

Safeguarding Policy

The British Porphyria Association (BPA) believes that protecting people and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The BPA recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of all who use its services, and prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harm of adults and children, and to report any abuse or harm discovered or suspected. The BPA also recognises its responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect from harm its staff, volunteers and others who come into contact with the charity through its work.

Our policy is:

- To be alert to potential indicators of abuse, neglect or harm
- To be alert to the potential risks posed to adults and children
- To ensure everyone at the BPA knows what to do if a safeguarding issue is raised
- To contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare
- To ensure that BPA staff and volunteers are suitable to act in their roles and that DBS checks, or equivalent safeguarding checks in Scotland (PVG) and Northern Ireland (AccessNI), are completed where required
- To promote an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, so that it is safe for individuals to report incidents and concerns with the assurance these will be handled sensitively and properly.

In the event of a safeguarding issue, the BPA will follow the safeguarding procedure outlined on pages 3-5 of this document.

Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to the activity undertaken to protect the safety of adults and children and keep them free from risks of abuse, harm or neglect.

Where safeguarding issues may arise

Within the BPA's main activities, the charity seeks to support patients with porphyria. Although not specifically vulnerable due to their porphyria, in the course of supporting patients via helplines or events (virtual and physical environments), BPA staff or volunteers may become aware of people who are vulnerable or at risk of harm. The BPA takes seriously the welfare of all people involved in its activities and aims to ensure that all are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

Confidentiality

All safeguarding information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the board of trustees and the executive committee.

Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Adopted on: June 2021

Last reviewed: March 2024

Signed: *J Chamberlayne* Name: John Chamberlayne

Position: Chair

Safeguarding Procedure

Being alert to the risks

Anyone can be at risk of abuse. People are at risk at different times and in different situations. BPA staff and volunteers should be alert to the potential vulnerabilities in people affected by long-term medical health conditions and have additional care and support needs. A person at risk may be:

- a person with porphyria
- a carer such as a family member/friend who provides personal assistance and care
- an adult with additional care and support needs
- a young person or child under the age of 18

Having porphyria does not mean someone is automatically at risk.

Categories of abuse, neglect or harm

Abuse is defined as ‘a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons’. It may arise as a result of deliberate actions or a result of negligence, indifference or a failure to protect. Abuse or harm can include:

- physical abuse
- sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation
- psychological/emotional abuse
- domestic violence
- neglect, self-neglect and acts of omission
- organisational/institutional cultures that allow poor behaviours, practices, accountability or an abuse of trust
- financial or material abuse
- discrimination (Equality Act 2010), bullying or harassment
- modern day slavery, human trafficking, extremism and radicalisation
- data breaches, including those under General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

While most abuse or harm takes place when people are in physical contact, it can also take place in a virtual environment, such as an online discussion board or chat room.

Please see www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/ for more detail.

Reporting procedure

Although rare, no suspicion of abuse or harm should be ignored. Staff or volunteers may become aware of possible abuse when they:

- witness a form of potential harm
- recognise an abuse or harm indicator

- are told about a potential harm by the person with porphyria
- are told about a potential harm by a carer, relative or friend
- observe online abuse on forums and discussion boards
- receive a complaint.

All BPA staff and volunteers have a duty to report any disclosure, reports or suspicions of abuse or harm without delay by contacting chair@porphyria.org.uk. The role of all staff members and volunteers is to recognise, respond, record and report internally.

The BPA does not provide an emergency service. If there is an emergency, the staff member or volunteer should inform the person at risk to call the Police.

Responding to disclosure, suspicion or witnessing of abuse

Where a person at risk discloses or discusses abuse the staff member or volunteer should be able to:

- **Recognise:** identify that the person at risk may be describing abuse, even when they may not be explicit.
- **Respond:** stay calm, listen and show empathy, without displaying shock or disbelief. Reassure them that it will be taken seriously. Explain that there is a duty to report the issues internally and what may happen next.
- **Record:** write up notes of the conversation clearly and factually as soon as possible. Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal cues and try to capture as much of the conversation verbatim as possible.
- **Report:** report the details of the case to chair@porphyria.org.uk

Making a referral

If the Chair of Trustees (lead safeguarding responder) has concerns after discussing the case with the person making an initial report, they will make a referral to the relevant Social Services team. The relevant local council team can be found by putting a postcode into the gov.uk's service finder: www.gov.uk/find-local-council. Instances concerning children can also be discussed with or reported via the NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000.

Enquiries or investigations are undertaken only by Social Services, or the Police if deemed to include criminal activity. No BPA staff or volunteer should start any investigation or confront or make contact with the alleged perpetrator.

What information will be needed when making a referral?

A safeguarding responder will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the person's full name, date of birth, address, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the person may have, details of the parents if a child. A call should still be made even if all of the details are not yet available. The verbal referral should be followed with a written referral within 48hrs.

BPA staff and volunteers

The BPA will ensure that trustees, staff, and volunteers are suitable and legally able to act in their positions and will use 'Working with Adults in the Charity Sector' or 'Working with Children in the Charity Sector', HM Government, to confirm whether BPA activities require staff and volunteers to obtain a DBS check and at which level it is required: www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-guidance-leaflets. Where trustees, staff, and volunteers are based in Scotland or Northern Ireland, the following guidance from the equivalent safeguarding schemes of these devolved nations will be consulted to determine the checks required:

- <https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-for-employers/voluntary-organisations>
- <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/checking-job-applicants-employees-and-volunteers>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-guidance-leaflets/working-with-children-in-the-charity-sector-and-overseas-aid-organisations>

Useful contact and resources

Senior lead for safeguarding: John Chamberlayne: chair@porphyria.org.uk

Police: Emergency – 999; Non-emergency – 101

NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000

Local council finder: www.gov.uk/find-local-council.

'Safeguarding is everyone's business' HM Government: <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/English-safeguarding-leaflet-WEB.pdf>

'Safeguarding Adults – pocket guide' NHS England: www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf

Safeguarding Form

1. Date	
2. Who discovered the safeguarding issue?	
3. Details of the case	
4. Person at risk name and contact details	
6. Reported to?	

Form completed by

Print name: _____

Signature: _____

Role: _____

Date: _____