



# **Safe Guarding Vulnerable Adults Policy**

## Armed Forces Para Snowsport Team

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**Glossary of terms used in the safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults**

Abuse	See Appendix One.
Adult	A person of, or over the age of, 18 years.
Advocate	An individual who speaks on behalf of, or represents the interests of, the vulnerable adult where appropriate.
Athlete	A generic term to include all our beneficiaries from across all 3 discipline sports who are part of AFPST who may be a Vulnerable Adult.
Criminal Records Check	A service carried by a government agency that checks the criminal record history of a potential employee or volunteer who will be working in a Regulated Activity that includes close or regular contact with Children or Vulnerable Adults, on behalf of organisations and recruiters throughout the United Kingdom. In England and Wales this agency is the Criminal Records Bureau; in Scotland it is called Disclosure Scotland, and in Northern Ireland checks are made through AccessNI.
Duty of Care	The duty that rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in an
Position of Trust	This is where an individual, such as a coach, team leader or member of staff who makes decisions for or about a vulnerable person, can influence a Vulnerable Adult's actions and may misuse that position to groom or Abuse the Athlete or individual. This position can be a positive one, in building confidence and self-esteem for vulnerable people.
Risk Assessment	A procedure to help identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise these risks taking into account the age, number, impairment type and competence of participants.
Safeguarding Officer (LSO)	The AFPST will appoint a Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) from its staff whose responsibilities are set out in section 4.1

<p>Vulnerable Adult</p>	<p>A person, 18 years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. No Secrets - definition based on that set out in the 1997 Consultation paper: "Who Decides?" Issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department.</p> <p>In respect of sporting activity a person is also regarded as a Vulnerable Adult under the Vetting and Barring Scheme when they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Receiving any form of medical care or therapy, such as being treated by a physiotherapist</li> <li>-Receiving a service or participating in an activity that is specifically targeted at people with age-related needs or disabilities.</li> </ul>
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## 1. Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy

### 1.1 General principles

Every organisation that provides services for vulnerable adults has a part to play in safeguarding and promoting their welfare. The key elements to safeguarding include:

- The protection of vulnerable adults from Abuse and neglect;
- The promotion of practices that contribute to vulnerable adults' safety, health and wellbeing;
- Ensuring a safe and effective environment for vulnerable adults.

The AFPST acknowledges that its membership, include people with disabilities, and that these people can be additionally vulnerable, and may be targeted by those wishing to abuse. Communication difficulties, isolation, a dependency on others are other factors that may contribute to increasing risks to a vulnerable adult's safety and welfare, and impact on their ability to access help and support. Care will be taken to ensure that individual needs are recognised and assessed, and appropriate additional safeguards are put in place.

Although the majority of individuals have a fulfilling experience in sport, some people may experience Abuse and/or poor practice linked to their participation. While experience of

harm occurs at every level of sport, research shows that vulnerability to Abuse and poor practice increases as athletes make progress through the competitive ranks.

It is vital that anyone involved in sports provision for vulnerable adults is alert to:

- Possible indicators of Abuse and neglect
- Risks that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults
- Understanding what actions they should take should concerns arise

The aim of this policy is to set context, commitment, principles, scope and core practice guidelines for any AFPST training, competition or event that may have vulnerable adults in attendance.

## **1.2 Scope**

These policies apply to all Athletes, Coaches, Team Leaders, Management Team and anyone involved with the AFPST Team. All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of Vulnerable Adults and prevent their Abuse.

## **1.3 Why these policies are needed**

AFPST has realised the need for an individual policy for Vulnerable Adults, in line with the considerations of the Equality Act 2010, to promote equal opportunities and provide a clearer framework for those who suffer from physical, mental health and learning disabilities.

Vulnerable people are at heightened risk of Abuse and discrimination because of their susceptibility and many experience this in all walks of life. Practice has shown that vulnerable people who are victims of Abuse in the sports setting can be reluctant to report their experiences for fear of losing a positive and important part of their lives. Therefore it is essential that all those involved with representing the AFPST are aware of the indicators of Abuse and can recognise and act appropriately to protect potential victims.

Abuse can occur in many situations, including the home, workplace, day centre, at the shops, on the bus, in educational institutions and of course in the sporting environment. For the majority of Vulnerable Adults, sport will be a positive and rewarding experience, however, there is a growing recognition that sport generally provides easy access to vulnerable people for those who wish to perpetrate abusive behavior for their own gratification. Therefore, the AFPST is aware of the need to protect Vulnerable Adults from those individuals who may seek to harm them in the sports environment

When addressing Adult Abuse it relates to the Adult's right to self-determination. Adults may choose not to act at all to protect themselves and only in extreme circumstances will the law intervene. In cases of suspected Adult Abuse it is important to recognise that assertive persuasion to encourage the individual to report or take action against an abuser or abusive situation may have negative outcomes for the Vulnerable Adult and could be detrimental to their wellbeing by causing them further harm. Therefore, the protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse is a more complex process than child protection and requires policy and procedures that reflect this. Policy users need to develop an understanding that protecting Vulnerable Adults necessitates a more supportive and advisory approach in response to reporting Abuse.

