

Safeguarding Adults from Abuse and Neglect



Safeguarding Handbook

March 2019



**Essex Safeguarding
Adults Board**



Introduction

This guidance booklet has been produced to help people to understand how to raise concerns they may have about abuse or neglect. This booklet supplements the [Southend, Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding Adult Guidelines](#).

- If you suspect abuse, neglect or self neglect, it is your responsibility to take action in line with the procedures in this document. **IGNORING ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS NOT AN OPTION.**
- All individuals regardless of age, ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or beliefs should have the greatest possible control over their lives.
- We must give adults every opportunity to live as independently as possible and to make informed decisions about their own lifestyles, including the opportunity to take risks if they choose to do so, without fear of harm or abuse from others.

Your understanding of adult safeguarding and your actions can make a positive difference to people.

What is expected of me?

1. If you come across a situation where you think a person is being or at risk of abuse or neglect you must not ignore the information. Do not assume that others know what you know. **You must tell** so that others can help and concerns can be looked into.
2. If you see something that concerns you or you are given information that causes you to be concerned about a person then:
 - ❖ **Keep calm; this will help the person**
 - ❖ **Make sure that the person is safe**
 - ❖ **Ask the person what they would like to happen**
 - ❖ **Listen carefully to what is said**
 - ❖ **Observe what you see around you, if possible**
 - ❖ **Reassure and take care of the person.**
3. It is expected that you pass on any concerns immediately to your manager (unless they are implicated, if so you should follow your organisations [whistleblowing](#) policy).
4. If you feel the person needs urgent medical assistance, call for an ambulance or arrange for a doctor to see the person at the earliest opportunity.
5. If you have reason to believe the person is in immediate and serious risk of harm or that a crime has been committed, dial 999 and ask for the police.

6. You will need to record everything that you saw, heard and did. **Record the facts of what happened** and ensure these are recorded in a way that will not lead to misinterpretation.
7. **Everyone has a right to live free from harm and abuse, you have a duty to ensure their needs are considered.**

Ignoring abuse/neglect is not an option

Definition of Adult Safeguarding

The statutory framework introduced under the Care Act applied to any person aged 18 or above who:

- **Has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)**
- **Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and**
- **As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.**

They may include:

- People with a mental health problem or mental illness (including dementia)
- People with a physical or learning disability
- People with a sensory impairment
- People who are frail and/or experiencing a temporary illness
- People with alcohol or substance dependency.

What is Abuse/Neglect?

Abuse can take place in any setting - an individual's private home, care home, hospital, day service, public transport, police station or college. This list is endless.

Abuse and neglect can take many forms. It may be an isolated incident, a series of incidents or a long term pattern of behaviour and could affect one person or more, whether in someone's home, in public or in an institutional setting.

It may be deliberate or the result of negligence or ignorance. Sometimes it happens when people are trying to do their best but do not know the right thing to do. Sometimes the person who causes harm does so because of frustration even in a caring context. The degree or lack of intent will inform the response.

Many people find it hard to understand why another person(s), (including adults with care and support needs) would want to abuse and cause harm to another person. However some people can often be the perfect target. Why? Because often:

- ❖ They can't defend themselves
- ❖ They may not be able to get away
- ❖ Even if they can tell, often they are not believed
- ❖ They may be in fear of someone
- ❖ There may be a power imbalance
- ❖ Sometimes our staff and organisation do not believe that it can happen
- ❖ It may be forgotten that **everybody** has a human right to be safe (as we do).

The [Southend, Essex and Thurrock Adult Safeguarding Guidelines](#) describes ten different categories of abuse:

Physical abuse: may include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, misuse of restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

Domestic abuse: may include psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, coercive control, so-called “honour” based abuse and forced marriage.

Sexual abuse: may include sexual exploitation, rape and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented, or could not consent, or where pressure was applied to secure their consent.

Psychological abuse: may include verbal abuse, emotional abuse, threats, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or Material abuse: may include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude.

Discriminatory abuse: includes an individual being treated less favourably than others due to their race, gender, religion or belief, disability, or sexual orientation, such as being given fewer opportunities, being called names or isolated, degrading treatment and other forms of mistreatment.

Organisational abuse: involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to adults with care and support needs. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping. It includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.

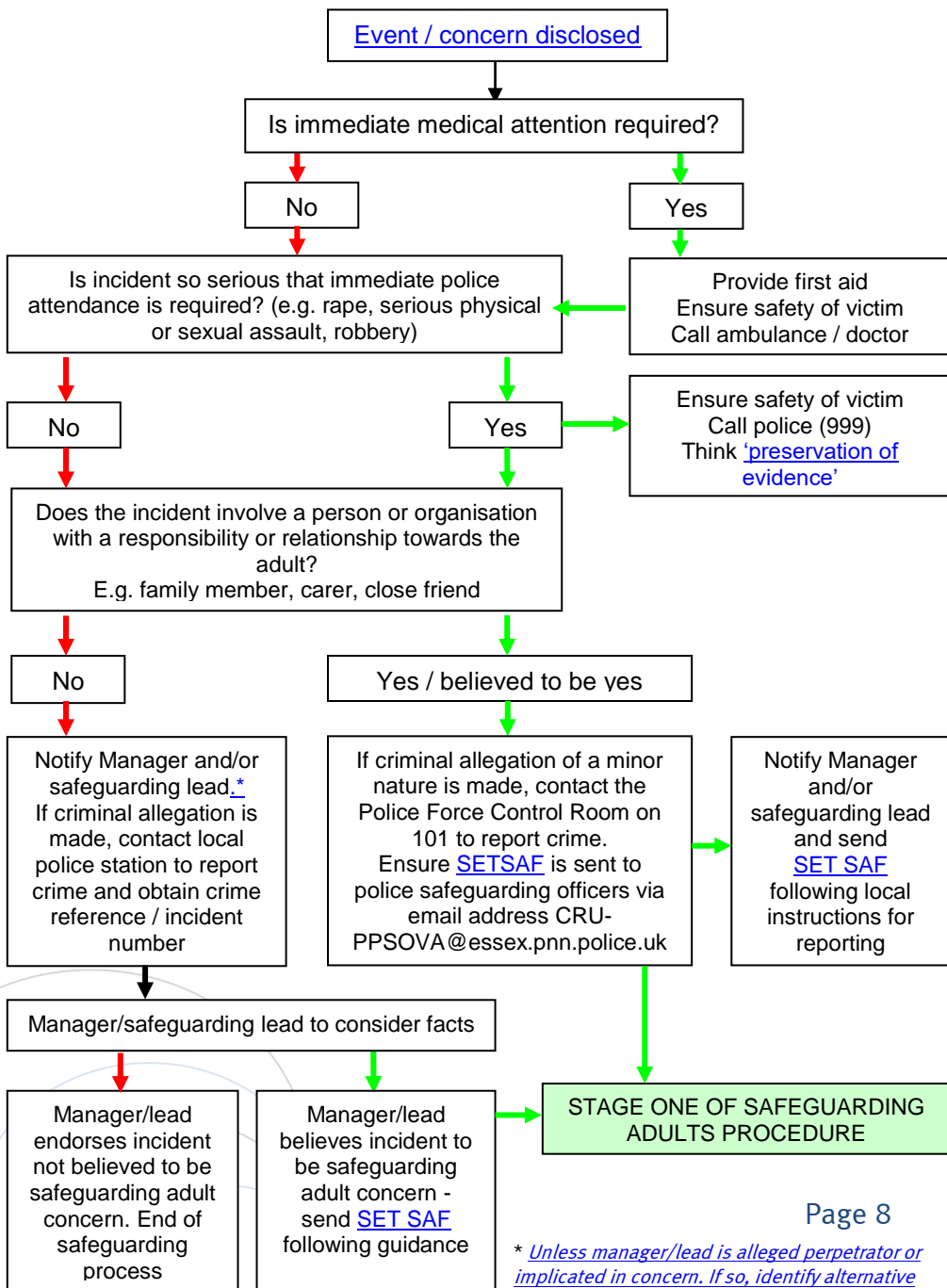
Neglect (including acts of omission): may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, food and drink and heating.

Self-neglect: includes a wide range of behaviours neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surrounding and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Ignoring abuse or neglect is not an option - Any person or organisation with knowledge of, or suspicion that an adult may be at risk of abuse or is being abused must report their concerns.

The following diagram shows the process you should follow if a concern is disclosed.

