

## Will I need to give my name if I report something I am worried about?

We will treat any information about you with care. We will only reveal some information, such as your name, if the adult's safety depends on it. Even if you do not want to give us your name, we can still look into the adult's situation, but it might make it more difficult. In certain circumstances, we may need to share with other professionals the information you give us, to make sure we are taking the right action to protect the adult at risk.

## What will happen to the adult or the carer if I report something I am worried about?

We will take all information seriously and act on it. In all cases we will make an initial inquiry. This may lead to a more detailed investigation of the person's circumstances. A social worker or care manager will work with them to decide what help they need. They will also make sure that what is done to protect the adult from harm is of most benefit to the adult and allows them to be as independent as possible.

Sometimes we will arrange a meeting, called a case conference, to decide what to do next. This meeting will involve a range of people such as social workers, police and health-care professionals.

The people at the meeting may decide to:

- provide support, help or advice to the adult or carer;
- provide a service to the adult or carer;
- take steps to remove the adult from the harmful situation or stop a person who causes harm from having contact with them;

- report the matter to the Mental Welfare Commission or the Care Commission; or
- move the adult to hospital or a care home for a short while.
- Also, the police might charge a person causing harm.

Remember to report anything you are worried about.

Never assume that someone else will recognise and report what you have seen or heard. An adult's safety may depend on you telling someone about something you are worried about.

### Contact details

Angus Council ACCESSLine	<b>08452 777 778</b>
Out Of Hours Social Work Service	<b>01382 307964</b>
Tayside Police	<b>0300 111 2222</b>

### Other useful numbers

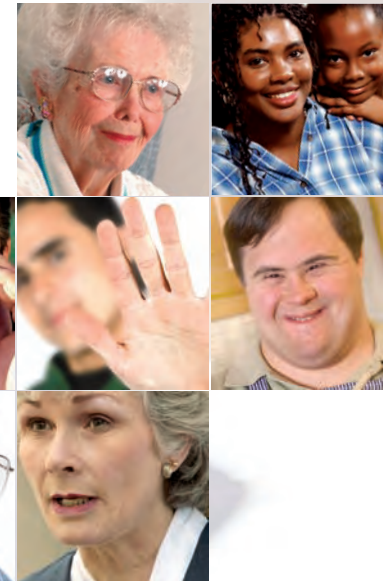
NHS 24	<b>08454 242424</b>
Angus Independent Advocacy	<b>01241 434413</b>
Victim Support Angus	<b>01241 870096</b>

### More information

[www.aapc.org.uk](http://www.aapc.org.uk)  
[www.infoscotland.com/actagainstharm](http://www.infoscotland.com/actagainstharm)



# Protecting adults at risk of being harmed





## What can I do to help adults at risk of harm?

Usually, adults with mental health problems, physical or learning disabilities or other health problems manage to live their lives comfortably and securely. In most cases, people live independently or with help from relatives, friends, neighbours, professionals or volunteers.

However, a small number of adults may experience harm, such as:

- physical abuse;
- being bullied or threatened;
- being forced or pressured into sexual activity, such as being touched, having to watch or look at sexual material (for example videos or magazines), or having sex;
- having their money or possessions taken; and
- not receiving the care that they need.

This leaflet will tell you about how to protect adults who are more at risk of being harmed because of a disability, health problem or their age, and who are not able to protect themselves or their own interests.

## Why might an adult be less able to protect themselves?

An adult might be less able to protect themselves because they:

- have a mental illness or form of dementia;
- are an older person (over 65 years old);
- have a physical disability;
- are frail;
- have a learning disability;
- have sight problems or are blind; or
- have hearing problems or are deaf.

## How would I know if someone was being harmed?

An adult may tell you that they are being harmed. More often the sign that they are being harmed is something you see or hear.

The adult might:

- behave in an unusual way;
- have injuries or regularly get infections;
- suddenly become confused;
- be unusually drowsy most of the time;
- be scared of another person or be scared of going home;
- be overly worried or upset;
- not have much money or food;
- be left in a situation where they are at serious risk, which could be avoided;
- not be receiving appropriate medical care;
- be depressed, withdrawn or suspicious; or
- have needs that are not being met.
- Or, someone might tell you something that makes you think that an adult is being harmed.

## Where does harm happen?

Harm can happen anywhere, including a person's own home, a care home, a hospital, at work or college or in a public place.

## Who can harm vulnerable adults?

Anyone can cause harm to vulnerable adults, and often it is someone who the adult knows and trusts.

An adult could be harmed by a:

- partner;
- relative;
- friend;
- professional member of care staff;
- health worker;
- neighbour;
- volunteer;
- solicitor or financial advisor;
- member of the community; or
- stranger.

A person who causes harm may also be an adult at risk.

## I think an adult is being harmed. What should I do?

If you see behaviour that you are worried about, or if a vulnerable adult tells you something that makes you worry, you need to take this seriously.

You should speak to someone, such as a police officer, social worker or health professional. To make sure people get the help they need, give as much information as you can about the adult and their circumstances, and describe what you saw or heard that worried you. Make sure you let the person know if someone is at immediate risk of harm.

Phone ACCESSLine: 08452 777 778  
(Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 5pm)

Phone the Out of Hours Social Work Service: 01382 307964  
(after 5pm and before 8.45am, at weekends and on public holidays) Or, phone Tayside Police on 01307 302200.