly managed and confidentiality adhered to by not repeating the information to anyone but the Safeguarding Manager or the Head of Charity.

- If the allegation is about a volunteer of PANDAS action will be taken by the organisation and this will involve suspending the volunteer. The volunteer is entitled to support at this stage from the Volunteer Manager.

- Inform the Safeguarding Manager immediately of any safeguarding issues and what has been done to assist the victim.

- Inform the Head of Charity if your Safeguarding Manager is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation.

The Safeguarding Process

1. Bring the concerns to the attention of the Safeguarding Manager who in turn will contact the Police or other relevant agencies. The Safeguarding Manager will discuss the concerns with the Head of Charity or trustee(s) or in an emergency situation will contact the local authority referral agency or the police straight away in order to ensure the safety and welfare of the service user.

2. The Pandas Safeguarding Manager will coordinate an investigation. After discussion with the Head of Charity it will be necessary to hold a strategy discussion or meeting with the trustees to decide what action to take next. They might decide to call the police. You might need to give a statement to PANDAS or the police. Social services or the police will decide what to do next.

Recording safeguarding concerns

Volunteers who have first contact with the service user concerned should keep a record of all relevant details as soon as possible somewhere that can be kept secure. Include:

- The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident, what the vulnerable adult said about the abuse or the risk of harm, how it occurred or is likely to occur, and what has been reported to you.
- The behaviour of the victim.
- Any injuries described by the service user.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Manager to;

- Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse or risk of harm has been raised.
- Deal with any immediate needs.
- Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe.
- Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged.
- Offer advice to try to ensure that no forensic evidence is lost.
- If the alleged perpetrator is a service user/ vulnerable adult/PANDAS volunteer, ensure that a member of the management team is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
- Clarify the facts stated by the volunteer but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.

- Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding adults procedures i.e. meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedures. If at all uncertain a referral should be made to the police.
- Address issues of consent and confidentiality.
- Complete the safeguarding referral form and send to the trustees and volunteer manager.

A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised wherever:

- A crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.
- There is a suspicion that abuse has taken place, including to both an adult or child.
- There is a confirmation, or suspicion, that an adult has harmed themselves and could be in need of medical assistance, in immediate danger or places a child or another vulnerable adult at risk or in immediate danger.
- The allegation involves a volunteer.
- Vulnerable adults or children are at risk.
- The alleged perpetrator is a vulnerable adult.
- It is unsure if abuse has taken place.

Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must be recorded, with the reasons for the decision not to refer.

Bringing the concern to the attention of PANDAS

As mentioned above the referral stage involves bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of PANDAS, to the Safeguarding Manager, who will then inform other authorities if appropriate. Any individual who has been alerted to the possibility of abuse or harm having occurred or being likely to occur should make a referral.

It is necessary to contact the Safeguarding Manager immediately to explain the situation and the course of action that was taken.

The Safeguarding manager who will make the official referral should ideally have the following information available; however, the lack of any of this information should not delay the referral:

- The name of the vulnerable adult.
- Date of birth and age.
- Address and telephone number.
- Why the adult is considered vulnerable and details surrounding why there is concern around the adult or child.
- Whether consent has been obtained for the referral, and if not the reasons e.g. the vulnerable adult lacks mental capacity or there is fear of further abuse (e.g. where other vulnerable adults are at risk).
- Whether there are any concerns or doubts about the mental capacity of the vulnerable adult.
- Whether the police are already aware of the service user, and whether a police investigation is underway.

How the concerns will be made official

The Safeguarding Manager will report to the police, social services, Head of Charity and the Trustees. It will be necessary to inform the Charities Commission as soon as there is an allegation/suspicion of a safeguarding issue involving a volunteer and or/PANDAS.

Should an allegation be made against the Safeguarding Manager or Head of Charity, this should be done in writing to the HR trustee, Sharon Phillips

Ongoing Safeguarding Work

PANDAS is committed to ensure that safeguarding is of paramount importance and will endeavour to keep up to date with all current legislation and policy. From an organisational level it will;

- Promote and support work designed to reduce abuse and the fear of abuse as experienced by vulnerable adults.

- Regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices for protecting vulnerable adults are working. Making sure all policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

- Ensure all staff have up to date DBS checks.

- All staff and volunteers will be requested to read PANDAS Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and associated policies and provide proof that it has been read and understood.
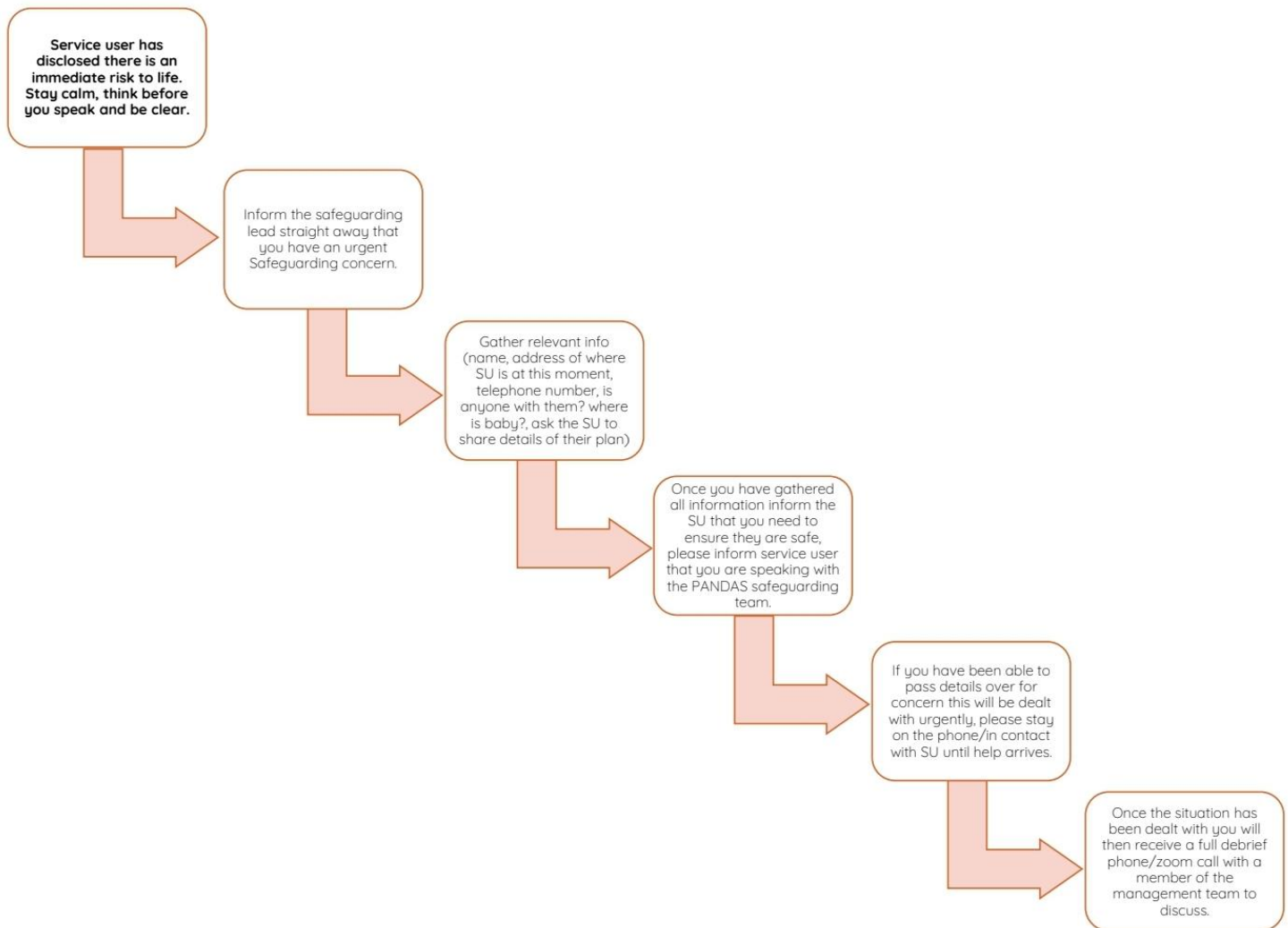
Safeguarding for groups

