**01 Background**

Domestic abuse and sexual violence is non-discriminatory. It can and does affect anyone in society. Domestic abuse has the highest rate of repeat victimisation of all violent crimes .

Evidence suggests that this abuse is more damaging to victims where it is experienced alongside other complex needs or vulnerabilities.

Older people are one such vulnerable group; on average, older victims experience domestic abuse for twice as long before seeking help as those aged under 61, yet they are hugely underrepresented among domestic abuse services.

Halton [SAB website](https://adult.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/) for up to date policies and resources.

**Safeguarding Adults**

**7 Minute Briefing– Domestic Abuse and older people**

**02 Why it matters**

Safeguarding older people is essential to promote their human rights: their right to live free from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, rights to privacy and family life and the right to make their own decisions free from coercion or undue influence. There is also sometimes confusion between the experience of domestic abuse in later life and “elder abuse” (a term which encompasses all forms of violence, abuse and neglect experienced by older people). Such confusion canresult in victims of domestic abuse not being effectively supported via the right services.

**03 Possible indicators of domestic abuse in the elderly**

Physical abuse (hit, restrain, no access to health appointments, late presentation of injury or illness). Emotional abuse (threats and Intimidation, creating a dependency on others, ridicule of personal values, manipulation of family circumstances, isolation.) Financial abuse (fraud, scamming)

**04 Information**

Be **“Professionally curious”** and use yourcommunication skills to explore and understand what is happening within a home rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value.

Applying critical evaluation to any information you receive and maintain an open mind to really explore what the elderly adult wants and their perspective on their situation.

Consider if there is immediate risk to life. Stay with the person and ring 999 if this is the case

Request consent for completion of a risk assessment tool (MERIT/DASH)

Request consent to refer to MARAC

Call an MDT with all agencies involved with the adult.

**06 What works?**

Practice is more successful where practitioners:

\* take time to build rapport and a relationship of trust and respect

\*try to understand the meaning of their situation in the context of their life, rather than just the particular need you are seeing them for

\*have assessed the individual’s mental capacity in respect of safeguarding decisions

\*are honest, open and transparent about risks and viable safe, options

\*engage in effective multi-agency working to ensure interdisciplinary and specialist perspectives, and coordination of work towards shared goals.-practitioners/

\* have a working knowledge of local, specialist support services

**07 What to do**

If you are concerned about self-neglect then please discuss the concerns with Adult Social Care within your Borough and the Named Lead for Adult Safeguarding within your service (see below).

In the event of an emergency contact the Police on 101 or 999

**05 Mental Capacity**

Understanding and assessing the adult’s **mental capacity** is crucial.

A capacitated person, who understands the consequences of his /her decisions, may make a conscious and voluntary decision to engage in acts that threaten his/her health or safety as a matter of personal choice. A person without capacity may not understand the consequences of their actions and we have a duty of care to support them.

If the person has capacity it is important to consider their perspective and support them in making informed decisions.

Safeguarding lead in your service. Tel:........................................................ Email:……………………………………………

Halton Safeguarding Adults Unit: 0151 907 8306

**7 Minute Briefing action plan – Self Neglect**

**Organisation ……………………………………… Service……………………………………………………………………….**

**Lead………………………………………………. Contact details ……………………………………………………………..**

**What learning or recommendations are relevant to your team, please give details:**

**1 …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**2 ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**3 ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Use this discussion to help plan development/service improvement**

**Action Plan: What actions have been agreed following group discussion?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What need to happen?** | **Who will do it?** | **By when?** | **How will you know when this has been done?** | **How will you know if it has worked?** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Please ensure you keep a copy of this discussion and plan for your records**