Each Vulnerable Adult is a unique individual with varying degrees of need and ability. Some people will have a combination of physical and learning disability, others may have one or the other; some may have mental health needs and a combination of other complex disabilities such as Epilepsy, Diabetes, Down Syndrome, visual or hearing impairment.

## **1.4 Policy statement**

The AFPST is committed to:

- Making the welfare of Vulnerable Adults paramount, even where the rights and needs of the other adults that work with them are overridden in order to provide the necessary protection to these individuals
- Enabling everyone, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, first language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, to participate equitably in sport in a fun and safe environment
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect Vulnerable Adults from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and have respect for their human rights, wishes and feelings
- Taking all suspicions and allegations of Abuse or poor practice seriously and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures
- Ensuring that all AFPST volunteers working with Vulnerable Adults are competent and appropriate for the responsibility and have been provided with relevant awareness training regarding the potential difficulties vulnerable adults can face and how to manage them
- Requiring all volunteers to accept responsibility for the welfare of the Vulnerable Adults in their care in accordance with current legislation and government guidance and procedures, and that they incorporate such policies into their constitutions and rules.

## **2. Good practice, poor practice and Abuse**

### **2.1 Introduction**

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from Abuse, whether intentional or accidental.

It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in sport to make judgements regarding whether or not Abuse is taking place, however, all AFPST Personnel have the responsibility to:

- recognise and identify poor practice and potential Abuse
- act on this if they have concerns, as explained in section 3.

### **2.2 Good Practice**

AFPST strongly advises, that all those working with Vulnerable Adults:

- hold a recognised coaching qualification

- have completed a recognised Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Basic Awareness course as a minimum standard.
- conduct appropriate risk assessments before carrying out any sports-related activity
- aim to make participation in sport fun and enjoyable
- promote fairness and playing by the rules
- not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances
- treat all Athletes equally and preserve their dignity; this includes giving attention, time and respect to all Athletes regardless of their level of ability

### **2.3 Coaches and those working with Vulnerable Adults**

Those working with Vulnerable Adults should:

- respect the developmental stage of each Athlete and not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for team, national or personal achievement
- ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the Athlete
- work with Vulnerable Adults to develop realistic training and competition schedules which are suited to the needs and lifestyle of the athlete, not the ambitions of others such as coaches and team members.
- build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, encouraging Vulnerable Adults to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making
- always be publicly open when working with Vulnerable Adults, for example: Avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual Athlete are completely unobserved and maintain an appropriate and open environment with no secrets
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with Vulnerable Adults. Physical contact may be appropriate where: it is neither intrusive or disturbing, the athlete has provided permission openly and it is delivered in an open environment
- maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with Athletes and avoid forming intimate relationships with athletes they are working with as this may threaten the position of trust and respect present between Athlete and coach
- be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour
- gain the Vulnerable Adult's consent in advance and in writing, to administer emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
- be aware of medical conditions, impairments, existing injuries and medicines being taken and keep written records of any injury or accident that occurs, together with



details of treatments provided

- arrange that someone with current knowledge of emergency first aid is available at all times.

### **3. Responding to suspicions and allegations of abuse**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Although many cases of Abuse take place within the family setting, Abuse can and does occur in sport. It is therefore essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken. It is not your responsibility to decide if Abuse of a vulnerable person is taking place. It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the appropriate agencies. Not acting is not an option.

#### **3.2 Receiving evidence of possible Abuse /poor practice**

You may have concerns about Abuse and /or poor practice because:

- you see it happening
- you recognise signs such as those listed in Appendix One
- someone reports it to you
- a Vulnerable Adult approaches you directly

#### **3.3 Recording information**

All concerns that you may have or receive should be recorded, ideally using the AFPST Incident Report Form. You are recording this information for:

- yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- the AFPST Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) or other designated welfare person within your sport, who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken
- the Police/ Care Services if appropriate

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g. colleagues, your fellow team members and other acquaintances outside the sport or organisation. Any information relating to Vulnerable Adults disclosures or concerns should be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis. When recording information you should: Stick to the facts (what you have seen, heard or had reported to you). You should distinguish between what is your personal knowledge and what you have been told by others and do not give your own opinions: be clear when you are giving your own or others' interpretation of events.