- Organised external guest- we now have in place an authorisation form for permission for invitation to guest, to ensure the person who is invited is credible, professional and will enhance mental health.
- Groups and their settings will be monitored to ensure that any adverse weather situations that may affect health and safety of attendees. - We at our disclosure, will ensure that we close groups to protect them from any additional environmental factors, such as but not exhaustive of, COVID known within the group or staff members, and weather conditions.
- Photographs or video imagery that is taken within groups, that may be used for media purposes must been given consent prior to their use by the parent or carer of child or themselves to the charity.

Safeguarding for social media content

- Any person that is considered as a service user who offers to share their story as a media related case study, will be offered a full wellbeing via the Communications Manager or journalist/publication to check before, during and after the piece goes live to ensure they are looked after during and beyond the

process. The responsibility of this is agreed prior to acceptance of the project by the Communications Manager.

Safeguarding Flow Chart for Volunteers

Service user has disclosed there is an immediate risk to life. Stay calm, think before you speak and be clear.

Inform the safeguarding lead straight away that you have an urgent Safeguarding concern.

Gather relevant info (name, address of where SU is at this moment, telephone number, is anyone with them? where is baby?, ask the SU to share details of their plan)

Once you have gathered all information inform the SU that you need to ensure they are safe, please inform service user that you are speaking with the PANDAS safeguarding team.

If you have been able to pass details over for concern this will be dealt with urgently, please stay on the phone/in contact with SU until help arrives.

Once the situation has been dealt with you will then receive a full debrief phone/zoom call with a member of the management team to discuss.

Blank Referral Form

The following referral form which should be used to log all relevant details when speaking with a vulnerable service user who is at risk of abuse or harm.

These details will be used in the event of calling for a welfare check in order to safeguard the service user.

PANDAS Foundation Safeguarding policy and procedure
Lauren Tonner

PANDAS FOUNDATION pre and postnatal depression advice and support

Risk assessment – referral form

Section A-Details of the person you are concerned about	
Name –	Age / Date of Birth:
Home Address:	Male		Female	
	Ethnicity:
Post code:	Police Log and Date:
Telephone / Mobile:	Social Services Identification No:
Current location of if different from above.	NHS Identification No:
GP Name. –	GP Address :
Has a referral been made to any other organisation; e.g. Police, CQC. Please specify	
Where has this person who you are concerned about come from through PANDAS?	
Mental Capacity. Yes. ☐ (Person being referred to sign below) No. ☐ (Person referring to explain and sign below.) **Consent of person being referred.** I agree that the information detailed below can be shared with the local authority, police and partner agencies in order to help with this safeguarding enquiry. **Signed (Service User):**　　　　　　(If Faxing) **Printed Name:** **Date:** **Reasons for not seeking consent.** Please give reasons for any decisions to refer without the persons written or verbal consent, *for example; other people are at risk of abuse, a person's mental capacity is questionable, this should also be documented in the client's notes.* **Signed (Referrer):**　　　　　　(If Faxing) **Printed Name:** **Date:**	
Concerns raised Physical ☐　　　Emotional ☐　　Welfare of adult ☐　　　Welfare of child ☐ Psychological illness ☐ Other - detail:	
Section B- Service User Circumstances	
Please describe as fully as possible: include how it came to your attention, time(s), dates(s) and location(s) of alleged incident(s) and situation.	

Is the service user pregnant or have they recently had a baby?

Are they currently experiencing anxiety and depression related to this experience?

What is the severity of their perinatal mental health symptoms, and how is it impacting on family life.

Duration of difficulties (have symptoms presented since onset of pregnancy or since birth within the last year or so?)

Complexity of difficulties, i.e. multiple risk factors / many professionals involved/ complex family difficulties?

Child protection concerns?

Further follow up?