

Safeguarding update

Introduction

This paper is to update you on the actions taken to develop our safeguarding processes and the next steps that will support local branches in the things that they do on behalf of Parkinson's UK.

We want to support our volunteers and staff and provide them with advice and appropriate training about best practice in safeguarding. This comes at a time when the law about CRB checks is changing. At the same time there is increased media attention on the issues of abuse of vulnerable adults.

We are focusing on developing example based support and training to help you understand the types of actions that can be undertaken without compromising the position of volunteers and staff. Our approach will protect not only the person living with Parkinson's, but also considers the volunteer and our staff exposure to misinterpretation. In this way the reputation of the charity is supported and we can demonstrate best practice.

Our approach to safeguarding

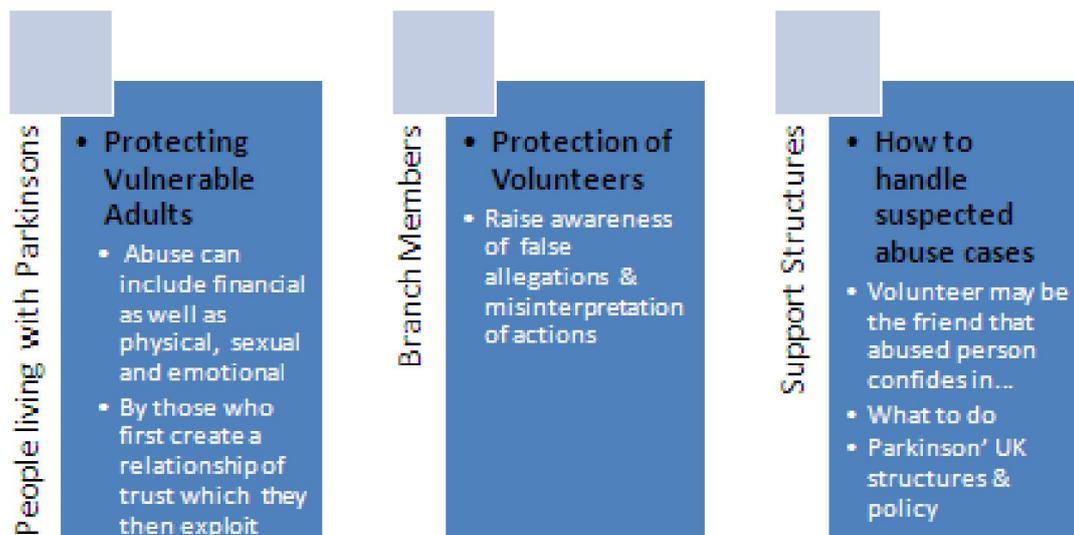
Our approach considers three aspects;

1. The need to protect Vulnerable Adults – unfortunately, in these days, there is a need to protect those living with Parkinson's from those that seek to build a relationship of trust that they can abuse. Abuse may be physical, emotional or financial, and it is important that it is understood and that our policies put in place safeguards and whistle blowing processes. Not everyone who has Parkinson's is vulnerable – but we all need to know what to do at times when people are.
2. The need to protect Volunteers from a misinterpretation of their well intentioned actions. This can unfortunately become allegations, leading to full investigation by local Adult Safeguarding Boards. There is also an increasing risk of false allegations being made. We intend to help branches understand the boundaries between friendship and inappropriate behaviour and how to protect themselves and volunteers in the local group network.
3. The need to build an understanding of national and regional safeguarding processes. As awareness of abuse of vulnerable adults increases it is possible that a local branch member will be the person that a vulnerable adult will confide their abuse to. We want to make sure that committee members and others understand what to do. We will explain the official Police and Social Service processes and how to escalate an issue whilst supporting that person if abuse is disclosed.

These topics will be fully covered in briefing events that will be rolled out in spring 2012.

Our approach can be seen as:

Aspects of safeguarding training



Next Steps

We want to ensure that the new approach is clearly understood and relates to best practice. We are currently arranging some meetings between volunteers in the local group network and Liz Morrison from Safeguarding Matters. The meetings will cover the following:

1. An outline on Safeguarding;
2. Provide scenario based examples of Safeguarding issues to talk about and discuss what our response and policy needs to be;
3. Identifying the most important sections for the Safeguarding policy

A number of people have already expressed an interest in working with the Safeguarding team and attending the meetings. We will be contacting these people directly to join the discussions however if you would like to be involved please contact Lavinia Beale on 020 7963 9386 or lbeale@parkinsons.org.uk

Our policy

A policy will be produced, incorporating people's issues and views on Safeguarding, by the end of January 2012.

Training and information about the policy will be available in spring 2012.

Ongoing Branch activities

At the moment some branches are still concerned about some of their activities. Branch activities that follow the branch handbook guidelines and meet the charity's objectives of signposting people living with Parkinson's to professional help and support are not affected. Branch meetings and social events do not need to change for Safeguarding reasons.

The new policies and training will explain best practice around other activities such as organising driving rotas, providing telephone support and hospital visiting. They will offer practical advice to help local groups understand the difference between formal activities and offering simple friendship and advice. Local support with specific questions will continue to be available from your local teams.

We hope you find this update on Safeguarding helpful, and would like to thank you for your patience. There will be further updates in the New Year.