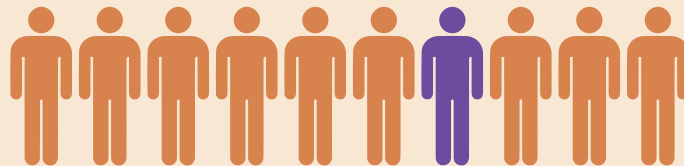




# SPOTTING AND REPORTING THE ABUSE OF AN OLDER PERSON

Around one in ten older people may be being abused, according to Action on Elder Abuse. This includes both older men and women and it can happen wherever they live or visit.



Older people may be abused in many different ways. The five most common types of abuse are:

- Physical.
- Psychological.
- Financial.
- Sexual abuse.
- Neglect.

Abuse is often also a crime.

The people who abuse older people are usually exploiting a special relationship, but it can be anyone.

They could be in a position of trust or have created an expectation of trust, whether through family bonds, friendship or a paid caring role.

We should all be mindful of older people in our communities, especially those who seem to be socially isolated.

## SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE

There are often indicators that an older person may be a victim of abuse. Where more than one indicator exists, there may be cause for concern. Look out for:

- Unexplained injuries.
- Inappropriate use of medication.
- Disclosure by an older person that they have been mistreated.
- Sudden or gradual withdrawal from social activities.
- Hesitation to talk openly.
- Other sudden changes in behaviour.
- Sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming rights to the older person's possessions or affairs.
- A third party seeking to isolate the older person from friends and family.
- Unfamiliar or incorrect signatures on financial documents.
- Unpaid bills.
- Inadequate clothing and unsanitary conditions.
- Malnourishment or dehydration.

# WHAT TO DO

## WHEN YOU SUSPECT THAT ABUSE IS HAPPENING

It is everyone's responsibility to keep an eye out for abuse and to report it when you suspect it is happening.



Where possible, the best starting point is to **talk to the older person** to try to better understand what might be going on. If it seems that abuse is happening, there are ways to report it to social care, the police and others without personal risk.



If you suspect someone is being abused in a care home or care home with nursing, or that abuse is happening in the older person's own home by a care worker, you can **contact the manager of the service** to raise your concerns. It is worth checking that your concerns are acted upon and, if you fear they have not been, you can contact your local council or police.



Your local council has a responsibility to investigate when a concern is raised about the well-being and safety of a vulnerable adult. You can find details of how to **report your concerns to the Adult Safeguarding Team** on your council's website.



If you believe that there is criminal behaviour, such as assault, theft or threats to the older person, you can **contact your local police service** by dialling **101**.

If you are not confident about your actions or have any questions about abuse of older people, do not hesitate to contact the Action on Elder Abuse helpline for further advice. You can reach them confidentially

and without charge at **0808 808 8141**. If you are not able to get through immediately, leave a message and your call will be returned at the first available opportunity.

With thanks to

