

SET SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK

2022





Introduction

This guidance booklet has been produced to help people to understand how to raise concerns they may have about abuse or neglect and supplements the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding Adult Guidelines.

IGNORING ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS NOT AN OPTION.

If you suspect abuse, neglect or self-neglect, it is your responsibility to take action in line with the procedures in this document.

All individuals regardless of age, ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or beliefs should have the greatest possible control over their lives.

We must give adults every opportunity to live as independently as possible and to make informed decisions about their own lifestyles, including the opportunity to take risks if they choose to do so, without fear of harm or abuse from others.

Your understanding of adult safeguarding and your actions can make a positive difference.

What is expected of me?



1. If you suspect an adult is being or at risk of abuse or neglect you must not ignore the information. Do not assume that others know what you know.
2. If you see something that concerns you or you are given information that causes you to be concerned about an adult then:
 - Keep calm
 - Make sure that the adult is safe
 - Ask the adult what they would like to happen
 - Listen carefully to what is said
 - Observe what you see around you, if possible
 - Reassure and take care of the adult.
3. If employed, it is expected that you pass on any concerns immediately to your manager (unless they are implicated, if so, you should follow your organisations whistleblowing policy).
4. If urgent medical assistance is needed, call for an ambulance or arrange for a doctor to see the adult at the earliest opportunity.
5. If the adult is in immediate and serious risk of harm or that a crime has been committed, dial 999 and ask for the police.
6. You will need to record everything that you saw, heard and did. Record the facts of what happened and ensure these are recorded in a way that will not lead to misinterpretation.
7. Everyone has a right to live free from harm and abuse. Ignoring abuse/neglect is not an option.

Definition of adult safeguarding

The statutory framework introduced under the Care Act applies to any person aged 18 or above who:

- Has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

They may include:

- People with a mental health problem or mental illness (including dementia)
- People with a physical or learning disability
- People with a sensory impairment
- People who are frail and/or experiencing a temporary illness
- People with alcohol or substance dependency.



**It is the
responsibility
of us all to
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What is abuse/neglect?

Abuse can take place in any setting – an adult's private home, care home, hospital, day service, public transport, police station or college. This list is endless.

Abuse and neglect can take many forms. It may be an isolated incident, a series of incidents or a long-term pattern of behaviour and could affect others, whether in someone's home, in public or in an organisational setting.

It may be deliberate or the result of negligence or ignorance. Sometimes it happens when people are trying to do their best but do not know the right thing to do. Sometimes the person who causes harm does so because of frustration even in a caring context. The degree or lack of intent will inform the response.

However, some adults can often be the perfect target. Why? Because often:

- They can't defend themselves
- They may not be able to get away
- Even if they can tell, often they are not believed
- They may be in fear of someone
- There may be a power imbalance
- Sometimes staff and organisation do not believe that it can happen
- It may be forgotten that everybody has a human right to be safe (as we do).



There are ten different categories of abuse:

Physical abuse: may include assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate physical sanctions, unauthorised restraint, physical punishments, making someone purposefully uncomfortable, involuntary isolation and confinement.

Domestic abuse: may include physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological, emotional or other abuse; so-called “honour” based violence and forced marriage.

Sexual abuse: may include rape, sexual assault, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse: may include verbal abuse, emotional abuse, threats, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse: may include theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits, misuse of power of attorney, rogue trading.

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude.

