



## **Adults at risk protection policy**

This policy applies to all members and leaders of SGI-UK. It also applies to staff, the board of trustees, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of SGI-UK, whether paid or not. SGI-UK is committed to safeguarding those who engage in its activities, ensuring their well-being.

### **Definition of 'adult at risk'**

The term 'adult at risk' (previously known as a 'vulnerable adult') is expressed within the Care Act of 2014 as a person aged 18 or over who:

- Has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

'Adults with care and support needs' could include people who:

- Have dementia
- Have learning disabilities
- Have mental health problems
- Have drug, alcohol or substance dependency
- Have physical or sensory disabilities
- Have been bereaved, suffered grief and loss
- Have through age or illness are dependent on other people to help them
- Live with domestic abuse
- Are homeless
- Are refugees or asylum seekers
- May be considered not to have 'mental capacity'

Adults without mental capacity' could include people who:

- are unable to make a decision due to illness, disability, poor mental health, dementia, a learning disability or something else that may impair their judgement.
- are unable, concerning matters of finance, social care or medical treatment, to understand a decision, retain information, weigh up information, or communicate their decision.

Whether a person has mental capacity is a matter of specialist assessment. However, it is useful to note that mental capacity is the ability to make a particular decision.

Whether or not a person is 'at risk' (or 'vulnerable') in these cases will vary according to circumstances. It should be noted that a person with a physical disability is not necessarily vulnerable or at risk, though they could be. Also people who are generally emotionally and

psychologically stable in most aspects of their lives may on occasion find themselves vulnerable or at risk, for example when they have been bereaved or suffered grief and loss. Each case must be judged on its own merits.

**This policy seeks to:**

- Provide the necessary framework to protect adults at risk who are involved in SGI-UK activities.
- Provide volunteers (members) and staff with the overarching principles that guide our approach to protecting adults at risk who engage with SGI-UK activities.

**We recognise that:**

- Everyone has a responsibility to help prevent physical, sexual, spiritual, financial, psychological, discriminatory abuse, neglect and self-neglect and domestic abuse of adults at risk, and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- All adults at risk, regardless of age, dis/ability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Adult Social Care is a part of every local authority, and they have the lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult at risk.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police should always be contacted as a matter of urgency.

**SGI-UK Statement on safeguarding**

SGI-UK believes that no one should experience abuse. The trustees of SGI-UK recognise their responsibility to protect adults at risk who engage with activities either locally (e.g. within the setting of a district) or at one of our national centres.

We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of adults at risk, and to keep them safe. We are committed to operating in a way that protects them.

Our activities as an organisation are centred on supporting current members and interested individuals in their practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, a humanistic philosophy of infinite respect for the sanctity of life.

**Legal and local authority framework**

This policy is based on the Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support statutory guidance (updated 2019). As SGI-UK is a religious charity with its headquarters in Buckinghamshire, this policy has been developed in the context of guidelines from the Charity Commission, and the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

**We will seek to keep adults at risk safe by:**

- Supporting adults at risk in SGI-UK who may be affected by abuse of any kind.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

- Recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with adults at risk.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving adults at risk and their carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against trustees, staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for adults at risk, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

### **What to do if you have a concern**

All concerns must be taken seriously. Everyone in SGI-UK has a responsibility to report any concerns.

**If you believe someone is in immediate danger, you must call the police on 999.** You should then contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Sanda McWilliam, within 24 hours.

If you have any concerns, you must contact Sanda McWilliam in the first instance.

**Email:** [sanda.mcwilliam@sgi-uk.org](mailto:sanda.mcwilliam@sgi-uk.org) **Landline: 01628 591208**

You can also use the online reporting tool in the safeguarding tab on the SGI-UK members' website. Once you are at the form, follow the clear instructions.

If you are unable to reach Sanda McWilliam, contact the following staff members:

Safeguarding senior lead: Robert Harrap [robert.harrap@sgi-uk.org](mailto:robert.harrap@sgi-uk.org) 01628 591210

Safeguarding team: Toni-Ann Hirayama [toni-ann.hirayama@sgi-uk.org](mailto:toni-ann.hirayama@sgi-uk.org) 01628 591233

### **Useful numbers**

**Police: Emergency (immediate danger), call 999**

Police: Non-emergency (advice), call 101

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