



COVID-19, social isolation and safeguarding adults

Advice for professionals

We know that social isolation increases the potential for abuse and neglect for adults at risk. It is likely that domestic abuse, self-neglect, financial abuse and carer stress will increase with social isolation. With more people being asked to self-isolate as a result of Covid-19, this needs to be a key consideration when in contact with adults at risk and when undertaking Section 42 enquiries. Social isolation can mean that:

- Abuse/neglect is hidden from professionals or others.
- People do not get the support they need.
- People feel like they do not want to ask for help for fear of being an added burden.
- Household stress and tension increases.
- People ask for or are offered help from people who might want to take advantage of their vulnerable position.

Some advice to consider:

Use existing tools and guidance to assess risk:

[Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Adults at Risk Referral Pathways](#)

[Carers advice and support](#)

[Domestic Abuse Toolkit](#)

[Self-Neglect Advice and Toolkit](#)

[Nottinghamshire Hoarding Framework](#)

Social distancing and self-isolation should not be at the expense of protection from abuse and neglect.

Ensure you factor in Covid-19 pressures to any risk assessments.

As always, consider mental capacity, control and coercion on a person's ability to make decisions and keep themselves safe.

Self-isolation and social distancing could be detrimental for the wellbeing of people living with dementia. Have a look at these helpful tips from [The Alzheimer's Society](#)

Plans to manage risk might include:

- Making a safeguarding referral where needed, consulting [Nottinghamshire's Adult at Risk Referral Pathways](#) as a resource, in conjunction with the Multi Agency Guidance and Procedures.
- Ensure you keep yourself informed of how to [spot, prevent and report scams](#) that target vulnerable people that may be self-isolating.
- Undertaking the MARAC checklist and subsequent referral to MARAC. MARAC will continue to operate at this time, but this is likely to be via teleconference.
- Referral to domestic abuse or carer support agencies;
Domestic abuse advice for women (24 hours) 0808 800 0340
Domestic abuse advice for men (office hours) 0115 960 5556
Nottinghamshire Carer's Hub 0115 8248824
- Flagging the address/person(s) on records following your organisations guidance and asking other agencies to do the same.
- Undertaking an assessment/re-assessment of need for the person and/or carer.
- Contingency arrangements for the person's care should the person's informal support need to self-isolate or be unable to provide care.
- Identifying family/friend/neighbour support and ways in which this could be done via phone/internet if possible.