#### **3.4 Reporting the concern**

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a Vulnerable Adult will raise feelings and concerns. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- The welfare of the Vulnerable Adult is paramount, being vigilant helps to protect the

individual

- It is important to explain to the vulnerable person BEFORE a disclosure that you may have to discuss the information they give with a person in a more responsible position than yourself. Always ensure you have the permission of the individual before taking official action regarding the concern. It is important that the individual is able to exercise their right to self-determination unless, in exceptional circumstances, the level of Abuse is very serious and clearly necessitates criminal investigation.
- Do not pressurise the vulnerable person as this can contribute to their stress. Try to negotiate an amicable agreement with the individual about sharing your concerns and be honest about who must be told and what may then happen. Ensure the vulnerable individual feels in control of their information and seek to encourage the individual to report the Abuse themselves. A good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

#### **3.4.1 Reporting concerns outside of an event**

Ensure you have permission of the individual before taking official action regarding the concern (unless it necessitates criminal investigation). With agreement, concerns should be passed to the AFPST LSO, if however the LSO is not contactable and it is urgent, or you are concerned that a Vulnerable Adult may be in immediate danger then you should report your concerns to a statutory agency and ensure that you follow this up in writing and forward a copy of the AFPST report form to the LSO as soon as possible or within 24 hours. The flowchart for reporting concerns can be found in Appendix Four.

#### **3.4.2 Reporting concerns at a training and competition**

Ensure you have permission of the individual before taking official action regarding the concern (unless it necessitates criminal investigation). With agreement, concerns should be passed to the AFPST LSO, if however the LSO are not contactable and it is urgent, or you are concerned that a Vulnerable Adult may be in immediate danger then you should report your concerns to a statutory agency and ensure that you follow this up in writing and forward a copy of the AFPST report form to the LSO as soon as possible or within 24 hours. Contact details will be provided in the Games/Camps welfare plan. A template flowchart for reporting concerns at training and competition can be found in Appendix Five.

#### **3.4.3 Involving statutory agencies**

It should be noted that physical and sexual Abuse is illegal. Consequently there is an obligation that allegations and concerns are reported to the police who will decide whether to take criminal action or not. In some instances, other types of Abuse such as discrimination and financial exploitation may also be considered to be criminal and these should also be reported. In any case of physical or sexual Abuse or where a Vulnerable Adult's safety is at risk, the Vulnerable Adult must be encouraged to contact one of the following statutory agencies:

- the local police station or in an emergency, dial 999. The police should be involved if the Abuse is thought to be of a criminal nature. A record should be made of the details of the referral and the crime reference number
- Adult Social Care Services (formerly Social Services). This body has a

statutory duty to ensure the welfare of adults in vulnerable positions and are legally bound to investigate allegations of Abuse. Such investigations will involve discussing the matter with the Vulnerable Adult, and where appropriate their Carer. They will also gather information from others who know and are involved with the vulnerable person

In an emergency, Social Care services contact details can be found on your area's County Council website or from the Samaritans (08457 909090) who will hold the Duty Officer's contact number.

All telephone referrals made to the statutory agencies must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours detailing the following information:

- the name and title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed and the date this happened
- any action that has been taken
- a summary of the information shared and the response received
- the time and date of the referral call to the statutory agency Other services that can offer help and advice (this list is far from exhaustive):

-Combat Stress. A charity to support veterans with mental issues. T 0800 138 1619  
[www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

-Careline. Telephone counselling service for children, young people and adults on any issue, including relationships, depression, mental health, Abuse, addictions, stress etc.  
[www.carelineuk.org](http://www.carelineuk.org) T 08451 228622

-Disability Information Service. National service providing information on all aspects of disability for disabled people, their families, friends and carers. [www.diss.org.uk](http://www.diss.org.uk)

-Mental Health Foundation. Information about how to get help with any mental health problem in your local area. [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

-Mind. A wealth of information about mental health issues and contact details for the nearest Mind group in your area. [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) T 0845 766 0163

### **3.5 Allegations of previous Abuse**

Allegations of Abuse are occasionally made some time after the event, for example by an adult abused as a young person by a member of staff who is still working with Children or Vulnerable Adults. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures given above relating to the involvement of statutory agencies. This is because other Vulnerable Adults, either within sport or in other environments, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to Abuse should automatically be excluded from working with vulnerable groups.

### **3.6 Support to deal with the aftermath of Abuse**

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that Vulnerable Adults and members of

staff may need in the aftermath of an Abuse case. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling; 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: bac@bacp.co.uk, Internet: <http://www.bacp.co.uk>.

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator. Whilst the investigation is on-going the alleged perpetrator should be given the detail of the process to be followed and should have a point of contact within the organisation. They can also be directed towards The British Association for Counselling Directory (details above) or The Samaritans who provide, non-religious, non-political, 24-hour confidential support line: 08457 90 9090 [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

## **4. Designated persons with responsibility for safeguarding Vulnerable Adults**

### **4.1 Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)**

This should be someone with good knowledge and understanding of the issues that Vulnerable Adults face in the sporting environment and a focussed approach to addressing concerns, raising awareness and improving practice. The post holder must be able to communicate effectively to provide advice and support at all levels. They should have influencing skills and an ability to work with conflict and with emotionally distressing matters. Knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance, the AFPST Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policies and procedures is essential. The ability to confront poor and discriminatory practice and also to promote and demonstrate high standards of anti-discriminatory practice in relation to safeguarding and Abuse.

