

Mental Fight Club

Create • Relate • Integrate

Registered Charity Number 1158926

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

Last revised March 2024

1. Policy Statement

Mental Fight Club (MFC) is committed to practice which protects vulnerable adults from harm. We accept and recognise our responsibilities to keep vulnerable adults safe.

The staff member with overall responsibility for Safeguarding at MFC is the Development/Managing Director. At the time of writing this policy this is: Meuthia Endrojono-Ellis, Contact no: 07889123325
Email meuthia@mentalfightclub.art

We protect and promote the welfare of all vulnerable adults engaged in all of our activities. The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and Trustees working on behalf of MFC in relation to the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse.

All adults have the right to be safe from harm and should be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2. The key objectives of this policy

- To explain the responsibilities MFC staff, volunteers and Trustees have in relation to protecting vulnerable adults
- To provide staff, volunteers and trustees with an overview of vulnerable adult protection
- To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where vulnerable adult protection issues arise

3. Background and definitions

For the purpose of this document 'adult' means a person aged 18 years or over.

The broad definition of a 'vulnerable adult' referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper 'Who decides?' issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department, is a person:

“Who is or may be in need of community care services 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”.

To ensure consistency, this policy will use the phrase ‘Vulnerable Adults’ to identify those eligible for interventions within the procedures.

The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable adults. To this end it is the responsibility of all staff to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect (see the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) and to pass on their concerns to a responsible person/agency.

Some adults are less able to protect themselves than others, and some have difficulty making their wishes and feelings known. This may make them vulnerable to abuse.

A Vulnerable Adult may be a person who:

- is elderly and frail
- has a mental illness
- has a physical or sensory disability
- has a learning disability
- has a severe physical illness
- is a substance misuser
- is homeless or socially isolated/ marginalised

The policy is based on the six safeguarding values – detailed in Appendix B

4. Legal Framework

This guidance reflects the principles contained within the Human Rights Act 1998, the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Care Act 2014.

The Care Act 2014, covering England, introduced new duties and responsibilities on local authority adult social service as the lead agencies in protecting adults at risk. This is supported by the Care and Support Statutory Department of Health guidance 2015.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005, covering England and Wales, provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves, or who have capacity and want to make preparations for a time when they may lack capacity in the future. It sets out who can take decisions, in which situations, and how they should go about this.

The Human Rights Act 1998 gives legal effect in the UK to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) created a framework for whistle blowing across the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Act provides almost every

individual in the workplace with protection from victimisation where they raise genuine concerns about malpractice in accordance with the Act's provisions.

5. The role of staff, volunteers and Trustees, including recruitment

All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of MFC have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.

MFC does not discriminate against anyone who may wish to be employed or volunteer to work with us. There are, however, safeguards that need to be in place.

All staff and contractors as part of the recruitment process will be asked to go through the DBS process and a DBS check will be undertaken by MFC if they are working directly with vulnerable adults. All volunteers must be supervised by DBS-checked staff at all times.

Volunteers with criminal records will receive additional supervision and support. Key staff (Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Project Manager, Project Manager) will collaborate closely with relevant professional support workers for (e.g. Probation Officers) during the induction process and on a regular basis to ensure procedures are in place to protect vulnerable adults.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe vulnerable adults who are at risk. The purpose of this policy is to enable staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific adult protection issues. Other policies should be used in conjunction with this policy – MFC Health and Safety Policy and the London ADASS Safeguarding Policy has examples of good practice see **Appendix A**.

There is detailed guidance on creating and maintaining safe online spaces in **Appendix C** which is incorporated into MFC's safeguarding procedures.

Many serious case reviews have stated that if professionals had acted on their concerns or sought more information then death or serious harm may have been prevented. Workers need to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns and be able to spot signs of abuse and neglect.

6. What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Abuse or neglect does not have to be deliberate, malicious or planned.