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* *Unless manager/lead is alleged perpetrator or implicated in concern. If so, identify alternative manager or discuss directly with social care.*

Disclosures

If someone discloses to you:

- Stay calm.
- Become an active listener -concentrate, try to comprehend what it is they are saying, sustain the conversation by verbal and non-verbal prompts and echoing by repeating the last one or two words spoken.
- Let them speak - do not interrupt them.
- **Do not question except to clarify** and ensure that you understand what is being said.
- Show empathy when listening.
- Ascertain the wishes of the alleged victim/witness about what they want to do or what they would like to happen.
- Reassure the person e.g. tell them that they have done the right thing in speaking to you and that you believe them.
- Ensure that any immediate needs are addressed.
- Remember that this is an important conversation with someone and they will probably be more anxious than you.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality, as you cannot keep the information to yourself.

Explain that you will need to pass this information on to your manager

If it is a matter that you must report, inform them that you are duty bound to do so. People have the right to expect that information shared with a member of staff should be treated as confidential.

However, it should be made clear that where the staff member has a reason to be concerned for the welfare of a person and/or others they have to share the information with someone who is in a position to take action or responsibility.

The adult should be told with whom the information will be shared, and that their views and wishes will be taken into account. Any views or wishes expressed by the adult should be recorded and reported with their concerns by the staff member. Concerns should be reported at the earliest possible opportunity.

Ensuring the safety of the adult and any other people at risk is the primary responsibility of staff when they become aware of a serious incident.

Preserving and recording evidence

In most circumstances when preserving evidence you may not need to do anything except record the events that have given rise for concern. However, there may be occasions when it is important to follow certain rules:

- Ensure written records (notes, letters, bank statements, medication records etc.) are kept in a safe place
- Make a written record of messages (e.g. answer-phone) to ensure they are not lost. Include the date and time and sign them
- In cases of physical or sexual assault encourage the person not to wash, bathe or shower where you think they might need a medical examination
- Don't tidy up, wash clothes, bedding or other items
- Try and ensure that others around do not interfere with any items that maybe important for the police
- If there is any suspicion that there may be forensic evidence, inform the police and preserve the evidence. The person may not tell you all the facts on the initial disclosure – do all you can to anticipate what may be needed as evidence, and do all you can to preserve it.

It is important that you write down why you are concerned about a person as simply and clearly as you can, and as soon as you can after an event. In some cases this will mean writing in a person's records or notes, in others it might be on a separate record sheet. All original notes must be retained. Ensure these are recorded in a way that will not lead to misinterpretation

- It is important that you record all relevant information including what you saw, what you heard, and why you acted as you did. Be clear on what are facts and opinions
- Sign and date your records and make sure they are kept in a safe place
- Record any physical signs or injuries using a body map; make sure you sign and date it
- Write down what is said to you, who said it including their relationship to the person or role and how they can be contacted, if appropriate. Include any questions you have asked, make sure you sign and date it
- Include any details about what the person wants to be done at this stage.



Whistleblowing

It is good practice and it is a duty of care to draw attention to bad/poor practice in the workplace. This includes practice that may be abusive and/or neglectful. Staff who work with adults have an individual responsibility to raise concerns with someone who has the responsibility to take action. Sometimes it may be necessary to go outside the immediate work environment or the immediate organisation, for example social services or the police.

It is the responsibility of all organisations to promote a culture which values good practice and encourages whistle blowing.



Confidentiality

Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is preserved, this will be governed by what may be an overriding need to protect a person who has been or is at risk of abuse.

All those working with adults must be clear that it is not possible to keep information about suspected or actual abuse confidential.

The needs of the person and the potential risk to others, requires you to share the information with your manager.

Southend

www.southend.gov.uk

By Email: accessteam@southend.gov.uk

By Phone: 01702 215008 **Out of hours:** 0345 606 1212

By Fax: 0300 123 0779

Essex

www.essex.gov.uk

By Email: socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk

By Post: Essex Social Care Direct, Essex House, 200 The Crescent, Colchester, Essex, CO4 9YQ

By Phone: 0345 603 7630 **Out of hours:** 0345 606 1212

By Fax: 0300 123 0779

Thurrock

www.thurrock.gov.uk

By Email: SafeGuardingAdults@thurrock.gov.uk

By Phone: 01375 511000 **Out of hours:** 01375 372468

By Fax to: 01375 397080