#### **4.1.1 Responsibilities**

The LSO has overall responsibility for the development and establishment of the AFPST approach to safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

#### **4.1.2 Role related to SPVA Policy**

- To liaise with the specialists and investigators who may be brought in to help with Vulnerable Adult cases regarding individual cases, proposed policy and guidance.
- To convene and chair the case management group as required. To convene and chair the Safeguarding Group meetings at least once a year. To take a lead role in maintaining and reviewing implementation of the AFPST Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- To coordinate the dissemination of this policy, procedures and related resources throughout AFPST.
- To represent the AFPST at external meetings related to safeguarding.
- To receive reports of referrals and investigations from Coaches or Team Leaders

## **5. Selecting People to work with Vulnerable Adults**

AFPST will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with Vulnerable Adults. AFPST will ensure effective recruitment and selection for all coaches and volunteers. Those volunteering as part of the AFPST Team should sign a Team Members Agreement

### **5.1 Controlling access to Vulnerable Adults**

All individuals who will have significant access to Vulnerable Adults must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with Vulnerable Adults or may present a risk to them.

All volunteers in a role that entails Significant Access to Vulnerable Adults, or where they have a Position of Trust, or existing volunteers or staff who change their role to work with these vulnerable groups, are required to complete the following vetting process:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will help to assess an applicant's suitability to work with Vulnerable Adults based on their skills and competencies as well as eliciting information about an applicant's past and providing a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- provide two appropriate referees
- provide details of previous volunteering experience or relevant employment.
- provide evidence of their identity (such as a driving licence or passport with photo)

In addition those working in a Regulated Activity must also comply with legal requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as these are implemented: That is, for anyone working in a 'Regulated Activity' they must complete an Enhanced CRB Disclosure check. For more information on criminal records checks please go to Appendix Three

## **6. Awareness and training**

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible Abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a Vulnerable Adult.
- Work safely and effectively with Vulnerable Adults. BPA requires:
- Coaching staff to attend a recognised 3-hour Safeguarding workshop, to ensure they have an understanding of what is considered to be good practice and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards safeguarding.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult, or a child, towards a child or Vulnerable Adults.

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## **7. Complaints and disciplinary procedures**

The AFPST has its own Complaints and Disciplinary procedure for dealing with breaches of the Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy and procedures.

If the Abuse is alleged to have been committed in the course of a person's employment, he or she will be subject to disciplinary procedures and removed from position of responsibility whilst the investigation takes place.

If a case is being investigated by a statutory agency, the AFPST may also suspend / de-select the individual concerned whilst this investigation is taking place. This is a neutral act and is not intended to prejudge the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with Vulnerable Adults until the investigation is concluded. Once the statutory agency's investigation is completed, and irrespective of its findings, the AFPST will assess the case following its own disciplinary procedures.

Irrespective of the findings of any social services or police inquiries, the case management group will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff, volunteer or athlete can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the LSO must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of Vulnerable Adults must remain of paramount importance throughout.

The AFPST has a statutory responsibility to inform the Charities Commission where there have been allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer that have resulted in them being removed, or having resigned themselves, from their duties.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to Vulnerable Adults, Carers, members of staff and volunteers.

It is not always possible to determine exact timescales for when cases will be resolved, however the AFPST will always try to ensure that all parties know what procedure will be followed and what the expected time scales are. If there is a delay they will endeavour to inform all parties why there is a delay and when any development is expected. There should not be any period without communication of more than 28 days with involved persons. Ideally case management processes should not extend over more than three months, only in exceptional circumstances should they extend up to six months.

## **8. Appendix One Good practice, poor practice and Abuse**

The following is regarded as being poor practice and should be avoided as far as is reasonable:

- unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with an individual Vulnerable Adult away from others
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- using language that might be regarded as inappropriate by the Vulnerable Adult, especially comments regarding disability which may be hurtful or disrespectful
- making sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- reducing a Vulnerable Adult to tears as a form of control
- letting allegations made by a Vulnerable Adults go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- doing things of a personal nature that a Vulnerable Adult can do for themselves
- taking a Vulnerable Adult alone on a car journey, however short inviting or taking Vulnerable Adults to your home or office where they will be alone with you
- sharing a room with a Vulnerable Adult

Note: 1- at times it may be impractical to avoid some of these particular examples of poor practice. In this case, to protect both Vulnerable Adults and yourself, seek written consent from the Vulnerable Adult and, where appropriate, their Carer and ensure that the Leading Safeguarding Officer for the team or event is aware of the situation and gives their approval.

