

## Where can abuse happen?

Abuse can take place in any setting:

- ◆ in your home
- ◆ in someone else's home (relatives or friend)
- ◆ in a residential or nursing home
- ◆ in a day centre, adult education or other establishment
- ◆ in a hospital or GP surgery
- ◆ at work
- ◆ in a public place

## Who abuses?

The person responsible for the abuse is often well known to the adult being abused. They may be:

- ◆ a relative, friend or neighbour
- ◆ a paid or volunteer carer
- ◆ a professional worker
- ◆ another resident or service user
- ◆ an occasional visitor or service provider

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please phone 0345 045 5202 or email: [adultsocialcareleaflets@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialcareleaflets@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

or write to:

Cambridgeshire County Council  
CC1307, Castle Court  
Shire Hall  
CAMBRIDGE, CB3 0AP

January 2012



# Safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse

Stop abuse  
Make that call

## Your Life, Your Choice

# Safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse

## Who is an adult at risk?

Some adults are more at risk of being abused than others. Adults who are more vulnerable could include older people, people with a visual or hearing impairment, people with a physical disability, people with learning disabilities or mental health problems and people living with HIV or AIDS.

## What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons; it may consist of a single act or repeated acts, it may be planned or unplanned, it may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

## Abuse can take many forms including:

**Physical abuse:** for example hitting, pushing, shaking, over medicating or causing physical harm.

**Sexual abuse:** for example unwanted touching, kissing or sexual activity or where the vulnerable adult cannot or does not give consent.

**Psychological/emotional abuse:** for example verbal abuse, bullying or the use of threats.

**Financial or material abuse:** for example; the illegal or improper use of a person's money, property, bank account or other belongings.

**Discriminatory abuse:** for example racism, sexism, religious and ageism, based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment.

**Domestic abuse and violence** is best described as the use of any of the forms of abuse listed above and/or emotional abuse or violence, including undermining of self-confidence, sexual violence or the threat of violence, by a person who is or has been in a close relationship.

**Professional abuse** is the misuse of power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services.

**Institutional abuse** involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people.

**Neglect** is behaviour that results in a vulnerable adult's basic needs not being met.

## What should you do?

Cambridgeshire takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and is committed to dealing with all aspects of abuse. If you are concerned that any vulnerable adult is experiencing abuse or neglect please contact:

**Cambridgeshire Direct** – 0345 045 5202 Mon-Fri 9.00am to 5.00pm

Email: [referral.centreadults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:referral.centreadults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

**Emergency Duty Team** – out of hours emergency social care is available on **01733 234724** Mon-Fri 5.00pm to 9.00am. All day Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays.

For more advice about Adult Safeguarding go to [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/adultprot/](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/social/adultprot/)

## Your Life, Your Choice

Improving the quality of life for adults in Cambridgeshire.

[www.yourlifeyourchoice.org.uk](http://www.yourlifeyourchoice.org.uk)

## Other contacts and advice

**CQC – The Care Quality Commission** is the independent regulator of health and social care in England.

Helpline: **03000 616161** Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm

Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

**Action on Elder Abuse** – run the national, free phone helpline for anyone concerned in any way about the abuse of older people. The helpline is confidential and provides information and assistance across the four nations of the UK.

Helpline: **0808 808 8141** Mon-Fri 9.00am to 5.00pm

Email: [enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk)

**Voice UK** – supports people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable people who have experienced crime or abuse.

Helpline: **0808 8028686**

Email: [voice@voiceuk.org.uk](mailto:voice@voiceuk.org.uk)

**Your Life, Your Choice**

[www.yourlifeyourchoice.org.uk](http://www.yourlifeyourchoice.org.uk)