

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults from Abuse or exploitation

What is abuse?

Abuse is mistreatment by any other person or persons that violates a person's human and civil rights. The abuse can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical and emotional suffering.

Abuse can happen anywhere – in your home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day opportunity or educational establishment, in supported housing or in the street.

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons': *No Secrets, DoH 1999*.

Who might be at risk?

- People with a learning, sensory or physical disability
- Older people who depend on or need help from others
- People with mental health problems
- People with dementia
- Someone who cannot always look after or protect themselves

Forms of abuse include:

- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, misusing medication, scalding, restraint, hair pulling.

- Sexual abuse such as rape, sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not or could not have consented, or to which they were pressurised into consenting.
- Psychological or emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or any other form of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, being prevented from receiving services or support.
- Financial or material abuse such as theft, fraud or exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, or inheritance, misuse of property, possessions or benefits.
- Neglect such as ignoring medical or physical care needs and preventing access to health, social care or educational services or withholding the necessities of life such as food, drink and heating.
- Discriminatory abuse such as that based on race or sexuality or a person's disability and other forms of harassment or slurs.
- Institutional abuse can sometimes happen in residential homes, nursing homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and poor practice that affects the whole of that service.
- Any of these forms of abuse can be either deliberate or be the result of ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way they are also being abused in other ways.

Who might be causing the abuse?

The person who is responsible for the abuse is very often well known to the person abused and could be:

- A paid carer or volunteer.
- A health worker, social care or other worker.
- A relative, friend or neighbour.
- Another resident or service user.
- An occasional visitor or someone who is providing a service.

How to stop abuse

We can all stop abuse. We can make a difference by taking notice of what is going on in our workplace, in our home or neighbourhood.

We can do this by:

- Looking for the signs (see 'forms of abuse' in this leaflet).
- Telling the police, health workers or Bedford Borough Council's Adult Services.

What do you do if you are being abused, or you suspect that someone you know, may be the victim of abuse?

You should contact the Safeguarding Adults Team on **01234 276222** as soon as possible:

- Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.20pm
- Friday 8.45am - 4.20pm.

Out of these hours and at weekends or bank holidays please call the Emergency Duty Team on **0300 300 8123**.

Your concern will be taken seriously and you will receive prompt attention.

What if the abuse is also a crime?

If the abuse is also a crime such as assault, racial harassment, rape or theft, you should involve the police to prevent someone else from being abused. If the police are involved, Adult Social Care Services will work with them and you to support you.

If you are worried about contacting the police you can always contact Adult Social Care Services to talk things over first.

You can call the police on **01234 846960** or in an emergency dial **999**.

What will happen if abuse is reported?

A member of staff will contact you to listen to your concerns and may ask you some necessary questions to ensure that they understand the circumstances fully.

If further investigation and an assessment is needed a member of staff will visit the person within 48 hours and offer support to make sure you or the person you are calling about is safe.

The staff member will work with the person who is being abused to help them make any decisions. They will provide help and support in taking action to try to end the abuse and enable them to ensure it does not happen again. They will tell you what is likely to happen next.

You may want someone to contact us on your behalf and to nominate someone to speak and act for you.

We will not normally do anything or share information with other people without the permission of the person who is being abused.

The only exception to this is in situations where others may be at risk of abuse or the person is not able to make decisions

for themselves because of mental capacity.

Having your say

We would like you to tell us how you think Bedford Borough Council's Adult Social Care Services have worked for you and what you think of our services. Our staff will ask for your views throughout your contact with us.

To give us feedback on the service you have received, please contact your social work team or write to us at the address on the back page.

Bedford Borough Council's Adult Social Care Services are independently regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). If you want to discuss our service(s) with them they can be contacted at:

Tel: 03000 616161

Care Quality Commission
Citygate, Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address .

Për Informacion

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برای اطلاع

Per Informazione

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Informacja

Za Informacje

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Contact the Safeguarding Adults Team

Tel: 01234 276222

Safeguarding Adults Team

Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

Email: adult.protection@bedford.gov.uk

General Enquiries

Tel: 01234 267422

Adult Social Care

Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

Email: care@bedford.gov.uk