

FAQ's about reporting

It is vital that you recognise you have a professional responsibility to protect those in your care and understand when and how you should report abuse.

Below you can find some frequently asked questions about reporting, along with some possible solutions and guidance on what to do in the specific situation.

How do I judge if something is abusive?

We have all seen situations that have caused us concern or made us feel uncomfortable. If you see or are aware of a situation and you feel you would be concerned if it was your relative involved, then you should report your concerns.

If you have any professional concerns but are unclear of what action to take, you need to contact and discuss it with your manager or seek legal advice from the appropriate service you work with, i.e. Information Governance, Safeguarding Adults Team, the police, etc.

You can also contact the safeguarding boards for adults or children for advice without the need to give specific details of the case.

What if someone asks me to keep it a secret?

Explain to them that you are not able to do this and, at the very least, you will have to tell your manager.

Ensure the individual is aware of your stance and planned actions before they disclose their details to you as they may refuse support. Their disclosure would result in raising a safeguarding issue even if there was no concern for others, e.g. if a child is at risk or if an adult is classed as 'at risk'.

Other people may be at risk from the abuse and you should not have to carry the responsibility of the possible consequences of not reporting the abuse.

What if the person has made false allegations in the past?

You must still report your concerns as each allegation would need to be looked at independently.

Someone who repeatedly makes allegations is often more at risk of abuse as they are less likely to be believed and could, therefore, be an easy target.

What if the person does not understand that they are being abused?

Some people might not understand that they are being abused, e.g. they have a learning disability or dementia.

This does not make the act any less abusive and you should still report your concerns.



What if my manager is implicated in the abuse?

Each organisation should have a whistleblowing policy. This outlines who you should contact if you are unable to raise concerns with your manager.

There is a national organisation called Protect who also may be able to advise you. They can be contacted by phone on 020 3117 2520, or via their website protect-advice.org.uk.

If you are still unsure, for adults at risk you can contact the Adult Protection Unit or Safeguarding Adults team for advice.

For children or young people at risk, you must contact the designated safeguarding lead (or the deputy if not available).

Who else can I discuss my concerns with?

You should not discuss your concerns with your colleagues, other individuals or family members. You should speak to your manager.

If you feel that you need some support as you're finding the situation difficult, you should discuss this with your manager too so that they can arrange appropriate support for you.

If you are still unsure, for adults at risk you can contact the Adult Protection Unit or Safeguarding Adults team for advice.

For children or young people at risk, you must contact the designated safeguarding lead (or the deputy if not available).

Remember any specific information must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Safeguarding concerns cannot be discussed with anyone other than the safeguarding lead; unless sharing that information is required to ensure the safety of an individual.

