

Safeguarding Adults: A brief guide

This information is to help people understand what happens when someone is worried that an adult may have been abused or neglected.

It is the responsibility of the Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board to make sure that adults in Newcastle are protected from abuse and neglect. The Board write policies and procedures which say what must happen if there is a concern that an adult at risk may have been abused.

What is abuse?

- Abuse is an action or a lack of action that causes harm to a person.
- Abuse can be an accident or it can be done on purpose.
- Abuse can be a crime, but it is not always.
- Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, self-neglect, financial, discriminatory, organisational, domestic violence or Modern Slavery.

What happens when there is a concern about abuse or neglect?

If a person working with an adult at risk is worried about abuse or neglect, they have a duty to take action. This usually means working together with the adult, their family, friends or representative and any agencies involved. The local authority (Adult Social Care) have a legal duty to coordinate a **safeguarding adults enquiry** when there is a concern about abuse or neglect.

Each safeguarding adults enquiry will be different. It will depend on how serious the concern is and what the adult (or their representative) wants to happen. Every safeguarding adults enquiry must involve the adult who is at risk or someone who can represent them. If the person does not have an appropriate person to represent them **and** they would have substantial difficulty in being involved, then Adult Social Care must arrange an independent advocate. They will help to support and represent the adult through the safeguarding adults enquiry.

The safeguarding adults enquiry can end at any stage, as long as it is agreed that the person is as safe as they possibly can be. Whenever this happens, there will be an agreed plan in place to keep the person safe. This is called a **Safeguarding Adults Plan**.

Over the page is an explanation of how the safeguarding adults enquiry may progress.

Stage 1: Initial Enquiry

A safeguarding adults referral is made to Adult Social Care when there is a concern that an adult at risk might have been the victim of abuse or neglect. This referral can be made by anyone.

Adult Social Care will try to find out how serious the abuse is and what risks there are. This will usually involve speaking to the adult who is at risk, their family or representative and other professionals or services who are involved. If someone is in immediate danger then action will be taken to make sure they are safe.

Stage 2: Further Information Gathering

If the concern is about “significant harm” (or risks are unclear or unmanaged) the concern will continue to Stage 2 where more information will be gathered by Adult Social Care. A decision will be made about whether a formal investigation or assessment is needed.

Stage 3: Strategy and Investigation

If an investigation or assessment is required a discussion or meeting will be held to plan this. A professional or agency will be asked to complete the investigation or assessment and provide a report with their findings. The investigation or assessment will be carried out by the best placed person or agency e.g. the police, health, social care, housing, regulator or service provider.

Stage 4: Protection Plan and Review

If people continue to be concerned about the risks, a meeting will be held to review the findings from the investigation or assessment. Everyone will agree how risks will be monitored and managed.

Information for you

If you would like some more information or you have any questions about safeguarding adults you can contact:

Name	
Telephone	
Email	

If you are worried about an adult being abused or neglected please contact:

Community Health and Adult Social Care Direct: 0191 278 8377
(Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm)

Out of Hours Service: 0191 278 7878 (Mon-Fri, 5pm-8am & weekends)

Email: scd@newcastle.gov.uk

In an emergency please call 999

**Find out more on our website by searching:
“safeguarding adults Newcastle”**