

## **FOREWORD**

In September 2000, The National Assembly for Wales, through its Social Services Inspectorate, issued a guidance document entitled *In Safe Hands* which called for the development and implementation of multi-agency policies and procedures to protect and support vulnerable adults from abuse and inappropriate care. This policy and operational guidance seeks to support good practice and has been developed with a view to embracing the ethos of the *In Safe Hands* guidance.

The multi-agency adult protection policy acknowledges the diverse aspects of abuse and fundamentally sets out to enable vulnerable adults to be protected from any form of abuse and inappropriate care by directing agencies to take positive action in dealing with such instances of abuse/inappropriate care. In collaboration with others, it aims to develop strategies that are designed to prevent and/or reduce the risk of abuse/inappropriate care from occurring. The protocols set out in this document aim to clarify and support the roles and responsibilities of practitioners and managers in all agencies tasked with caring and supporting vulnerable adults.

Statutory agencies must be committed to the fundamental principle of preventing abuse and this will be achieved through the development of positive service cultures within those agencies that are tasked with the care, protection and support of vulnerable adults. Agencies within the voluntary and independent sector will also have a key role to play in the protection of vulnerable persons, albeit that the lead responsibility for the investigation of allegations of abuse/inappropriate care will always rest with the statutory agencies.

It is the duty of every citizen, not just employed staff, to report any concerns they may have in relation to the abuse/inappropriate care or suspected abuse/inappropriate care of a vulnerable adult.

The South Wales Adult Protection Forum consists of representatives from statutory, voluntary and independent sector organisations and service users and carers. Whilst the Forum has produced the following proposals for individual agencies in South Wales to consider, the responsibility for agreeing adult protection policies and procedures rests with individual agencies. It is likely that these agencies will require that their staff and contractors comply with the policy.

For reference purposes, the geographical area defined by South Wales encompasses the seven Unitary Authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, the Vale of Glamorgan, the South Wales Police Authority together with the two Health Authorities of Bro Taf and Iechyd Morgannwg and the six NHS Trusts of Bro Morgannwg, Cardiff and Vale, North Glamorgan, Pontypridd and Rhondda, Swansea and Velindre.