The Department of Health's 'No Secrets' report suggests the following as the main types of abuse:

- Physical Abuse: including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions
- Sexual Abuse: including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting
- Psychological Abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- Financial or material abuse: including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- Neglect and acts of omission: including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- Discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- Institutional abuse: Repeated incidents of poor practice or care that are continually unaddressed. Threats of harm or abandonment.

7. Procedure in the event of a disclosure

It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously and acted on.

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been/ is being abused.

Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full record should be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant factual information. It is important not to include your own personal opinions or views.

The record should include the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant (person who has made a formal complaint that they have been harmed by someone else) and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, and the full account which has been given of the allegation.

7.1 Procedure in the event of an allegation made against staff, volunteers or Trustees

- Any and all allegations made against staff, Trustees or volunteers should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead by the member of staff or volunteer who the allegation has been raised to
- Patrons should be supported as necessary if an allegation is made by them to another member of staff
- In the event of an allegation made against any member of staff or volunteer, the Safeguarding Lead is responsible for carrying out any investigation
- The Safeguarding Lead should report to the Board of Trustees any allegation that requires an investigation within 3 working days of the issue being raised and should liaise with the Board throughout the period of investigation
- Whilst it is not always possible to place a time estimate on the length of any investigation, MFC will aim to investigate fully within 28 days of an allegation being raised and will keep any complainant informed should this time be exceeded
- Any investigations should be timely and aim to respond as soon as possible
- Any allegations made against the Safeguarding Lead should be reported directly to the Board of Trustees

8. Responding to an allegation

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse relating to MFC's activities must be reported to the named Safeguarding Lead referenced on page 1 of this document.

8.1 Reporting abuse or neglect

The Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility for reporting the incident by telephone to adult social services.

Incidents at The Dragon Café will be reported to Southwark Council's Adult Social Services Team by the Safeguarding Lead.

Incidents relating to adults with a mental illness or impairment (aged 18-65):

T: 020 7525 0088

E: MHContact@southwark.gov.uk

Incidents relating to older people and adults with a physical disability, including older people with a mental illness or impairment (if aged over 65):

T: 020 7525 3324

E: OPPDContaktteam@southwark.gov.uk

Incidents taking place in other areas will be reported to relevant local authorities.

The Safeguarding Lead will also report all incidents to MFC Trustees.

Where possible, consent should be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority. The adult should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only

to people who need to know about it and that they will be kept informed of any action to be taken and why.

A written record of the date and time of the report should be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing marked 'Confidential' and emailed to the relevant adult social service within 24 hours.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines.

Cases reported to adult social services will be dealt with under the 'No Secrets: Adult Protection in Southwark' procedures. If it is believed that a crime has been committed the police may be involved, and the employees or volunteer involved may be required to make a statement, if it is deemed necessary.

8.2 Guidelines on responding to allegations of abuse

It is very important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. This is a task for professional adult protection agencies, following a referral from the Safeguarding Lead.

In the event of an incident or disclosure:

DO

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Listen carefully and without judgement
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them on 999
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Follow the correct procedure
- Immediately speak to your manager/ supervisor for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation – clearly mentioning areas of confidentiality
- Remember the need for ongoing support and discuss the best approach with your manager/ supervisor

DON'T

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern

- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions
- Assume Information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic

9. Confidentiality

Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality, which should be clearly understood by all.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines. Records will only include details required in the initial contact form.

Where possible, consent should be obtained from the vulnerable adult before sharing personal information about them with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority. Consent will be managed by the Safeguarding Lead or Project Manager.

If an adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies. Within that context, the adult should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Where a disclosure has been made, staff should let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result. Staff should assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The adults' involvement in the process of sharing information should be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

10. The role of key agencies

10.1 Adult Social Services

The Department of Health's 2000 'No Secrets' guidance document requires that authorities develop a local framework within which all responsible agencies work together to ensure a coherent policy for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.

All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multiagency work aimed at protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults. It is normal practice for the board to comprise of people from partner organisations who have the ability to influence decision making and resource allocation within their organisation.

10. The Police

The Police play a vital role in Safeguarding Adults with cases involving alleged criminal acts. It becomes the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and gathering evidence. Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocol.

