

Safeguarding adults from abuse and neglect

What you can do about it:
a guide for patients, relatives
and carers

Safeguarding adults involves helping people who might be experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect, or self-neglect to protect themselves.

Adult safeguarding is defined as protecting an adult's wellbeing and right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect (Care Act 2014 statutory guidance).

Which people at risk of abuse and neglect?

They are people who are vulnerable because of their mental health, physical or learning disability, age or illness. They may find it difficult to protect themselves from abuse.

Everybody can help vulnerable adults to live free from harm!



What is abuse?

Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly. Abuse is **always** wrong. Abuse can be:

- **Physical abuse** – e.g. hitting, slapping, punching, biting, rough handling.
- **Domestic violence or abuse** – e.g. psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse by a partner or relative.
- **Sexual abuse** – e.g. rape, inappropriate touch, non-consensual sex.
- **Psychological or emotional abuse** – e.g. enforced social isolation, bullying, threats.
- **Financial or material abuse** – e.g. theft of money or possessions, fraud, scamming.



- **Modern slavery** – e.g. human trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – e.g. unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- **Organisational or institutional abuse** – e.g. misuse of medication, run-down or overcrowded establishment.



What is neglect?

- **Neglect or acts of omission** – when people who are supposed to help don't look after you properly.
- **Self-neglect** – when you can't look after yourself and unable to meet your own health and social care needs.



If you think you are being abused or neglected, you should tell:

- Someone in your family.
- A nurse, doctor or social worker.
- A member of staff (if you live in a residence with staff caring for or watching over you).
- A friend or neighbour.
- An advocate or support group.
- Or you can telephone one of these numbers on the overleaf.



If you suspect that a vulnerable adult you know is being abused call:

If you live in Reading:	0118 937 3747
If you live in West Berkshire:	01635 519056
If you live in Bracknell:	01344 351500
If you live in South Oxfordshire:	0345 0507666
If you live in Wokingham:	0118 974 6371
If you live in Slough:	01753 475111
If you live in Windsor / Maidenhead:	01628 683744

If you think the situation is urgent because someone is at immediate risk of harm, take yourself out of danger, and dial 999 for the police.



If you would like to know more about safeguarding adults, visit:

www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/leaflets/safeguarding-adults-from-abuse-and-neglect

Useful contacts

Berkshire Women's Aid	0118 950 4003
Samaritans	08457 90 90 90
Thames Valley Police	0845 8505 505
The Advocacy People	0330 440900

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