

Safeguarding is Everyone's Business



**Darlington
Safeguarding
Partnership**

Protecting Children and Adults

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

All adults have the 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.

What is Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. ?

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership is a partnership of organisations which have come together to protect adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect. The main partners are the Local Authority, the NHS and the police but many other organisations sign up to the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. You can visit our website on www.darlingtonsafeguardingpartnership.co.uk

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
- is unable to protect themselves because of care and support needs

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

- is elderly and frail
- has a physical disability or a learning disability
- has hearing or sight impairment
- has mental health needs including dementia
- has issues with substance misuse

What is abuse?

Abuse is any action which harms another person. It can happen anywhere and adults with care and support needs can be abused by anyone including a partner, family member, friend, neighbour, health or social care professional, volunteer or stranger. Abusers may deliberately exploit vulnerable people. There are several types of abuse:

Physical abuse

Includes: hitting, slapping, pushing, tripping or unreasonable restraint.

Sexual abuse

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

Psychological and emotional abuse

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

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.

Self-neglect

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

Domestic abuse

Includes: physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse, coercion and control and honour based violence and forced marriage.

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

Modern slavery

Includes: domestic servitude, human trafficking and forced labour, sexual exploitation, organ harvesting and forced criminality

Discriminatory abuse

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

Financial 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 or possessions

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

- Tell someone you trust
- In an emergency contact 999
- If a crime has been committed contact Durham Constabulary on 101

You can report the abuse of an adult with care and support needs to Adult Social Care using the First Point of Contact on **01325 406111**

Or you can complete the **Safeguarding Adults Concern Form** with accompanying **Guidance Notes** and email to: ssact@darlington.gov.uk

If you require urgent help outside office hours or at the weekend or on Bank Holidays contact the Emergency Duty Team on **01642 524552**

If you have any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person please contact the Children's Access Point (CAP): Telephone **01325 406222**

Or you can send an e mail to: childrensaccesspoint@darlington.gov.uk

What will happen next?

It is important that the views and wishes of the adult at the centre of the enquiry are heard. The Care Act 2014 calls this 'Making Safeguarding Personal'. At every point the adult at risk or a representative acting on their behalf will be involved in the decision making. The adult at risk or their representative can tell us their views and wishes and what they would like to happen at any time. Throughout the safeguarding process we will ask the adult at risk whether they felt that their views were sought and whether they felt their views were heard and whether their desired outcome was achieved.

We also have a duty to protect people who are in danger and we may need to contact the police regardless of the wishes of the adult if a crime has been committed.



No decisions about me without me

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

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



We will:

- 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
- treat the person with dignity and respect
- support the person affected by abuse and their family or carer
- work with relevant organisations to obtain help and support where needed and
- keep the adult who has been affected up to date with actions which have been taken

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

The law says that if the person has difficulty understanding or making decisions 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 who has been affected
- share information with other organisations such as the police or health services. If we do this we will only share information where necessary in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- 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 might 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 and they may be prosecuted

I feel listened to and what I say is taken seriously

My views directly inform what happens next

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

Adults have the right to make their own choices even if others think that these choices are 'unwise'. This is one of the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. If this is the case we 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 organisations and representatives will make a decision in their best interests.

If the safeguarding issue could affect other people we may need to take action such as contacting the police even if the person does not 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 the abuse is a risk to others.

