CARD 4
The six safeguarding principles
There are six safeguarding principles enshrined in the Care Act, and reflected throughout this toolkit.

**Principle 1 – Empowerment**
As far as possible, adults should be in control of their care and the decisions that affect their lives. Safeguarding must involve promoting their independence and quality of life, and must maximise their ability to control their lives. There should be a presumption that adults will make their own decisions and will be engaged in discussions about what they want from safeguarding.

**Principle 2 – Prevention**
It is clearly better to act before harm occurs. Prevention of abuse or neglect is the primary goal of safeguarding. It involves working with individuals to reduce risks of harm or abuse and delivering high-quality, person-centred services in safe environments. All adults have a right to care and support focused on their individual needs and requirements.

**Principle 3 – Proportionality**
Safeguarding responses should be proportionate. They should be no more intrusive than is necessary to respond to the risks involved.

**Principle 4 – Protection**
Patients should receive the support they need to protect themselves from abuse and neglect. The greater the risk to the individual, the greater the support offered. Where adults are less able to protect themselves, health professionals should take reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure their protection. This will usually involve assessing whether
more proactive measures are required to protect someone. It may involve a multi-agency response.

**Principle 5 – Partnership**
Safeguarding adults is effective where individuals, professionals and communities work together to prevent, detect and respond to neglect and abuse. Communities have a part to play in safeguarding adults.

**Principle 6 – Transparency and accountability**
Professional engagement with safeguarding should form part of ongoing assessment and clinical audit to identify areas for improvement in service delivery. Good safeguarding requires collaboration and transparency within and between partner agencies.

Care providers must also avoid discriminating unfairly between groups of patients. Care and treatment decisions must be based on a fair and objective assessment of individual needs, in partnership with service users, and not on assumptions about age or disability.