11. Additional Information

11.1 Spotting the signs of abuse

There are many possible signs that an adult may be being abused. Some of the most common signs include:

- Not having enough money to cover bills, food and other living expenses
- Unexplained marks, bruises or injuries
- Not wanting to be left alone or with a particular person
- Unusual difficulty with finances
- Being unusually light-hearted and insisting that there is nothing wrong
- Changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn, aggressive, depressed or angry for no obvious reason.
- What if the abuse is also a crime?
If the abuse is also a crime, such as physical assault, rape or theft, you should inform the police immediately.
- Dial 101 to speak to your local police station in a non-emergency. In an emergency always dial 999.

11.2 What can I do if I am not happy with how my concerns have been handled?

Call the Southwark customer service centre and tell them you wish to make a complaint: 020 7525 0042

Guidelines on making a complaint: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/complaints-comments-and-compliments/making-a-complaint>

Use of Mental Health Complaints Procedure Appendix A

11.3 Useful Helplines

Southwark Council's Adult Social Services:

Incidents relating to adults with a mental illness or impairment (aged 18-65):

T: 020 7525 0088

E: MHContact@southwark.gov.uk

Incidents relating to older people and adults with a physical disability, including older people with a mental illness or impairment (if aged over 65):

T: 020 7525 3324

E: OPPDContaktteam@southwark.gov.uk

Guidelines on safeguarding vulnerable adults: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/social-care-and-support/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults/safeguarding-adults>

City of London Adult Social Care team

Incidents relating to adults experiencing abuse or neglect:

T: 020 7332 1224 9.00am to 5.00pm – Monday to Friday

T: 0208 356 2300 for all other times including weekends and Bank holidays

E: adultsduty@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Offer free, confidential services available to anyone in England & Wales. They are independent of the police and can be contacted for support regardless of whether the crime has been reported or how long ago it took place.

Free support-line operating 24-hours a day 7 days a week: 08 08 16 89 111

Victims' Information Service: www.victimsinformationservice.org.uk

Free nationwide service which helps people find local support after a crime takes place.

Samaritans: crisis and emotional support helpline

24/7 freephone helpline: 116 123

Action on Elder Abuse: www.elderabuse.org.uk

Protect older people from abuse and neglect.

Helpline (Mon – Fri, 9am-5pm): 0808 808 8141

Age UK Lewisham & Southwark: www.ageuk.org.uk/lewishamandsouthwark

Southwark residents: To make an appointment or arrange a home visit call: 020 7358 4077

11 Scovell Road

Southwark

London

SE1 1QQ

Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk

24/7 freephone domestic violence/abuse helpline: 0808 2000 247

Rape crisis: www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Supports anyone who has experienced rape, child sexual abuse and/or any other kind of violence. Runs local helplines and centres across England and Wales.

Appendix A

Other MFC and ADASS Safeguarding Policy and Procedure:

The following policies should be read in conjunction with Safeguarding Policy

- MFC Health and Safety Policy
- MFC Complaints Procedures

MFC includes safe recruitment procedures to include references and DBS checks together with risk assessments for MFC activities and premises used training for MFC team and volunteers

The complaints procedure for informal and formal resolution for all MFC service users and team members.

The London Association of Directors of Adult Social Services – (London ADASS) have provided a comprehensive safeguarding document, which covers referral to local authorities. The London Multi –Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures have a comprehensive list of definitions in relation to Safeguarding <http://londonadass.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Pan-London-Updated-August-2016.pdf> and detailed guidance.

