

Safeguarding factsheet for volunteers

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is what we do to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals. Safeguarding allows children, young people and adults to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

All professionals have a duty to safeguard. As a volunteer it is important that you understand how to spot the signs of abuse and neglect and how to report any concerns that you may have.

- A child or young person means anyone under the age of 18. It means protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- An adult at risk is anyone over the age of 18, who has:
 - needs for care and support or is experiencing,
 - is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
 - as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it
- Remember 'It could happen here' when safeguarding children and adults is concerned.
- We are all responsible for the welfare of children and adults– ALWAYS ACT and report any concerns that you have.

There are 4 types of abuse for children:

- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse

There are 10 types of abuse for adults at risk:

- Physical Abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self-Neglect
- Psychological or Emotional Abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory Abuse

Anyone can make a referral to Children's or Adult's Social Care.

Children and adults may be abused in any setting and they may be abused by another adult/ adults or another child or children.

Abuse, harassment and harm can happen to anyone. It's not always visible and often not spoken about.

Whistleblowing

If you are concerned about the behaviour of a staff member at an organisation that cares for children or adults, this may include a hospital, care home, school or nursery, you should try and report your concerns to the manager or head teacher in the first instance.

Alternatively you can contact the Designated Officer (Allegations) on 01942 486034 or via email LADO@wigan.gov.uk

What do I need to do?

Know how to report your concerns– if you are worried about a child, young person or adult you may wish to talk to them, listen calmly and reassure them that it's not their fault and encourage them to tell you what's happened. If you can't speak to the person directly that's ok but it's important that you tell someone about your concerns.

- If you believe a person to be at immediate risk of harm or in need of emergency medical attention call the emergency services on 999
- Otherwise if you are worried about a child or young person call Wigan Children's Social Care Team on 01942 828300.
- If you are worried about an adult then contact Wigan Adult Duty team on 01942 828777

Types of abuse

Neglect

This is the most common type of abuse and means that a parent or carer is failing to meet the basic needs of a person.

- Poor appearance and hygiene, smelly, dirty, unwashed, not wearing suitable clothes for the weather.
- Being hungry and not being given food.
- Having untreated health problems, such as nappy rash, tooth ache, eczema, head lice., untreated injuries.

Physical Abuse

It's important to remember that physical abuse is intentionally causing physical harm to a person. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

- Unexplained injuries or regular visits to A & E
- Bruising, bites, cigarette burns or scalds.

Sexual Abuse

This is when a person is forced or tricked into sexual activities.

They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong and they might be afraid to tell someone.

Sexual abuse can happen anywhere: it can happen in person or online.

- Being forced to engage in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smart phone.
- Making a child or adult at risk of harm; watch, view or share sexual images of themselves or someone else.
- Showing a child or adult at risk of harm; pornography.
- Rape, sexual assault or an indecent assault of an adult or child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a person.

- Threatening, shouting or calling someone names.
- Exposing a someone to upsetting situations, like domestic abuse or drug taking.
- Not showing any emotional when interacting with a child.
- An air of silence when a particular person is present.

Domestic Abuse

This is controlling or threatening behaviour between partners or family members.

Men and women can be victims of domestic abuse and it can be very harmful for children to witness it.

- Low self-esteem
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not
- Physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones
- Verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others
- Fear of outside intervention
- Damage to home or property

- Isolation – not seeing friends and family
- Limited access to money

Financial or material abuse

This includes theft, fraud or Scamming.

- Unexplained lack of money.
- Someone being in control of their bank cards or spends.

Modern Slavery

Adults and children are forced to work – through coercion, control or physical threat. They are often trapped and controlled by an 'employer', through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse.

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Always wearing the same clothes
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of law enforcers

Discriminatory Abuse

Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

- The person appears withdrawn and isolated.
- Being harassed or insulted.

Organisational or Institutional Abuse

This includes neglect and poor standards of care which are provided by an organisation. This can happen in a care home, hospital or someone's own home.

- Few social activities.
- The basic needs not being met, such as food, drink and clean clothing.
- People being hungry and dehydrated.
- Not receiving the correct medication or treatment.

Neglect/ Acts of Omission

Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care or providing care that a person dislikes due to religious, cultural beliefs.

- Malnutrition and not receiving the correct levels of food and drink.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Bed sores
- Over use of medicines to sedate

Self- Neglect

Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety

- Very poor personal hygiene and Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- Hoarding
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury