

# North Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board

## Unpaid carers and safeguarding Learning briefing



# Introduction

This briefing is based on the 'Carers and safeguarding – a co-production' briefing produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adult Services (ADASS). The briefing aims to support the practice improvement regarding safeguarding adults, as well as safeguarding their carers.

Across the UK an estimated 6.6 million people are carers and an increasing number of people have carer roles to a greater or lesser extent in their personal lives. Carers make a huge contribution to the lives of the people they support, and to the communities around them. During the Covid-19 pandemic, carers' support was valued at a staggering £530 million per day, an equivalent of £193 billion a year.

Caring for someone can be very difficult, with many carers reporting increased stress levels, social isolation, financial difficulties, and a decline in health and wellbeing. Therefore, it is crucial that carers have access to practical and emotional support to enable them to provide good and safe care, as well as look after their own wellbeing.

# Carers' rights under the Care Act 2014

**Section 9** entitles adults to an assessment of eligibility for care and support regardless of whether they receive unpaid care.

**Section 10** gives anyone aged 18+ who is caring for another adult the right to a carer's assessment.

**Section 20** places a duty on local authorities to meet carers' needs in line with a national eligibility threshold.

**Section 42** places a duty on local authorities to make enquiries if an adult may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The Care Act also places a duty on local authorities to assess young carers before they turn 18, so that they can plan for their future. This is referred to as a **transition assessment**.

All assessments of carers and adults cared for must be timely and thorough, including a full understanding of family circumstances and support networks. Professionals must not make any assumptions as they can compromise safety. Assessments of the carer and the adult they care for must consider the wellbeing of both people. It is crucial that carers know what support is available in their area. Carers want to feel involved and have flexibility to find the best solution to support them to continue caring.

Some carers may not identify as carers and remain hidden. It is important that there are effective mechanisms in place that will help to identify hidden carers, so that they do not miss out on opportunities for support and involvement as experts by experience.

# Carers and safeguarding

**Potential situations where abuse of a carer is more likely are where the adult cared for:**

Does not consider the needs of the carer

Treats the carer with lack of respect or courtesy

Rejects help or support from outside

Refuses to be left alone by day or night

Displays abusive, aggressive or frightening behaviours

Has control over the carer's finances, property or living arrangements

Is angry about their circumstances and punishes others for it

Has sought help or support but did not meet criteria for this

Has care and support needs that exceed the carer's ability to meet them

Has a history of substance misuse, offensive behaviour and lacks insight into the impact of their behaviour

# Carers and safeguarding

**When a carer unintentionally or intentionally abuses or neglects the adult they care for, often the carer:**

Is vulnerable themselves

Is being abused by the adult cared for

Has other responsibilities, such as family or work

Has unwillingly had to change his or her lifestyle

Has frequently requested help but problems have not been solved

Has little understanding of the adult's condition or needs

Is feeling emotionally and socially isolated, undervalued or stigmatised

Is not receiving practical or emotional support from other family members

Feels unappreciated by the adult cared for or exploited by relatives or services

Has unmet or unrecognised needs of their own

Has no personal or private space, or life outside the caring environment

# Working together to achieve positive outcomes

The overall message from carers is that equality, support and recognition are high on their agenda. Carers want to be recognised and valued, have information and support that enables them to care safely and well, and make the right decisions for them and their family.

Carers want their family to receive great services that promote choice and independence. They want to be healthy and well and have regular breaks from caring. They want to work for as long as possible, be protected from poverty, and have a decent income and standard of living. Having given so much, it is right that they are supported too.

## **Key points for working with carers:**

- Do not make assumptions
- Ask 'Is there a young carer involved?'
- Provide timely and careful assessments
- Understand and apply relevant legislation with confidence
- Apply Making Safeguarding Personal
- Apply professional curiosity

# Further reading and resources

- North Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board website [North Lincs SAB | North Lincs SAB](#)
- Carers' Support Service website [Home - Carers Support Service](#)
- Carers and safeguarding: a briefing for people who work with carers (includes case studies) [Carers and safeguarding: a briefing for people who work with carers | Local Government Association](#)
- Unseen and undervalued: the value of unpaid care provided to date during the COVID-19 pandemic [Unseen and undervalued: The value of unpaid care provided to date during the COVID-19 pandemic | Carers UK](#)
- Caring behind closed doors – six months on [Caring behind closed doors - six months on - Caring Together Charity](#)
- Carers UK library [Policy library | Carers UK](#)
- 7-minute briefing: learning from domestic abuse - The review was in relation to case where there was domestic abuse was identified between an older adult in their 90's who was being cared for by their Family member who was in their 60s. [Seven minute briefing: learning from domestic abuse | Local Government Association](#)
- Care provider response to domestic abuse and supporting people living with dementia and their carers [A5 Booklet Care Provider Response final](#)



# Safeguarding Adults Board

[www.northlincssab.co.uk](http://www.northlincssab.co.uk)



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