



Hourglass

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse
Northern Ireland

Keeping you and your loved ones safe from

NEGLECT



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**We are
Hourglass
the only UK-
wide charity
that's calling
time on the
harm, abuse and
exploitation of
older people**



Keeping You and Your Loved Ones Safe from Neglect



Neglect is abuse and can take many forms, it can be subtle and hard to spot. If you or an older person you know are experiencing this you are not alone, sadly, this type of abuse can affect anyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity.

Hourglass is here to help. This guide provides you with information about what neglect is, how to identify it when it is happening and some tips on how to protect yourself and others.

What is Neglect?



Neglect occurs when someone deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, suitable care and support needed for an older person. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a deliberate decision not to act when they know the older person in their care needs help. Neglect can negatively impact the health and the well-being of an older person.

Neglect can also be self-inflicted, whether through a lack of knowledge in how to look after oneself or purposely not looking after oneself. If someone is unable to look after themselves they may need extra support or help in order to support them to do so. There can be a fine line between self-neglect and the right to independence and privacy. This can be very difficult for family members, friends, carers or anyone concerned. Self-neglect must be considered alongside the Mental Capacity Act. Some people may not agree with decisions being made because they are not similar to their own way of thinking.

Neglect can include:

- Not being provided with enough food or drink.
- Being denied access to working and hygienic facilities.
- Being left in soiled clothing, not having access to appropriate clothing.
- Being denied access to medicines or health care services such as: GP, dentist, optician.
- Being denied shelter that is appropriate for individuals needs.
- Restricting or not having heating as needed.
- Being denied access to appropriate sleeping arrangements or being left in a bed/chair for long periods if not appropriate.
- Being denied access to services for wellbeing.
- Being deprived of stimulation, emotional warmth, nurturing behaviour.
- Not being allowed to see visitors.
- Not being provided with privacy and dignity.
- Someone not taking account of someone's cultural, religious beliefs, or individual needs when providing care.

Self-neglect can include:

- Not keeping oneself clean, living in unhygienic accommodation.
- Not eating enough, eating too much, allowing self to become malnourished or dehydrated.
- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens safety of self or others.
- Not attending medical appointments, deliberately not taking medication that is needed, failure to collect prescriptions or attend appropriate services for support.
- Unable or unwilling to manage own personal affairs, pay bills, keep up to date with own finances, resulting in debt.



Possible Indicators of Neglect:

- Weight loss, becoming thinner.
- Dishevelled appearance, stained, unwashed clothing.
- Poor personal and dental hygiene.
- Untreated injuries.
- Bed sores
- Untidy, dirty living environment.
- Lack of heating.
- Change in personality- becoming distressed, withdrawn, tearful, anxious, confused.
- Changes in behaviour, sleeping pattern, eating habits, toileting.

You may be feeling:

- As though you are a burden to your carer, family, friends, care facility.
- Hopeless, depressed, suicidal, useless.
- Unsure of what to do or who to speak to.
- Confused, fearful of the abuser.
- Scared the person may leave if you speak up and you will be left without support.
- Humiliated, embarrassed, helpless.
- Reduced motivation to partake in activities, see friends.
- Isolated, lonely, irritable, angry.
- Out of control, unable to make choices for yourself.
- As though you are missing out on social stimulation with friends, family or from activities.
- Worried that you don't want the person hurting you to get into trouble, you just want the abuse to stop.
- Hopeless, if you have experienced a negative response from agencies before when reporting the abuse.

Tips and advice for you:

- If you're worried an older person may be experiencing neglect, it can help to let them know you're there to help, just listening to them can make a huge difference.
- Stay calm if an older person tells you they are being abused and be sensitive to the emotional impact of disclosing abuse.
- Know how to spot the signs of neglect and self-neglect, not all are obvious.
- If someone is struggling to cope with tasks or self-care there are agencies that may be able to provide support to meet their needs.
- Contact Hourglass for further advice and support.
- Provide Hourglass' contact details to the person you are worried about, if it is safe to do so.

Tips and advice if you are concerned about someone else:

Know how to spot the signs of neglect, not all are obvious.

- If you're worried about someone experiencing neglect, and if it is safe and appropriate to do so, have an open conversation about this with them.
- It can help to let them know you're there to help, just listening to them can make a huge difference.
- Stay calm if an older person tells you they are being abused and be sensitive to the emotional impact of disclosing abuse.
- Support them to seek out the support that is needed.
- Provide Hourglass' contact details to the person you are worried about, if it is safe to do so.

How we can support you:

At Hourglass we are dedicated to stopping the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people. Our helpline and online services are available across the UK and our expert team provide information, advice and support and can put you in touch with appropriate local agencies that may provide additional services.

We are here for you Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, offering:

- Support for any older person experiencing or at risk of abuse or exploitation.
- Support if you are unsure if abuse or exploitation is happening to you or someone else.
- Support for anyone with concerns about an older person, e.g. family, friends, neighbours, paid carers or professionals, etc.
- Information and advice relating to safer ageing and prevention.



All our contact details can be found on the back of this brochure.



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You can contact us in many ways:

24/7 Helpline: 0808 808 8141

Our helpline is entirely confidential and free to call from a landline or mobile, and the number will not appear on your phone bill.

Text message: 07860 052906

Texts from outside the UK will be charged at their standard international rate which will differ depending on location and service charges of your phone provider. The number will appear on your bill and in your phone records but will not be identified as Hourglass.

INSTANT MESSAGING service: www.wearehourglass.org

Get information from our CHATBOT - www.wearehourglass.org

Get information from our KNOWLEDGE BANK - knowledgebank.wearehourglass.org

Email: helpline@wearehourglass.org

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