

Safeguarding adults in care homes

Information for the public

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Keeping adults in care homes safe from abuse and neglect

Abuse or neglect can happen to anyone, but people in care homes can be more at risk because they rely on others for care and support. In 2019, a third of all local authority investigations into possible abuse or neglect were in care homes. To keep people safe, everyone working in care homes, health and social care staff, families and care home residents themselves need to know what abuse and neglect looks like and what to do if they see it.

By law, care homes must follow what the Care Act 2014 says about keeping people safe from abuse and neglect, but how well this works in practice varies. We want this guideline to help protect people in care homes by making sure:

- everyone in care homes, and family and friends who visit, can recognise abuse or neglect (including when it is caused by the way the care home is run, rather than by a single person)
- staff, residents and families know what to do and who to speak to if they are worried about abuse or neglect
- staff and residents never feel under threat themselves for reporting a concern
- managers discuss safeguarding and ways it could be better with staff, residents and families, so that everyone is involved in keeping people safe.

Support during an investigation into abuse or neglect

Care home residents and their families need support and information during investigations into abuse and neglect. This should include:

- being kept up to date on the progress of the enquiry
- support to take part in all discussions, including from an advocate if needed
- practical and emotional support
- being told the outcome of the enquiry, and the reasons why.

If you can't understand the information you are given, tell your advocate or a health or social care professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [VoiceAbility](#); 0300 303 1660
- [The Advocacy Project](#); 020 3960 7920
- [Age UK](#); 0800 055 6112

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have personal or professional experience of safeguarding adults in care homes. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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