

# Safeguarding adults from abuse: say no to abuse

Every adult has the right to live free from abuse.

There are lots of different types of abuse and this leaflet explains what these are. It also outlines what you can do if you are worried that you or someone you know may be at risk of abuse.



## **What is abuse?**

Abuse is when someone does or says things to you to make you feel upset or frightened. You may be too scared to speak out or stop them.

You may be abused on purpose by someone who wants to harm you, or by someone who does not know they are being abusive. Abuse happens when someone has power over you and you do not agree to what is happening to you.

**Abuse is never your fault.**

## **What is ‘safeguarding adults’?**

‘Safeguarding adults’ is the name given to the way we work together to protect adults at risk from abuse.

When someone says: “Abuse has happened”, this is called an ‘allegation’. When an allegation is made, it is taken seriously and an investigation will take place by the hospital, police or adult social services to find out what has happened.

Adult social services will then decide whether abuse has happened and if the adult at risk needs a protection plan. A protection plan is a list of things to keep the person safe.



## Who are we trying to help?

Adults over 18 who may be vulnerable.

They may be vulnerable because of their age, disability or illness. They might be unable to take care of themselves, or stop someone else from harming them or taking advantage of them.



## Reporting abuse

If you or someone else reports abuse, this is called making a 'safeguarding concern.'

We will work with you and other people, to help you understand any risks to your safety and to keep you safe.

## Types of abuse



## Physical abuse

This is when someone physically hurts you. Examples of physical abuse include:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pulling hair
- Punching or shaking
- Giving someone too much medication so they find it difficult to do things



## **Sexual abuse**

This is when someone makes you do sexual things that make you sad, angry, or frightened.

Sexual abuse is being touched where you do not want to be touched, such as:

- Your bum your private parts
- Your breasts
- Your penis or vagina

Or being made to touch other people in these places.



## **Emotional/psychological abuse**

This is when people say bad things to hurt your feelings, shout at you or threaten you. Some examples of emotional abuse include:

- Calling you names
- Laughing at you
- Blaming you for things when it's not your fault
- Treating you like a child
- Ignoring you



## Financial abuse

This is when someone takes your money or belongings without asking. Examples of financial abuse include:

- Stealing your money/bank card
- Being forced to pay for other people's things
- When you don't have a say in how your money is spent



## Neglect

Neglect is when your care or support is not enough to meet your needs.

Neglect can be:

- Feeling cold a lot of the time
- Being hungry or thirsty a lot of the time
- Having only dirty clothes to wear
- Being put in danger



## Discriminatory abuse

This is when people say or do bad things or treat you unfairly because you are different. Discriminatory abuse is being treated unfairly/differently because of your:

- Skin colour
- Religion
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age



## Modern slavery

This is when you are forced to work for little or no money and you are threatened or hurt if you do not do it. You may:

- Be forced to do sexual acts for money
- Be forced to clean and work as a slave
- Be forced to live and work in a dirty and cramped house/flat.
- Have your ID and personal documents taken away from you





## **Institutional abuse**

This is when you are in a hospital or a care home and the way things are done make you feel sad, frightened, or angry.

This can be when:

- there is not enough staff.
- staff have bad attitudes and are abusive towards you
- there is no respect for your dignity and your privacy
- staff do not give you enough food and drink or do not help you with your meals if you need or want it
- staff do not give you your medication properly



## **Self-neglect**

Self-neglect can happen when you are:

- Not caring for yourself and putting your health and safety at risk
- Harming yourself
- Not caring about where and how you live
- Not getting help and not telling people that you need help
- Not wanting to manage your money and bills



## Domestic abuse

Being abused happens to lots of people in relationships or in their family. This is called domestic abuse and includes lots of different things:

- Physical violence
- Sexual or emotional abuse
- Your partner taking your money from you
- Insults or verbal abuse
- Nasty texts or phone calls
- Your child might get hurt or involved
- Your pet might get hurt
- Your partner controlling where you go and who you talk to



## Exploitation

Exploitation is when someone is treating unfairly

Sometimes this is called 'mate crime'. This is when someone says they are your friend or helping you, but they are not.

They can take advantage of you by:

- Staying in your home or bringing other people to your home, even though you would like them to leave
- Asking you for money and not paying you back
- Asking you to buy them things
- Making you to do things that you do not want to do



**Real friends do not ask you to do things that make you feel uncomfortable or bad.**



## Who can abuse?

Anyone can be abusive. It might be someone you know, such as

## Where does it happen?

Abuse can happen anywhere. Including:

Day centre or college



Club



Hospital



Care home



Home



Work



## What should you do if you experience or suspect abuse?



Tell someone you trust as soon as possible. You can tell:

- Family
- Friend
- Carer
- Support/social worker
- Doctor or nurse
- Police
- Inspector

## Where to report abuse?

Ask to speak to the ward manager or the person in charge.

You can speak to the learning disability nurse in the hospital:



### **Royal Free Hospital**

020 7794 0500, extension 39517 or 07903 225 052

### **Barnet Hospital and Chase Farm Hospital**

020 8216 4474 or 07931 290 623

You can also contact the hospital safeguarding team

via telephone: 0207 794 0500, extension 33695

email: [rf-tr.safeguardingvulnerableadults@nhs.net](mailto:rf-tr.safeguardingvulnerableadults@nhs.net)



Or you can contact other agencies where you live.

## **What happens next?**

- You will be supported to tell us what happened.
- If you are in danger, we will make sure you are safe. We will ask you what you would like to happen next .
- You will be given easy read information and we will make sure you have support to make choices.

## **What hospital staff will do:**

- Consider your wishes.
- Ask you what you would like to happen next
- Everything they can do to keep you safe
- Contact the police and a social worker if it is a serious crime

## **Our Privacy promise**

All information about your care and treatment will be kept in your medical records.

Your medical records will be kept private.

We may need to look at your medical records. This will not be given to anyone else without your permission.

If you need an advocate or an interpreter they will keep your information confidential.

Sometimes if there is a serious risk to you or other people we might have to share your information with the police, social services or the courts. If we need to do this, we will talk to you about it.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **More information**

For more information about safeguarding at the Royal Free London visit our website: [www.royalfree.nhs.uk/about-us/corporate-information-and-accountability/safeguarding-children-and-adults/](http://www.royalfree.nhs.uk/about-us/corporate-information-and-accountability/safeguarding-children-and-adults/)

## **Your feedback**

If you have any feedback on this leaflet or for a list of references for it, please email: [rf.communications@nhs.net](mailto:rf.communications@nhs.net).

## **Alternative formats**

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please speak to a member of staff.

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