



Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults

1. Purpose of the Policy

Interface is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all participants, particularly vulnerable adults, who may be involved in our programs, projects, and activities. This policy outlines the organization's approach to protecting vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, ensuring that their rights, dignity, and well-being are respected and safeguarded in all interactions with staff, volunteers, artists, and other participants.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, artists, contractors, and anyone who interacts with vulnerable adults as part of the activities and services provided by Interface. It is intended to provide guidance on how to recognize, report, and prevent abuse or neglect.

3. Definitions

- **Vulnerable Adult:** An individual aged 18 or over who, due to age, disability, illness, mental health, or other factors, may be at greater risk of harm or exploitation.
- **Abuse:** Abuse can take various forms, including:
 - **Physical Abuse:** Inflicting harm or injury on a vulnerable adult.
 - **Emotional or Psychological Abuse:** Causing distress, fear, or harm to an individual through manipulation, threats, or humiliation.
 - **Sexual Abuse:** Any form of sexual contact or behaviour without consent.
 - **Neglect:** The failure to provide necessary care, leading to harm or risk of harm.
 - **Financial Abuse:** The exploitation of an individual's financial resources or assets.
 - **Discriminatory Abuse:** Treating someone unfairly because of their age, disability, ethnicity, or other protected characteristic.

4. Principles of Protection

- **Dignity and Respect:** Vulnerable adults will be treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity, and their individual needs and preferences will be considered.
- **Prevention of Harm:** All activities will be designed to minimize the risk of harm or abuse. Where possible, harm will be prevented through proactive measures.
- **Confidentiality:** The privacy of vulnerable adults will be respected, and sensitive information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis or as required by law.
- **Empowerment:** Vulnerable adults will be supported in making informed choices and decisions about their participation in activities.

- **Accountability:** All staff and volunteers will be held accountable for their actions and are expected to report any concerns regarding the welfare of vulnerable adults.

5. Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

All staff, volunteers, and associated personnel must adhere to the following guidelines to protect vulnerable adults:

- Never engage in any form of abuse or exploitation.
- Treat all individuals with respect and courtesy.
- Maintain professional boundaries and avoid inappropriate physical contact or behaviour.
- Be vigilant for signs of abuse or neglect and report any concerns immediately.
- Ensure that any communication or interaction with vulnerable adults is appropriate and respectful.
- Respect the confidentiality of all participants, while understanding that safeguarding concerns must be reported as per the procedures outlined in this policy.

6. Recruitment and Training

- **Recruitment:** All staff, volunteers, and artists will be thoroughly vetted before they are allowed to work with vulnerable adults. This will include:
 - DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks
 - Reference checks from previous employers or organizations.
- **Training:** All personnel will receive safeguarding training to recognize the signs of abuse and understand the appropriate actions to take. This will be reviewed regularly.

7. Reporting Concerns

- **Immediate Actions:** If a vulnerable adult is at immediate risk of harm, staff must contact emergency services (e.g., the gardaí or social services) without delay.
- **Internal Reporting:** Any concerns about abuse or neglect should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead or officer within Interface. This person will ensure that the matter is addressed promptly and in line with legal and organizational procedures.
- **External Reporting:** In cases where there is a serious concern, the designated safeguarding lead will liaise with external authorities such as social services or the police.

8. Safeguarding Lead and Contact Information

The designated Safeguarding Lead at Interface is responsible for ensuring this policy is followed and that appropriate action is taken if concerns arise. Contact details for the Safeguarding Lead are:

- Name: Alannah Robins
- Email: interfaceinagh@gmail.com
- Phone: 086 1993878

In the event that the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, concerns can be directed to Emma O Flaherty interfaceinagh@gmail.com 085 7398429

9. Risk Assessment

Interface will carry out a risk assessment for each activity involving vulnerable adults. This will include:

- Assessing potential risks of harm and putting strategies in place to mitigate them.
- Identifying any specific vulnerabilities related to the individual(s) involved.
- Ensuring adequate staffing levels and support for vulnerable adults during activities.

10. Whistleblowing

Interface encourages staff and volunteers to report any concerns they may have about the behavior of colleagues or others involved in the organization. Whistleblowing procedures are in place to protect those who report concerns in good faith.

11. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up to date with current legislation, best practices, and the needs of vulnerable adults involved in our programs. The review will also assess the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures and identify areas for improvement.

Signed:

Alannah Robins
Artistic Director

4/11/2024

Implementation Considerations

- **Accessibility:** The policy should be communicated clearly to all relevant parties, including staff, volunteers, artists, and vulnerable adults. Accessible formats (e.g., large print, translations) should be available for those who need them.
- **Ongoing Evaluation:** Interface should continually monitor the implementation of the policy, ensuring it meets the needs of vulnerable adults and is adhered to by all staff and participants.

By implementing this safeguarding policy, Interface will demonstrate its commitment to the protection and welfare of vulnerable adults and create a safer environment for everyone involved.