

### **What is abuse and how to report it**

Abuse occurs when a person causes harm or distress to another person. Abuse can happen at any age and be experienced by adults and children. If you have care and support needs (even if this care and support needs are not being met) and are unable to protect yourself because of your care and support needs, you are at greater risk of experiencing abuse. This may be because you have:

- A physical disability
- A Intellectual Disability and/or Autism
- Your mental health or mental wellbeing
- Your age
- A protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act (2010) such as your age, gender reassignment, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, etc

### **Who can abuse you?**

Abusers may be an individual or person known to you, the abuser may have a position of trust and take advantage of their relationship to you. It could be a family member, someone you live with, someone paid to care for you or provide care informally, a professional, a neighbour, someone living in your community or a friend of a friend. Sometimes abuse isn't intentional but can happen when someone doesn't have the necessary skills or experience to care for you. This doesn't reduce the impact but helps us to understand why it's happening.

### **Why me?**

Anyone can experience abuse, it is not a reflection of your intelligence, strength or worth.

### **Where does abuse happen?**

Abuse can take place anywhere and at any time. The abuse can occur in your own home, someone else's home, a hospital, care or nursing home, at work, in your community.

### **What types of abuse are there?**

#### **Abuse can take many forms including**

**Physical** – Assault, rough handling, pushing and shoving, forced feeding or withholding food, restraining you, given too much or too little medicines prescribed

**Financial** – Takes or restricts access to your accounts, debit or credit cards. Pressures you to buy things you don't want, uses your money to pay for their things, stops you from buying things you want.

**Emotional** – Threatens you or people close to you, stalks you, harasses you, makes fun of you, ignores you, stops you from going out, makes you feel like you're the problem

**Sexual** – rape, assault, touches you inappropriately or forced to touch them or it may be non-contact such as forcing you to take part in photographs, sharing sexual images

**Psychological** – threats, controlling behaviour, swearing at you, bullying you, using social media to bully or intimidate you

**Discrimination** – being treated unfairly because of your ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender reassignment, religion, etc

**Neglect** – Not meeting your care needs, leaving without enough heating or food, not meeting your personal care needs or seeking medical attention when you need it

**Self-neglect** – Not meeting your personal hygiene, looking after your home

**Modern Day Slavery** – Forced to work for little or no pay, forced to pay off debts that, forced to work as a domestic

**Organisational** – When people in a professional setting such as a care home do not care for you properly

### **How can I report abuse and what happens next?**

If you are being abused, or know someone who is you can make a confidential referral to Nottingham City Council **0300 03001300** You can also tell someone you trust e.g. police, social worker, GP, family member. You can alert on line at [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

In an emergency contact the relevant emergency service (fire and rescue, police, or ambulance) by ringing 999.

We will work with you to find out what's happening, what you want to see change and keep you involved. We may communicate with other organisations or people involved with your care.

### **Useful contact Information**

**Womans Aid Juno (0808 800 0340)**

**POhWER advocacy services (0300 456 2370)**

**Autistic Nottingham 0115 888 3223**

**Notts LGBTQ+ 0115 934 8485**

**Remember abuse in any form is not acceptable and you don't have to experience it. There is help to keep you and your family safe and you will get the support to decide what happens next**