

Safeguarding Adults Quick Guide

What do I do if I have a concern that an adult is being abused or neglected or is at risk of this?

1. If the adult is in immediate danger, take action at once such as calling emergency services or medical assistance.
2. Report any concern about a child to the Children's MASH on 0300 555 1373. This includes where you know a child lives in the same home as an adult you think may be experiencing or at risk of abuse.
3. Unless it is not safe to do so, speak to the adult about your concerns and the risks you think they face and obtain their views and wishes.

I am asked my opinion if people around me think I am at risk of abuse or neglect.

- Listen to their views, including the risks they face and what they would like to see happen next. (They may see the concern differently; some safeguarding concerns can be minor and easily resolved; others can be very serious and affect lots of people.)
- Consider the person's ability to understand the concern (mental capacity). If they are not able to understand, you will need to decide what to do in their best interests. If you are in any doubt, refer the matter to Adult Social Care on: 01983 814980.

I know that decisions are made in my best interest when I lack capacity to make them.

I feel listened to and what I say is taken seriously.

- If the person declines support, consider if this is because they are scared of someone who may be trying to control what they say or do. That could be a sign of domestic abuse.
- Discuss the concern and what to do with your supervisor/manager/person you report to, unless this would cause a delay that places the person at greater risk (but then make sure you inform them as soon as you can).

My views directly inform what happens next.

4. Take the action you have agreed to safeguard the adult. **This could be:**

- The actions the adult wants that resolves a problem in the way they want.
- If a crime has or is being committed, report this to the police.
- (Take action to protect any evidence of a crime.)
- Where the person agrees (or where you have decided that for their safety you must act,) report the safeguarding adult concern to Adult Social Care on: 01983 814980 and ask to speak to the Safeguarding Duty Officer. Out of Hours if your concern cannot wait until the next working day contact: 01983 821105
- Always record what you have done and the reasons for doing it and share this with your supervisor/manager.

Why is it so important to speak to the adult when I have a safeguarding concern about them?

The 2014 Care Act says that safeguarding an adult from abuse or neglect has to be done with their involvement to the greatest extent possible. Everyone has the human right to be involved in the decisions that affect their lives. This approach is known as “***making safeguarding personal***”.

Adults with care and support needs have said that when people act to protect them without including them, this often makes things worse, not better.

Remember “***No decision about me without me***”.

Should I report a safeguarding concern without the consent of the person and what if they tell me not to report anything?

You should always listen and take account of what the person says. But there may be occasions when you need to report a concern without the person’s consent; for example:

- If you suspect the adult is being coerced or bullied into refusing support
- If waiting to get their consent would put them at further risk
- If there is a risk of harm to the adult or others, including children
- If it is necessary to prevent crime or if a crime may have been committed
- If the adult lacks mental capacity to understand the risks, they face
- If you suspect that the adult is at risk or has been harmed by a person in a position of trust, i.e. a professional, paid carer, volunteer.

In these circumstances you ***must*** report your concern.

The adult should always be told of your decision to report the concern and the reasons for this, unless by telling them would put their safety, or the safety of others, at risk.

The key issue in deciding whether to report a concern without their consent will be the level of risk of harm to the adult (or to any other adults who may have contact with the person or organisation causing the risk of harm.) If you are not sure what to do, report your concern to: 01983 814980.

Confidentiality and sharing information – sharing information on a “need to know” basis is essential to safeguard adults at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect.

There is a duty to share information to stop or prevent abuse or neglect. But this needs to be balanced against your duty to protect the person right to confidentiality.

You should:

- Wherever possible gain permission of the adult to share information if consent cannot, or is not given, if you judge this is essential to protect the adult and is in their best interests; or to protect others from harm.
- Only share the information necessary to protect the adult; and only with people who need to know.

Four steps to protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect.

