



## Safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberties Policy

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is an overriding professional duty for registered optical practitioners and practices, in the same way as for all other health and social care practitioners and providers.

The Company is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults including deprivation of liberties safeguards. The Company also supports the safeguarding agenda in the context of tackling health inequalities.

The Company will comply with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and recognises its principles to be:

- Presumed capacity unless proven otherwise.
- Empowering decision making to the maximum extent utilising all practical steps before an individual is treated as lacking capacity.
- Recognising that unwise decisions do not in themselves indicate lack of capacity.
- Acting in the best interests of an individual lacking capacity.
- The objective of less restrictive options relating to acts or decisions when a person lacks capacity.

The Company supports the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and will ensure individual patients' freedom are not inappropriately restricted while protecting their rights and allowing them to make decisions where possible, putting the patient first when decisions are taken for them.

The Company will comply with local safeguarding, mental capacity and deprivation of liberty policies including any updates required in line with multi-agency policies and the Commissioner's requirements. The Company will meet Prevent requirements as appropriate for the contract/services type.

## Company policy

The Company's named safeguarding lead is **Frances Walker**. This lead will also act as the Company's mental capacity and deprivation of liberty lead, child sexual abuse and exploitation lead and where appropriate, prevent lead. The Commissioner will be kept informed at all times of the identity of the lead.

It is the Company's policy that its staff must adhere to <http://www.opticalconfederation.org.uk/downloads/oc-safeguarding-guidance--updated--june-2017.pdf> (this guidance is freely available internally from the Company).

By requiring familiarity with this guidance, the Company ensures its staff are immediately able to implement the necessary steps if they suspect and observe signs or symptoms of suspected abuse or neglect.

All optometrists working for the Company are required to be aware of and adhere to the relevant College of Optometrist guidelines. In addition, each accredited practitioner is required to complete the DOCET Level 2 accredited 'Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults' training modules (funded by the Department of Health via the College of Optometrists) and submit evidence to the Company. The DOCET Level 2 accredited safeguarding modules also cover the Mental Capacity Act.

The Company will ensure local safeguarding team contact numbers are available internally.

The Company will support the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs). The Company understands the key role of LSCBs and SABs in highlighting required improvements with regards safeguarding and will act accordingly as necessary.

The Company will participate in the development of any local multi-agency safeguarding quality indicators and/or plan if requested by the coordinating commissioner.

At the reasonable written request of the commissioner the Company will provide evidence to the commissioner no later than ten days from request confirming that it is addressing any concerns raised by relevant multi-agency reporting systems.

The Company's Safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberties Policy will be reviewed annually from commencement date **1 February 2018** and amended in order to comply with evolving local multi-agency policies and commissioner safeguarding requirements.