

GUIDANCE NOTE

SELF-NEGLECT AND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance Chapter 14 recognises self-neglect as a category of abuse. It describes self-neglect as a wide range of behaviours; neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. The previous guidance contained in "No Secrets" is replaced by Chapter 14.

Self-neglect may affect people in different ways and at various times in their lives. It is important to recognise that in the majority of cases, self-neglect would be best addressed through care and support (and in some situations, treatment) delivered by health and social care services. This could include interventions under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 or the Mental Health Act 1983.

For most cases where the risks are assessed as low a safeguarding response may not be necessary or appropriate.

There will be some cases where the adult may not engage with services or there may be challenges in delivering care and support. Self-neglect may persist and in some circumstances the risks to the individual may increase and could have a significant impact on the person's wellbeing. Such cases could benefit from a multi-agency response via the safeguarding process. This will help ensure the adult can be offered the best possible range of interventions and support.

Self-neglect should be referred for a safeguarding response when it is recognised as presenting a significant risk to the health or wellbeing of the adult, when the usual care, support and treatment options have been unsuccessful in reducing the risks.

If you wish to discuss a particular case please contact:

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