

Safeguarding Adults:



Keeping people safe – tell us how we can help.



EasyRead Version

What is this booklet about?



This is a booklet with information and it has lots of questions that we want to ask you to help us make some decisions.



It is about the “No Secrets” guide, the government’s handbook on how to help keep adults safe from abuse.



It is also called a consultation. This just means that we ask you questions, and then you tell us what you think.



By answering a few questions you can help us make it better.



What is “No Secrets”?

It is a guide to help keep adults safe. This is often called ‘safeguarding adults’. It is made for people like the police, local authorities, health services and many others.



Safeguarding means making sure you are safe from abuse and neglect. It also means helping you to be independent and to make choices.



The people who need to be safeguarded includes everyone - but especially vulnerable adults. These are people who might need help to live a normal life. They are:

- people with disabilities



- people with mental health problems



- people who are ill for a long time



- people who are very very old.

What is abuse and neglect?



Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly. Abuse is always wrong. There are different kinds of abuse.



Physical abuse - when someone hurts you, for example hitting, kicking, biting, pinching hard enough to leave bruises.



Sexual abuse - when someone touches your body in ways you do not like or want. This includes kissing you, making you touch them, having sex with you when you do not want them to.



Emotional abuse - when people talk to you in unkind ways. For example, teasing, threatening, swearing, ignoring you, shouting, making you feel bad and treating you like a child.

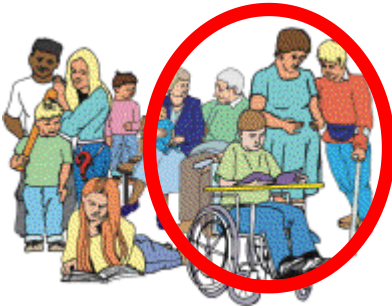


Neglect is when the person who is supposed to be looking after you does not help you at all. For example, not giving you food, not bathing you or leaving you locked in a room by yourself.



Why does “No Secrets” need to be better?

The Minister at the Department of Health, Phil Hope, wants the guide to be better, so do the Ministers at the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice.



There are 3 main reasons:

1. It has helped some people, but not all.



2. The government wants everyone to have more say in how they are helped. So we need to ask you how you want us to help.



3. People have told us that we need better laws and plans which “No Secrets” does not cover. We need to talk about this more.



We have been working on making this better for a while.

How to use the questionnaire



This questionnaire is in 9 parts. You can write your answers in the answer booklet.



Part 1: Who do you think should be in charge?



Part 2: How can we prevent people from being abused?



Part 3: How can we learn from how “No Secrets” has been used?



Part 4: How can we help people to choose how they are looked after and keep them safe?



Part 5: What else can the NHS do?



Part 6: How can housing services help safeguard people?



Part 7: How can the police and the law help safeguard people?



Part 8: Do we need a new “No Secrets” and new laws?



Part 9: How do we make the meanings of words clearer?

Turn over for Part 1. 

Part 1: Who do you think should be in charge?



The “No Secrets” handbook says that the local social services authority is responsible. They have to make sure that the rules for keeping adults safe are followed.



The handbook also says that your local social services should help certain groups work together.



Groups such as:

- people who work in the health service or the NHS



- the police



- housing services



- volunteer organisations



- the Crown Prosecution Service.

(The Crown Prosecution Service is the government's lawyers.)



The “No Secrets” handbook says that some groups have to work with your local social services.



Each local social services authority chose a person to be in charge of carrying out what the “No Secrets” handbook says.



These people were given different names. Some were called Safeguarding Co-ordinators and others were called Adult Protection Leads. Their job is to get all the different groups working together.



People have told us that:

- the handbook wasn't clear about who is in charge of safeguarding for the whole country



- social services are in charge locally, but other parts like housing staff are not very involved



- some groups that should work together, don't choose to do so



- even though the Safeguarding Co-ordinators and the Adult Protection Leads were doing the same job, they were given different things to do



- different government groups seem to be doing things differently. For example, the NHS seems to be doing things their own way. This causes confusion and makes working together very hard.



We would like to know what you think:

1 (a) Who do you think should be in charge of “No Secrets” for the whole country?

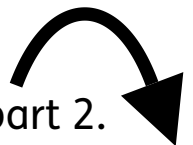


1 (b) In your own local area, should your local social services be in charge of “No Secrets”? Or should the whole local authority be in charge?



1 (c) Should all social services act in the same way? Or should each area choose how they act?

This is the end of Part 1. Please go to part 2.



Part 2: How can we stop people from being abused?



The “No Secrets” handbook has been good at helping people who have been abused. But people have told us that a lot more could be done to stop it happening.



We know that, in the future:

- there will be more older people in Britain



- they are more likely to live alone with no one close by to help them



- there will also be more people with disabilities living on their own



- more people with mental health problems



- more people who cannot make their own decision.



Some organisations have already made good plans to stop abuse.



