

COVID-19, social isolation and safeguarding adults

Advice for professionals

We know that social isolation is an increasing risk factor in relation to abuse and neglect. In particular, we know that incidences of domestic abuse, self-neglect and carer stress will increase with social isolation. With more people being asked to self-isolate as a result Covid-19 this needs to be a key consideration when undertaking Section 42 enquiries. Social isolation can mean:

- 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;
- Increased household stress and tension;
- People ask for help from people who might want to take advantage of their vulnerable position.

Some advice to consider:

- Always use the existing tools and guidance to assess risk and clearly document this
- 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.
- Seek advice from Managers/Legal if you need to.
- Plans to manage risk might include:
 - **Risk planning on a multi-agency basis**
 - **Referring/opening the case to safeguarding adults procedures if it isn't already**
 - **Referral carer support agencies**
 - **If concerns relate to Domestic Abuse in an emergency dial 999 or contact the DA Hub 0300 123 5101**



- **Flagging address/person(s) on Adult Social Care records and asking other agencies to do the same**
- **Undertaking an assessment/ re-assessment of need for the person and/ or carer**
- **Identifying family/friend/neighbour support and ways in which this could be done via phone/internet if possible**
- **Contingency arrangements for the person's care should the person's informal support need to self-isolate or be unable to provide care**
- **Mental capacity assessments and best interest decisions**

Take into consideration that smaller organisations might be operating slightly differently. e.g. Skeleton staff, closed buildings etc.

Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board

www.stopadultabuse.org.uk