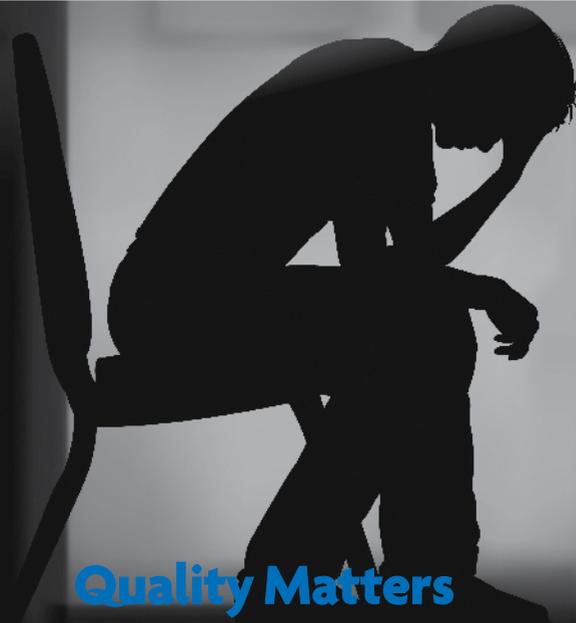




Safeguarding Adults

A Guide for Staff

Everyone who works with adults at risk has a duty to report concerns if they feel that someone is being **abused**



Quality Matters

An adult at risk (formerly vulnerable adult) is a person aged 18 (17 in Scotland) or over who:

- May be in need of community care services because of learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, mental illness or a difficulty related to age or illness. This will include all service users supported by The Trust in registered services, independent hospitals and within 'own home' support.
- May be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

Abuse:

- Is any kind of ill-treatment or neglect that results in physical harm or emotional distress.
- May be single or repeated acts.
- May happen intentionally or unintentionally.
- May take place in any relationship or setting.
- Is categorised into seven types which are explained in this guide.

Safeguarding children and young people:

Even though you may not support children and young people directly at your service, children may visit your service to meet with family/friends.

Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility

You have the legal responsibility to raise an alert to your Manager.

The Disabilities Trust has a leaflet; 'Safeguarding Children and Young People: A Guide for Staff' that gives more information about your responsibilities in this area.

Special requirements for Scotland:

Within our Scottish services, adult support and protection guidance and legislation should be adhered to within the remit of The Disabilities Trust policy and procedure on safeguarding adults as a demonstration of the best practice of the Trust in partnership with the information in this leaflet and local authority procedures.

What to do if you discover abuse:

- 1** If the person is in immediate danger call the emergency services. Do not jeopardise your own safety.
- 2** Remember you may be at a crime scene; be aware of the need to preserve evidence. Do not clean up, do not wash the victim, do not touch anything you do not have to. If you have to clarify what happened keep it to a minimum, ask open questions – what, when, how. Do not probe further.
- 3** If you suspect abuse you have a duty to alert someone of your concern. You may feel uncomfortable about having to break confidentiality if the person asks you not to tell anyone. However, you have a duty to report your concerns if you think that someone may be at risk of harm. The Trust will support you through this.
- 4** If the person you are concerned about is safe, then inform your line manager about your concern. If you suspect that your line manager is involved contact a more senior manager or the Quality Assurance Team at CSS who will signpost you to the appropriate team or call the whistleblowing line on **01444 258599**.
- 5** There is guidance in the Safeguarding Adults Procedures within your service on what your line manager should do next. If you are unhappy with their decision, then you may want to check the procedures yourself. If you think it is an action contrary to the procedures, inform them if you feel you can or contact a more senior manager. Alternatively you can seek advice from the Quality Assurance Team on **01444 239123** during office hours, or call the whistleblowing line on the number above.
- 6** Write down what you have witnessed, heard or have been told. Record what has been said in the words that were used. Record as much factual detail as you can. Do this as soon as you can. Always keep the original report even if it is typed later. Do not Tipp-Ex out. Cross mistakes out with a light line so it can still be read. This is because your report may be used in court as evidence. Put the date, the time of day you are referring to and sign it. Print your name underneath and your job title.

Physical abuse

Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, pinching, burning, misuse of medication, forms of restraint e.g. being tied to a bed or chair.



What to look for:

An injury inconsistent with explanation, bruises found in different states of healing, small clusters indicating finger marks, friction burns from a carpet, outline burns e.g. radiator. There may be a reluctance to seek medical help.



Sexual abuse

Includes any sexual act to which the vulnerable person has not consented, is unable to consent to or does not understand, or was pressured into consenting to. This also includes non-contact abuse such as exposure to pornographic material.



What to look for:

Bruises and bleeding around rectal & vaginal area, stained or torn underclothes and nightwear, “love bites”, overt sexual behaviour or language not previously used, or – conversely – fear of any type of physical contact.

Financial or material abuse

Includes theft, fraud, and unreasonable pressure in relation to their money, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions; exploitation of a person’s generosity or lack of understanding of the value of money or goods.



What to look for:

Sudden inability to pay bills or purchase necessities, unexplained withdrawals from savings.

Neglect and acts of omission

Includes disregard of a person’s physical or care needs, failure to provide health, social care leisure and education. Failure to provide adequate medication, nutrition or heating. Failure to keep safe, not following support or care plan.



What to look for:

Lack of attention to personal care needs, rashes, pressure sores, lice, the person being left alone for long periods, dirty and wet, failure to ensure privacy and personal dignity.

Psychological and emotional abuse:

Includes threats of harm or abandonment, inappropriate jokes, humiliation, blaming, controlling, harassment, name calling and verbal abuse.



What to look for:

Symptoms of stress, onset of bed wetting, anxiety, tearfulness, low self-esteem, unexplained paranoia, lack of eye contact.

Discriminatory abuse:

Includes victimisation in relation to race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religious or cultural background. It may take the form of slurs, bad taste jokes and harassment or denial of rightful opportunities or provision of goods or services to meet individual needs.



What to look for:

Fear and anxiety, withdrawal from activities, isolation, bullying, threatening behaviour, agoraphobia, and depression.

Institutional abuse:

Where groups of people are exposed to similar maltreatment due to institutional practices: following out-of-date or inappropriate support plans and risk assessments.



What to look for:

Lack of privacy around toileting and bathing and how the person may be supported; lack of choice of food, bedtime, clothing and toiletries etc.

Confidentiality

Service users should be made aware of your duty to report concerns. You should tell the individual what you are concerned about and that you are going to report a concern to the appointed person without delay.

People who have capacity to make decisions for themselves may choose to remain in an abusive situation; they should **STILL** be informed that they have access to services and assistance. The named Safeguarding Coordinator within your service should be kept informed.





Whistleblowing

If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a service user, you **MUST** tell somebody about it **TODAY!**

Speak to the person in charge or ring the Whistleblowing Line **01444 258599**.

Information

For more information about

Safeguarding Adults A Guide for Staff

contact the Quality Assurance Division

Telephone Number: **01444 237266**

Email: **cssqa@thedtgroup.org**

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The Disabilities Trust is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales under 2334589; registered office as shown. It is registered as a charity in England and Wales under 800797 (BIRT 800797/1) and in Scotland under SCO38972 (BIRT SCO43579)

“Service users are at the centre of all we do at The Disabilities Trust. We are working in partnership with staff and key stakeholders to ensure that those we support are safeguarded and protected.”

Barrie Oldham
Chief Executive