

# Say NO To Abuse



Alerters Guide to Safeguarding Adults



Safeguarding vulnerable adults  
from abuse and neglect

The College holds, as a very high priority, the health, safety and welfare of all vulnerable adults involved in courses or activities which come under our responsibility.

In order to safeguard people from abuse it is important that everyone knows what to do if they suspect someone is being abused. This leaflet is aimed at all staff working within the College





## Why do we need to safeguard adults?

- ◆ Everyone has the right to live their life free from violence, fear and abuse.
- ◆ All adults have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation.
- ◆ Not everyone can protect themselves.
- ◆ All adults have the right to independence, which may involve some risks.

This booklet will help you to identify if someone is at risk from or may be experiencing abuse. We all need to know what abuse is, how we can recognise it, and what our role is in safeguarding people who are vulnerable.

We are ALL  
responsible for the  
safeguarding of  
vulnerable adults



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## Who is an Adult at Risk?

An adult at risk (vulnerable adult) is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

*“No Secrets” – Dept. of Health, 2000*

## What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

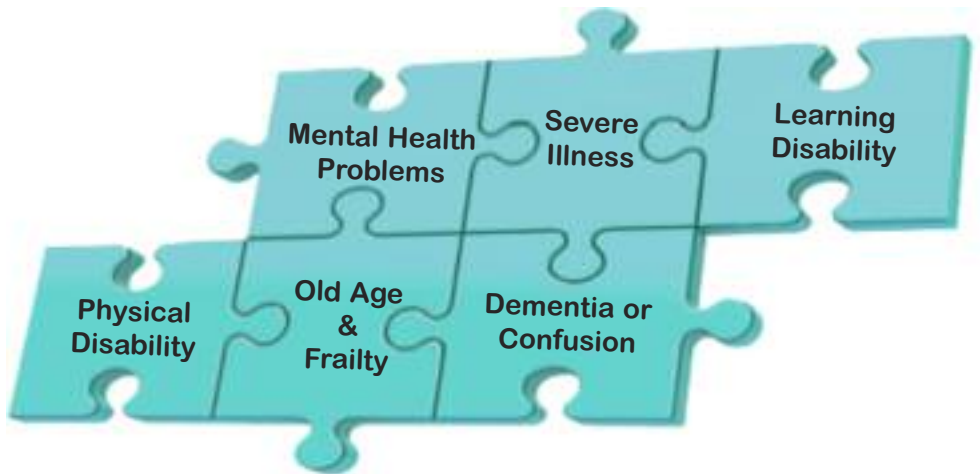
Abuse can occur in any relationship, both formal and informal, and may result in significant harm to or exploitation of the person subjected to it. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts.

*“No Secrets” – Dept. of Health, 2000*



## Things that may make people vulnerable to abuse

Some adults might be more at risk of abuse than others. The following things could increase the risk of abuse:



Also, people who depend on others to look after them may not be able to stop someone else from hurting them or taking advantage of them.



## Abuse can happen in many different places:

- ◆ someone's own home
- ◆ a care home
- ◆ a hospital
- ◆ a day centre
- ◆ a public place

## Anyone could be an abuser and it is often someone who is known and trusted:

- ◆ a family member or partner
- ◆ a neighbour
- ◆ a health or social care worker
- ◆ another professional worker, for example a financial advisor or solicitor
- ◆ a volunteer worker
- ◆ a friend
- ◆ another service user



# What do you need to do?



## *RECOGNISE*

Abuse comes in many forms and more than one type of abuse may be happening at the same time. The following are examples of abuse and some possible signs.

**Physical abuse:** being hit or slapped, being given the wrong medication on purpose, being locked in or force-fed.

*Possible signs are:* a history of unexplained falls or minor injuries; finger marks, clusters of bruises, untreated medical problems, unexplained weight loss.



**Psychological or emotional abuse:** being threatened, not being given choices, being bullied or isolated from other people.

