

2. JOINT POLICY STATEMENTS:

- 2.1 The seven Social Service Authorities within South Wales have the lead role in co-ordinating the development of policy guidance for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.
- 2.2 All partner agencies (see Section 15: Glossary of Terms for meaning of the term 'partner agencies') have a responsibility to respond to suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse as described in these procedures. Where appropriate, agencies will undertake to arrange protection, support and/or care for vulnerable adult client groups and to take action against those who deliberately abuse vulnerable adults and to support those who find themselves over stretched in their caring responsibilities.
- 2.3 Local policies should be designed so that they draw on other policy frameworks, thus ensuring that a consistent response is given to vulnerable adult(s) when concerns are raised, whether these are reported:
- under the rubric of a complaints procedures;
 - through inspection or registration activity;
 - through care management contract monitoring arrangements;
 - as a result of disclosure on part of the vulnerable adult(s) or their carer(s); or
 - as a result of 'whistle-blowing' (See Section 15: Glossary of Terms for the meaning of the term 'whistle-blowing'. Also see supplementary guidance for practitioners who may wish to make a confidential disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 – Appendix 'B')
- 2.4 All partner agencies and organisations must co-operate with each other on issues relating to the identification, investigation, treatment and prevention of abuse of vulnerable adults. In this respect:
- Each agency has a responsibility to share information on a 'need to know' basis so that effective decisions can be made and appropriate preventative action taken. (Further guidance on this can be found in Section 7: Inter-Agency Protocols – The Sharing of Information).
 - Any action taken must be co-ordinated against perpetrators to ensure that parallel processes are dovetailed including prosecution, disciplinary action and removal from, or notification to, professional registers and similar bodies e.g. POVA List (see paragraph 4.4 for further guidance on this).
- 2.5 **Policy - Guiding Principles:**

2.6 All partner agencies/organisations must adhere to the following guiding principles which are to:

- Apply the core principle of equal opportunities to all vulnerable adults regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, culture, religious beliefs or except where it is strictly relevant, their possession of a criminal record.
- Apply the doctrine of equality to all vulnerable adults regardless of their age, race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, culture or disability.
- Continuously strive to improve the effectiveness of responding to abuse.
- Actively promote the empowerment and well being of vulnerable adults through the services they provide.
- Ensure the safety of vulnerable adults by integrating strategies, policies and services relevant to abuse within a legislative framework (For further guidance on this, see Section 14: Legal Context).
- Act in a way that supports the rights of the individual to lead an independent life based on self-determination and personal choice.
- Recognise people who are unable to take their own decisions and/or to protect themselves, their assets or bodily dignity.
- Recognise that the right to self-determination can involve risk. Any significant risk of harm should be managed following a risk assessment.
- Ensure that when the right to an independent lifestyle and choice is at risk, the individual concerned receives appropriate help, including advice, protection and support from relevant agencies, including an independent advocate.
- Ensure that the law and statutory requirements are known and used appropriately so those vulnerable adults receive the protection of the law and access to the judicial process.