



What is Abuse and Neglect?

Abuse is when someone does or says something which harms you or makes you upset and scared.

Neglect is a 'passive' form of abuse. For example, if someone does not do something they should have done, and it leads to you being harmed or put at risk.

Abuse is always unacceptable. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. No-one has the right to abuse you.

Abuse can happen once or can be something that happens over weeks, months or years. It can be accidental or deliberate. Just because there is no injury

that someone can see it does not mean there is no abuse.

Who abuses?

Most people will not abuse BUT anyone could abuse. It might be someone you know or a stranger. It can be anyone who uses their 'power' over you. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- A partner, spouse, child or relative
- A friend or neighbour
- A parent or guardian
- A health or social care worker
- Staff in a residential or nursing home or hospital
- A volunteer worker
- Someone else you live with
- A stranger

It is likely that the person responsible for abuse is known to you and is in a position of trust and power.

Where can abuse happen?

Abuse or neglect can happen anywhere and at any time, but the most common places are:

- In a person's own home
- In hospital
- In a residential or nursing care home, where you may live permanently or for short periods
- At a day centre or social club

Types of abuse

- **Physical abuse:** Examples include assault, hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, imposing restrictions on another person.
- **Domestic violence:** This can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse as well as so called 'honour' based violence
- **Sexual abuse:** Examples include rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, and sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

- **Psychological / Emotional abuse:** Examples include verbal assault, intimidation, emotional abuse, deprivation of contact, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation or blaming.
- **Financial or material abuse:** Examples include theft, fraud, internet scamming, exploitation, and pressure in connection with wills, property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery:** Examples include slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, traffickers and slave masters coercing, deceiving and forcing individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment
- **Discriminatory abuse:** Forms of harassment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion
- **Organisational abuse:** This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or care provided in the home.

- **Neglect and acts of omission:** Examples include ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Self-neglect:** This covers a wide range of behaviour, like neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and includes behaviour such as hoarding or not getting to medical appointments.

Abuse and neglect should not happen to anyone at any time. But it does happen, often because people do not recognise that the situation they are in is not right. Everyone has the right to live safely and in control of their day-to-day lives. If you think you or another adult is being abused or are at risk report it as soon as possible.

Who to contact if you are worried that about abuse or neglect:

Somerset County Council's Adult Social Care service has the lead for adult safeguarding in Somerset, and works closely with other organisations including the police and NHS. If a crime has been committed you should always contact the police.

Adult Social Care:

- **Telephone: 0300 123 22 24** (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, Saturday and Sunday closed.)
- **Email: adults@somerset.gov.uk**
- The phone number for Adults and Mental Health out of hours is **0300 123 23 27**

Police:

- **101 or in an emergency 999**

Further information:

Please use the following link to view other leaflets on our website: bit.ly/SSABLeaflets