*Possible signs are:* vulnerable person seems very distressed or confused, or appears frightened of carers or care-workers.

**Financial abuse:** having money or property stolen, being pressured into giving people money or changing a will, misuse of benefits, not being allowed access to money.

*Possible signs are:* unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts, inability to pay bills, an unusual interest in the person's assets, failure to explain financial transactions by person managing the vulnerable person's money.

**Neglect:** ignoring medical or physical care needs, withholding food or drink, not allowing access to appropriate health or social services, being left in wet or dirty clothes.

*Possible signs are:* living conditions are filthy / cold, clothing is dirty or inappropriate, the persons health is deteriorating and they are not getting the medical treatment and care they need.



**Sexual abuse:** being touched or kissed when it is not wanted, being made to touch or kiss someone else, being raped, being made to listen to sexual comments or forced to look at sexual acts, or materials.

*Possible signs include:* pain, bruising, soreness, infections, changes in usual behaviour.

**Discrimination:** ignoring spiritual or religious beliefs, comments or jokes about a person's disability, age, race, sexual orientation, or gender / gender identity, ignoring cultural needs, for example diet or clothing.

*Possible signs are:* the person is excluded from activities, there is no attempt to address their communication needs or provide food and care that meets their cultural needs.

**Institutional Abuse:** lack of individual care, no flexibility of bedtimes or waking, deprived environment and lack of stimulation.

*Possible signs include:* repeated concerns about poor care or ill-treatment, lack of flexibility about waking / bedtimes, no respect for dignity or privacy, poor bedding or heating, lack of individual care planning, inadequate provision or choice of food and drink.



## *RESPOND*

You may suspect abuse because:

- ◆ You have general concerns about someone's well-being.
  - ◆ You see or hear about something which could be abuse.
  - ◆ Someone tells you that something has happened or is happening to them, which could be abuse.
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- ✗ **Remember, it is not your role to investigate any concerns you may have.**
  - ✓ **It is your role to pass on any concerns you may have.**



### *YOU MUST:*

- ✓ Report your concerns to Glenda Jackson - Learner Support Manager or Fiona Playford - Strategic Manager for Student & College Services.

### *YOU MUST NOT:*

- ✗ Touch or clear away any evidence.
- ✗ Agree to keep it a secret – you cannot do this. Explain to them that you will have to pass the information on. If possible, name the person you will pass the information to.
- ✗ Interrupt the person or ask “leading questions.”
- ✗ Contact the alleged abuser.
- ✗ Talk to other staff members or service users about the information shared with you.



## *RECORD*

If it is decided that the matter should be taken further

### *YOU MUST:*

- ✓ Write an account of what you have seen or heard as soon as possible. Make sure you include the time and date.
- ✓ Make sure the information is factual and accurate.
- ✓ Note down what the person said, using their own words.
- ✓ Describe the circumstances and identify anyone else who was there at the time.
- ✓ Sign and date your report, noting the time and the location.



## *REPORT*

You must never assume that somebody else will recognise and report what you have seen or heard.

It can be difficult if the allegation is about a colleague or it is difficult to believe what you have heard – but you must still report any alleged abuse, or concerns that you have.

You should normally report your concerns to Glenda Jackson - Learner Support Manager or Fiona Playford - Strategic Manager for Student & College Services as soon as possible and they will then contact the relevant organisations.

If you are a member of the public, or a manager, or can't speak to anyone in your organisation, please refer to the contact numbers on page 14.



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## Contact Numbers

It is very important that you know who to contact in case you need to raise a concern about abuse.

Glenda Jackson **020 8269 8990**  
*Learner Support Manager*

Fiona Playford **020 8269 8999**  
*Strategic Manager for Student & College Services*





Notes:



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## Other formats

If you would like this information in another format please contact Glenda Jackson - Learner Support Manager on **020 8269 8990**

The leaflet is also available on our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and website: **[www.adultedbexley.org](http://www.adultedbexley.org)**

For further copies of this leaflet, please the Learner Support Manager.