



What people thought about Safeguarding Adults, our questions about keeping people safe



EasyRead Version



What is this booklet about?

This booklet is about what lots of different people thought about the “No Secrets” guide.



What is “No Secrets”?

It is a guide to help keep adults safe. This is often called ‘**safeguarding adults**’. It is for people like the police, local authorities, health services and many others.



Safeguarding means making sure you are safe from **abuse and neglect**.



It also means helping you to be independent and to make choices.

What is abuse and neglect?



Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly. Abuse is always wrong.

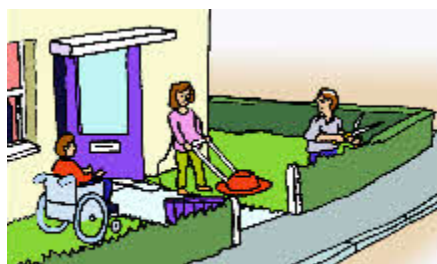


Neglect is when the person who is supposed to be looking after you does not help you.

For example, not giving you food, not bathing you or leaving you locked in a room by yourself.



Everyone needs to be safe. But people at risk need to be kept safe more.



People at risk are people who might need help to live a normal life.



They may be:

- people with disabilities



- people with mental health needs



- people who are ill for a long time



- people who are very old.



Some of the people we asked were people who might need help. **The 1st part of this booklet is about what they thought.**



Some of the people we asked were people who worked with people who might need help. **The 2nd part of this booklet tells you what they and everyone else said.**

What did we find out?



We found that lots of people really wanted to help make sure adults are safe from abuse.



The Government agrees that all abuse is wrong.



The Government wants to make a good plan for keeping people safe.



The plan will include choices for all adults.

What people at risk said



- 1. To keep adults safe everyone must listen to them and give them choices.**



If adults are being hurt or abused they need to know that people will listen to them. They need to know where to go to for help.



This will help people to make choices and speak up if something is going wrong.



- 2. People need help to make choices, but they must make their own choices about keeping safe.**

People want help and support to understand what their choices are.

The choices are about:



- who to talk to, like support workers or police or others



- whether what you say stays with one person or is told to others



- whether you decide what happens next or someone else decides.



It is everyone's job to help give people choices. This gives people control of their **risks** and their lives. **Risks** are things that might go wrong when you are doing something.

You should have choices about risks.



You may want to take many risks or only some risks in your life. This is up to each person.



Most people thought that communities needed a larger role. People needed to look after other people around them.



It is not for the Government to choose your friends, what you do, all your risks and to keep people totally safe.



3. Keeping adults safe is not like keeping children safe

Adults do not want to be treated like children and do not want a system made for children.



People said things like:

“I do not want to be treated as a child”



“Staff have too much power over adults.”



“They do not listen to you”

People who cannot make their own choices



Some people who we need to keep safe could not speak to us because they were too ill or too confused. They cannot easily make their own choices.

We need to think about how to keep these people safe.



They need to be helped to take part in decisions about their lives.



Their friends, staff and **advocates** need to stand up for them.

Advocates are people who find out what you want and speak up for you.

What everyone else said



Listening to people at risk

Staff from different services wanted to know how to listen to people who may want help to make choices about risks.



Lots of NHS staff did not know who they should tell if they were worried about a patient.



People with mental health needs needed more help from NHS staff. People were not being listened to enough to keep them safe.



Lots of staff wanted to make sure that people at risk could stand up for themselves. People need to be able to say if they are worried.



There needs to be an easy way for people to say if there is abuse. Right now, it isn't easy to tell someone about abuse.



Some services could speak to people every year to find out if they are well. They could find out if anything had changed to make them more at risk.

Services could tell people at risk about other organisations that could help.

Helping people to make choices



People said they want to support people to understand the choices they have and to make their own choices.

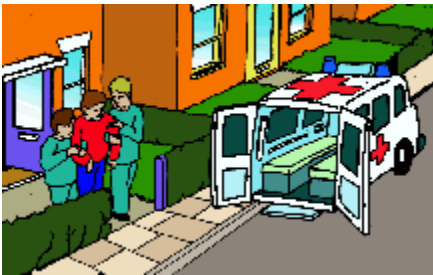
If you have choice and control in all parts of your life it will help to protect you against abuse.



Most people agreed that services have to help adults to make choices. Right now, staff find it hard to help adults make choices.



The police think that helping keep adults safe is part of their job.



All services need to be included in keeping people safe. For example, some ambulance staff said nobody asked them what they knew about people at risk.



One way the police could help is to give some people an alarm to use if something bad happened to them.



People's neighbours could also help. Neighbours could tell the police if they think something bad has happened.



Many people from black or minority ethnic communities said they would not ask for help if they were worried about abuse.



Some were worried about talking to services. Some were worried about being treated differently from white people.



Services need to make sure they help people from these communities to keep safe.



Housing and social services need to **review** people's care and support. **Review** means to look at what was agreed about your care and support to see if it needs to change.



In a **review** they should ask if anything has changed for you. This lets you have a say in how you want to live.



Keeping adults safe

Everyone agreed with people at risk that keeping adults safe is different from keeping children safe.



Services should not make choices for adults. Services need to listen to people and help them make choices.



When staff help you to make choices they think about the risks.



Staff have to help people understand risks. You can choose to take a risk even if something might go wrong. Staff should help you make it go right again.



Housing staff say they want to treat people at risk like adults. For example they do not want to tell private information about people to others.



They are worried that sometimes meetings happen without people. This means people do not have choice or control.



People who cannot make their own choices

Some people at risk cannot make choices for themselves.



They need other people to help them to make choices and to stand up for them.



Sometimes people with mental health needs might not be able to make choices for themselves. NHS staff need to think about how to help people at those times.



Being in charge

People thought the whole country should have one - or maybe a few - organisations in charge of making sure abuse does not happen.



Many people did not mind which organisation was in charge. What is important is that it is clear who is in charge.



Stopping abuse before it happens

Everyone agreed that we need to stop abuse before it happens.



Right now, services wait until abuse has happened, and then try to solve the problem. It would be better if everyone worked together to stop abuse from happening in the first place.



Staff should speak up if they see other staff doing something wrong. Staff need to feel safe enough to talk about problems.



Staff from lots of different services want training. Training would help staff to stop abuse.



People thought that GPs could do more to stop abuse. This is because GPs find out a lot about people's lives.



Housing staff want to help people make safety plans. The plans would look for dangers and think of how to stay safe.



The police could find out who is at risk and do their best to protect them before any abuse happens to them. The police could visit those adults to see if they are safe.



Changes to the law

Most people didn't want lots of new laws.



They wanted everyone to work the same way to keep people safe from abuse.



Nearly everyone thought that **safeguarding boards** needed to have more powers.

Safeguarding boards are groups of experts who work together on how we keep people safe.



Right now, experts and organisations don't have to work together. Many staff want to make a law that says that they have to.



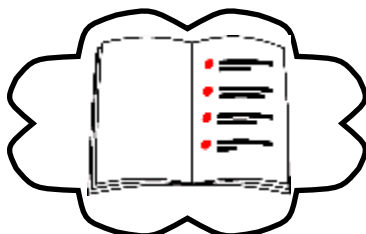
Housing staff wanted a new No Secrets guide. They thought the new guide should tell housing services how to keep people safe.



The police thought that some things needed to be done differently for adults at risk in a police station and in court.



The police could ask questions in a different way. Courts would try to understand the needs of people at risk and keep them safe.



Next steps



The Government is thinking about all these things. It is making plans and will write a new guide.

Credits



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