

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS PROCEDURES	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 20 MAY 2004	Ref: MW	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To advise Committee of the production of Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and the proposed implementation arrangements.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. A vulnerable adult is defined as a person :

“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” (Definition adopted by the Department of Health).

- 2.2 In 2000 the Department of Health issued in England “No Secrets” and in Wales “In Safe Hands”. Both documents provided guidance and direction for the completion of multi-agency procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse. To date, there has been no such detailed guidance made available in Scotland, although there is an increasing awareness of the need for this.
- 2.3 The need to protect vulnerable adults from abuse and exploitation has been recognised by a range of agencies in Scotland, including the Mental Welfare Commission which has published reports about deficiencies in care, most notably in relation to Ms P in 1988 and Mr B in 2001.

3. PROGRESS

- 3.1. During the last twelve months, a multi agency Steering Group has met on a regular basis to produce the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Procedures. Representatives from Health and Police, Carers and Service Users and Social Work Officers have contributed to their development.
- 3.2. The draft procedures have been widely circulated for comment. The response has been very positive. Amendments have been made, as necessary and appropriate, and the procedures are now set to be implemented with the involvement and agreement of all partners.
- 3.3. The procedures are designed to encourage the development of good practice through:
- staff training and induction
 - positive interagency working
 - the development of a culture of prevention

They are also designed to raise awareness of issues and to utilise a multi agency approach to the protection of vulnerable adults. In this respect they parallel existing Child Protection Procedures.

3.4. The procedures will address :

- definitions
- roles and responsibilities
- legal frameworks
- practice guidance about responding to allegations about abuse

3.5. The implementation of the procedures will include:

- staff training on a multi agency basis
- the development of IT solutions for recording the collation of information
- the proposed establishment of an Area Adult Protection Committee
- the production of public information leaflets, and awareness raising

Detailed work is currently underway in relation to proposals for the above.

4. CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The procedures reflect the statutory responsibilities of the Council in protecting adults from abuse and exploitation. They are also consistent with national policy in further developing joint working between agencies and in ensuring the promotion of the individual rights of vulnerable people. At the present time there are no financial / personnel implications.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to :

- (i) note the contents of the report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
1 April 2004

For further information on this report please contact Susan Taylor, Manager, Community Care (Adults) (Tel : 01698 332177) or Mary Wilson, Service Manager (Adults) (Tel 01698 332172)

A copy of the procedures has been made available in the Members Library.