Some other organisations have systems which allow workers to complain about their own organisation safely.



For example, if a care worker sees his boss abusing someone, they can tell someone without being fired. This is called “whistleblowing”.

We would like to know what you think:



2 (a) Do you think “No Secrets” should be more about stopping people from being abused?



2 (b) If you think so, how can we do this?



2 (c) If you are doing something that already stops people from being abused, please tell us about it.

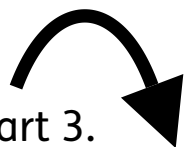


2 (d) Should we have a plan for the whole country to follow?



2 (e) Do you think whistleblowing schemes are good things?

This is the end of Part 2. Please go to part 3.





Part 3: How can we learn from how “No Secrets” has been used?



So that organisations can work well, they must have:

- goals to aim for



- ways to learn from what they have been doing



- ways to show that services are getting better.

Examples of goals would be:



- more bad workers and volunteers are stopped



- more carers getting the help they need



- more abusers are caught and taken away



- more people know about keeping adults safe.

We can learn how to do things better through:



- getting someone to check regularly on things



- getting that same person to tell us what works and what doesn't



- teaching each other



- getting families together to talk about their experience



We would like to know what you think:

3 (a) Would “No Secrets” be better if it had goals to aim for?



3 (b) If yes, tell us what you think each of these groups should do:

- Police
- NHS
- Social Services



3 (c) How can we learn from people who have been abused?



3 (d) How can we learn from people who have been kept safe from abuse?

 Information



3 (e) Should we keep everything we learn in 1 place so that anyone can see it?

This is the end of Part 3. Please go to part 4.





Part 4: How can we help people to choose how they are looked after and keep them safe?

A lot of people have told us that they want to choose how they are looked after.



For example:

- some old people do not want to leave their home and their community to be looked after



- some people don't want hospitals or care homes to make decisions for them



- some people want to say more about how they want to live even if they are very sick



- some people want to choose who looks after their money.



What this means is:

- instead of just telling you what we think is best, we want to talk to you about what your choices are



- instead of just doing things for you, we want to talk to you about what things can be done.



Then it will be up to you to make your decision about what is best for you.



There are 2 problems with more choices:



1. Because people would be able to choose more things, we will need to come up with different ways to keep them safe.



2. A lot of people will choose to do things themselves. This means that they would need to be supported in a totally different way.

We would like to know what you think:



4 (a) What do you think we can do to help keep people safe and still give them what they want?

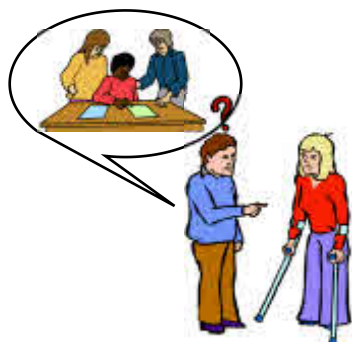
For example, if someone wants to look after their own money and they aren't well enough to.



4 (b) How should we help people make the best choice for them?



4 (c) What training to do you think healthcare workers need to help people make the best choice for them?

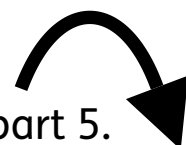


4 (d) Have you had this help yourself?



4 (e) If yes, tell us about it.

This is the end of Part 4. Please go to part 5.





Part 5: What else can the NHS do?

In the past, there were a lot of serious safeguarding problems in the NHS.



People have also told us that they thought the NHS did not know enough about “No Secrets” or take “No Secrets” seriously enough.



The NHS now tells us that they have changed and are taking it more seriously.



Some nurses have been given special training in safeguarding and some hospitals have changed the way they work.



We would like to know what you think:

5 (a) Should the NHS have their own “No Secrets” handbook?

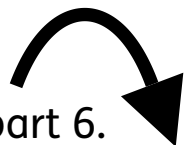


5 (b) Would you feel you could tell your GP or nurse if you were being harmed?



5 (c) What more do you think the NHS should be doing to keep people safe?

This is the end of Part 5. Please go to part 6.





Part 6: How can housing services help keep adults safe?

We were told that housing services often do not know that people are being abused. They do not know what questions to ask.



Sometimes they do know there is a problem, but they do not know what to do about it. They have no handbook or training.



We hear that people in the community are sometimes more able to spot when someone is being abused. Neighbours and friends who live nearby may see more and understand more.



Some places have made schemes that involve the whole community. These schemes have really helped keep people safe.

We would like to know what you think:



6 (a) Do you think everyone in the community should be involved with “No Secrets”?

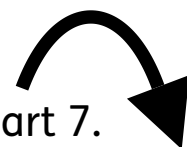


6 (b) How do you think we should do this?



6 (c) What do you think housing services could do better to help keep people safe?

This is the end of Part 6. Please go to part 7.



Part 7: How can the police and the law help safeguard people?



The police have done some things to stop hate crimes against people with disabilities. This is when people are bullied or attacked because they have a disability.



