

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is everybody's business



What is a vulnerable adult?

A vulnerable adult is anyone aged 18 or over who may be unable to take care of themselves. Because they are unable to care for themselves, they may be at risk from harm and serious exploitation.

Vulnerable adults might be older people, people with a visual or hearing impairment, severe physical disability, learning disability or mental health problem, people with HIV, substance abusers or carers.

Who might the abuser be?

Vulnerable people might be at risk of abuse from:

- family members
- professional staff
- paid or voluntary workers
- other vulnerable adults
- friends
- young people
- carers
- strangers

It is a criminal offence to abuse a vulnerable adult

In 2005 the mental capacity act was introduced and made it a criminal offence to ill treat or neglect a person who is vulnerable or lacks capacity. If a person is found guilty of such an offence they are liable to be sent to prison for a term of up to five years.

What can the abuse be?

Physical

Hitting, smacking, pushing, shaking, spitting, or other physical harm.

Sexual

Any sexual activity where a vulnerable adult cannot or does not consent.

Financial or material

Fraud, theft or using a vulnerable adult's property without their permission.

Emotional or psychological

Such as shouting or swearing at or ignoring a vulnerable adult, or using insulting language about their age, ethnicity, culture, sexuality, gender or disability. This could also be referred to as discriminatory abuse.

Neglect

Where a person allows a vulnerable adult to suffer by failing to care for them or by ignoring their needs, for example with regard to food, visual or hearing needs.

Institutional

Repeated poor care of a vulnerable adult through neglect or poor professional practice.

What are the signs of abuse?

- multiple bruising or finger marks
- injuries the person cannot give a good reason for
- worsening health for no apparent reason
- weight loss
- inappropriate, dirty or inadequate clothing
- mood changes or becoming withdrawn
- a carer who is unwilling to let other people have contact with the person
- shortage of money for no apparent reason
- signs of self harm
- neediness – someone being clingy and wanting affection
- tearfulness and crying for no reason and not saying why

What will happen if you report abuse?

The first thing we will do is contact the person being abused. We will work with them and investigate the allegations.

Where the abuse is definitely a criminal activity the police may take legal action against the abuser.

Camden adult social care will work with the person being abused to put in place a protection plan. Help and advice will be given on how to prevent the abuse from happening again.

Who do I contact if I think someone is being abused?

If you think you or a person you know may be at risk from harm and/or serious exploitation contact:

Housing and adult social care

London borough of Camden

Phone 020 7974 4000

Textphone 020 7974 6866

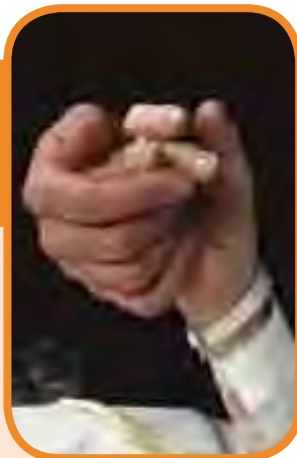
Camden Police Community Safety unit

020 8733 5665/6445/5940

Email csu.camden@met.police.uk

Do not be afraid to contact us. An adult who cannot care for themselves may not be able to raise the alarm so it is important you do - and make the abuse stop.

You can also visit [camden.gov.uk/asg](https://www.camden.gov.uk/asg) for more information on how to protect vulnerable people from abuse and information on what Camden is doing to protect them.



If you are not a Camden resident and you are concerned about a person, contact your local council or the police.

For more copies of this leaflet, or if you would like the leaflet in a different language or format, call 020 7974 4000

Adult social care

Information and access team

38 - 50 Bidborough Street

London WC1H 9DB

Phone 020 7974 4000

camden.gov.uk/asg



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