

# What is Safeguarding Learning Briefing



## Keeping Adults with care and support needs safe

Referring to safeguarding in different ways creates confusion regarding the action needed, and can lead to inappropriate referrals for safeguarding, which could then lead to delays in responding to abuse and neglect for other Adults. Adults may need support to keep safe or manage risks which are not related to abuse or neglect. This may include a coordinated response from health/social care/housing/other professionals.

### Example of keeping someone safe

A man with dementia keeps leaving his own home and wandering in the street, putting himself at risk. This indicates that the Adult needs help with keeping safe. The response could involve a multi-agency approach including consultation with their GP and any other professional involved to address the risk.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is needed when an Adult with care and support needs is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves.

### Example of safeguarding

A man with dementia was able to leave a secure care home as the door was not closed by a carer. He became lost and was found distressed having fallen, causing a broken bone.

This requires a formal Safeguarding response, as the Adult experienced neglect in the care home given the door was left open, resulting in injury/distress/other avoidable risks.

## What are the types of abuse?

**Physical abuse:** hitting, kicking, burning, giving you the wrong medication, or medication you don't need.

**Neglect:** not getting the help, food, or healthcare you need.

**Self-neglect:** not looking after your own needs, or not wanting help offered to you. Please note the [Thresholds Document](#) for the types of self-neglect concerns which may require safeguarding.

**Financial abuse:** stealing money or possessions, not letting you have money, or telling you what to spend it on.

**Domestic abuse:** any form of abuse from anyone that you live with, including ex-partners.

**Sexual abuse:** unwanted sexual contact such as touching or kissing, taking, or sending sexual pictures.

**Psychological/Emotional abuse:** shouting, threats, cyber bullying.

**Discrimination:** threats, insults, harassment, or abuse based on disability, age, ethnicity, gender, religion, or sexuality.

**Modern Slavery:** working without being paid or not being paid enough.

**Organisational abuse:** poor care, neglect, poor practice.

## If an Adult needs help, but is not experiencing abuse or neglect?

- Contact the agency most related to the need e.g., GP, housing, mental health services.
- If a social care assessment is needed, contact their social care team (if known) or contact social care by completing an [online form](#) or by calling 01243 642121

## Before reporting a safeguarding concern

- Consider steps to remove immediate danger if possible.
- For a crime in progress, dial 999 before also contacting adult social care using [the online form](#) and preserve any potential evidence.
- Use the [Safeguarding Thresholds](#) document which tells you which issues are reportable, not reportable and require consultation; it also has useful advice for issues which are not safeguarding.
- Contact Children's Services using [the online form](#) if a child or young person is also at risk.
- Inform the Adult that you are raising the concern, unless this puts them or you at increased risk. Ask them what they would like to happen and share this in your referral.

## How do I raise a safeguarding concern?

West Sussex Adult Social Care lead on Adult safeguarding by receiving concerns and assessing action needed.

If you are concerned about abuse and neglect, make a referral using [the online form](#). If members of the public need help to do this they can phone 01243 642121. Professionals can call the Safeguarding Hub on 03302228400 for advice.

## What happens if the Adult does not want safeguarding?

Whilst consent from the Adult will be sought where possible, there are circumstances where actions need to be taken even when an Adult does not consent. These include the following:

- Others are, or will be, put at risk.
- It is in the public interest because a criminal offence has occurred.
- The Adult lacks capacity to understand, retain, weigh, and communicate about the need for safeguarding.
- The Adult's capacity is impacted by coercion or undue influence.
- The Adult will be informed of actions to be taken and reasons for this.

## Six principles of safeguarding

Any safeguarding work with an Adult should follow these principles:

- Empowerment:** person-led decisions and informed consent
- Prevention:** acting before harm occurs
- Proportionality:** using the most appropriate response to the level of risk
- Protection:** Support and representation for those in need
- Partnership:** Working together to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect
- Accountability:** Accountability and transparency

## Advocacy

Adults must be involved in decisions made about them, no matter how complex their needs. The Care Act states that Advocacy must be arranged where an Adult has difficulty understanding the process. This can be an Independent Advocate, a friend, or an unpaid carer. An Advocate's role is to help the Adult's involvement, not make decisions on their behalf.

Please note: In line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, there must be an underlying assumption that an Adult has capacity to make relevant decisions themselves. Where there is concern that the Adult may lack capacity to make specific and needed decisions, the [Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice](#) should be followed.

## Resources and further reading

On the [learning briefings and podcasts](#) page of our website we have a number of learning briefings and podcasts in relation to this briefing, these include:

- Making Safeguarding Personal
- Safeguarding Early Warning Signs
- Multi-Agency Working
- Person-Centred Approaches
- Professional Curiosity
- Risk Assessment
- Safeguarding Young People