

**Safeguarding
Vulnerable
Persons at
Risk of Abuse**

CareChoice Staff

All staff employed by CareChoice are aware that safeguarding residents is an essential part of their duty and that there is a ZERO TOLERANCE approach in place. Staff are alert to the fact that abuse can occur in a range of settings and therefore make themselves aware of the signs of abuse and the appropriate procedures to report such concerns or allegations of abuse.

Advocacy for Residents'

SAGE Independent Advocacy Services

Tel: 046 955 7766

Lo-call: 1850 440 444

National Advocacy Service
for People with Disabilities

Tel: 0761 073 000

Please remember that if you have any concerns of a Safeguarding nature that you are encouraged to report to the Director of Nursing, or Nurse in charge at the time, for further investigation.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding adults is about protecting those at risk of harm from suffering abuse or neglect. Abuse can happen anywhere. It can happen at home, in a residential or nursing home, in a hospital, at work or in the street.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

An adult who is restricted in capacity to guard himself/herself against harm or exploitation or to report such harm or exploitation. This may arise as a result of physical or intellectual impairment and risk of abuse may be influenced by both context and individual circumstances. (HSE, 2014)

What is Abuse?

Abuse may be defined as “any act, or failure to act, which results in a breach of a vulnerable person’s human rights, civil liberties, physical and mental integrity, dignity or general well-being, whether intended or through negligence, including sexual relationships or financial transactions to which the person does not or cannot validly consent, or which are deliberately exploitative. Abuse may take a variety of forms.” (Safeguarding Vulnerable Person at Risk of Abuse, HSE, 2014)

Categories of Elder Abuse (NCAOP 2002)

Physical Abuse: The infliction of pain or injury, physical coercion, physical/chemical restraint.

Psychological/Emotional Abuse: The infliction of mental anguish. This is usually characterised by a pattern of behaviour repeated over time and intended to maintain a hold of fear over the older person.

Financial Abuse: The illegal or improper exploitation and/or use of finances or resources/property belonging to the older person.

Sexual Abuse: Non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with an older person.

Neglect and acts of omission: Failure to provide appropriate physical, social and healthcare needs, including withholding life necessities such as medication, nutrition and heat.

Discriminatory Abuse: Racism, Sexism and other forms of intimidation or harassment.

Institutional abuse: may occur within residential care and acute settings including nursing homes, acute hospitals and any other in-patient settings, and may involve poor standards of care, rigid routines and inadequate responses to complex needs. (HSE, 2014)

Recognising Abuse

Abuse can be difficult to identify and may present in many forms. No one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse. It may indicate conditions other than abuse. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the context of the person's situation and family circumstances. (HSE, 2014 National Policy document of Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse)

The safety and wellbeing of the resident will be paramount in all situations where there is a suspicion or allegation that they have been abused or are at risk of abuse.

What We Do:

The first priority of a CareChoice staff member is to ensure that the resident is safe.

The nurse in charge will establish whether or not the resident is at continued risk and take any immediate measures that may be needed to safeguard the resident or other residents.

The Director of Nursing (DON)/Assistant Director of Nursing (ADON) shall inform the next of kin/resident representative. A Preliminary screening will be commenced and a Safeguarding care plan.

The DON/ADON shall inform HIQA and the HSE Senior Care Worker/Safeguarding and Protection Team (Vulnerable Persons) as appropriate.

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