



Discriminatory Abuse

This leaflet explains what Discriminatory Abuse is and what you can do about it if you are worried that you or someone you know is experiencing it.

We have also published other leaflets about adult safeguarding.

Abuse is when someone does or says something which harms someone or makes them upset and scared.

Abuse is always unacceptable. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. No-one has the right to abuse other people.

Abuse can happen once or can be something that happens over weeks, months or years. It can be accidental or deliberate. Just because there is no injury that someone can see it does not mean there is no abuse.

Discrimination and People with Care and Support Needs

People with care and support needs have exactly the same rights as everyone else.

Who could carry out Discriminatory Abuse?

Most people will not abuse BUT anyone could abuse. It might be someone the person being abused knows or a stranger. It can be anyone who uses their 'power' over someone else. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- A partner, spouse, child or relative
- A friend or neighbour
- A parent or guardian
- A health or social care worker
- Staff in a residential or nursing home or hospital
- A volunteer worker
- Someone else the person experiencing abuse lives with
- A stranger

It is likely that the person responsible for abuse is known to the person experiencing abuse, and is in a position of trust and/or power.

Possible signs and symptoms of Discriminatory Abuse include:

- Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic
- Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer, or lip-reader
- Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Sub-standard service provision relating to a protected characteristic

Possible indicators of Discriminatory Abuse include:

- Acts or comments motivated to harm and damage, including inciting others to commit abusive acts
- Lack of effective communication provision, for example, interpretation
- The adult being subjected to racist, sexist, ageist, gender based abuse
- Abuse specifically about their disability
- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- Expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety
- An adult making complaints about the service not meeting their needs the service not meeting their needs

Who to contact if you are worried about abuse or neglect:

Somerset County Council's Adult Social Care service has the lead for adult safeguarding for all adults with care and support needs in Somerset, and works closely with other organisations including the police and NHS. If a crime has been committed you should always contact the police.

Adult Social Care:

- **Telephone: 0300 123 22 24** (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, Saturday and Sunday closed.)
- **Email: adults@somerset.gov.uk**

The phone number for Adults and Mental Health out of hours is **0300 123 23 27**

Police:

101 or in an emergency 999

Further information:

Please use the following link to view other leaflets on our website: bit.ly/SSABLeaflets

