

## 3.11 ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF ADULTS

### Overview:

Employees, volunteers and others who are involved in the lives of the individuals that we serve are often in positions of trust and authority over those people. Some of the individuals we serve have physical limitations that make them unable to protect themselves or look after all of their own needs. These circumstances make them vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

This policy is intended to guide employees and volunteers in: (1) dealing with suspicions of abuse; or (2) reports of abuse or neglect; and (3) handling situations where abuse or neglect has occurred or might occur. Where programs are under the jurisdiction of Community Care Licensing, the intent is to provide direction which is consistent with the Residential Care Regulations. Where programs are funded by CLBC, the intent is to provide direction which is consistent with the Community Support Services Policy Manual.

### Policy:

The Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI) will support individuals in a safe, positive, and nurturing manner at all times. The support will be free of any abuse, neglect, and/or harm to the individuals. BACI is committed to the safe care of the individuals receiving support and will not tolerate any form of abuse, neglect and/or harm. If an individual receiving supports is at risk or the victim of abuse, harm, and/or neglect, BACI will take every measure to ensure the individual is safe and no longer at risk.

### Definition and Categories of Abuse:

#### 1. Definition

Abuse is an action, inaction or behaviour that may result in physical, sexual, emotional, or mental harm to an individual.

#### 2. Categories of Abuse

##### *Physical*

- Assault (for example: slapping, hitting, kicking, punching, stuffing a cloth into an individual's mouth).
- Rough handling without regard for the individual's comfort (for example: unnecessary force applied during lifts, transfers, and activities of daily living).
- Physical neglect (for example: withholding food or personal or medical care).

##### *Psychosocial*

- Verbal or emotional abuse (for example: yelling, making demeaning or derogatory remarks, teasing, swearing, and/or name-calling.)

- Psychosocial neglect (for example: lack of attention, isolation, confinement).
- Setting individuals up for ridicule or scorn by peers or others.
- Interactions that are, or could reasonably be interpreted as, disrespectful.

#### *Financial*

- Misuse of an individual's finances for inappropriate purposes (for example: comforts for food or benefits normally provided by the caregiver).
- Theft of money or personal property.
- Fraud, which is deceitful manipulation of finances.
- Solicitation for compensation.

#### *Sexual Abuse/Assault*

- Any form of sexual conduct by force or threat of force.
- Any form of sexual contact.
- Any attempt to engage in sexual activities.
- Unnecessary disregard for privacy.
- Unnecessary touching of a person's private parts.

#### *Medication Abuse*

- Medicating or sedating unnecessarily.
- Over sedation or non-compliance with medication refills.
- Misuse of an individual's medications and prescriptions.
- Misuse of non-prescription medications.

#### *Violation of Rights*

- Denial of basic civil/human rights.

#### *Neglect*

- Intentional neglect: willful withholding of basic necessities and care.
- Unintentional neglect: withholding of basic necessities and care, usually due to a lack of experience or information.
- Failure to respond to an individual's need for discussion, inclusion, or routine interaction on a daily basis.

#### **BACI's Responsibilities:**

BACI will provide services in an environment that is safe and free from any abuse or neglect.

BACI will report allegations of abuse to family members and appropriate authorities.

BACI will ensure the investigation of any allegations of abuse. To ensure that individuals are supported without fear of abuse, every effort will be made to ensure that all reported incidents are investigated and dealt with quickly. We will try to maintain confidentiality but it cannot be guaranteed.

BACI will take any necessary action to ensure that individuals are, and feel, safe and secure and that abuse does not re-occur. Any employee who, upon investigation, has abused or neglected an individual that we serve will face disciplinary measures up to and including immediate dismissal.

**Employees' and Volunteers' Responsibilities:**

Employees or volunteers who suspect that abuse or neglect has occurred have the responsibility to report their suspicions within 24 hours to their supervisor. If the accused is a supervisor, the suspicions must be reported within 24 hours to the manager.

Employees or volunteers who know or could reasonably be expected to know about an incident of abuse or neglect and who do not report it will be treated as having aided the abuse or neglect and will face disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal.