

Demystifying Safeguarding and Quality Concerns

How to understand the difference between a safeguarding concern from a quality concern and how to report it

Adult Safeguarding Concerns

Section 42 of The Care Act (2014) sets out the criteria for Adult Safeguarding, which places a statutory duty on the local authority to.

To protect adults who:

- **have needs for care and support** (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) **are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and**
- as a result of those care and support needs are **unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.**

Potential Causes for a Safeguarding Concern

- Signs of physical abuse, e.g. unexplained bruising
- A series of medication errors.
- An increase in the number of visits to A&E, especially if the same injuries happen more than once.
- Changes in the behaviour and demeanour of an adult with care and support needs, without justified reason or explanation.
- Signs of neglect such as clothes being constantly heavily soiled with no clear explanation.
- Repeated missed visits by a home care agency.
- An increase in the number of complaints received about the service.
- An inability to get a response to issues raised about the care being provided.
- A pattern of missed GP or dental appointments.
- An unusually high or unusually low number of safeguarding concerns

What the Safeguarding Team Does

- Check that the section 42 Criteria has been met.
- Check that the adult has been spoken to and consent gained.
- Assess risk to the individual and others.
- Provide advice.
- Coordinate Section 42 enquiry/ non statutory enquiry.
- Arrange for a safeguarding Advocate when required.
- Chair Planning meetings for individual cases.
- Ensure safeguarding response is proportionate.
- Liaise with other teams working with the person.
- Liaise with Quality Assurance and compliance Team.



Types of Abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological / Emotional
- Domestic Abuse/coercive control
- Financial
- Exploitation
- Neglect
- Institutional/organisational neglect and poor practice
- Self-Neglect
- Discriminatory
- Modern Slavery

Reporting Safeguarding

- if it is an emergency **dial 999**
- to report a crime or potential crime to the Police **you can phone the non-emergency number 101**
- **to report an adult safeguarding concern please call 01905 768053**
- if you would like **safeguarding advice** please phone the **Adult Safeguarding Team on 01905 843189** (note this number does not accept referrals)

<https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/report-it/>

Quality Concerns

Poor Care

Examples of poor care might be:

- A one-off medication error (although this could, of course, have very serious consequences).
- An incident of understaffing, resulting in a person's care needs not being attended to in a timely manner. Such as someone being left in bed longer than they should, or having to wait for meals)
- Poor-quality, / poor nutritional food being provided by a care home
- One missed visit by a care worker from a home care agency without causing harm to the person but not providing a satisfactory action or solution.

Reporting a Quality Concern:

In the first instance we would encourage anyone to discuss a concern with the provider.

If you are not comfortable with this you can discuss your concerns with a social worker by contacting the adult front door [Link to Adult Front Door Webpage](#).

You can also report your concerns to the Care Quality Commission (CQC*) who regulate registered social care providers [Link to raising a concern with the CQC](#)

*Please note the CQC do not inspect day opportunities or supported living unless personal care is provided.

If you have exhausted the providers complaints process or are unhappy with the outcome, you can raise your concern using the Council's Complaints process: [Link to WCC complaints](#)

What Happens Next:

The CQC and social workers will feed any concerns into the Worcestershire Hub Access team who will either pass the information to the Safeguarding team or the Quality Assurance Team.

The Quality Assurance Team, Safeguarding Team, Integrated Care Board Quality Team, Commissioning and CQC meet regularly to share information and discuss providers of concern within Worcestershire. The relevant teams will take action where necessary. This could include (but would not be limited to), Joint quality visits, CQC inspections and safeguarding actions and contractual actions.