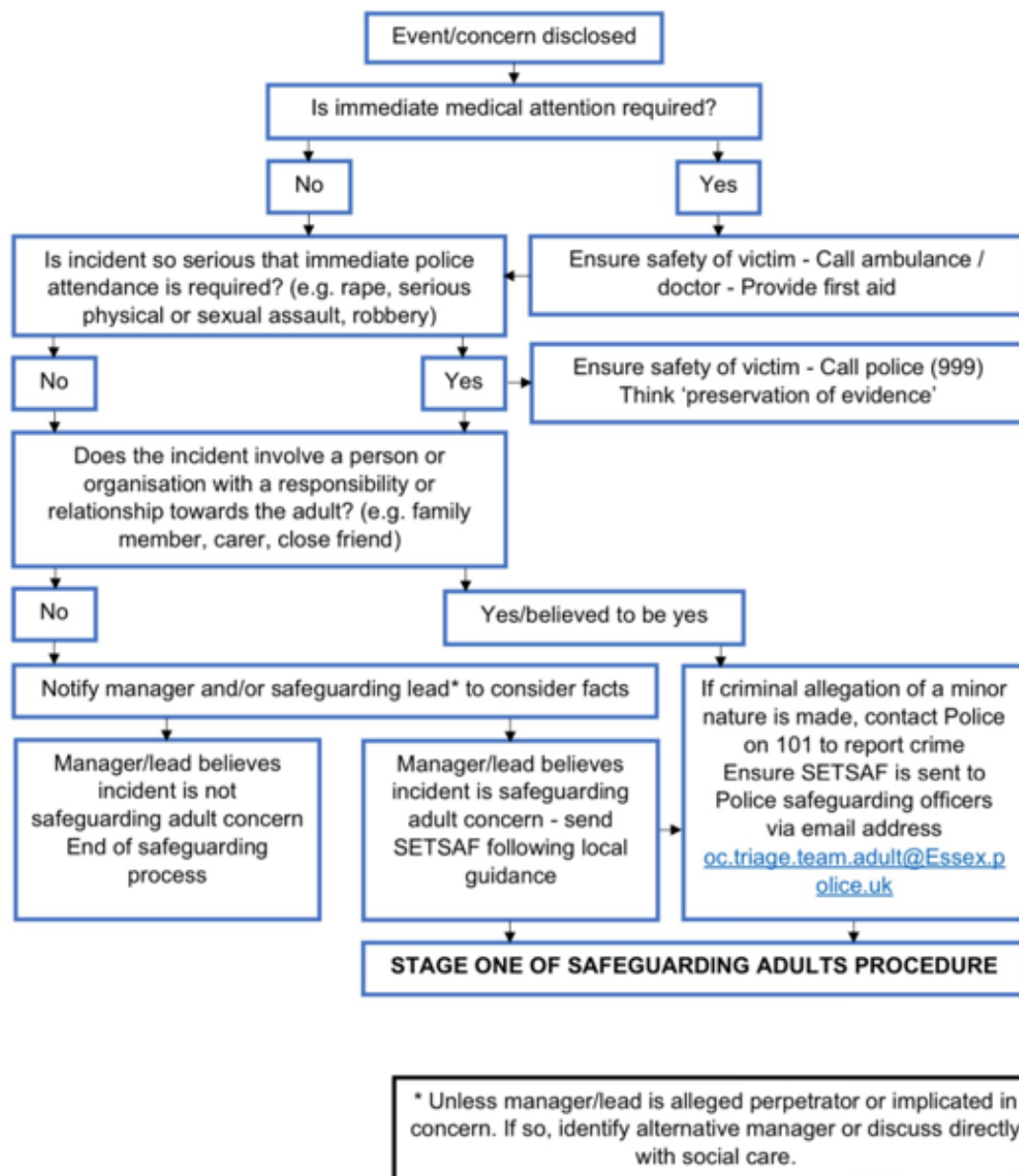
Discriminatory abuse: includes an individual being treated less favourably than others due to their race, gender, religion or belief, disability, or sexual orientation, being given fewer opportunities, being called names or isolated.

Organisational abuse: involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate service to adults with care and support needs. It includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.

Neglect (including acts of omission): may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, food and drink and heating.

Self-neglect: includes a wide range of behaviours neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surrounding and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

The following diagram shows the process you should follow if a concern is disclosed.



Disclosures

If someone discloses to you:

- Stay calm.
- Become an active listener – try to comprehend what it is they are saying, sustain the conversation by verbal and non-verbal prompts and echoing by repeating the last one or two words spoken.
- Let them speak – do not interrupt them.
- Do not question except to clarify and ensure that you understand what is being said.
- Show empathy when listening.
- Ask the alleged victim/witness about what they want to do or what they would like to happen.
- Reassure the adult e.g. tell them that they have done the right thing in speaking to you and that you believe them.
- Ensure that any immediate needs are addressed.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep.

Remember that this is an important conversation and they will probably be more anxious than you.

However, it should be made clear that where a staff member has a reason to be concerned for the welfare of an adult and/or others they have to share the information with someone who is in a position to take action or responsibility.

The adult should be told with whom the information will be shared, and that their views and wishes will be taken into account. Concerns should be reported at the earliest possible opportunity.



Preserving and recording evidence

When preserving evidence, you may not need to do anything except record the events that have given rise for concern. However, there may be occasions when it is important to follow certain rules.

If there is any suspicion that there may be forensic evidence, inform the police and preserve the evidence. This may include:

- Ensuring written records (notes, letters, bank statements, medication records etc.) are kept in a safe place.
- Making a written record of messages to ensure they are not lost. Include the date and time and sign them.
- In cases of physical or sexual assault encouraging the adult not to wash, bathe or shower where a medical examination may be needed.
- Not tidying up, washing clothes, bedding or other items.

You may not be told all the facts initially – do all you can to anticipate what may be needed as evidence and do all you can to preserve it.

It is important that you record all relevant information including what you saw, what you heard, and why you acted as you did:

- Include any details about what the adult wants to be done at this stage.
- Record any physical signs or injuries using a body map.
- Be clear on what are facts and opinions.
- Sign and date your records and make sure they are kept in a safe place.

Write down what is said to you, who said it including their relationship to the adult or role and how they can be contacted, if appropriate. Include any questions you have asked, make sure you sign and date it.

This may mean writing in an adult's records or notes, in others it might be on a separate record sheet. All original notes must be retained. Ensure these are recorded in a way that will not lead to misinterpretation.

Whistleblowing

It is good practice and it is a duty of care to draw attention to bad/poor practice in the workplace. This includes practice that may be abusive and/or neglectful. Staff who work with adults have an individual responsibility to raise concerns with someone who has the responsibility to take action.

Sometimes it may be necessary to go outside the immediate work environment or the immediate organisation, for example social services or the police.

It is the responsibility of all organisations to promote a culture which values good practice and encourages whistle blowing.

Confidentiality

Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is preserved, this will be governed by what may be an overriding need to protect the adult who has been or is at risk of abuse.

All those working with adults must be clear that it is not possible to keep information about suspected or actual abuse confidential. The needs of the adult and the potential risk to others, requires you to share the information with your manager.





We're here for you.

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