

Caring for older adults:

Spotting the signs of domestic abuse



What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse means an incident, or pattern of incidents of violence or abuse, by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member, regardless of gender or sexuality.

What could I do to help?

- You work in people's homes, and can see the most personal parts of people's lives.
- You can develop strong and trusting relationships with the people you care for.
- You may see and hear things that no-one outside would
- You are part of the safeguarding network in Derbyshire.
- You can recognise when something isn't right, and take action to prevent and respond to abuse.

What am I looking out for?

(this list is not exhaustive)

- Unexplained or unusual bruising or injuries – be curious: 'oh, that's a nasty looking bruise'.
- Carers appearing very stressed / tired – ask how they are doing.
- One person always talking over the other, or answering for them – listen to the voice of the cared for and the carer.
- Unusual or restrictive care practices – not letting someone have a drink because they will need help to get to the toilet.



What can I do?

- Check what your organisation's procedure is for reporting concerns and ensure that they are recorded according to your company policy.
- **Look and listen** – notice changes, in the person, the people they live with, their environment.
- **Ask questions** – be interested in their lives.

- **Be supportive** – reassure the person if they tell you something that is worrying them, explain that services are there to help and support them.
- **Think** - Are there any children in the household? Or does the adult you support witness domestic abuse? Either may be harmed by this.
- Ask the person what they want to happen next – are they safe right now?
- You can give them information about local services if they want to make contact themselves.

What happens next

- Domestic abuse responses and services are well maintained in Derbyshire and there is a list of local and national contacts below.
- The police will often be involved, especially when there is a high risk of harm and when there is a criminal allegation of abuse or neglect, officers are always focussed on working with and supporting the victim.



Local services

If anyone is at immediate risk of harm, phone the police on 999.

The silent solution: If you can't speak or make a sound when calling 999, listen to the operator's questions, then tap the handset.

If prompted, press 55. Your call will be transferred to police who will know it's an emergency.

Derbyshire Domestic Abuse Helpline

In Derbyshire there is one helpline number for Domestic Abuse services. This includes refuge accommodation.

Website:
www.theelmfoundation.org.uk
Phone: 08000 198 668

Email:
derbyshiredahelpline@theelmfoundation.org.uk

Deaf and Hard of hearing people can text: 07534 617532

Opening hours: 24 hours a day 7 days a week

Helplines:

- Police - Non-emergency 101
- National Helpline 24hrs 0808 2000 247
- Respect helpline for perpetrators 0808 802 4040

For more information on support services visit www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what-we-do/domestic-abuse/domestic-abuse.aspx

