



## What happens after abuse or neglect is reported?

This leaflet summarises the adult safeguarding role in Somerset. We have published other leaflets with information about the different areas of support.

Anyone can report a concern about an adult being abused or neglected.

If you, or someone else, reports abuse or neglect, this is called raising a *'safeguarding concern'*.

The term *'raising a concern'* is used to describe the responsibility people in caring capacities have to tell their manager when they first suspect that someone is being abused, or is at risk of abuse.

Somerset County Council is the lead agency for adult safeguarding in Somerset. They work with other organisations including the police, NHS health and care providers to keep people safe.

### What happens next

Somerset County Council will look at the concern and decide what happens next. This might mean that your concern is passed to a team that looks at whether someone needs some additional help to keep themselves safe and as independent as possible. More serious concerns will be passed to the Council's Adult Safeguarding Service. The Council review the concerns and plan what should happen next.

### Safeguarding enquires

For serious allegations the Council may decide that it needs:

- To find out what has happened.
- Identify ways to protect you from abuse or neglect
- If other adults are at risk, to consider ways in which they can also be protected.

This is called a *'safeguarding enquiry'*. Sometimes the Council may ask another organisation that it works with to undertake the enquiry on its behalf. If this happens the Council will instruct the other organisation what it needs to do, and then check what it has done.

### Carrying out a Safeguarding Enquiry

As part of the enquiry someone will be appointed to lead the enquiry. They will work with you and others such as family, friends or support workers to understand risks to your safety and to help identify ways to keep you safe.

- They will support you to create a plan that outlines how to keep safe. This is called a *'protection plan'*.
- If the plan involves changes to the care and support you receive, then this will be agreed with you.
- Sometimes a plan is needed to keep other people safe as well. In these situations, the plan may not need your agreement.
- The protection plan will be reviewed to make sure it is working.

- If you have the mental capacity to make decisions about your safety, you can decide whether to accept the help or not.
- If you have been assessed as not having mental capacity to make a decision about your safety, then we will support you to identify what is in your best interests.
- If the person undertaking the enquiry needs to meet with you, then you can ask for someone to be with you for support. This could be a family member, friend, Advocate, Social Worker, Nurse or a member of staff from a service you receive support from.
- The person undertaking the enquiry can identify someone to support you if needed.
- The person undertaking the enquiry may need to talk to other people involved and look at health and social care records as part of the enquiry.

## Reviewing the Enquiry

- When the enquiry is completed it will be necessary to review the findings and consider if there are any changes needed to your protection plan.
- Sometimes the person undertaking the enquiry will be responsible for these decisions, taking your views and wishes into account.
- On some occasions there might be a review meeting.
- Any plan about your support or care will need to be agreed with you.
- A review meeting is usually held where it is helpful for everyone involved to meet and discuss the findings of the enquiry and how to support you to be safe.
- You will be invited, and you can ask someone to come and support you.
- If you have been assessed as not having capacity to be able to understand the concerns and make decisions in relation to them then an Independent Advocate, referred to as an Independent Mental Capacity

Advocate (IMCA) may be asked to represent your views.

- If you have questions at any time, the person undertaking the enquiry will be happy to answer them.
- You may be contacted after the safeguarding enquiry has finished to find out if you feel safer as a result and if you would like to give feedback about your experience.

- **Further information:**

- Please use the following link to view other leaflets on our website:

[bit.ly/SSABLeaflets](https://bit.ly/SSABLeaflets)

