

Indicators of organisational abuse and neglect

The numbers refer to sections in the guideline. See the guideline recommendations for more information.

Concern

1.12 Indicators of organisational abuse and neglect

Indicators that should lead you to 'consider' abuse or neglect:

- Policy and governance issues
- Failing contractual or regulatory standards
- Mismanagement of safeguarding concerns and poor record keeping
- Staffing problems
- Poor quality of care
- Failure to refer residents for care
- Financial mismanagement
- Physical signs and lack of openness

Indicators that should lead you to 'suspect' abuse or neglect:

- Incidents of abuse or neglect not reported
- Evidence of falsified or missing records
- Multiple hospital admissions leading to safeguarding enquiries
- Residents repeatedly cannot access medical/dental care
- Frequent unexplained deterioration in residents' health and wellbeing
- Misuse of residents' money
- Sudden increase in safeguarding concerns
- Residents repeatedly evicted, or they and their families feel victimised, when they complain
- Care home fails to improve in response to reviews, inspections or audits and deteriorates over time

If you see an indicator starting with 'consider' – abuse or neglect is one possible explanation

If you see an indicator starting with 'suspect' – you should have a serious level of concern about abuse or neglect

If you consider abuse or neglect

- Raise the matter with the care home manager (unless they are believed to be part of the problem), in writing if possible. Explain the impact on residents, or the likely impact if the situation continues. Ask for a response within a specified period of time (for example 2 weeks).
- If the manager agrees to make changes, make sure these happen.
- After taking these steps, if the situation does not improve, raise your level of concern to 'suspect'.

If you suspect abuse or neglect

- Contact your local authority and tell them that you want to make an adult safeguarding referral.
- If you are not satisfied with the response from your local authority, report the matter to the Care Quality Commission.

Referral

No section 42 enquiry

- Local authority decides whether to hold section 42 enquiry
- If many residents of a care home are affected, local authorities may conduct a large-scale enquiry, following their own local procedures

Enquiry

Section 42 enquiry

1.13 Throughout the process – provider organisations, care homes and staff should be learning from safeguarding concerns, referrals and enquiries