



Useful Contacts

Safeguarding Adults Team

0191 566 1736

Adult Services Out of Hours Team

0191 528 9110

Police Main Switchboard

0191 454 7555

For a more comprehensive list of local information and contact details please refer to the Safeguarding Adults Procedural Framework.

Know your **Safeguarding Adults Procedures**.

It is your **responsibility** to **recognise** abuse. **report** it. **stop** it.

This information can be made available in large print, braille, audio and other languages. Please contact the Communications Service on **0191 566 1419** or email **communications@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk**

www.alertabuse.org.uk

Safeguarding Adults: **guidance for staff and volunteers**

Working together to stop adult abuse

Working together to stop adult abuse

- All adults have the right to live lives that are free from violence, fear and abuse.
- All adults have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation.
- All adults have the right to an independent lifestyle and the right to make choices, some of which may involve a degree of risk.

Some people do not enjoy these fundamental rights. **Every day** adults who are dependent on others for support will suffer some form of abuse.

The Multi-Agency Panel for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (MAPPVA) was set up in 1997 but has more recently been replaced by **Sunderland's Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board**, made up of senior members of key agencies providing services for adults.

Safeguarding Adults Procedures launched in April 2007 replace those previously produced by MAPPVA. These new procedures reflect Government guidance in the 2000 Department of Health document 'No Secrets' but also embrace the content and philosophy of the 'Safeguarding Adults: National Framework for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work' produced by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) in October 2005.

No single agency can hope to work unaided and ensure the safety of all adults. There is a need to build on the strong multi-agency arrangements already in place and every single member of staff within each of those agencies must take seriously their responsibility to work for the benefit of those who can potentially be at risk of harm and abuse.

Know your **Safeguarding Adults Procedures**.

It is your **responsibility** to **recognise** abuse. **report** it. **stop** it.

What is adult abuse?

There is no nationally agreed, single definition of adult abuse. It is suggested in 'No Secrets' that:

“**Abuse is a violation** of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons.”

Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Partnership also recognise that:

- abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts
- abuse may be intentional or unintentional
- abuse may be perpetrated by an individual, group or organisation
- abuse often occurs when there is a misuse of power, control and/or authority.

Who might need the help of the Safeguarding Adults process?

Those adults more likely to be at increased risk of abuse, or less able to protect themselves from abuse are:

- those, aged 18 years and over, who are or may be eligible to receive support from social care or health services
- and who may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against serious harm or exploitation
- and whose independence and well-being would be/or is at risk if they did not receive appropriate health or social care support.

This might include people who are frail, either physically or mentally due to old age, adults with mental ill-health, adults with physical disabilities and/or sensory impairments, and adults with learning disabilities. It might also include adults who abuse substances, adults whose behaviour or condition puts themselves at risk of abuse, and victims of domestic violence who meet the above criteria.

Individuals who are not in receipt of any services but fulfil the above criteria are eligible for support under the Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

Where does abuse take place?

Abuse can occur **anywhere**.

People can be abused in their own homes, in residential or nursing homes, in day services, at work, in education settings, in hospitals, health centres or surgeries, police stations or in public places.

Who are the abusers?

Anyone can be an abuser -
neighbours, friends, relatives,
partners, people in a position of trust,
people paid to provide social care or
health services, volunteers, strangers.

Institutions, large and small, can be abusive if the care they provide is of a poor quality.

Some abusers will deliberately target people they see as vulnerable and therefore easy to exploit.

Types of abuse and what to look out for

Physical Abuse

The physical ill treatment of an adult, which may or may not cause physical injury.

Signs and symptoms may include: unexplained bruising or scratches; burns, particularly in unusual places; unexplained fractures; sudden incontinence; flinching; evidence of under/over use of medication.

Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity, physical contact or non-contact, which the adult does not want: rape; buggery; incest; unwanted touching; serious teasing or sexual innuendo; being forced to look at pornographic material.

Signs and symptoms may include: urinary tract infections; vaginal infections; bruising and/or pain in the genital/anal area; torn, stained or bloody underclothing; over-sexualised behaviour or language.

Financial or Material Abuse

Inappropriate use of a person's money; stealing a person's money, property or possessions; blocking access to a person's material goods; denying a person's rights, for example, the right to seek independent legal advice, to vote or complain.

