

**Do you
suspect that
an adult is at
risk of abuse?**

Who is a vulnerable adult at risk of abuse?

A person over 18, who may be in need of care and unable to protect themselves because of:

- **Mental health needs or learning disability**
- **Physical disability**
- **Age or illness**

What is abuse?

Abuse can range from not treating someone with respect, to extreme punishment or torture. It might be one or a series of incidents. The most common forms of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse:** this is the use of force to cause pain or injury and can also include the misuse of medication.
- **Sexual abuse:** this includes rape, sexual assault, or sexual acts which the vulnerable adult has not, or could not consent to, or was pressured into consenting to.
- **Psychological abuse:** this might be emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour or verbal and racial insults.
- **Financial abuse:** this includes theft, fraud, or using a person's money, possessions or property without consent.
- **Neglect:** this is when a vulnerable adult does not have their basic needs met, for example when they do not get adequate food or warmth, or proper help with personal hygiene.





- **Discrimination:** this includes any sort of abuse based on a person's race, gender, disability, faith, culture, sexuality or age.
- **Institutional abuse:** this is where a vulnerable adult experiences abuse as a result of poor professional practice by organisations or their staff.

Where does abuse take place?

Abuse can be committed by anyone, including other vulnerable adults. It can happen anywhere, including in the vulnerable adult's own home, in a friend or relative's home, in residential or nursing homes, or in a hospital.

How to get help

If you suspect that someone vulnerable is being mistreated or abused - do not ignore it.

You should report it immediately so that the vulnerable adult can be protected as soon as possible. You can tell a professional who you trust or telephone h&f advice on 0845 313 3935 or email h&fadvice.care@lbhf.gov.uk during office hours. For outside office hours call 020 8748 8588.

In an emergency where someone is in immediate danger you should contact the Police by dialling 999.

What will happen next?

Community services will treat any referral seriously. Our main concern will be the best interests of the vulnerable adult. Our trained staff will carry out careful and sensitive enquiries, and work with the vulnerable adult to devise a plan to keep them safe.



Hammersmith & Fulham council's community services department is responsible for protecting vulnerable adults living in the borough. The council, together with its partner agencies, has developed a policy for dealing with the reported abuse of vulnerable adults.

'Safeguarding adults' and a copy of the 'Protecting vulnerable adults' policy is available from the council's website at **www.lbhf.gov.uk**

If you would like any part of this document produced in large print or braille, please telephone 0845 313 3935