



Safeguarding adults is everybody's business

Information for the **citizens** of Birmingham





This leaflet tells you about adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, the kind of abuse that may happen, what to do if you have a concern about this and what happens when abuse has been reported.

Introduction

All adults have a right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding adults is about working with people with care and support needs who experience abuse or neglect. It is about making them aware of their rights and working with them to improve their situation in a way that they choose.

This leaflet tells you about adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, the kind of abuse that may happen, what to do if you have a concern about this and what happens when you report abuse.



What is Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board?

Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) is a partnership of agencies who have come together to safeguard (protect) adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect. By law, main partners must be the local authority, the NHS and the police, but many other agencies and groups sign up to the BSAB too. You can visit our website www.bsab.org or follow us on Twitter @BrumSAB for more information.

Who should you be concerned about?

The Care Act 2014 says that safeguarding adults is about protecting any adult who:

- has care and support needs;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

An adult with care and support needs may be someone who is:

- elderly and frail;
- a person with a physical disability, a learning disability or difficulty, or a sight or hearing difficulty;
- someone with mental-health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder;
- a person with a long-term health condition; or
- someone who has issues with substance misuse.

What is abuse?

Abuse is any action that harms another person. It can happen anywhere. Adults with care and support needs could be abused by anyone, including a partner, family member, neighbour, friend, health or social-care professional, volunteer or stranger. Abusers can deliberately exploit those who they see as vulnerable. There are several different types of abuse, including the following.



Discriminatory abuse

Includes: harassment, insults or similar treatment because of someone's race, sex or gender identity, age disability, sexuality or religion.

Domestic violence

Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse or 'honour-based' violence.

Physical abuse

Includes: hitting, slapping, pushing, unreasonable restraint or locking someone in a room.

Financial or material abuse

Includes: theft, fraud, persuading someone to do something against their will in relation to their financial arrangements (for example wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions) or misusing or dishonestly or unfairly taking property, possessions or benefits.

Neglect and failure to act

Includes: ignoring medical, emotional or physical-care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services,

and withholding necessities, such as medication, adequate food and drink and heating.

Organisational abuse

Includes: neglect and poor care in an institution such as a hospital, care home or care agency. This could be a culture of bullying, poor organisation, lack of resources, denying people choice, and lack of dignity and respect for service users.

Psychological and emotional abuse

Includes: intimidation, bullying, shouting, swearing, taunting, threatening or humiliating someone.

Self-neglect

Includes: neglecting to care for personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and behaviour such as hoarding.

Sexual abuse

Includes: rape, inappropriate touching, or forcing someone to take part in or witness any sexual act against their will.

Modern slavery

Includes: Slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour.



What can I do if I think I am being abused or I am worried that someone else is?

- You should tell someone you trust.
- If it is an emergency, phone 999.
- If a crime has been committed you can call West Midlands Police on 101.

You can report the abuse of an adult with care and support needs to social services using the **Adults and Communities Access Point (ACAP)**. Just phone **0121 303 1234** or email **ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk**

If you have any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person please telephone the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) on: 0121 303 1888 or e-mail: cass@birmingham.gov.uk

I get help and support to report abuse and neglect



What will happen next?

We believe in the principle 'no decision about me without me'. This is written into the Care Act and is referred to as 'making safeguarding personal'.

We promise to:

- listen carefully;
- take all of your concerns seriously;
- ask what the person who has been abused wants to happen to make them feel safe and support them to make their own decisions about this;
- treat the person affected with dignity and respect;
- support the person affected and their family or carers as appropriate;
- work with other relevant agencies to get help and support where needed; and
- keep the person affected up to date with any actions we have agreed to carry out.

*I feel listened to
and what I say is
taken seriously*

*I am asked my
opinion if people
around me think
I am at risk of
abuse or
neglect*

*No decisions
about me
without me*

We will make sure that the person who has been abused is involved as much as possible in any enquiries we make.

The law says that if the person has difficulty in understanding or making decisions about a safeguarding concern and has no one to help, we must arrange for someone called an advocate to support them. This is someone who is totally independent and will make sure that the person understands what is happening.



We may also need to

- Talk to other people who know the person affected.
- Share information with other agencies such as the police or health services. If we do this we will work in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and only share information where it is necessary.
- Keep a record of the safeguarding concern and any actions we have taken in a personal record on our computerised data systems, which are safe and secure.

What could happen to the person who is carrying out the abuse?

- If they are important to the person affected, we will, if possible, try to help them maintain the relationship.
- If the person affected does not want to see the person they say has abused them, we can help make this possible.
- The person carrying out the abuse may be investigated by the police, who might prosecute them.

My views directly inform what happens next

What if the person wants to remain in a risky situation?

Adults have a right to make their own choices, even if other people think these choices are 'unwise'. This is one of the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. If this is the case, all relevant agencies will work with the person to help them manage and minimise the risk. If a person is not able to make this decision for themselves, relevant agencies and representatives for the person will make a decision in their best interests.

I know that decisions are made in my best interest when I lack capacity to make them

If the safeguarding issue could affect other people, we may need to take action, such as reporting the matter to the police, even if the person doesn't want us to. This is because we have a duty to safeguard all people with care and support needs and must consider whether the person carrying out abuse is a risk to others.



For more information about safeguarding adults in Birmingham visit www.bsab.org or follow [@BrumSAB](https://twitter.com/BrumSAB) on Twitter

Phone **0121 303 1234** or
Email **ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk**
