

Safeguarding Adults at Risk: How to recognise and protect yourself and others from abuse

Adult safeguarding is about protecting Adults at Risk. This includes keeping people safe and protecting them from abuse. It is also about keeping people safe in their home. This includes fire safety and home security.

There are different kinds of abuse - older people and those with disabilities can be especially vulnerable:

Discriminatory: Including forms of harassment, bullying, slurs, isolation, neglect, denial of access to services or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, religion or because someone is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Domestic abuse or violence: Including an incident or a pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexual orientation. This includes psychological/emotional, physical, sexual, financial abuse; so called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage or Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Financial or material: Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, exploitation, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery: Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Neglect and acts of omission: Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to access appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Organisational (sometimes referred to as institutional): Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Physical: Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Psychological (sometimes referred to as emotional): Including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber-bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

Sexual: Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual assault, sexual acts, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting. It also includes sexual exploitation which is exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the person receives "something" (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, mobile phones, cigarettes, gifts, money) or perceived

friendship/relationship as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing sexual acts.

Self-neglect: Includes a person neglecting to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings; or an inability to provide essential food, clothing, shelter or medical care necessary to maintain their physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing and general safety. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Not included in the Care Act 2014 but also relevant:

Cyber Bullying: cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages, or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person. It can be used to carry out many different types of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities) but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology as a means to do it.

Forced Marriage: forced marriage is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse.

Mate Crime: a 'mate crime' as defined by the Safety Net Project as 'when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.

Radicalisation: the aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

How to protect yourself and others from abuse:

With each kind of abuse, neglect, undue pressure or assault, there is often someone who knows it is happening or suspects that something is wrong.

By taking responsibility and reporting it, you can help yourself and others. This will help people keep their dignity and respect, protect their finances and keep them safe from physical harm.

Anyone who thinks they might suspect abuse can talk to someone about it.

There are many ways we can support you or someone you think is at risk or might need protecting. If you report something, we will discuss with you what action, if any, might be taken.

If no one reports a problem, neglect, abuse or assault could continue when something could be done to stop it.

Reporting abuse of an Adult at Risk

All safeguarding adult referrals should be made by telephone initially to the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership.

Monday to Thursday: 8.30am – 5.00pm; Friday: 8.30am – 4.30pm; excluding Bank Holidays

Phone: 0345 604 2719
Text: 07814 191111
Fax: 01785 276026
Email: VAStaffordshire@staffordshire.gov.uk

In an emergency outside office hours, please call: 0345 604 2886

More information can be found at www.staffordshire.gov.uk

If you think someone is in immediate danger or is at a high risk of harm:

Contact the **emergency services** on **999**