Abuse
don't tolerate it
don't ignore it
do report it!

**County Durham**
SAFEGUARDING ADULTS
INTER-AGENCY PARTNERSHIP

**Factsheet**

Working with The Safe Durham Partnership *Altogether safer*

# Safeguarding adults – an easy read guide

## What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse is where someone behaves in a way that causes you harm.
This can be on purpose, or can be unintentional.

Abuse can be:

**Physical** – this is when someone hurts you.

**Sexual** – this is when someone touches you in a way you don't like or understand.

They might touch your private parts or have sex with you when you don't want to.

**Financial** – When someone takes your money or won't let you choose how to spend it.

**Psychological** – When someone makes fun of you or makes you feel bad.

# What is abuse continued…

**Organisational** – where your care provider gives poor service – like ignoring you or not treating you properly.

**Discriminatory** – when you are treated differently because of your race, belief, sex, age etc.

**Domestic abuse** – where you are threatened, hurt or abused by a member of your family.

**Modern slavery** – this is where you are forced to work for no money.

**Self neglect** – where you don't look after yourself by eating properly or keeping yourself or your home clean.

# What are the signs of abuse?

Signs that someone is being abused can include:

Injuries which can't be explained, or repeated visits to the doctor or hospital.

Being scared, upset or worried, or if you hide and don't mix with your friends or family.

Pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease.

Not having enough money to buy food, even if you should have enough money.

Not looking after yourself or not being looked after properly by others.

## Which adults are at risk of abuse?

'Adults at risk' are people over 18 years old, who:

May need other people or services to care for them or support them, because of their age, a disability, a mental health need, or substance misuse.

It may also mean people who can't make decisions for themselves, or need someone to speak up for them.

## Where might abuse happen?

Abuse can happen anywhere.

It can happen in your own home, or outdoors.

It can also happen at places like day centres, care homes, college, at the Doctor's, or hospital.

## Who are abusers?

Anyone can be an abuser.

This could include family members, carers, partners, friends or neighbours.

It could also be volunteers or professionals.

## How to report abuse

You can call Social Care Direct if abuse is happening to you or if someone tells you they have been abused. Call **03000 26 79 79**

Social Care Direct will listen to you and you will be taken seriously. Your details will be kept private.

**If you are in danger call 999 before ringing Social Care Direct.**

# What happens after you report abuse?

We take your report seriously and will keep you informed about what's happening.

We will take steps to keep you, or anyone else at risk of abuse safe.

We will talk to you, or the person at risk to find out what is happening. You can use an **advocate** if you need to.

Where needed, we will work with other agencies like the police to investigate reports of abuse. We will do all we can to stop abuse happening again.

We will give you any advice you may need when you have reported abuse.

An **advocate** is someone who helps you speak up for yourself.

## What not to do

If you, or someone you know is being abused, don't:

Promise to keep abuse a secret.

Let the abuser know you are reporting abuse – this may make things worse and make it harder for us or the police to help.

Don't delay – call Social Care Direct on **03000 26 79 79** or the police as soon as possible.

# Help us to stop abuse

Lots of abuse is not reported. We need your help to make sure people get the help they need.



There is more information on our website:
www.safeguardingdurhamadults.info

## Useful contacts



**Social Care Direct**
Tel: 03000 26 79 79



For domestic abuse services call **Harbour**.
Tel: 03000 20 25 25
www.myharbour.org.uk



**Hate crime**
www.durham.gov.uk/hatecrime



**Modern slavery**
Call 0800 121 700
www.modernslavery.co.uk

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.
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