This is their guidance on good practice for referrals to Adult Social Services

Good Practice Guidance- DISCLOSURE
•Speak in a private and safe place
•Accept what the person is saying
•Don't 'interview' the person; but establish the basic facts avoiding asking the same questions more than once
•Ask them what they would like to happen and what they would like you to do
•Don't promise the person that you'll keep what they tell you confidential; explain who you will tell and why
•If there are grounds to override a person's consent to share information, explain what these are
•Explain how the adult will be involved and kept informed
•Provide information and advice on keeping safe and the safeguarding process
•Make a best interest decision about the risks and protection needed if the person is unable to provide informed consent
Establish
•The risks and what immediate steps to take
•Communication needs, whether an interpreter or other support is needed
•Whether it is likely that advocacy may be required
•Personal care and support arrangements

CONCERNS CHECKLIST
•Safety of adult and others made
•Initial conversation held with the adult
•Emergency services contacted and recorded
•Medical treatment sought
•Consent sought
•Mental Capacity considered
•Best Interest Decisions made and recorded
•Public and vital interest considered and recorded
•Police report made
•Evidence preserved
•Referrals to specialist agencies e.g. Haven and Channel
•Referral to children services if there are children and young people safeguarding matters
•Action taken to remove/reduce risk where possible and recorded
•Recorded clear rationales for decision making
•Referral to Local Authority included relevant information
•Mental capacity to make decisions about whether the adult is able to protect themselves and understand the safeguarding process

Appendix B Principles of Safeguarding

The policy and procedures are based on The Six Principles of Safeguarding that underpin all adult safeguarding work.

Empowerment	Adults are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with support and information.	I am consulted about the outcomes I want from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens
Prevention	Strategies are developed to prevent abuse and neglect that promotes resilience and self-determination.	I am provided with easily understood information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help
Proportionate	A proportionate and least intrusive response is made balanced with the level of risk.	I am confident that the professionals will work in my interest and only get involved as much as needed
Protection	Adults are offered ways to protect themselves, and there is a co-ordinated response to adult safeguarding.	I am provided with help and support to report abuse. I am supported to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want and to which I am able
Partnerships	Local solutions through services working together within their communities.	I am confident that information will be appropriately shared in a way that takes into account its personal and sensitive

Accountable		nature. I am confident that agencies will work together to find the most effective responses for my own situation
	Accountability and transparency in delivering a safeguarding response.	I am clear about the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the solution to the problem

Appendix C

Creating and facilitating safe online spaces for vulnerable adults

1. Introduction

Owing to the restrictions placed on staff, volunteers and patrons during the COVID-19 crisis, Mental Fight Club (MFC) have established a Virtual Dragon Café and have also moved some Dragon Café in the City project activities online.

This guidance note sets out procedures enabling staff to manage and facilitate safe online spaces for vulnerable adults, which may include patrons with long-term mental health difficulties, on-going suicidal thoughts and feelings, or those who may be at risk of harm.

It is important to recognise that we are living in a rapidly changing online environment and may encounter unanticipated risks over time. New risks and safety breaches must be brought to the attention of a Safeguarding Lead immediately, in order for this guidance note to be updated and extended.

This note must be read alongside MFC's existing safeguarding policy. Any concerns about the safety of a MFC staff member, volunteer or patron or other safeguarding incidents must be reported directly to the Development Director of MFC, as soon as possible and by the end of the working day. Reports are to be made by telephone in the first instance and then via email so that there is a written record.

2. The Dragon Café and Dragon Café in the City: Online events and groups

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, some face-to-face activities and discussion groups usually facilitated for The Dragon Café, Dragon Café in the City at Shoe Lane Library have been moved online and hosted via Zoom. These have reduced, but continued, after the relaxation of lockdown rules.

All of our activities are designed to reduce isolation and support connection during this difficult and distressing time, as well as to inspire creativity and support compassionate dialogue in mental health.

While there is a peer supportive element to all of our activities and sessions, our online groups are distinct from peer support groups in that they serve to facilitate a specific, time-limited activity, such as a creative project or an arts and research collaboration. As such there are limitations to what participants are able to share during groups, and Community Guidelines will be used to communicate the remit of the sessions and the ways in which participants are encouraged to use them.

Online activity and discussion groups carry a number of risks to staff and participants, and as such we have identified a number of potential risks and outlined the ways in which we will mitigate against them:

2.1 Risk: Zoombombing

There will always be a member of staff responsible for Safeguarding in Zoom sessions exploring sensitive mental health issues/ personal stories/ experiences to ensure the experience is as safe as possible for registered participants.

