



Adult Protection

'Everyone's Responsibility'

Information for people working with
vulnerable adults

What is abuse?

Vulnerable people can be mistreated, harmed and exploited in a number of ways:

- Physically
- Sexually
- Financially
- Psychologically or Emotionally
- Neglect
- Discrimination

For comprehensive information and advice on types and indicators of abuse consult Staffordshire's Inter-Agency Policy and Procedures (2001).

Who is vulnerable?

Most adults are capable of protecting themselves and only a proportion could be considered 'vulnerable' and potentially in need of protection. They are likely to be:

- Older people who are dependent on others to provide their care
- People with a learning disability
- People with a physical disability or sensory impairment
- People with mental health concerns.

People's vulnerability can increase if they are misusing alcohol or other substances or because they are subject to intimidation or discrimination within the community.

For more information and definitions of vulnerability consult Staffordshire's inter-agency policy and procedures (2001).

Where does abuse occur?

Abuse can happen anywhere but is most commonly in the person's own home. Other places where abuse might occur are:

- in residential or nursing homes
- in day centres
- in hospitals
- in the community, pubs and clubs.

Wherever abuse occurs it should always be treated seriously.

What should you do?

- DON'T DELAY if you think someone is being abused it is important that you take some action. Ignoring abuse should not be an option.
- Tell your line manager as soon as possible.
- Contact Social Services as soon as you can.

If a crime has been committed or if the person is seriously injured ring the emergency services on 999.

Let the person know what you are doing.

Staffordshire's inter-agency policy and procedures (2001), gives detailed information about passing on concerns and how to respond to people who are telling you about abuse.

Your own agency will probably have procedures for dealing with vulnerable adult abuse which you should also refer to.

What happens next?

Investigations of allegations are co-ordinated by Social Services and may include the Police or The Care Standards Commission depending on the nature of the allegation.

Information will only be shared between agencies for the purposes of protecting the vulnerable person.

Why Investigate?

Investigations are carried out to find out if abuse is occurring and what action should be taken to protect the person and prevent it from happening again.

Victims of abuse should feel that:

- they have been listened to
- their concerns have been taken seriously
- criminal offences have been properly investigated
- they and their property are safe
- they will receive support at all stages of the investigation.

The outcome of any investigation should be shared with the vulnerable person and a plan formulated to manage any risks.

Staffordshire Adult Protection Committee

The SAPC brings together lead officers from all agencies concerned with the well being and protection of vulnerable adults in Staffordshire. By maintaining an active dialogue between agencies it promotes the development of comprehensive strategies to protect vulnerable adults within Staffordshire.

Who represents your agency?

If you would like more information about Adult Protection or would like a copy of Staffordshire's inter-agency policy and procedures please contact:

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