



What should you do if you suspect an adult is being abused or neglected?

If you or someone you know is being abused or neglected please contact Health and Community Services on: **0300 123 4042.**

Or for adults receiving mental health services please contact Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust. on **0300 777 0707.**

If there is immediate danger to life, risk of injury or if a crime is being committed dial **999**. If there is no immediate risk but a police response is required as soon as practicable due to the seriousness of the incident and / or potential loss of evidence then dial **101**.

All information will be treated as confidential although there may be occasions when some information needs to be shared when it is in the best interest of the adult at risk.

This information can be made available on request in other formats, including large print, Braille, audio and other languages.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Working together to protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect

Hertfordshire
Safeguarding Adults Board

Any abuse is wrong, everyone has the right to live their life free from violence, fear and abuse. We all have a role to play if we suspect that someone is being abused or neglected and we need to act promptly to prevent this.

This leaflet explains what to do if anyone has concerns about the actual or potential abuse or neglect of an adult at risk in Hertfordshire.

Who is an adult at risk?

Adults at risk are adults in need of care and support who may be at risk of abuse or neglect. This may be because they are older or have a mental health problem, a learning or physical disability.

What is abuse or neglect?

There are different forms of abuse:

- **Physical** – such as hitting, pushing, kicking, shaking, restraint.
- **Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, 'honour' based violence.
- **Sexual** – such as inappropriate touching, rape, sexual assault or sexual acts of any kind to which the adult at risk has not consented, or could not consent, or to which they were pressurised into consenting.
- **Psychological or emotional** – includes being shouted at, ridiculed or bullied, as well as being made to feel frightened or pressured into decisions.
- **Financial or material** – means misusing, withholding or stealing someone's money or belongings. When people take control or steal your money.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – poor treatment or harassment based on age, gender, sexuality, disability, race or religious belief.
- **Organisational abuse** – when any of these types of abuse are caused by an organisation, it might be called 'Organisational abuse'.
- **Neglect** – this is failure to provide care or the provision of inappropriate care, that results in someone being harmed.

Who might abuse or neglect?:

We know that this can happen anywhere and can be caused by anyone:

- Family, friends, neighbours
- Paid staff, carers, volunteers
- Other service users or patients
- Strangers

How will you know if someone is being abused?

You may notice a number of signs if someone is being abused for example:

- **Behaviour** – they may become withdrawn, depressed or tearful. They may also be angry or aggressive for little reason.
- **Personal hygiene** – they may not take as much care as normal with their appearance, such as not bathing, shaving or washing their hair.
- **Lifestyle** – they may stop going out, not have any money to access leisure services or buy food, not welcome visitors, not want to be left alone with certain people or lose their appetite.
- **Injuries** – they may have unexplained or frequent injuries.