

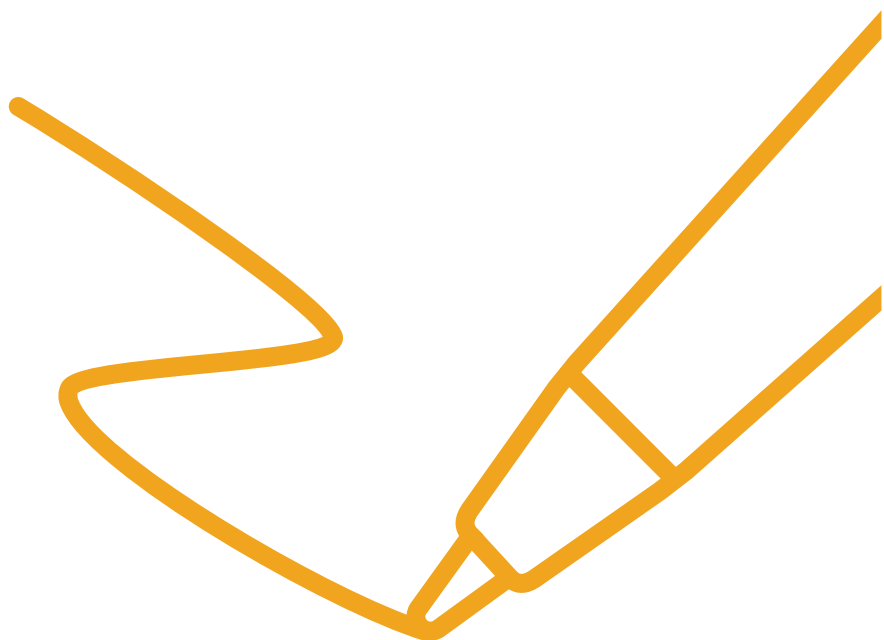


Safeguarding Adults

Thresholds

Guidance for care providers on the duty to report safeguarding incidents to the local authority

Here's some extra help – if you need it.



Introduction

This guidance has been produced for care providers, with the intention of summarising and clarifying the safeguarding incidents which should be reported to the local authority.

This guidance is not exhaustive, and should be read alongside the [Safeguarding Adults Thresholds: Guidance for Professionals \(Sussex Safeguarding Adults Boards, 2023\)](#). A full list of reportable incidents can be found in that document. This guidance is intended to support your decision-making but is not a substitute for your own professional judgement, or internal policies and procedures.

This guidance applies only to concerns about an adult with care and support needs, according to the Care Act 2014. An adult meets the criteria if they have a physical or mental impairment or illness, and as a result of these needs, they are unable to support their own wellbeing. This could be through managing nutrition, personal hygiene, toilet needs, keeping a safe and habitable home, maintaining relationships, and accessing work, training, or education.

Please note: Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the local authority may have different thresholds for the reporting of incidents. For more information about reporting to CQC, read our 'Summary guidance: Regulation 18: Notification of other incidents'.

Your responsibilities

If you have concerns about the safeguarding of an adult with care and support needs, you should seek advice from your line manager and/or safeguarding lead, before making a referral to the local authority.

If someone is in immediate danger or has been the subject of a crime, this must be reported to the police and/or emergency treatment should be sought.

For information about referring a safeguarding concern to the local authority, visit the ['Raise a concern' page](#) on our website.

Notifiable incidents

The Safeguarding Adults Thresholds tell us that we must report the following safeguarding concerns to the local authority:

1. **Neglect and acts of omission**, where there is ongoing failure to meet someone's basic needs. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - continued failure to follow a care plan;
 - failure to arrange medical treatment or attend appointments, which has impacted someone's health and wellbeing;
 - discharge from hospital without proper planning, where the customer has been impacted.
2. **Self-neglect**, where a person is living in a way that puts their health, safety, or wellbeing at risk. Self-neglect will not always be a safeguarding issue and you must be mindful of an individual's right to live as they choose. Consider whether the person can protect themselves from self-neglecting by controlling their own behaviour and look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Self-neglect includes (but is not limited to):
 - living in unsanitary conditions, including lack of amenities and food;
 - structural damage to the property, or significant hoarding;
 - refusing health or medical treatment, resulting in significant impact on health and wellbeing.
3. **Physical abuse**, where a physical injury has been caused to someone else. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - assault or other actions causing significant injury;
 - deliberate withholding of food, drinks, or aids for independence;
 - significant unexplained injuries, or rough or inappropriate handling or restraint that causes marks to be left.
4. **Sexual abuse**, when an adult is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities when they can't or don't consent to it. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - concerns around grooming or sexual exploitation;
 - sexual activity in a relationship where there is authority or inequality, e.g. a Person in a Position of Trust;
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

5. **Psychological abuse**, where there is ongoing psychological or emotional maltreatment. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - intimidation or humiliation, or prolonged verbal attacks;
 - emotional blackmail or withholding information to dis-empower;
 - concerns related to cuckooing.
6. **Financial or material abuse**, where there is unauthorised use of funds, property, or resources. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - finances or possessions removed from the person without legal authority;
 - suspected fraud or exploitation;
 - coercion into giving money or possessions.
7. **Organisational abuse**, where there is neglect or poor practice due to processes and practices within an organisation. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - staff misusing their position of power;
 - low staffing resulting in injury or death;
 - failure to refer disclosure of abuse or to improve poor practices.
8. **Discriminatory abuse or hate crime**, where there is ill-treatment based on age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. This includes (but not limited to):
 - hate crime resulting in injury or fear for life;
 - honour-based violence;
 - failure to meet care and support needs due to prejudice.
9. **Modern slavery**, where a person is held in a position of slavery, compulsory labour, or is moved geographically with the intention of exploitation. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - a person being exploited or controlled by others, including financial control;
 - a person being moved, or a location or vehicle being moved to transport exploited persons;
 - coercion, including false promises related to hierarchical progress in a gang.
10. **Domestic abuse**, including physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic, psychological or emotional abuse. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - violent, coercive or controlling behaviour;
 - unexplained marks or injuries;
 - isolation and fear, including disengagement from support services.

Other notifiable incidents

In addition to incidents of abuse and neglect, the following other types of incidents are notifiable to the local authority:

1. **Pressure ulcers**, which are injuries to the skin and underlying tissue caused by prolonged pressure on the skin. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - Category 3 or 4 unstageable and deep tissue injury, where there has been a lack of capacity and/or risk assessment;
 - pressure ulcers where there are other incidents of abuse or neglect;
 - pressure ulcers where there is a pattern.
2. **Falls**, where there are frailty or mobility issues which increase the risk falling. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - unexplained falls which result in injury;
 - repeated falls, despite preventative advice provided;
 - falls resulting in injury where medical attention was not sought.
3. **Medication errors**, including the mismanagement or misuse of drugs. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - any medication error causing harm requiring medical attention;
 - deliberate maladministration of medicines or falsification of records;
 - failure to follow procedures or a pattern of recurring errors.
4. **Incidents between adults in a service**, i.e. service-user to service-user incidents. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - any incident resulting in intentional or intended harm;
 - any incident involving a weapon or other object with the intent to harm;
 - repeated incidents where the person lacks capacity and is unable to protect themselves.
5. **Homelessness**, where people are at increased risk of exploitation and abuse. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - lack of inter-agency cooperation when self-neglect procedures have been initiated;
 - appears to be targeted by individuals for abuse or exploitation.