2 - If, during your care, you accidentally injure a Vulnerable Adult, they seem distressed in any manner, appear to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstand/misinterpret something you have done, report these incidents as soon as possible to another adult in the organisation and make a brief written note of it. It may also be in the best interests of the Vulnerable Adult to discuss the matter with them openly and in a professional and sensitive manner that will avoid embarrassment; this is dependent on the individual and the circumstances.

## **Abuse**

Abuse has many forms and can affect a Vulnerable Adult of any age or disability. The effects of such treatment can be degrading and damaging in the longer term and may follow an individual throughout their lives.

An individual who has been abused may exhibit a wide range of uncharacteristic behaviours some of which may manifest in the following ways:

- find it difficult or impossible to maintain a stable or trusting relationship
- become involved with drugs or prostitution
- increase alcohol consumption

- show angry or volatile behaviour without reason
- attempt suicide or self-harm
- go on to abuse another individual

Some of the reasons why Vulnerable Adults may be at increased risk of Abuse are as follows:

- stereotyping
- prejudice
- discrimination including ethnic or racial, sexual, disability orientated, etc.
- isolation low self image and low self esteem resulting in vulnerable self-presentation
- lack of knowledge about appropriate behaviours by others
- desire for acceptance , affection and attention
- powerlessness to protect themselves
- dependency upon others to care for them
- difficulty in communicating that Abuse has occurred

### **Indicators of Abuse**

Even for those experienced in working with the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults, it is not always possible to recognise potential abusive situations or situations where Abuse is on-going. Personnel involved in the work of the AFPST do not have responsibility for assessing and deciding situations where Abuse may be occurring. It is however the responsibility of everyone involved to be alert to the indicators of Abuse and to act upon any concerns in line with AFPST policy and procedures relating to the protection of Vulnerable Adults.

Indicators of Abuse may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent and improbable
- a disclosure made by a vulnerable individual describing what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- an expression of concern from a third party about the welfare of an individual
- unexplained changes in an individual's behaviour, such as loss of confidence, low self-esteem, becoming quiet and withdrawn, sudden outbursts of temper or uncharacteristic changes in behaviour: tearful , depressed, angry, watchful and frightened
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of others, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends and socialising contrary to previous social behaviour
- being prevented from socialising with other individuals by a Carer or person in a position of authority
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating, loss of appetite or stealing and concealing food
- unexplained weight loss deterioration in personal hygiene and physical appearance
- refusal/reluctance to undress or change for sporting activities



In assessing the degree of Abuse, consideration should be paid to:

- the vulnerability of the victim
- the nature and extent of the Abuse
- the length of time the Abuse has been occurring
- the impact on the individual
- the risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving this or other Vulnerable Adults.

### **Types of Abuse**

In response to the No Secrets Government guidance, the Law Commission states that the severity and extent of Abuse should be evaluated based on the level of harm brought about by ill-treatment (not only physical ill-treatment) "that leads to an impairment of, or avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development".

The Government guidance No Secrets provides the following as classifications of Abuse:

#### **Neglect and acts of omission**

"Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating."

In a sports environment this could include:

- a coach not keeping a vulnerable individual safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. allowing Athletes under their supervision to train or race inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions
- a parent, guardian or Carer consistently leaving a vulnerable individual without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun block where they are unable to provide themselves with these provisions

#### **Physical Abuse**

"may involve hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions."

In a sports environment this could include:

- a coach disregarding the individual requirements of each vulnerable person's needs when setting a training programme e.g. allowing those who are limited by a physical impairment to undertake long, continuous or repetitious training that may lead to an injury or damage their health.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

"Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the Vulnerable Adult has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressured into consenting.

In a sports environment indicators could include:

- a coach engaging in unnecessary and inappropriate physical contact e.g. massaging the shoulders of the athletes in a suggestive manner
- a coach making suggestive comments to their Athletes,
- an individual spending an unnecessary amount of time in the changing area where vulnerable individuals are present.

### **Psychological Abuse**

“Including emotional Abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal Abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.”

In a sports environment this could include:

- a Carer or coach subjecting an Athlete to constant criticism, shouting, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or discriminatory behaviours or prejudicial attitudes
- a Carer or coach putting an Athlete under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations

### **Financial or material Abuse**

“Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.”

In a sports situation this could include:

- blackmailing an individual by requiring financial or material payment in return for certain benefits such as selection or complements
- charging vulnerable individuals more than the standard fee for participation in sports activities

### **Bullying**

“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves”

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding kit or equipment, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, shouting, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

The AFPST is committed to fostering a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in sport. If bullying does occur, all Athletes, coaches, volunteers or Carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullies come from all walks of life; they bully for a variety of reasons and may even have been bullied or abused themselves. Typically bullies can have low self-esteem, be excitable, aggressive or jealous.

