

# Speak up • Speak out

## We can help

Are you being harmed?  
Do you think someone is being harmed?

Now I know  
where to get  
the help that  
I need.



Everyone has the right to feel safe. However, for some people, a disability, health condition or impairment can prevent them from being able to keep themselves from harm.

## What we mean by harm

Anyone can be harmed by others and that harm can take many forms. Sometimes it's as simple as someone not acting in your best interests. Here are some examples of what we mean by harm:

**financial harm or theft** – taking your money without your permission or stopping you from getting your money or belongings; financial harm can also mean workmen persuading you to get work done, which is not needed or is overpriced

**neglect** – when you are not looked after properly, or you can't look after yourself; it can mean that you don't get enough food, clothing or the care or medical treatment you need

**physical harm** – someone hitting you or being too rough when they're helping you get washed and dressed

**psychological or emotional harm** – someone shouting at you, threatening or constantly criticising you

**sexual harm** – someone touching you sexually when you don't want them to

**negative discrimination** – treating you differently because of the colour of your skin, your sexual orientation, religion, age or gender.

## We can help

If you're worried about yourself or about someone else, you can contact us for help.

We understand that it can be frightening to ask for help for yourself or someone else and that you'll probably be worried that it may make things worse.

We'll do our best to make sure anyone you talk to us about gets the support they need, and we will keep the details confidential.

Here's an example of how we can help. You can find more examples throughout this leaflet and on our website:

My nephew David had been helping me around the house. When he had to leave his own flat, he moved in with me and told me that because he was my carer, he didn't need to pay me any rent. He 'borrows' money from me but doesn't give it back and he often invites groups of his friends to the house for drinking parties. They are noisy and I think they steal things from my house but I'm not going to say anything to them because they frighten me.



I don't want to get David into trouble, but I don't like what is happening.

### What happened next?

I spoke with my GP who contacted Social Care Direct. A social worker came to see me and got me some help in the house. The social worker and a community police officer spoke to David about taking my money and made arrangements for him to live elsewhere. I am happy because I can still see David, but not his friends.

## Which adults are most at risk of being harmed?

An adult is more at risk of harm if they:

- have a disability, illness or mental health problems including dementia or learning disabilities
- find it difficult to keep themselves or their property (their home, the things they own) safe.



Lesley had a serious car accident and now lives in a care home. Lesley likes the care workers, but they don't always understand her. She wants to explain that it hurts when they move her from her bed to the wheelchair or into the bath. Also, she doesn't finish her meal because she can't get the spoon to her mouth and not because she doesn't like the food. She often feels hungry and thirsty.

### What happened next?

A visiting nurse notices that Lesley is not eating her meal and that she appears in pain. She also notices that other residents are having similar difficulties. The Health Board, the Council and the Care Inspectorate hold a meeting with the care home and arrangements are made for health and social care specialists to visit all the residents to discuss their needs with the care home manager. Lesley now has proper help to move around and a communication board with pictures and symbols she can use to say what she wants. She and others now have help to eat their meals from start to finish.

## Who may cause the harm?

**Anyone.** It could be a relative, husband or wife, friend, neighbour, doctor, carer, volunteer or stranger.

## Where can harm happen?

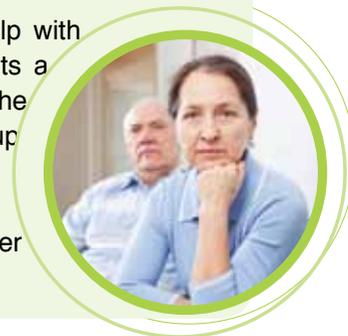
**Anywhere.** It can happen at home, on the internet, on a hospital ward, in a care home, at a social club or day centre, at work or in a public place.

Mum and Dad have been married for 50 years. But Dad is ill now, and Mum cares for him. I think it's too much for her. Dad dropped something and Mum pushed him over and hurt him. That's when I had to do something. I called Social Care Direct and a social worker came to see us.

### What happened next?

The first thing they did was get Mum some help with Dad. He comes to us for a weekend, Mum gets a break, and she gets help looking after him in the house. The nurse and the carers' support group have made a big difference too.

She's calmer now. Dad's safer and I sleep better too.



### What to do?

If you or someone you know is being harmed - speak up immediately.

The adult being harmed or neglected may not be able to report it themselves and may need someone to speak out on their behalf. There is also a chance that the person hurting them is harming other people.

Contact the Council's Social Care Direct service, or the police who will take your concerns seriously and work with you and others to make sure that everyone is safe. You can also call NHS Inform for health information.

## What happens next?

We will ask you for more information so we can understand the problem. The answers you give us will be kept confidential, but might need to be shared between the Council, police and doctors.

### If you are being harmed

Social work, NHS and police officers will work together with you to decide what action needs to be taken to keep you safe. They may arrange a meeting to do this. You will be invited to meetings about you and you can bring someone with you if you want.

You can find more information on the multi-agency guidelines and local adult protection procedures at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/adultprotection](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/adultprotection)

### If someone you know is being harmed

The same process will be followed to ensure the person you are worried about is supported and protected.

You may be contacted afterwards for more information, but you will not be asked to become involved in any action that needs to be taken.

For confidentiality reasons, we can't normally tell you what action we've taken to make sure the person you're worried about is safe, but we will give you as much information as we can to let you know that we have taken your concerns seriously.

## Who can help?

You can get in touch with us any time to ask for help or advice:

### Social Care Direct

The City of Edinburgh Council's social work service

**0131 200 2324**

[socialcaredirect@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@edinburgh.gov.uk)

### Police

**101**

or in an emergency call **999**

### NHS Inform (for information)

**0800 22 44 88**

You can find out more on the types of harm we can help with at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/speakupspeakout](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/speakupspeakout)



## HAPPY TO **TRANSLATE**

You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats if you ask us. Please contact ITS on 0131 242 8181 and quote reference number 12-1183. ITS can also give information on community language translations.

**POLICE**  
SCOTLAND

• **EDINBURGH** •  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

**NHS**  
Lot 1