**Safeguarding and Best Practice around use of PPE**

Under the Care Act 2014\*, agencies have a legal responsibility to raise safeguarding concerns where there is a suspicion that abuse of a vulnerable adult has occurred which may be as a result of neglect or omission of care.

\*'Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action'.

Preventing service user harm during the Covid-19 pandemic is paramount and at the forefront of all Regulated Care services. Those in receipt of services should expect to be supported and cared for in a safe environment. Neglect through lack of adherence to PPE is considered within the Care Act as ‘Organisational Abuse’. Services should ensure that interventions and support arrangements are in place to minimise the risk of abuse resulting from poor PPE use. We need to always challenge ourselves or others as to whether **‘**The care we are giving is good enough for us or our loved ones’

There have been increasing trends as to poor PPE compliance across the Care Home sector and as such, we need to remain vigilant about PPE and the serious nature of Covid-19 into the 2nd wave.

**Best practice checklist:**

* Ensure your service has received available PPE training for trainers
* Ensure you have competent trainers within your service to deliver PPE training and guidance
* Consider use of Infection, Prevention & Control Champions
* Know your Public Health - Infection Prevention and Control support pathway InfectionPrevention@lancashire.gov.uk
* Ensure PPE supplies remain at acceptable levels and how to order further supplies <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ppe-portal-how-to-order-emergency-personal-protective-equipment>
* Audit your service around good PPE use and address unsafe practice
* Understand individual accountability when PPE guidance is not adhered to

**What happens when a safeguarding alert is made due to poor PPE compliance?**

Should a safeguarding alert be raised in respect of poor PPE use, there will be an expectation that evidence can be produced in respect of best practice to demonstrate the services PPE compliance and actions taken around deficits.

**The CQC, as part of the inspection process, will require written evidence to confirm that training compliance, internal audits, including subsequent actions; have taken place in respect of Infection Prevention and Control.**

Raising a safeguarding concern in respect of PPE use:

Some examples of PPE incidents (not exhaustive) which must be considered appropriate for raising a safeguarding concern (these may be isolated or persistent incidents which have resulted in harm):-

1. Repeated incidents of PPE non-compliance
2. Deliberate incidents of PPE non-compliance
3. Repeated outbreak activity coupled with PPE non-compliance
4. Poor systems in place to support PPE adherence

**Useful resources:**