We will use Zoom's enhanced [security measures](#) by requesting that participants register in advance,

2.2 Risk: Abusive behaviour or unhelpful behaviour within the group

While group members will be encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour in the group, and to uphold the group's Community Guidelines, the safety of the session is the responsibility of the group's facilitator.

If a group member behaves in an abusive way towards another group member, or a facilitator, during a group, the facilitators will explain that their behaviour isn't acceptable and refer them to the Community Guidelines.

If the group member agrees to uphold the Community Guidelines, they will be able to continue on in the group. If they disagree with the Community Guidelines and continue to act in an abusive way, they will be asked to leave the session and will be removed from the group if necessary.

If a group member has been asked to leave a session, or has been removed from a session, the staff facilitator will write to them to follow-up. If the group member wishes to return to the group and agrees to respect the Community Guidelines, they

will be permitted to do so only with the agreement of the other group members that were present.

Any group members who have been affected will also be contacted in writing after the session. They will be offered the opportunity to speak with a senior member of staff about the incident, or to submit a complaint about the incident. If they require additional support MFC managers will provide signposting to relevant support services.

In addition to abusive behaviour, unhelpful behaviour may occur within the group. Unhelpful behaviour may include:

- A group member/s giving medical advice
- A group member/s disclosing graphic details about distressing subjects, such as abuse, suicide or self-harm
- A group member/s dominating the conversation or activity, interrupting people or not listening
- A group member/s making derogatory or defamatory remarks about someone not present
- A group member/s marginalising another member

In these instances, facilitators will reflect on what they see happening within the group and refer back to the Community Guidelines. Challenging situations will be managed in much the same way online as they are in face-to-face groups, but if necessary, it is possible for a facilitator to mute a member or remove them from the group temporarily while they explain that their behaviour isn't helpful and encourage them to keep in mind the group's Guidelines.

2.3. Risk: Harm to members, or others, through failure to identify risk or seek additional support

As above, all members will be asked to read the group's Community Guidelines, which explain the remit of the group, Mental Fight Club's confidentiality policy and the details of where to go if they are experiencing a crisis.

If a group member makes a disclosure which is immediately concerning, group facilitators will respond straight away within the group to assess whether they, or someone else, are at risk of harm, explore support options and where to go in a crisis.

Disclosures which are immediately concerning may include:

- Suicidal plans or intent, or the intent to carry out life threatening self-harm
- Intent to harm another person
- Disclosures of on-going abuse (which could include sexual/physical/emotional/financial/online abuse or neglect)
- Disclosures about a crime

If the group member (or someone else) is unsafe and cannot access support by themselves, the Safeguarding Lead will be informed and will contact the relevant

support services without delay – e.g. emergency services if the person intends to take their own life imminently and has the means to do so, or their local crisis team if they are in crisis but do not require immediate help. If the disclosure relates to a crime the facilitator will contact the police.

For additional guidance on how to respond to suicidal disclosures online, please see the [National Suicide Prevention Alliance's best practice guidelines for responding to suicidal content online](#).

2.4 Risk: Members taking on support roles for other members to their detriment

Members may have existing relationships with one another, or go on to develop relationships with one another, which may at times feel difficult, problematic or detrimental to their wellbeing.

All group sessions will emphasise the importance of self-care, self-compassion and helpful boundaries. If a group member has concerns about the wellbeing of another member, or the impact that another member is having on them, they will be encouraged to discuss this with the group's facilitator. The facilitator will help them to think about their current needs, and signpost them to other support services if required.

2.5 Risk: Inappropriate material

Members may attempt to post inappropriate material to the site. Inappropriate material may contain:

- Adverts for services, or requests for services
- Medical advice, or requests
- Imagery containing nudity
- Pornographic or explicit content

Any inappropriate material will be deleted by the site's administrator/editor, who will email the member to explain why the post was deleted and remind them of the Community Guidelines. If the member continues to post inappropriate material, they will be removed and contacted with an explanation.

2.6 Risk: Sensitive material

Members may attempt to post sensitive material to the site. Sensitive material may contain:

- Personal contact details
- Contact details for another member/non-member (e.g. a mental health professional)

As above, the post will be deleted and the member will be redirected to the site's Community Guidelines.

2.7 Risk: Inappropriate conversations between patrons

We have taken the decision to disable the function allowing patrons to send private messages to one another, as these are not possible to moderate.

All posts are moderated by the site's administrator and editors before being made public, including comments on other member's posts. If conversations between members are considered to be inappropriate, they will be deleted and the member/s informed by email.

Inappropriate conversations may include:

- Sexually explicit language or references to sex acts
- Sensitive details relating to the physical or mental health difficulties of a member or another person
- Derogatory or defamatory comments about a member or another person (e.g. a mental health professional)

If a member/s continue to post inappropriate material they will be removed from the site, with an explanation as to why this decision has been made.

2.8 Risk: Inappropriate conversations between staff/volunteers and patrons

- All interactions and conversations between staff and members are publicly visible, and no private messaging is able to take place.
- All MFC staff have been DBS checked, and receive training and on-going support.
- All pending posts are visible to the site's administrator and team of editors.

2.9 Risk: Harm to a member, or others, through failure to identify risk or seek support

All patrons will be asked to read the site's Community Guidelines, which explain the remit of the site, MFC's confidentiality policy and the details of where to go if they are experiencing a crisis.

If a patron posts content which is immediately concerning, moderators must report this straight away via a phone call to Development Director of MFC who will respond without delay, along with a copy of the post (via screenshot) in an email. All incidents must be reported as soon as possible and by the end of the working day in the first instance via a phone call and then via a follow up email to provide a written record.

Content which is immediately concerning may include:

- Words/imagery containing references to suicidal plans or intent
- Words/imagery relating to life threatening self-harm
- Words/imagery detailing the intention to harm another person

- Words/imagery disclosing that the member, or another person, is experiencing abuse (which could include sexual/physical/emotional/financial/online abuse or neglect)
- Words/imagery disclosing a crime

Any safeguarding concerns will be responded to the Safeguarding Lead, i.e. the Development Director, in line with MFC's Adult Safeguarding policy.

For additional guidance on how to respond to suicidal content, please see the [National Suicide Prevention Alliance's best practice guidelines for responding to suicidal content online](#).

3. Right of appeal

If a member wishes to appeal a sanction / action that has been taken they are to email the Development Director clearly outlining the date when the incident occurred, the MFC staff member involved and why they are appealing. If the complaint is in relation to Development Director, the above details are to be emailed to info@mentalfightclub.art marked for Trustees attention.

4. Mental Health Crisis Helplines:

South London & the Maudsley (SLaM):

Main contact: Crisis Assessment Unit 0800 731 2864 (temporary service to handle increase in demand due to Covid-19 and help people in mental health crisis avoid A&E)

Usual services:

Emergency services and out of hours: contact the Acute Referral Centre on 020 3228 6272

Relevant local assessment and liaison teams to contact during office hours:

Southwark North (Maudsley Hospital)

Email: SouthwarkNorthAssessmentandLiaisonTeam@slam.nhs.uk

Call: 020 3228 9454

Southwark South (Maudsley Hospital)

Email: SouthwarkSouthAssessmentandLiaisonTeam@slam.nhs.uk

Call: 020 3228 9454

Lambeth

The assessment and liaison team has been replaced with [Lambeth Single Point of Access](#)

Email: lambethspa@slam.nhs.uk

Call: 0800 090 2456

Lewisham

Email: Slm-tr.Lewisham-A-and-L@nhs.net

Call: 020 3228 9200

Croydon

Email: CroydonMapAssessmentandLiaisonTeam@slam.nhs.uk

Call: 02032280365

Mental Health crisis line for City of London residents: It can also be used to refer or self-refer – call 020 8432 8020

Approval and Review

Status: Requires Approval by MFC Trustees

Last Approved by Trustees March 2024

Last Reviewed by Development Director: January 2024