

## Keeping vulnerable adults safe from harm and abuse

The term **vulnerable adults** means people who are in need of community care services because of a disability, their age or an illness and who are - or may be - at risk of harm.

### » What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse is something that can be done by anyone and take place at any time. It is something that is done to a person or it can be as a result of something not being done. Abuse can take place in someone's house or in an institution such as a hospital, day centre or residential care home.

There are many different types of abuse. It can include:

- **Physical abuse**  
such as hitting, kicking, burning, holding down or pushing around
- **Sexual abuse**  
such as touching someone in a way they do not like, forcing someone to have sex, forcing someone to look at sexual pictures or videos or making someone do something sexual to someone that feels uncomfortable or wrong
- **Financial abuse**  
such as taking someone's money or things without asking, spending a person's money in a way they are unhappy with or pressurising someone to change their will
- **Neglect**  
Not taking good care of someone, for example refusing to help someone get food, keep warm and safe or see their doctor
- **Psychological abuse**  
such as continuously threatening to hurt someone or leave them, keeping someone away from other people, locking someone in or making someone feel unworthy
- **Discriminatory abuse**  
such as treating someone badly or unfairly because of their age, disability, sexuality, gender, religion or the colour of their skin

## » What to do

If you think that you or someone you know is being abused, you must tell someone about it. People you could tell include:

### ■ The Social Care Duty Team



Telephone: 01429 523872



Textphone/minicom: 01429 284130



e-mail: [socialcare@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:socialcare@hartlepool.gov.uk)

- The police
- A doctor, nurse or other health worker
- Someone you trust (for example your care worker or a warden)

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## » About this factsheet

This factsheet tells you about protecting vulnerable adults from abuse. We issued this factsheet in July 2011. We will check the information is up to date in July 2012.

## » Other useful factsheets

Title	Reference
■ How to contact us	Factsheet 01
■ What we do	Factsheet 02
■ Getting help from us	Factsheet 03



You can download all of our factsheets from [www.hartlepool.gov.uk/factsheets](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/factsheets)  
If you do not have access to the internet you can request factsheets from our administration team on 01429 523745