

Support relating to abuse of people with learning disabilities

Many people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health conditions receive good quality care and support, however abuse and poor care can take place anywhere. Families are often particularly concerned when their family member is far away from home and they are unable to visit regularly.

If at any point you believe your family member is in immediate danger you should contact the police. If there is no immediate danger, you should report your concerns about abuse to the local authority in which the person is living. Each local authority has a child protection and adult protection/safeguarding team who you should contact if you have any suspicion that someone is at risk of abuse.

Poor care includes things like not being able to access fresh air, take part in meaningful activities and have nutritious food. Any inappropriate use of 'restraint' and other restrictive practices could be regarded as either abuse or poor care.

Poor care can be challenged using advocacy, complaints processes, Care Programme Approach (CPA) meetings for people detained under the Mental Health Act and sometimes by legal challenges. Support and information is available for families and individuals from a range of charities and organisations; some are listed below.

Support organisations

Ann Craft Trust

Advice for anyone concerned with the protection of vulnerable children and adults.

Website: www.anncrafttrust.org

Contact No: 0115 951 5400 (Office hours Monday to Friday 9am-5pm).

Email: ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk

Challenging Behaviour Foundation

Support for families of children and adults with severe learning disabilities who display challenging behaviour.

Website: www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk

Family Support Service: 0300 666 0126 (available 9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 3pm Fridays).

Email: support@theCBF.org.uk

Hft

The Family Carer Support Service is a free service for family carers in England, who have a relative with a learning disability and/or autism.

Website: www.hft.org.uk/familycarersupport

Freephone: 0808 801 0448 (available 9.30am – 4.00pm Monday to Thursday).

Email: familycarersupport@hft.org.uk

Mencap

Advice and information on issues relevant to people with learning disabilities and their families.

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 808 1111 (lines open 9am – 3pm Monday to Friday).

Email: helpline@mencap.org.uk

National Autistic Society (NAS)

Support people with autism and their families.

Website: www.autism.org.uk

Respond

Working with children and adults with learning disabilities who have experienced abuse or trauma, as well as those who have abused others.

Website: www.respond.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7383 0700

Speak Up Direct - Whistleblowing Helpline

If you are a member of staff working in the NHS or social care sector and you have concerns about abuse in your workplace, you can contact Speak Up Directly. You can speak to them anonymously.

Website: <https://speakup.direct/>

Helpline: 08000 724725 (available 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday).

Also contact via website or use online tool

Information

For further information about concerns about the quality of care or safety of someone with a learning disability, see the Challenging Behaviour Foundation website [here](#).

<https://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/information/information-sheets-and-dvds/when-things-go-wrong.html>

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