Bullies can be boys or girls, men or women. Although bullying often takes place in schools and care homes, research shows it can and does occur anywhere where there is inadequate supervision—on the way to and from college, university or the sports club, at a sporting event or in the changing rooms.

Competitive sports are an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in sport can be a:

- Parent or Carer who pushes too hard
- coach who adopts a “win at all costs” philosophy
- Athlete who intimidates or ridicules a peer
- sports official who places unfair pressure on a person
- spectator who constantly shouts abuse

### **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Athletes and Personnel who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone involved with the AFPST has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to all individuals, particularly vulnerable groups. An individual may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Coaches and those in staffing positions should be aware of these possible signs that they should investigate, especially where an individual:

- says they are being bullied
- is unwilling to go to sessions
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- regularly feels ill before training sessions
- has clothes torn or possessions damaged
- has possessions go ‘missing’
- asks for money,
- steals money or parts with their own money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts, bruises or injuries
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

In more extreme cases:

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night,
- has nightmares or demonstrates any other form of unusual behaviour during the evenings
- becomes aggressive,

- disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other individuals
- stops eating
- self harms
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **9 . Appendix Two Welfare planning for AFPST training and competition**

The following elements should be considered in forming a welfare plan:

- Lead Safeguarding Officer(s)
- At all training and competition AFPST will designate a member(s) of staff as the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s). The size and complexity of the event and the associated risks will be reflected in the number of DSOs and the communication and reporting structure between them. Each DSO will undergo appropriate training to handle safeguarding concerns prior to their appointment.
- Within AFPST the Deputy Chairman has ultimate authority for deciding what action should be taken on reported cases and is responsible for taking concerns forward to the statutory agencies if appropriate.

### **Team Agreement / Codes of Conduct**

All members of the AFPST (athletes and support staff) are required to sign a Team Agreement outlining expected behavior, as well as, broader aspects relating to participation at training and competition. Failure to behave in the appropriate manner as outlined in the Team Members Agreement can result in removal from the team.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The team leader or coach should know how to contact emergency services and have access to at least a basic First Aid box. Those in charge of Vulnerable Adults have a duty to ensure that they are kept safe and healthy and should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation. The plan and Risk Assessment should ensure there are sufficient and accessible escape routes for the number of wheelchair users and those with other types of impairments that might restrict their mobility.

### **Photography**

The use of photography and film is an excellent way of capturing sporting moments for use in the promotion of the sport and/or to celebrate individual success. There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of Athletes with a disability in vulnerable positions. With this in mind AFPST will only use appropriate imagery of its Athletes on its website and in its promotional documents. Consent to use this imagery will always be sought.

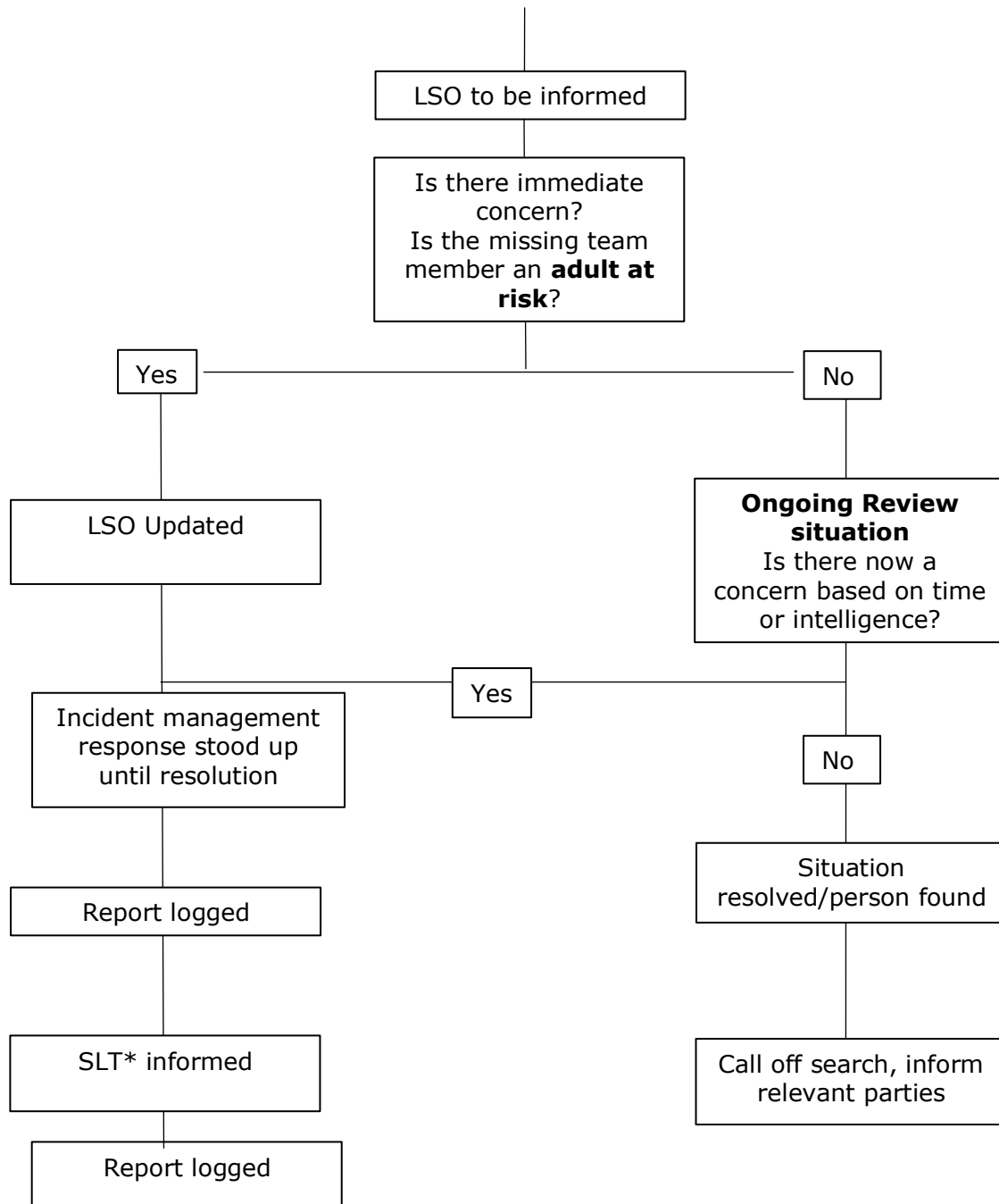
All staff should be vigilant and any concerns over the misuse of photography or images of AFPST athletes should be reported to the LSO.

