

there can be *no* secrets

# What to do if you think a vulnerable adult is being abused

COMMUNITY SERVICES FACTSHEET

## The abuse of adults

Cheshire County Council Community Services, with the support of the Police, Health Organisations, Housing, and the Voluntary and Independent Organisations have launched a campaign to stop the abuse of vulnerable adults. By drawing attention to this problem, we have made it easier for concerned people to contact their local Community Services Department and report what they believe to be abuse of vulnerable adults. This factsheet is part of a campaign to break the silence and reduce or deal with adult abuse in Cheshire.

Together we can **protect** vulnerable adults, **prevent** and **stop abuse** from happening.

We are asking you to; **hear** it, **see** it, **say** it.

## What is adult abuse?

Abuse may be physical, sexual or it may be neglect. It may be financial or psychological or discriminatory. It may be domestic violence or institutional abuse. Sometimes it may be unintentional abuse, where someone thinks they are trying to help but in the wrong way.

- **Physical abuse** such as shaking, pushing, hitting, force-feeding, tying up or locking up;
- **Sexual abuse** sexual activity of any kind where the person does not give, or is unable to give, consent;

- **Neglect** such as leaving someone alone for inappropriate periods of time, failing to care for them or leaving them in soiled clothes;
- **Financial abuse** such as holding money back, cheating or stealing money;
- **Psychological or Emotional abuse** such as rejection, ignoring, humiliating, bullying, or the use of threats;
- **Discriminatory abuse** treating people in a way that does not respect their race, ethnic background, culture, age, sex, disability or sexuality;
- **Domestic abuse** is emotional, physical or psychological abuse by partner/other family member;
- **Institutional abuse** takes place in any form of institution, for example, hospitals, residential and nursing homes, day centres and includes any of the above and poor and unsatisfactory professional conduct, ill treatment or gross misconduct.

**Although the above list is fairly comprehensive it is not exhaustive.**



*Works*

## Who does it?

Sadly it can be anyone including ones nearest and dearest. Research by Action on Elder Abuse suggests that as many as one in eleven older people in the UK are mistreated or neglected by those they trust the most. Two thirds of these are abused by members of their own family. Care staff, too, can be abusers.

There are many examples of this, including those where the abusers have deliberately chosen to work in environments where there will be vulnerable people, such as those with learning disabilities. Any types of abuse may be carried out as the result of deliberate actions, negligence or ignorance.

## Where does it happen?

Abuse can happen anywhere - in a person's home, in the street, in a residential or nursing home, at a day centre or resource centre, in a hospital or indeed any place where vulnerable people might be.

## What can I do?

Do you know a vulnerable adult or are you in a position of trust? If you believe that someone is being abused contact Community Services at the nearest address on page 3 of this factsheet. You will be listened to and you will be supported.

Alternatively, speak to the police, doctor or nurse, or any of the organisations listed below:

- Housing advice (contact your local housing department);
- Women's Aid;
- Local Citizens Advice Bureau;

- Action on Elder Abuse Helpline  
080 8808 8141;
- Age Concern Cheshire;
- Mind; or
- Mencap.

Cheshire Information Centres can provide contact telephone numbers of local organisations.

## What will happen next?

Cheshire Community Services have the lead role in the Inter-agency Policy, Procedures and Guidance Document on the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from abuse. If you contact Community Services Access Teams, you will be asked for basic information about the person you are concerned about, and who is the alleged abuser. You will be asked about yourself, and what you heard or saw. Information will then be shared on a **"needs to know"** basis, but you will be kept informed about who has to be told, for example, the Police if a crime may have been committed.

Together all the relevant agencies will work with the person who may be being abused, to establish what has happened, and what action the person wants taking next. Work will also be done with the alleged abuser, and multi-disciplinary options will be created which will prevent, reduce or stop further abuse from happening.

Imagine if it was your mother or father, sister, brother, son or daughter. You would want someone to speak out if they thought they were being abused. You may be being abused yourself and need support.

**Break the silence, contact Community Services, or any of the organisations listed, you will be believed and given advice about what to do.**

This fact sheet is available in alternative formats, including large print, Braille, tapes and other languages, on request from Cheshire County Council Media and Promotions Team, County Hall, Chester, CH1 1SF. Phone 0845 11 333 11 [www.cheshire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk) [info@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:info@cheshire.gov.uk)

## More information can be obtained from your local Community Service office:

### Chester

Goldsmith House  
Hamilton Place  
Chester CH1 1SE  
01244 603400  
Internal phone 5934  
Fax 01244 603130

Opening times  
Mon – Thu 8.30am – 5.00pm  
Fri 8.30am – 4.30pm

### Ellesmere Port

County Offices  
Coronation Road  
Ellesmere Port CH65 9AA  
0151 357 4500  
Internal phone 5904  
Fax 0151 357 4646

Opening times  
Mon – Thu 8.30am – 5.00pm  
Fri 8.30am – 4.30pm

### Vale Royal

County Offices  
Watling Street  
Northwich CW9 5ET  
01606 814900  
Internal phone 4900  
Fax 01606 815052

Opening times  
Mon – Thu 8.30am – 5.00pm  
Fri 8.30am – 4.30pm

### Vale Royal

or Wyvern House  
The Drummer  
Winsford CW7 1AU  
01606 815600  
Internal phone 5600  
Fax 01606 815601

Opening times  
Mon – Thu 9.00am – 5.00pm  
Fri 9.00am – 4.30pm

### Crewe

Delamere House  
Delamere Street  
Crewe CW1 2LL  
01270 505100  
Internal phone 5100  
Fax 01270 505352

Opening times  
Every weekday  
9.00am – 5.00pm

### Congleton

Riverside Mill  
Mountbatten Way  
Congleton CW12 1DG  
01625 534700  
Internal phone 5457  
Fax 01625 410746

Appointment only at  
Congleton Library  
Tue and Thu 10.00am – 1.00pm

### Wilmslow

County Offices  
Chapel Lane  
Wilmslow SK9 1PU  
01625 534700  
Internal phone 4737  
Fax 01625 410746

Appointment only  
Mon and Wed  
9.00am – 12.00pm

### Macclesfield

The Library  
Jordangate  
Macclesfield SK10 1EE  
01625 534700  
Internal phone 4909  
Fax 01625 410746

Opening times  
Mon – Thu, 9.30am – 5.00pm  
Fri 9.30am – 4.30pm

### The Saturday Access Service and Emergency Duty Team

01606 76611  
Fax 01606 815776

### Cheshire County Council General public enquiries

and information  
0845 11 333 11  
[www.cheshire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk)

This fact sheet is available in alternative formats, including large print, Braille, tapes and other languages, on request from Cheshire County Council Media and Promotions Team, County Hall, Chester, CH1 1SF. Phone 0845 11 333 11 [www.cheshire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk) [info@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:info@cheshire.gov.uk)