



Care Academy
Training that matters

Delivering Dignity for the Older Person

Who may be a vulnerable adult?

A person who is 18 years of age or over and who is or may need community care serviced due to the fact the person has mental health problems, a disability, dementia or an illness - And who is or may be unable to take care of him / herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

The definition of a vulnerable adult may include:

- A person with learning disabilities
- A person with mental health problems
- A person with dementia
- An older person with support / care needs
- A person who is physically frail or has a chronic illness
- A person who has a physical or sensory disability
- A person who misuses drugs or alcohol
- A person who had social or emotional problems

In September 2000, the National Assembly for Wales (WAG) issued a document entitled in 'In Safe Hands'. The outcome was that, in Wales, currently we have one policy which all agencies have made a commitment to preventing and responding to allegations of abuse.

This policy re-enforces that everyone has a duty to report abuse / suspected abuse and it is not your responsibility to handle the situation on you own.

What is abuse?

The term abuse is open to wide interpretation-

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons, which results in significant harm.



Abuse can be:

- A single or repeated act
- A lack of appropriate action
- Perpetrated (be responsible for) as a result of deliberate intent
- Negligence (neglect or carelessness) or ignorance
- An act of omission (failing to act) or to neglect

Types of Abuse	Signs and Symptoms
<p>Physical Abuse:</p> <p>This is when another person does physical harm to another by hitting, slapping, punching and kicking.</p> <p>It could also be misuse of medication (to make it easier to care for the person).</p> <p>Restraint e.g. chair with table up close so the person can't move, strapped in a chair, walking stick or walker placed where the person cannot reach it. Not being able to move around freely around the care home setting.</p>	<p>Bruising / burn marks Unexplained injuries Fractures / broken bones</p> <p>Person drowsy and slumped in chair for long hours Apathy</p> <p>Frustration Unsettlement Angry Shouting Hitting</p>
<p>Financial Abuse:</p> <p>Theft of someone's belongings or money, pressure around wills, property inheritance, misuse of bank cards or misappropriation of benefits</p>	<p>Unpaid bills / asking for money / no food / heating in the house. Unexplained withdrawal of monies. Valuable possessions going missing. Contrast between known income and unnecessary poor living conditions. Care services refused under pressure from family.</p>



<p>Emotional / psychological Abuse:</p> <p>This is when a person threatens harm, abandonment, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks to another person.</p>	<p>Disturbed sleep Withdrawn / depressed / Anxiety / confusion Extreme submissiveness or dependency. Loss of weight without apparent loss of appetite and less of confidence / low self-esteem feeling devalued.</p>
<p>Sexual Abuse:</p> <p>This is a person carrying out sexual activities without the other persons consent e.g. rape, sexual assault, touching inappropriately and innuendo</p>	<p>Bleeding Reluctant to undress Unexplained changes in behaviour Unexplained soreness / bruising in genital / rectal area Disturbed sleep pattern Anxiety / unsettlement New tendency to withdraw and spend time in isolation</p>
<p>Institutional Abuse:</p> <p>This is deprivation of choice e.g. times going to bed, tea trolleys, lack of privacy staff walking into toilets unannounced, people dressed in other people's clothes, cot sides on every bed, over medication, staff morale low with use of agency staff, lack of appropriate / individual care plans / failure to evaluate care. Rigid inflexible care Atmosphere oppressively quiet or very unsettled Person being treated like an object rather than a human being.</p>	<p>Boredom Asking for time constantly Anxious and not being able to decide Apathy Unsettlement</p>



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<p><i>Neglect by others:</i></p> <p>A failure of care givers to fulfil their responsibilities to provide needed care</p>	<p>Untidy in appearance Lack of food and hungry all the time Soiled / wet clothing</p>
<p><i>Self-Neglect:</i></p> <p>Failure of an adult to take care of themselves which is likely to cause physical, mental or emotional harm</p>	<p>Strong odour Dirty clothing Disinterested in eating or washing</p>