

The Catholic Institute for Deaf People

Protection of Vulnerable Adults Framework

September 2008

Introduction

Every person using a Catholic Institute for Deaf People (CIDP) service should be safe from abuse, neglect and mistreatment and have their human rights protected. The CIDP is committed to providing quality person centered services to adults with hearing impairment. Fundamental to the delivering of quality services, is ensuring that people who use CIDP services are safe and free from abuse and neglect. In achieving this, CIDP has developed an Adult Protection Framework to address its responsibilities in protecting people from abuse and responding to allegations of abuse. A framework is another way of looking at all parts that make up a system, it is a structure which holds the different pieces together and relates and links with one another.

The Adult Protection Framework has 3 parts:

1. Principles

These are statements to explain our beliefs, values and agreed understanding of what guides us when it comes to protecting people who use CIDP services.

2. Safety, Protection and Promotion

These are the work practices, programmes and policies that ensure people who use CIDP services are protected and that safe systems of working for staff are in place.

3. Organisational Assurances

These are the agreed organisational procedures that are followed when the system fails.

1 Adult Protection Framework Principles

The following statements outline agreed approach to providing services to people with disabilities in order to protect their safety and wellbeing.

These principles are:

- The safety and best interests of people who use CIDP services is a priority for the organization.
- People availing of CIDP services have a right to be safe and free from abuse and neglect.
- We shall treat people using CIDP services with respect and dignity and recognise and uphold their rights.
- We shall promote and protect a person's right to self determination and autonomy.
- People using a CIDP service will be facilitated to give feedback and make a complaint on any aspect of the service.
- People using a CIDP service will be facilitated to develop and maintain relationships with family, friends and their community.
- We shall put in place best practices in the recruitment, selection, supervision and development of staff to ensure people with the right values and attitudes are recruited and supervised in the delivery of person centered services.
- All staff working in CIDP services must uphold and lead in the implementation of the values, mission and ethos of the organization in the daily exercise of their duties and responsibilities.

- All staff working in CIDP are required to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations in promoting the safety of people who use CIDP services and of their duty to report and respond to allegations or suspicions of abuse and neglect.
- All investigations into allegations of abuse will be dealt with in a fair manner, respecting the person's right to confidentiality as far as possible.
- We shall put in place regular evaluations of CIDP services to ensure coherency between values and practices.

2 Safety, Protection and Promotion

A key element of the Adult Protection Framework is the need to focus on preventing abuse from occurring in the first instance. This is achieved by looking at proactive strategies to protect and promote the safety of individuals which we call Individual Protection Safeguards and ensuring the right policies and supports are in place as part of the organizations responsibilities which we call Organisational Safeguards.

2.1 Individual Protection Safeguards

Protecting people who use CIDP services from abuse and neglect, begins with addressing people's rights and developmental opportunities:

Rights, Protection and Promotion

A fundamental element in ensuring that people who use CIDP services are safe is upholding the rights of people on a daily basis. A key element of the Adult Protection Framework is supporting people to get information on their rights. We also have a role in supporting people to understand their rights and responsibilities and how they can exercise these rights.

Developmental Opportunities for people who use the Service

One mechanism for ensuring that people who use a CIDP service are safe and protected from abuse, is supporting individuals to have autonomy, choice, control and opportunities in all aspects of their lives. We recognise that some people availing of CIDP services may not have had the same opportunities to develop life skills and may have been deprived of opportunities to participate in adult education and/or employment pursuits. In this regard, we will aim to provide opportunities for people who use CIDP services to access personal development programmes and/or courses, if they so choose i.e.

- Health management
- Vocational opportunities
- Financial management / budgeting
- Advocacy support

2.2 Organisational Safeguards

Supporting people who use CIDP services to exercise their rights, be safe from abuse and neglect, requires that the organization employs staff with the right values, attitudes, behaviours and desire to work within a person centered approach. This will be achieved through the implementation and monitoring of the Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Secondly, it is important that staff have the necessary guidance, information and training to carry out their role and guide them in exercising their duty of care whilst ensuring a person's right to self determination is upheld. This will be achieved through the implementation over time of specific organisational policies, procedures and guidelines which include:

- **Adult Protection Policy**
Which defines categories of abuse, outlines the 'Right Relationship' and CIDP's commitment and responsibilities in keeping people safe from abuse, neglect and mistreatment.
- **A Service Agreement**
Individual contract with each person which outlines the nature of service that will be provided and the role and responsibilities of all parties.
- **Complaints Procedure**
Outlines how people using a CIDP service can make a complaint.
- **Guidelines on the Management of People's Financial Affairs**
Where people receiving a CIDP service require assistance to manage their money and/or financial affairs, these guidelines provide direction on how this support is provided to ensure there are clear, safe and accountable mechanisms and safeguards in place, in line with good practice.
- **Confidentiality Policy**
Defines confidentiality in a range of different contexts and the responsibilities of staff in upholding confidentiality.
- **Intimate Care Guidelines**
These guidelines will support staff in understanding and maintaining boundaries in the delivery of personal and intimate care as a means of protecting people using the service and staff.
- **Medication Management Policies and Supporting Procedures**
Provides guidance to staff on all aspects of administering medication to ensure this is carried out in a safe manner.
- **Risk Management**
The right to self determination and autonomy is paramount for people who use CIDP services. It is recognized that sometimes this can involve risk. Staff must be supported in the use of risk assessment frameworks to ensure that risk is recognized and minimized within a rights context. A risk assessment and risk management approach will be built into organizational policies, procedures and guidelines in line with person centered approaches to supporting individuals.
- **Safety Statements**
As required by law, the Safety Statements outline the organisation's commitment to safety and health in the physical environment.
- **Workforce Investments**
This includes the Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures, induction and orientation procedures and training, support, supervision and performance management for all staff.
- **Staff Handbook**
This handbook will provide information to staff on employment related issues as well as outlining the behaviour expected from all people working in CIDP services.

3 Organisational Assurances

The organisational assurances come into play when either the individual or organisational protection safeguards have failed to protect a person using a CIDP service from abuse, neglect or mistreatment. In this instance the following organisational procedures are used:

- **Abuse Report and Investigation Procedure**
This outlines the steps to be taken in situations where abuse is suspected, observed or has occurred. The procedure outlines how to alert, report, investigate and respond to allegations of abuse and is a core element of the Adult Protection Framework.
- **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**
This policy makes it clear that all employees can raise concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise concerns within the CIDP rather than overlook the problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.
- **Staff Disciplinary Procedure**
This procedure outlines the steps that will be taken where staff have failed to comply with the normal standards of conduct required by the organisation.