Videoing as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent coaches using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, Athletes and their Carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme, their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

## **Missing People**

If any person is suspected of being missing, the flow chart must be followed.

Coach/friend/other  
notices a team  
member is missing



## 10 Appendix Three Criminal Records Checks

All individuals who will have significant access to Vulnerable Adults must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with Vulnerable Adults or may present a risk to Vulnerable Adults. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers.

All volunteers and employees working in a role that involves Significant Access to Vulnerable Adults, or where they hold a Position of Trust, or existing volunteers or employees who change their role to work with Vulnerable Adults, are required to complete the following vetting process:

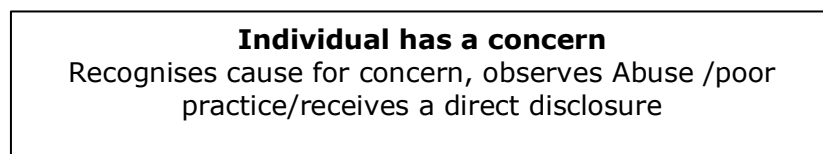
- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will help to assess an applicant's suitability to work with Vulnerable Adults based on their skills and competencies as well as eliciting information about an applicant's past and providing a self-disclosure about any matter that might influence their suitability to work with Vulnerable Adults.
- provide two appropriate referees
- provide details of previous volunteering experience or relevant employment.
- provide evidence of their identity (such as a driving licence or passport with photo)

