



SAFEGUARDING POLICY
Neuro Gateway Support Network

1. Introduction and Statement of Commitment

Neuro Gateway Support Network is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity, and rights of all individuals who come into contact with the organisation. This includes individuals affected by dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and other neurological conditions, as well as their families, carers, and wider support networks. The organisation recognises that many of the individuals it supports may be vulnerable due to cognitive impairment, mental health needs, physical frailty, or complex social circumstances. As such, *Neuro Gateway Support Network* acknowledges its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure that individuals are protected from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Safeguarding is regarded as a fundamental aspect of the organisation's work and is embedded within all of its activities. The organisation adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and neglect and is committed to ensuring that any safeguarding concerns are identified promptly and responded to appropriately, in line with statutory guidance and best practice within Wales.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework (Wales)

This policy is informed by and operates in accordance with the following legislation and guidance applicable within Wales:

- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- The Wales Safeguarding Procedures (All Wales Procedures)
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005, including the Code of Practice
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

These frameworks collectively establish the duty to protect individuals at risk, promote wellbeing, and ensure that safeguarding concerns are appropriately managed through partnership with statutory agencies.

3. Scope and Application of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of *Neuro Gateway Support Network*, including trustees, volunteers, and any individuals engaged in delivering services or representing the organisation.

The policy applies to all interactions with members of the public, including individuals seeking guidance, families and carers, and any person who may be identified as an adult at risk. It applies regardless of whether contact occurs in person, via telephone, online communication, or any other medium.

4. Definition of an Adult at Risk

In accordance with Welsh legislation, an adult at risk is defined as a person aged 18 years or over who:

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

This definition recognises that vulnerability is not static and may arise due to a range of physical, psychological, or situational factors.

5. Understanding Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect can take many forms and may occur in any setting, including within the individual's own home, care environments, or wider community. *Neuro Gateway Support Network* recognises the following categories of abuse:

Physical abuse may involve the use of force resulting in injury or harm.

Emotional or psychological abuse may include threats, intimidation, humiliation, or controlling behaviour.

Financial abuse involves the misuse or theft of money, property, or financial resources.

Neglect and acts of omission refer to the failure to meet an individual's basic needs, including care, nutrition, or medical support.

Sexual abuse involves any non-consensual sexual activity.

Discriminatory abuse occurs when individuals are treated unfairly due to protected characteristics.

Organisational abuse may arise from poor practice within institutions or services.

Self-neglect refers to behaviour that threatens an individual's own health or safety.

The organisation recognises that abuse may be deliberate or unintentional and that individuals may be subject to multiple forms of abuse simultaneously.

6. Role and Boundaries of the Organisation

Neuro Gateway Support Network provides guidance, information, and support to assist individuals and families in navigating health, social care, and legal systems. The organisation does not provide direct care services, medical advice, or regulated legal services.

However, in the course of its work, the organisation may become aware of safeguarding concerns. In such circumstances, it has a duty to act appropriately by recognising, recording, and referring concerns to the relevant statutory authorities.

The organisation does not investigate safeguarding concerns but works in partnership with agencies that hold statutory responsibility, such as local authorities and safeguarding teams.

7. Safeguarding Principles

The organisation's approach to safeguarding is underpinned by key principles derived from Welsh safeguarding legislation and guidance. These include a commitment to protecting individuals from harm, preventing abuse through early intervention, ensuring that responses are proportionate to the level of risk, working in partnership with relevant agencies, and maintaining clear accountability for safeguarding actions.

These principles guide all decision-making and ensure that safeguarding is approached in a consistent, ethical, and legally compliant manner.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The trustees of *Neuro Gateway Support Network* hold ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the organisation meets its safeguarding obligations. They are responsible for approving and reviewing safeguarding policies, ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place, and promoting a culture in which safeguarding is prioritised.

A designated Safeguarding Lead (Leah Morgan) must be appointed within the organisation. This individual is responsible for overseeing safeguarding matters, providing guidance to trustees and volunteers, and acting as the primary point of contact for safeguarding concerns. The Safeguarding Lead (Leah Morgan) is also responsible for making referrals to statutory services where necessary and maintaining appropriate records.

All individuals acting on behalf of the organisation are responsible for remaining vigilant to potential safeguarding concerns, responding appropriately to disclosures, and reporting concerns in line with this policy.

9. Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise in a variety of ways, including direct disclosure, observation of concerning behaviour, or information shared by third parties. Indicators may include changes in behaviour, signs of physical neglect, financial irregularities, emotional distress, or evidence of unsafe care arrangements.

Given the nature of the organisation's work, concerns may frequently arise during conversations with individuals or families experiencing crisis situations. It is essential that all representatives remain attentive to such indicators and respond appropriately.

10. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Where a safeguarding concern is identified or disclosed, the individual receiving the information must respond calmly and professionally. They should listen carefully, avoid judgment, and ensure that the individual feels heard and taken seriously. It is important not to promise confidentiality, as safeguarding concerns may need to be shared with relevant authorities.

The individual must not attempt to investigate the concern or confront any alleged perpetrator. Instead, they must record the information accurately and report it to the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

11. Reporting and Referral Procedures

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly, including details of what was observed or disclosed, the date and time, and any actions taken. Records should be factual and avoid interpretation or opinion.

The concern must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, who will assess the situation and determine whether a referral to the relevant local authority safeguarding team is required. In Wales, this will typically involve contacting Adult Services or the local safeguarding team within the relevant authority.

If there is an immediate risk of serious harm, emergency services must be contacted without delay by calling 999.

12. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

The organisation recognises the importance of maintaining confidentiality while also acknowledging that safeguarding concerns may require information to be shared without consent in order to protect individuals from harm.

Information will be shared on a need to know basis and in accordance with data protection legislation. Wherever possible, consent will be sought from the individual before sharing information. However, where there is a risk of harm, information may be shared in the public interest without consent.

13. Record Keeping

Accurate and secure record keeping is essential in safeguarding. The organisation will maintain clear records of all safeguarding concerns, actions taken, and referrals made. Records will be stored securely and access will be restricted to authorised individuals only. All records will be retained in accordance with data protection requirements and organisational policies.

14. Safe Working Practices

All individuals representing the organisation are expected to maintain professional boundaries at all times. This includes using official communication channels, avoiding dual relationships, and not undertaking roles or responsibilities beyond the organisation's scope. Clear communication regarding the organisation's role and limitations is essential to prevent misunderstandings and reduce risk.

15. Training and Awareness

The organisation is committed to ensuring that all trustees and representatives have an appropriate level of safeguarding awareness. This includes understanding the signs of abuse, knowing how to respond to concerns, and being familiar with reporting procedures.

16. Partnership Working

Neuro Gateway Support Network recognises that effective safeguarding requires collaboration with statutory and voluntary agencies. The organisation will work constructively with local authorities, health services, and other relevant bodies to ensure that safeguarding concerns are addressed appropriately.

17. Policy Review

This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational practice. The review process will ensure that the policy remains effective, relevant, and compliant with current standards.

18. Safeguarding Lead

Name: Leah Morgan

Role: Safeguarding Lead

Contact Details: leah.morgan@neurogatewayssupportnetwork.org

19. Final Statement

Neuro Gateway Support Network is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the individuals it supports. Safeguarding is integral to the organisation's mission and values, and all those involved in its work share responsibility for ensuring that individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and protection from harm.