Signs and symptoms may include: constant lack of money; unexplained withdrawals from bank accounts; disparity between assets/income and the way a person is living; the disappearance of bank statements, receipts documents or valuables.

Psychological Abuse

Being repeatedly made to feel unhappy, anxious, afraid, humiliated or devalued by the actions or inactions and/or attitudes of others; intimidation; rejection; a person's choices and opinions being ignored.

Signs and symptoms may include: depression; low self-esteem; self-neglect; anxiety; tearfulness; becoming withdrawn; isolation; agitation.

Institutional Abuse

The practice of an abusive regime or culture which destroys the dignity and respect to which every person is entitled; can occur within services, organisations, residential care, as well as within family homes.

Signs and symptoms may include: lack of privacy; denying or failing to promote individual rights; oppressive environment, routines or culture; unsafe or unhygienic environment; individual needs sacrificed for the smooth running of a service, home or organisation.

Neglect

The deliberate withholding, or unintentional failure to provide appropriate and adequate care and support; physical neglect; incorrect administration of medication; failure to provide adequate nutrition, heating or clothing.

Signs and symptoms may include: poor physical condition/appearance; skin ulcers or pressure sores; poor hygiene; unexplained weight loss; malnutrition; dehydration; reduced mobility due to deprivation of aids.

Discriminatory Abuse

This abuse may manifest itself as any of the categories already listed but is motivated by oppressive and discriminatory attitudes towards:

A person's disability; race; gender; age; religion; cultural background; sexual orientation.

- It must be noted that there are a wide range of signs and symptoms of abuse and that the above list is not an exhaustive one. Also, it is important to remember that such signs and symptoms, on their own, do not necessarily confirm that abuse has taken place, but that we should be **alert** to the **possibility** of abuse. All signs and symptoms should be considered within the context of an individual, their circumstances and usual pattern of behaviour.

What can we do to keep people safe?

Sunderland's Safeguarding Adults Procedural Framework identifies 3 distinct roles in the safeguarding process:

- Alerter
- Responsible Person
- Safeguarding Manager

Know Your Role

Alerter

An Alert is identified as an **expression of concern**, suspicion or allegation that an adult is at risk of abuse or is experiencing abuse.

An Alerter is the person who raises the concern.

We can all be Alerters - we can all see if abuse is happening around us; we can all be told about or suspect that it may be happening.

Alerters can be: health or social care workers; volunteers; residential or nursing home staff; police officers; council staff; community workers.

The responsibility of the Alerter is to pass their concern or suspicion over to their line manager as soon as possible.

Responsible Person

The person who **receives** the concern from the Alerter is called the Responsible Person.

It is the role of the Responsible Person to receive and review the information provided, and any action taken, by the Alerter.

Based on information gathered, the Responsible Person will determine whether abuse can or cannot be ruled out and whether or not the adult is eligible for support under the Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

Responsible Persons can be Care Managers, Managers or Team Managers of services or agencies, supervisors, or others as identified through Individual Agency Guidance within the Safeguarding Adults Procedural Framework.

The Responsible Person reports to the Safeguarding Manager.

Safeguarding Manager

The designated person(s) within each organisation or agency who **manages** the safeguarding process.

Safeguarding Managers co-ordinate and chair Safeguarding Adults meetings and ensure appropriate documentation is completed and forwarded to the Safeguarding Adults Team.

Safeguarding Managers need to be at an appropriate level of seniority and responsibility within an agency to ensure that they can make relevant decisions and take appropriate action(s) as necessary within the safeguarding process. Safeguarding Managers should be identified by each agency in their own Individual Agency Guidance as set out in the Safeguarding Adults Procedural Framework.

Know your own Individual Agency Guidance

Know where to go for help or advice

- There should be a copy of the Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedural Framework (April 2007) in your place of work. This is available in both paper copy and CD Rom format.
- Your agency or organisation should have its own Individual Agency Guidance to sit within this overall Framework.
- You should have access to the Framework and the Guidance if and when needed so that you can find out who to speak to within your own agency or organisation if you have concerns or would like more information.

If you need additional help, advice or information you can contact the Safeguarding Adults Team:

Leechmere Training Centre,
Carrmere Road,
Leechmere Industrial Estate,
Sunderland SR2 9TQ.

You can also visit the Safeguarding Adults website: www.alertabuse.org.uk for further information and to access the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedural Framework.

The worst you can do is **nothing**