

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (ADULTS)

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly medical students, doctors and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Melanin Medics.

This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of doctors, therapists or medical students associated with Melanin Medics
- The design and implementation of the Melanin Medics Mentorship programme and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by Melanin Medics and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment on the programme – this is dealt with under Melanin Medics' Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Melanin Medics or associated personnel

What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including doctors and medical students from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

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

Scope

All staff contracted by Melanin Medics.

Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Melanin Medics including but not limited to the following: volunteers, doctors and medical students.

Policy Statement

Melanin Medics believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Melanin Medics will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding as appropriate: adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them (see Associated Policies).

Melanin Medics commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (ADULTS)

Prevention

Melanin Medics responsibilities

Melanin Medics will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with Melanin Medics. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Staff responsibilities

Adult safeguarding

Melanin Medics staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at-risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

Melanin Medics staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, Melanin Medics staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an Melanin Medics staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

Enabling reports

Melanin Medics will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with. Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by the Melanin Medics Whistleblowing Policy. Melanin Medics will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (ADULTS)

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to Khadija Owusu, Director of Programmes. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Safeguarding Focal Point or line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be a senior manager or a member of the HR Team.

Khadija Owusu
Director of Programmes
khadija@melaninmedics.org

Response

Melanin Medics will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in Associated Policies).

Melanin Medics will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

Melanin Medics will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from Melanin Medics's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the Melanin Medics serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Harm

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

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 and isolation

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (ADULTS)

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Safeguarding

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes. One donor definition is as follows:

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means 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 definition 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, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

At risk adult

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.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE)

Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

MELANIN MEDICS recognises that, under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, it has a duty and responsibility for making arrangements to ensure all its functions are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people in their care – this includes all services directly provided and commissioned by the local authority. A child is anyone up until their 18th birthday.

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” is defined in Working Together 2015 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Persons affected

- All staff, paid and unpaid, this includes volunteers
- All service users
- All visitors and contractors

Scope

All staff contracted by Melanin Medics.

Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Melanin Medics including but not limited to the following: volunteers; doctors and medical students.

Policy Statement

MELANIN MEDICS is committed to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It has:

- a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for MELANIN MEDICS’s safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- clear whistleblowing procedures and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed;

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE)

- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information procedures with other professionals and with the Suffolk safeguarding Partnership;
- a designated professional lead for safeguarding at MELANIN MEDICS, Director of Programmes. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Safeguarding leads should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom MELANIN MEDICS will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a DBS check;
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training;
- ensuring that staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
- staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare;
- all staff should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time in their work with children, young people and families.
- clear policies in line with those from the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

MELANIN MEDICS will ensure that staff understand;

- What they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children.
- Core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and MELANIN MEDICS should do to keep children safe. In doing so, MELANIN MEDICS seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding systems are those where:
 - The child's needs are paramount, and the needs and wishes of each child, be they a baby or infant, or an older child, should be put first, so that every child receives the support they need before a problem escalates;
 - That all staff who come into contact with children and families are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
 - The requirement to share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues and local authority children's social care;

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE)

- The necessity to use their expert judgement to put the child's needs at the heart of the safeguarding system so that the right solution can be found for each individual child;
- The necessity to contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a child's welfare and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans and outcomes;

Key principles will be communicated that;

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

POLICY

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by staff or others working on behalf of the charity is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore require all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the charity or the way in which the organisation is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

BACKGROUND

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters in the public interest. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'. A qualifying disclosure is one made by an employee who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence
- a miscarriage of justice
- an act creating risk to health and safety
- an act causing damage to the environment
- a breach of any other legal obligation
- or concealment of any of the above.

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for you to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed – a reasonable belief is sufficient. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter – it is the charity's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

If you make a protected disclosure you have the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because you have made a disclosure. We encourage you to raise your concerns under this procedure in the first instance.

PRINCIPLES

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Staff and others working on behalf of the charity should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- No employee or other person working on behalf of the charity will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the worker will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure our disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the chief executive or the chair of the board of trustees.

PROCEDURE

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of your own contract of employment. Matters relating to your contract of employment, should be raised via the grievance procedure.

Stage 1: In the first instance, any concerns should be raised with the chief executive, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above.

Your statement will be taken into account, and you will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The chief executive will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to the chair of the board of trustees and any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. The chief executive will also invoke any disciplinary action required. On conclusion of any investigation, you will be told the outcome and what the charity has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

Stage 2: You should escalate the matter to the chair of the board of trustee if you are concerned that the chief executive:

- is involved in the wrongdoing
- has failed to make a proper investigation
- or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the relevant person.

The chair will arrange for a review of the investigation to be carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make their own report to the board.

Stage 3: If on conclusion of stages 1 and 2 you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body. This includes:

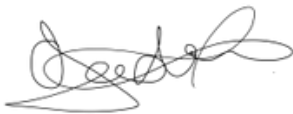
- HM Revenue & Customs
- The Health and Safety Executive
- The Environment Agency
- The Serious Fraud Office
- The Charity Commission
- The Pensions Regulator
- The Information Commissioner
- The Financial Conduct Authority
- The Competition and Markets Authority
- The Independent Office for Police Conduct

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

DATA PROTECTION

When an individual makes a disclosure, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with the data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the disclosure.

Signed by:



Olamide Oguntimehin
Chief Executive of Melanin Medics
Contact: olamide@melaninmedics.org

LAST REVIEWED: 4TH APRIL 2024
NEXT REVIEW: 1ST APRIL 2025

CONTACT

Melanin Medics

Arundel House
66-80 Arundel Road
Unit D
Bedfordshire
LU4 8DY

www.melaninmedics.com
info@melaninmedics.com
[@melaninmedics](https://www.instagram.com/melaninmedics)