

Close-Knit

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, vulnerable adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Close-Knit. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with Close-Knit
- The design and implementation of Close-Knit's programmes and activities
- Harm that is disclosed to Close-Knit staff or personnel whilst in an official



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection Policy

capacity

The policy lays out the commitments made by Close-Knit, and informs staff and associated personnel¹ of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under Close-Knit's Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy²
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by or disclosed to Close-Knit or associated personnel

What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect³

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

¹ See 'Scope' for definition of associated personnel

² Some NGOs are now including workplace bullying and harassment in their safeguarding portfolio, as it relates to harm caused by coming into contact with our staff or programmes. However accompanying procedures for dealing with workplace bullying and harassment are likely to be different, due to legal and statutory differences in handling workplace incidents

³ NHS 'What is Safeguarding? Easy Read' 2011
Policies/Safeguarding

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Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur as outlined in The children act 1989 as amended 2004, The care act 2014, Mental capacity act 2005, Sexual offences act 2003, Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006, Protection of freedoms bill 2011.

Scope

- All staff contracted by Close-Knit
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Close-Knit, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians

Policy Statement

Close-Knit believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Close-Knit will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding and adult safeguarding. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them including the following:

- Code of Conduct
- Anti Bullying and Harassment policy
- Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblower) policy
- Complaints Policy
- Procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns
- Procedures for safeguarding in staff recruitment

Close-Knit commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

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Prevention

Close-Knit responsibilities

Close-Knit will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with Close-Knit. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Staff responsibilities

Close-Knit staff and associated personnel must not harm any adult or child in any way and follow the staff code of conduct at all times.

Close-Knit staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since these are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, Close-Knit staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a Close-Knit staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member
- Work with other professionals to share information where relevant in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This includes reporting any safeguarding concerns to the relevant body.

Enabling reports

Close-Knit will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

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Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by Close-Knit's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy. Close-Knit will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or line manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or their line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to the Director with the responsibility for safeguarding – Beth Munby 07341418794
Designated safeguarding officer – Beth Pearson - elizabethcpearson@gmail.com

Response

Close-Knit will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in Associated Policies).

Close-Knit will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

Close-Knit will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from Close-Knit's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that Close-Knit serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

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Child

A person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Abuse

A violation of a person's physical, emotional or mental integrity by any other person.

Vulnerable adult

A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

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