

What happens next?

The person who is being abused or neglected will have choice and control in what happens next.

Staff/professionals will talk to the person concerned about:

- the abuse or neglect that they have experienced
- discuss what they want to happen next and
- discuss how the people around them can help

Support

The person themselves can be involved or if they find it too stressful or difficult, they can ask a family member or a friend to speak on their behalf. Support can be arranged for people who have difficulties in understanding or making decisions for themselves this person is known as an advocate. The advocate will support the person affected to express their views and wishes.

Staff will work with the person affected to stop the abuse or neglect and help them recover from it. They will:

- listen carefully
- take their concerns seriously
- treat the person with dignity and respect
- support the person and their family or carers as appropriate
- work with other relevant agencies to get help and support where needed

- keep the person up to date with any actions they have agreed to carry out
- talk to other people who know the person
- work in line with current data protection legislation and will only share information where it is necessary such as with the police or health services
- keep a record of the safeguarding concern and any actions taken in a personal record on computerised data systems, which are safe and secure
- try to help maintain the relationship with the person who carried out the abuse or neglect if that person is important to them
- if the person does not want to see the person, they say has abused or neglected them, staff can make this possible
- advise the person that the adult who carried out the abuse or neglect may be investigated by the police

What if the person decides to remain in an unsafe situation?

Adults have a right to make their own choices, even if other people think these choices are not right. If this is the case, all professionals will work with the person to help them manage and minimise the risk. If a person is not able to make this decision for themselves, staff and representatives for the person will make a decision in their best interests.

If the safeguarding concern could affect other people staff will always take action. If a crime has been committed staff will tell the police even if the person doesn't want to. This is because staff have a duty to safeguard people with care and support needs and must consider whether the person carrying out abuse or neglect is a risk to other adults.

View these links for further information:

How you can get help | Adult Safeguarding Board

<https://nssab.co.uk/how-you-can-get-help>

If in doubt, and you are worried about someone's safety, please contact us.



This leaflet was originally co-produced by **Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board** and **Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board** and it has been adapted with their kind permission to be used by **North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board**.



Keeping adults safe from abuse or neglect in North Somerset

SEE
something

SAY
something

Abuse or neglect is always wrong

Safeguarding adults is about working with people with care and support needs who experience abuse or neglect

This leaflet is about

- adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect
- the kind of abuse or neglect that may happen
- what to do if you have a concern for an adult
- what happens when the concern is reported

Who is an adult at risk of harm?

An adult at risk of harm is someone who is

- aged over 18 years old and
- has needs for care and support or some help and
- is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect

This may include

- people with a learning and/or physical disability
- people who are frail due to their age
- people with mental ill health
- people with other health conditions

who may be more at risk and not able to take steps to stop the harm from happening.

What is abuse or neglect?

Abuse is a term used to describe the mistreatment of people. It can take different forms, like taking advantage of a person, disrespectful treatment, physical harm, emotional harm or verbal abuse. Abuse can also take place online.

Neglect is when people who are there to assist an adult who requires some help do not take care of the adult properly.

Abuse or neglect can happen anywhere.

It can be low level or more extreme taking place over a short or long time.

Adults who may need help with their care could be abused or neglected by anyone. This could be a partner, family member, neighbour, friend, health or social care professional, volunteer or stranger.

Abuse or neglect is always wrong

Some examples of abuse or neglect

Emotional abuse is when people say or do things to hurt other people's feelings, or shout at or threaten them. This could include name calling, bullying, swearing or treating someone like a child.

Physical abuse is when someone hurts another person. This could include hitting, slapping, pushing or kicking someone, locking someone in a room or giving them the wrong medication.

Sexual abuse is when someone touches another person's body or private parts in ways that they do not like or want, or makes them do sexual things that make them feel sad, angry or frightened.

Financial abuse is when someone takes other people's money or belongings without asking them, like stealing, taking control of another person's money, or making them pay for other people's goods.

People can also be scammed, this is a dishonest scheme or trick used to cheat people out of money or belongings. Different scamming methods include;

- emails are sent to people to get them to disclose personal details and passwords
- telephone scams where people pretend to be calling from the bank, police or another agency to trick the person they are calling to give them their bank account details with PIN number
- relationship fraud where the scammer develops a relationship with a person and then begins to ask for money
- door-to-door fraud, where people promote goods that are never delivered, poor quality and/or high price

Neglect is when people who are there to help others do not look after them properly and ignore their needs. This may result in them being hungry most of the time, not being kept safe, not getting the right medical help or not having clean clothes to wear.

Self neglect is when people may fail to look after themselves properly and this is known as self-neglect. This may include not taking care of their personal hygiene, health or surroundings and behaviours such as hoarding.

Discrimination is when people treat others badly, or unfairly because they are different to them. This could be harassment, insults or unfair treatment due to someone's:-

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Organisational abuse is where paid staff in organisations such as hospitals or care homes do not care for people properly or respect their rights. This can happen when people are shown a lack of dignity and respect and are denied choice. It can also happen when the organisation does not have enough staff or resources and where there is a culture of bullying.

Domestic abuse occurs between people aged 16 or over including older adults, who are intimate partners, ex-partners, family members, or individuals who share parental responsibility for a child. It can include physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic(financial) abuse or psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

Modern slavery is where someone is forced to work for people against their will. These people may also be cruel to them or abuse them, including human trafficking and forced labour.

What to do if abuse or neglect is taking place?

Tell a trusted person as soon as possible.

This could be:

- trusted friends or family members
- other trusted professionals
- social care worker
- your doctor
- other health professionals
- care workers
- nurse
- police

Any concerns about yourself or an adult who is unable to protect themselves from being abused or neglected, contact Adult Social Care in the area you live/they live:

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| North Somerset Council Care Connect | 01275 888 801 |
| North Somerset Emergency Duty Team for out of hours and weekends | 01454 615 165 |
| North Somerset Local Domestic Abuse FreeFone Service (DAFFS) | 0800 694 9999 |
| If a crime has been committed, you can report it via website www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report/ or call Avon and Somerset Police on 101 . If it is an emergency or someone is in immediate danger, phone 999 . | |