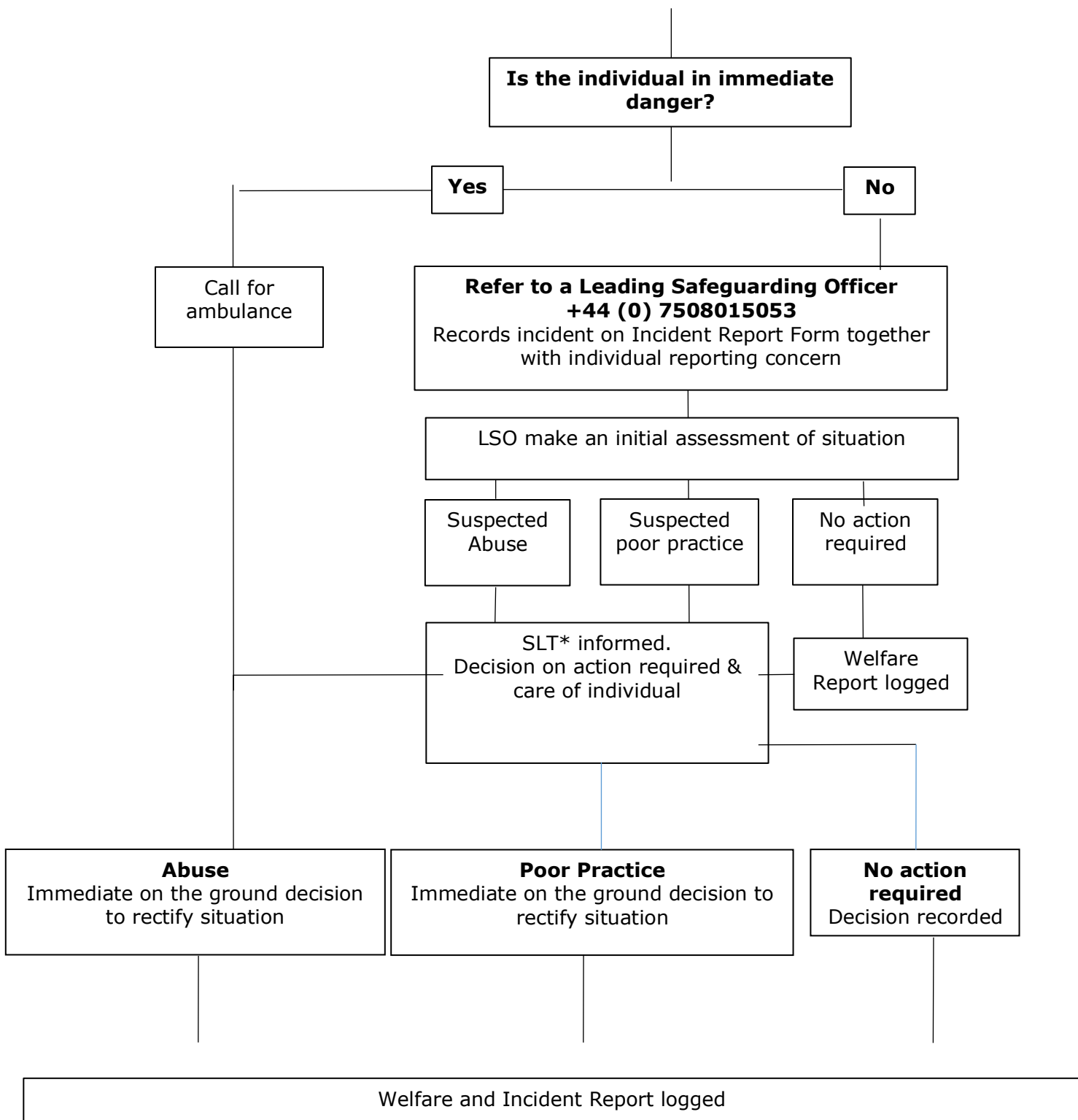
In addition those working in a Regulated Activity must also comply with legal requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as these are implemented:

- That is, for anyone working in a 'Regulated Activity' they must complete an appropriate criminal records check. All of which must be at an Enhanced level.
- The self-declaration form requires prospective volunteers and employees to declare any criminal records they may have, even if these are considered 'spent', or any disciplinary investigations by any organisation including employers, the police or social services that relate to inappropriate behaviour towards a child or Vulnerable Adults.
- Disclosure certificates must be renewed at least every three years if a person remains in post or more regularly if, for example, there is a concern raised, if the person changes their role or moves to a new role, or if the person has been absent from the AFPST for a significant period.

Note: Completing the above process does not guarantee that an individual is safe to work with Vulnerable Adults. The AFPST will use information from the Disclosure certificate and any additional information from the Disclosure agency as part of an overall recruitment and selection process to assess any potential risk. The Line Manager will also assess for the individual's suitability by taking up references, interviewing and supervision.

## 11 Appendix Four AFPST Reporting Flowchart





\*in this scenario SLT includes LSO



## 12 Appendix Five Welfare Incident Report Form

Completion guidance:

**This form should only be completed by a LSO or Team Leader or Coach.**

**This form should be received by the LSO (Elizabethburgess23@hotmail.com) who may forward it to appropriate agencies within 24 hrs if required– immediately after completing the form, telephone the LSO to report the incident.**

<b>Your name:</b>	<b>Your position:</b>
<b>Your address:</b>	<b>Your phone number/s:</b>
<b>Adult at risk's name:</b>	<b>Adult at risk's address:</b> <i>Available centrally</i>
Date of birth: Contact number: Any special needs/disability:	
NOK names and address: <i>Available centrally</i>	
Contact number: <i>Available centrally</i>	
Date and time of any incident:	
Your observations:	
Exactly what the Adult at risk said and what you said:	
Action taken so far:	
Alleged / Suspected abusers' name:	Role/Position:

Address:	Contact number:
<b>External agencies contacted (date &amp; time):</b>	
<b>Police</b> Yes/No	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
<b>Supporting Agencies</b> Yes/ No	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
<b>NGB</b> Yes/No	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
<b>Local authority</b> Yes/No	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
<b>Other</b>	Which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:

Date:

Signature:

Print name: