



**STOP
ADULT
ABUSE**

**SEE IT,
REPORT IT**

**SAFEGUARDING ADULTS
FROM ABUSE**

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS FROM ABUSE

Everybody has the right to a life free from fear, to be treated with dignity, to have their choices respected, and to not be forced to do things against their will. Safeguarding refers to the process of keeping adults at risk safe from abuse, and from neglect.

WHO ARE 'ADULTS AT RISK'?

An adult at risk is someone who is aged 18 or older, who may not be able to take care of or protect themselves from abuse. Adults at risk might need help to live fulfilling lives due to the impact of a disability, mental health issue, a long term illness, or because they are an older person.

WHAT IS ADULT ABUSE?

Adult abuse is when someone hurts (or seeks to hurt) an adult at risk. Abuse can take many forms, such as:

- **Physical abuse:** for example pushing, hitting, slapping, shaking, kicking, holding a person against their will, or over/under medicating.
- **Neglect:** not meeting the adult's physical, emotional or medical needs, for example by not providing enough food or sufficient shelter, not providing medication as prescribed, and failing to keep the adult safe. Self-neglect includes when the adult at risk is unwilling or unable to tend to their own essential needs.
- **Sexual:** for example forcing someone to have sex or engage in a sexual activity, inappropriately touching someone's body or private parts, indecent exposure, exposure to pornographic material.
- **Psychological:** for example shouting, swearing, intimidation, humiliation, online bullying.
- **Financial:** stealing, tricking or coercing money from the adult. This also includes decisions involving wills and property.

- **Discrimination:** mistreating the adult because of their race, disability, sex, sexuality or beliefs.
- **Organisational:** abuse or neglect in a care home or hospital setting.
- **Modern slavery:** slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Domestic violence:** usually against a spouse or partner, domestic violence can consist of physical, sexual, psychological, financial and 'honour' based violence.

SIGNS ABUSE IS TAKING PLACE

There may be signs/clues that someone is being abused, for example:

- They are injured and cannot or will not explain how it occurred
- They appear frightened around certain people
- They are unusually withdrawn, or sad
- They fall into unexplained debt, or have no money

WHO ABUSERS MAY BE

Anyone can abuse. It may be someone familiar to the adult (for example a partner, family, friends, carer, professionals and volunteers known to the adult) or it could be a stranger.

John's neighbour buys things for herself using his shopping money, but he's scared to report her because he can't shop for himself.



Maria needs professional care at home but her family refuse to help. Her health is getting worse.



WHERE ABUSE MAY TAKE PLACE

Abuse can occur anywhere, for example at the adult's home, in a care home, hospital day service, at college, or in a public place.

WHAT TO DO IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED/TAKING PLACE

If you are concerned about an adult at risk in the borough of Southwark you should notify us immediately.

If the adult has been injured you should seek advice from their GP, or in an emergency call 999.

If you believe a crime has been committed you should notify the police.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN ABUSE IS REPORTED

We will treat your concerns sensitively. We will need to speak to the alleged victim of the abuse in order to find out whether abuse is taking place. What we do following this will depend on the seriousness of the abuse, and the wishes and needs of the person who has been abused.

CONTACT DETAILS

Adult Social Care
020 7525 3324
casc@southwark.gov.uk

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