

## **Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals Safeguarding Assurance Statement**

### **Context**

The Safeguarding responsibilities of Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust), including children, young people and adults at risk includes the provision of safe, high quality care for all those who use and attend our services. As the legal frameworks, national policy and evidence change, the Trust reviews its safeguarding provision to ensure it is relevant and in line with our national and local partner agencies.

The Trust ensure that the duties and principles of safeguarding children and adults are applied diligently and consistently using a holistic approach. We respect the need for patient autonomy and support the empowerment of patients' right to make individual decisions.

The Trust works closely with partner agencies to deliver its safeguarding responsibilities collectively. This partnership working allows the Trust to help and support those needing safeguarding support. The Trust safeguarding teams work with colleagues in both health and local authorities collaboratively, to ensure those at risk and their families are supported consistently in and out of hospital.

### **Legal Framework**

There are multiple legislative acts that regulate how the Trust enacts its safeguarding responsibilities for children and adults. Those over 18 with the capacity to do so, have the right to make their own decisions, even if these are unwise. If an adult makes unwise decisions that continually put them at risk of exploitation or maltreatment, then further investigation may be needed.

Decision making power for children lies with those who have parental responsibility. If children or those responsible for them reject measures that could save them from significant harm, their wishes can be overridden. If a child is capable of making a reasonable assessment of the treatment proposed, the consent, if given, can be described as true consent in accordance with the Gillick principles. Parents and carers can still be involved unless the Fraser guidelines apply.

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) empowers children aged 16 and 17 to make their own decisions unless it is established they do not have the capacity to do this. The Mental Health Act (MHA) covers people of any age.

### **Ashford and St Peter's Duties**

Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals Trust Board are fully committed to providing the highest standards of safeguarding practice. The Trust believes that everyone has a right to:

- Live free from violence, fear and abuse
- Be protected from harm and exploitation
- Be independent - which may involve some risk
- Say 'No' to anything they don't fully understand

The Trust considers that safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff, both clinical and non-clinical. The Trust will discharge its safeguarding duties and provide assurance of this to the CCG. All staff have a duty of care to share concerns about a patient or staff welfare if they believe they are suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

The Trust has a Named Doctor and Named Nurse for children's safeguarding. The Trust also has a named Midwife for those up to 28 days old and their parents. For Adults at risk there is a Named Nurse. The Trust also has an administrator for MHA documentation.

The Trust is represented on the Surrey Safeguarding Children's and Adults boards by the Chief Executive and Chief Nurse respectively. Representation is also made at the health sub groups of both boards.

The Trust works in partnership with local agencies to facilitate effective information sharing. Staff at the Trust have access to the safeguarding teams for advice and support and information can be shared if it done to protect children or adults at risk. The Trust participates fully in all Section 42 enquires and Serious Case Reviews.

All staff commencing employment at the Trust are screened using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), this is repeated every three years during employment.

The Trust Board of Directors complete the Fit and Proper Persons Test before commencing employment. The trust acts in an open an honest way to patients, relatives and staff in terms of care provision to ensure good safeguarding practice. This includes following duty of Candour in relation to any unexpected or unintended incidents that may occur and which may cause harm.

### **Ashford and St Peter's Roles and Responsibilities**

Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). All Trust staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

The Trust safeguarding executive lead is the Chief Nurse, supported by the safeguarding teams including named professionals. Consent for care and treatment is obtained in line with legislation and guidance.

Ashford and St Peter's NHS Foundation Trust has safeguarding accountability and assurance arrangements in place which are quality assured by regular meetings with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and evidence of compliance is also provided to the Adults and Children's Boards.

All Trust staff are trained in line with their role in:

- Safeguarding adults
- Safeguarding children
- Prevent
- Domestic abuse
- Mental Capacity Act
- Deprivation of Liberties

The Trust has arrangements in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children or vulnerable adults. The Trust also has a set of safeguarding policies and procedures which are regularly updated.

We have effective partnership arrangements in place to facilitate working with other agencies.

Trust staff are aware of their personal responsibility to report any concerns and to ensure poor practice is identified and tackled.