



# Safeguarding Adults Fact Sheet 5

## **What is a Safeguarding Adults Enquiry?**

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When there are identified concerns about adult abuse or neglect that have resulted in a Safeguarding Adults Planning Meeting/Discussion, a Safeguarding Enquiry may be started.

The purpose of a Safeguarding Enquiry is as follows:

- To find out what has happened.
- To help identify ways to protect you from abuse or neglect
- If other adults are at risk then it will consider ways in which they can also be protected.

The focus for the Enquiry will have been agreed at the Planning Meeting or Planning Discussion (see Fact Sheet 4 for further information).

The findings from the Enquiry are used to decide whether abuse or neglect has taken place, whether you, and sometimes others, are at risk, and whether you need a safety plan. A safety plan is an agreed set of arrangements to keep you (and others) safe. A safety plan will not be needed in all cases e.g. where concerns are not identified or the risk has been removed.

## **Who is involved in undertaking the Enquiry?**

The Enquiry will be led by a safeguarding worker. The safeguarding worker might be a person from Adult Social Care or an NHS organisation e.g. Mental Health Team. If a provider organisation e.g. Domiciliary Care Agency, Care Home or Hospital is involved they may be asked to provide part of the Enquiry report.

You will be invited to contribute to the Enquiry either directly or through a representative. If you are spoken with about the suspected abuse or neglect you can have someone sit in with you for support if you find that helpful. If you have particular communication needs these will be taken into account. You may want to be supported by a friend, family member or advocate. The safeguarding worker can arrange for an advocate if you need one.

## **What does a Safeguarding Enquiry involve?**

Its aims are to:

- establish the facts about an incident or allegation
- understand the risk of further harm
- understand how to support you and/or others to be safe in the future
- agree any actions needed regarding the person or agency alleged to be responsible.

The Enquiry may involve a wide range of activities depending on the circumstances. It will include interviewing people who have witnessed or have knowledge of what has happened. It might also involve reviewing records or policies and procedures.

Sometimes other investigations will also be needed under other procedures. For example, if a criminal offence is suspected the police may undertake an investigation, and if so, this will take priority. If the person is an employee, then an HR process may also be required. An internal incident investigation may also be needed.

A safeguarding Enquiry is separate from these, but often it is possible for organisations to work together so that people do not need to say the same thing to a number of different people.

### **What happens next?**

- The findings of the Enquiry will be written up in a report.
- These will be shared with you or your representative.
- A review meeting will be held to discuss the report findings.
- You or your representative will be invited to this as well as other relevant people/organisations (please see Fact Sheet 6 for more information).

Throughout the safeguarding Enquiry, decisions will need to be made as to whether any actions are needed to keep you or other people safe. Any safety plan about your support or care will need to be agreed with you or your representative. These decisions will need to be reviewed once the enquiry has finished.

If you have questions, please contact your safeguarding worker who will be happy to answer them.

### **For more information please see other available Fact Sheets:**

- Fact Sheet 1 - Safeguarding Adults from Abuse and Neglect – types of adult abuse and what you can do about it
- Fact Sheet 2 - Safeguarding Adults from Abuse and Neglect – types of adult abuse and what you can do about it (Easy read version)
- Fact Sheet 3 - What Happens when Abuse or Neglect are Reported?
- Fact Sheet 4 - What is a Planning Meeting or Planning Discussion?
- Fact Sheet 5 - What is a Safeguarding Enquiry?
- Fact Sheet 6 - What is a Safeguarding Review Meeting?
- Fact Sheet 7 - Information for Relatives and Friends
- Fact Sheet 8 - Information for Those Alleged to Have Caused Harm

The Fact Sheets and the Bath and North East Somerset Adult Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are available for anyone to read at: <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/what-safeguarding>

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