



HEART CELLS
FOUNDATION

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction and purpose

The Heart Cells Foundation (also referred to in this document as "we" or "us") is dedicated to protecting all individuals who engage with us. We fund life-saving stem cell therapy for heart conditions which is provided on a compassionate basis by Barts Health NHS Trust, as well as raising money for trials of stem cell therapy to treat patients' hearts. While our direct contact with beneficiaries is limited, and we do not regularly work with vulnerable adults or children at risk subject to domestic safeguarding legislation, this policy sets out our responsibilities and the measures we have in place to protect people from harm, including employees, volunteers, Trustees, donors and beneficiaries.

This policy details our commitment to safeguarding and informs staff, Trustees and volunteers of their obligations and responsibility to be aware of and report any concerns related to the protection and safeguarding of the people we come into contact with through our work.

We expect all organisations we work with, whether funded or contracted, to have established and to follow their own safeguarding policies and procedures. In cases where these are not in place, they must comply with our safeguarding policy and the standards we expect them to uphold.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, ensuring they are safe and able to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.¹ It involves proactive measures to prevent abuse, reduce risks, and respond effectively to all allegations of abuse when concerns arise.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed or contracted by us;
- All our Trustees; and
- Associated personnel involved in activities or visits related to the Heart Cells Foundation, including but not limited to donors, volunteers, consultants, beneficiaries and attendees at events organised by us or on our behalf.

¹ NHS 'What is Safeguarding?': <https://www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/about/>

Policy Statement

The Heart Cells Foundation has a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviour that poses a risk of harm in any way to our staff, Trustees, volunteers, patients or other people involved in our work. The Heart Cells Foundation believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin, has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

We commit to addressing safeguarding throughout our work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention

Our responsibilities

We will:

- Ensure all staff and Trustees have access to this policy, are familiar with its contents, and understand their responsibilities.
- Promote a safe and trusted culture by ensuring that the organisations we work with have appropriate safeguarding mechanisms and take all safeguarding concerns seriously;
- Design and carry out all activities in a way that protects individuals from any risk of harm that may arise from their interaction with us, including how information about individuals is collected, stored and shared;
- Implement robust safeguarding procedures in the recruitment, management and deployment of staff and associated personnel; and
- Respond to safeguarding concerns promptly and follow due process to address them effectively.

Enabling reports

We will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff, associated personnel and all external stakeholders, including members of the public or organisations we work with. Concerns related to our work must be reported by emailing or calling our Safeguarding Leads:

- Jenifer Rosenberg, our Chair, at admin@heartcellsfoundation.com or 020 7935 5351, or
- Sara Beare, our CEO, at sara@heartcellsfoundation.com or 020 7935 5351.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Anyone who has a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to one or both of our Safeguarding Leads.

Response

We understand our responsibility to act promptly on safeguarding concerns. We will ensure that concerns are recorded appropriately and, if necessary, shared with relevant staff and other statutory agencies, including the police. All our staff and Trustees co-operate fully with statutory authorities where applicable.

It is not our role or that of our staff, Trustees or associated personnel to decide whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been abused or not. This responsibility lies with the Social Services Department (which has legal responsibility), the NSPCC (which has investigative powers under The Children Act 2004) or the police.

If our staff, Trustees or associated personnel witness, or our safeguarding leads receive a report of a safeguarding concern, we will respond by:

- Always treating survivors of abuse and individuals affected by safeguarding concerns with respect, care and dignity, ensuring that those who raise a concern, as well as the individuals involved, receive a compassionate response, are listened to attentively and have their concerns taken seriously;
- Recording what we've been told and have witnessed as soon as possible;
- Tell the affected individual the next steps (if possible);
- Notifying the safeguarding lead (if they have not been informed already);
- Offering support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response, such as an internal investigation, is carried out; and
- Applying appropriate disciplinary measures to staff, Trustees and associated personnel found in breach of this or any other policy.

For concerns relating to our partners, the Safeguarding Lead will, where appropriate, discuss the concern with the relevant grant or contract manager for the partner organisation. In most cases, if the concern relates to a project we are funding, information will be passed to our partner organisation and any investigation will be carried out by them with regular check-ins between the Heart Cells Foundation and the partner organisation until the investigation is complete and appropriate action has been taken.

Confidentiality

All documentation relating to safeguarding incidents or allegations will be kept and treated as confidential at all stages of the process in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Information relating to the concern and any subsequent case management documentation should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

Where appropriate and in circumstances where confidential information may need to be shared with others within the Heart Cells Foundation or with external agencies, we will seek consent to share such information. If obtaining consent is not possible or if seeking consent would increase the risk to the individual or if it is unreasonable to request consent given the circumstances, we may share the information without the individual's consent. Any decision to share information without consent will be made in line with safeguarding best practices, ensuring the individual's safety and well-being remain a priority.

Review

We will review this policy annually or following legislative changes to ensure good practice. Additionally, this policy will be published in full on our website (<https://www.heartcellsfoundation.com/>).

Glossary of Terms

Abuse

Abuse is a form of mistreatment by one individual that causes harm to another person. The range of abuse includes physical abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation.

Adult at risk

Sometimes also referred to as "vulnerable adult". A person who is or may be in need of care 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.

Beneficiary

Someone who directly receives goods or services from the Heart Cells Foundation's work.

Child

Anyone below 18 years old.

Discriminatory abuse

This includes discrimination on grounds of race, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Domestic Violence or Abuse

This includes assault, threats of violence, humiliation, intimidation and harming, frightening or punishing.

Duties under charity law

The Heart Cells Foundation is regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. In developing this policy, we recognise the specific duties set out by the Charity Commission for safeguarding and protecting people and protecting charities from abuse for extremist purposes. As a funder we also recognise the specific responsibilities the Charity Commission establishes on funders to carry out due diligence checks on donors, beneficiaries and local partners and how to monitor end use of funds.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of an adult could include humiliating, blaming, controlling, intimidating or harassing, verbal abuse, cyberbullying and isolation.

Exploitation

Unfairly manipulating someone for profit or personal gain. This could be planned or something done on the spur of the moment.

Financial or material abuse

This includes (but is not limited to) theft, fraud, exploitation or coercion in relation to the person's financial affairs or arrangements, for example, getting someone to change their will.

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights.

Modern Slavery

Human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, debt bondage or sexual exploitation.

Neglect

For vulnerable adults, neglect includes not being provided with enough food or with the right kind of food, or not being taken proper care of, being left without help to wash or change dirty or wet clothes, not getting to a doctor when needed or not making sure they have the right medicines. For children, neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Organisational abuse

This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, for example, a hospital, care home or care provided at home. This could be a one-off incident or on-going ill treatment and could be through neglect or poor professional practice.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve (but is not limited to) slapping, hitting, pushing, restraining, misuse of medication, restraint, being denied food or water or not being helped to go to the bathroom when you need to.

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement or isolation.

Self-neglect

Lack of self-care, to the extent that this threatens the person's health or safety, inability to avoid self-harm or failure to seek help.

Sexual abuse

This includes sexual activity with someone without their permission or sexual activity with someone who is not able to give their consent. Sexual activity includes indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate touching or looking, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, being forced to watch pornography or sexual acts, or being forced or pressured to take part in sexual acts and/or rape.

Sexual exploitation

Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including (but not limited to) profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, but it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.