



**Hourglass**

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse  
Northern Ireland

Keeping you and your loved ones safe from  
**PHYSICAL ABUSE**

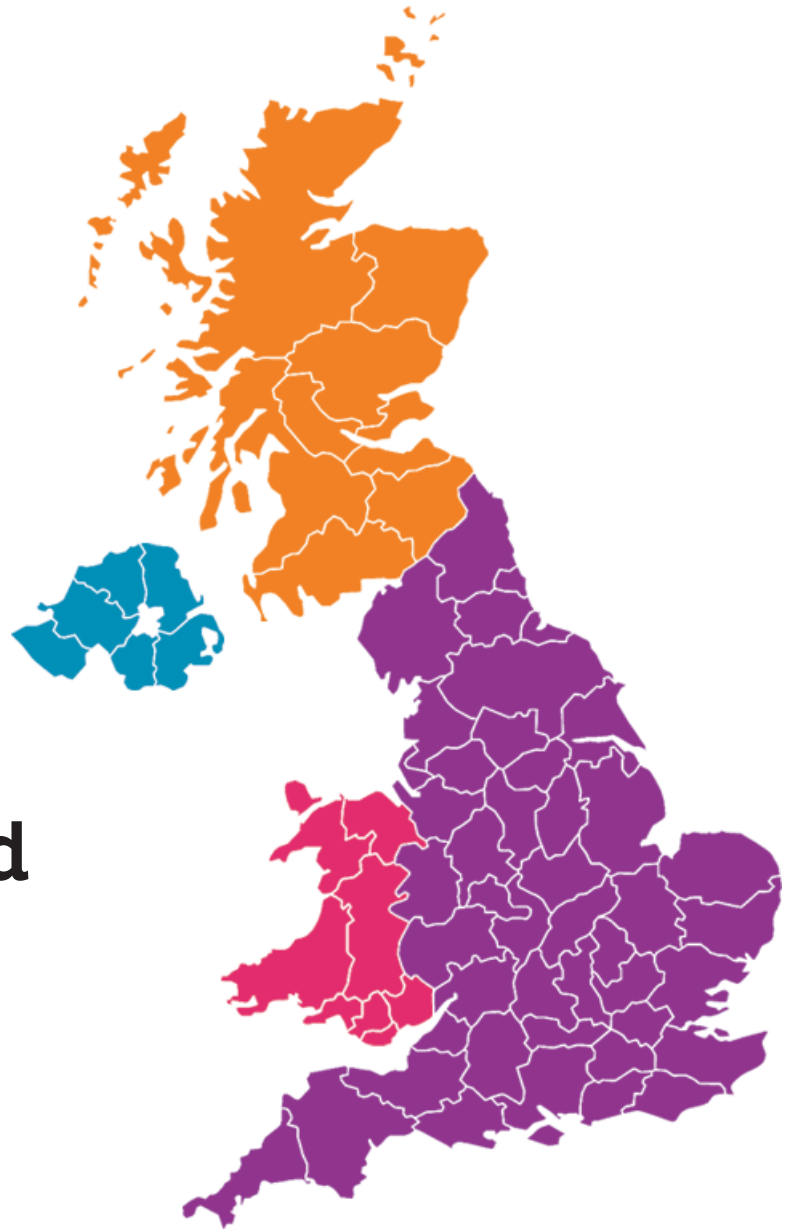


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**We are  
Hourglass  
the only UK-  
wide charity  
that's calling  
time on the  
harm, abuse and  
exploitation of  
older people**



# Keeping You and Your Loved Ones Safe from Physical Abuse



**Physical abuse 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 physical abuse is, how to identify it when it is happening and some tips on how to protect yourself.



# What is Physical Abuse?



**Physical abuse is the intent to injure or hurt and involves a person using physical force which causes or could cause harm. Physical abuse can also be experienced with other forms of abuse such as, psychological abuse where you may have feelings of fear, distress and distrust.**

Physical abuse may be noticeable, for example, bruising or cuts. However physical abuse can also be concealed and less easy to see with injuries such as broken bones or marks on the body that are covered by clothing. Injuries may be concealed, as the abuser does not want others to know about the abuse.

## Physical Abuse may include:

- Pushing, biting, hitting, kicking, slapping, punching.
- Unauthorised restraint.
- Being handled roughly.
- Misuse of medication.
- Being force-fed or having food withheld.
- Physical punishments.
- Making someone uncomfortable on purpose (removing blankets, making someone sit in uncomfortable positions).
- Burning, scalding.

## Possible indicators of Physical Abuse:

- No explanation given for injuries or the injuries do not match the explanation given for them.
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Failure to seek medical treatment or repeated changes in GP.
- Frequent injuries or injuries in places that are not common.
- Change in behaviour - becoming subdued, isolating self or not wanting to be left alone with someone.
- Flinching, fearfulness or anxiety.
- Tension with a particular person.



## You May be Feeling:

- Frightened of the person causing the abuse.
- Afraid to talk to someone about it or not know who to turn to.
- Ashamed, embarrassed or worthless.
- Lonely, isolated or depressed.
- Guilty, that it's your fault or that you are a burden.
- Threatened, you may have been told not to tell anyone or that you will be 'put into a care home' or not be allowed to see your grandchildren.
- Worried that you don't want the person hurting you to get into trouble, you just want the abuse to stop.
- Worried you will no longer have anyone to care for you if you ask for help
- Hopeless, if you have experienced a negative response from agencies before when reporting the abuse.

## Tips and advice for you:

- Abuse is never your fault and it is not okay for someone to hurt you.
- Talk to someone you can trust about the abuse, a friend, relative or your GP.
- Unfortunately abuse can escalate and worsen over time so do not delay in getting help.
- Physical abuse is against the law – call 999 if you are in immediate danger or 101 if you would like to report an assault.
- Contact Hourglass for further advice and support.

## Tips and advice if you are concerned about someone else:

- If you're worried about someone being physically abused, 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 physical abuse, not all are obvious, some signs may be physical, some may be behavioural changes.
- 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.

# 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.**





# Hourglass

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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](http://www.wearehourglass.org)**

**Get information from our CHATBOT - [www.wearehourglass.org](http://www.wearehourglass.org)**

**Get information from our KNOWLEDGE BANK - [knowledgebank.wearehourglass.org](http://knowledgebank.wearehourglass.org)**

**Email: [helpline@wearehourglass.org](mailto:helpline@wearehourglass.org)**

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