

Dos and don'ts if there are concerns that an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect



**Durham
Safeguarding Adults
Partnership**

In all cases, if an adult is in immediate danger, take preventative steps and call 999 for the emergency services

Member of the public

- Has concerns an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect
- Contact Social Care Direct (SCD) call **03000 26 79 79**
- Social Care Direct will accept anonymous referrals. But this may inhibit any further enquiry

DCC Children's Services and DCC Adult and Health Services

First

- Discuss concerns with your line manager/supervisor

Then

- Manager considers information and refers concern to SCD if necessary
- SCD will respond to safeguarding enquiry and ask others to make enquiries
- SCD will decide on next steps using Risk Threshold Tool: Safeguarding Enquiry or Adult Protection

NHS, independent or voluntary sector agency, or other statutory or Durham County Council services

- Follow agency's guidelines
- Discuss your concern first with your line manager/supervisor and record as required by your service
- Manager/supervisor uses Safeguarding Adults Risk Threshold Tool
- If appropriate, refer to Social Care Direct Call **03000 26 79 79**

Do

- Do ensure the person is not in immediate danger. If they are, seek police or medical assistance (999)
- Do remember to remain calm
- Do listen carefully if the person discloses abuse
- Do secure the scene if necessary and if possible
- If you suspect financial abuse, consider placing cheque books, bank cards etc. into a plastic bag in case they are required as evidence
- Do explain to the person that you have a duty to discuss the issue with your line manager/supervisor
- Do remember, the person may not want their family informed as the family may actually be involved
- Do make a note of the time, date and setting in which the allegation was made, if the event was witnessed, and any witnesses to the event (e.g. incident report, patient notes, client case file)
- Do make use of a body map to illustrate physical injuries
- Do make a note of anyone else who was there at the time
- Do record what was said using ONLY the person's own words
- The account you record must be legible and include the date and your signature
- Do ensure your written account follows your agency's guidelines
- Do provide information to the person about the steps that will be taken and reassure them that the issue will be taken seriously
- Do give the person your/SCD contact details so that they can report any further issues or ask any questions
- Do inform the person that they will receive feedback
- Do give your report to your line manager/supervisor to keep in a safe and confidential place

Don't

- Don't place yourself or anyone else in danger
- Don't be judgemental
- Don't make promises you cannot keep
- Don't ask detailed or probing questions
- Don't interfere with, or contaminate potential evidence following physical or sexual assault, for example, by washing, sheet changing, teeth cleaning etc
- Don't discuss the incident with anyone else except your line manager/supervisor
- Don't question witnesses except to obtain basic information
- Don't leave detailed confidential information on answer machines
- Don't, in any circumstances, discuss the issue with the person alleged to have caused harm
- Don't attempt to influence or intimidate potential witnesses
- **Don't conduct your own enquiry or investigation**