

Spiritual Abuse & Coercion Policy

Spiritual Abuse is defined as: ‘Coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context.’

Spiritual abuse or coercion may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of scripture or using the pulpit / position of ‘spiritual’ authority to control behaviour, omission of choice, the suggestion of a ‘divine’ position, isolation from others, especially those external to the spiritual context.

At Mercy UK, we are committed to proactively avoiding and addressing behavioural patterns of enforcement, isolation, legalism, coercion, religious control or unethical decision-making.

In our commitment, we aim to:

- Provide Spiritual Abuse & Coercion training for all staff
- Cultivate a working environment where employees and beneficiaries may raise concerns freely without fear of retribution, alienation or victimization
- Conduct regular review of practice and organisational accountability
- Require regular supervision of employees which applies reflective practice to personal and professional development

We ask all team members to:

- Encourage and empower individuals within their spiritual contexts to develop autonomy
- Undertake all training aimed at the successful implementation of this policy including spiritual abuse & coercion training, safeguarding adults, mental health first aid, as provided by Mercy UK
- Apply reflective practice to their ongoing personal and professional development in line with our wellbeing in the workplace policy, our core values and our ethical framework