Some schemes have been quite successful. We think there is more that can be done.



The police now have special groups called Public Protection Units who help those who have been abused. The police treat abuse seriously now like a crime.



Some people find it hard to report a crime. Some are afraid they will not be listened to. Some are afraid that they might be hurt even more.



Sometimes the person committing the crime is the carer or someone in the family. This makes it even harder to report. We think this is wrong. We think there should be systems in place stop this happening.



One way is for some services to work more closely with the police. They can do this by telling the police that they think a crime might be committed even if they are not sure.



For example, when a care home calls an ambulance more often than other care homes. The ambulance workers could tell someone in the police as this is suspicious.



We think that although this is a good idea, it could get out of hand.



This would involve a lot of different people. New rules will have to be made up to control it.



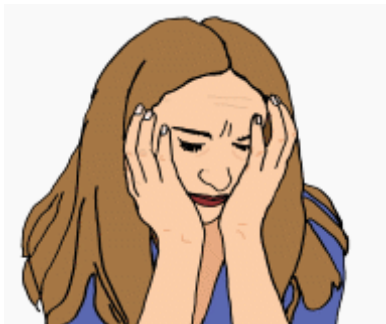
More money would be needed to make it work. But if it does, a lot more people could be helped.



People have told us that they are afraid to tell the police about crimes they might have seen.



If you have a seen a crime, or know something about a crime, you are called a witness. They are sometimes afraid that they might be hurt if they tell.



People with learning disabilities find it even harder to tell.



The government has made schemes to protect witnesses. They can talk about what they've seen to an intermediary.



An intermediary is a person who can speak to police and the Court for them. This will help people who have difficulty with words and will help keep them safe.



We would like to know what you think:

7 (a) How can we help people who are afraid to report a crime to speak up?



7 (b) What can we do to let more people know that they can tell someone about a crime and be safe?



7 (c) How can we help the police talk to and listen to people with learning disabilities about crimes?



7 (d) What can we do to make it easier for people with learning disabilities and other people to get their problems heard in court? And to get convictions for the person who harmed them?

This is the end of Part 7. Please go to part 8.





Part 8: Do we need new laws?

We are making “No Secrets” better. But improving the guidance alone may not be enough to make safeguarding stronger. We may need new laws to back it up.

Some people tell us that we need new laws to:



- Give more power to Adult Safeguarding Boards. These are groups of people chosen by social services to work on keeping people safe.



- Right now, organisations don't have to work with them. We can make a law that says that they have to.



- We can make a law that says different organisations and agencies must help each other.



- Make a law that tells different organisations exactly what their job is.



- Make the meanings of some words and terms clearer. The words like safeguarding and abuse can mean different things to different organisations.



- Give social workers and the police the power to enter someone's house without permission.



- If someone is being abused, they may not be able to leave even if they want to. We could have a new law to allow the police or other care workers to force their way in and give help.



- The problem is, sometimes that person may not want help.



- Make a law that says police and other care givers must act when they are told that someone may be hurt.



Making new laws is complicated and takes a long time. Trying to make a law fit what we need it to do can lead to more problems.



For example, the Human Rights Act says that everyone has the right to choose how they live so long as they are not breaking the law.



If someone chooses to stay with someone who is hurting them, should we force them to leave?



Just making better guidance for safeguarding adults is easier and means we can make changes.



For example, if we decide to make more changes, we do not have to go through Parliament to do so. We would be able to react faster to what you need.



We would like to know what you think:

8 (a) Do you think there should be special “No Secrets” guidance for different organisations?



For example, 1 for the police and a different 1 for local authorities?



8 (b) Do you think we need new laws?



8 (c) If yes, what new laws do we need?



8 (d) Do you think we should have a law to make organisations help each other?



8 (e) How can we make agencies help each other?



For example, how can we reward them if they help each other? Or how would we punish them if they don't?



8 (f) Do you think the police, social workers and nurses should be given the power to enter a home against the wishes of the people living in it?



8 (g) If yes, do you think that it should be given to:

- the police only?
- social workers and other professionals like nurses only?
- all of them?



8 (h) What about when we know that someone is being abused. They understand what is happening and can choose to leave. But they don't want to leave. Should they be forced to leave?



8 (i) Should someone who is hurting themselves or neglecting themselves be forced to leave their house and be taken into care?



8 (j) If we have new laws, what can we do to make sure our Human Rights are respected?

This is the end of Part 8. Please go to part 9.



Part 9: How do we make the meanings of words clearer?



“No Secrets” explained what is meant by certain words. For example, a vulnerable adult is someone:



- who is 18 years old or older



- has a disability or illness or is very old



- who might need help looking after themselves (with community care services)



- who might not be able to keep others from hurting them



Organisations have all told us that the meaning of 'vulnerable' needs changing. But no one can agree what this new meaning should be.



Even the laws that use the same words have given them different meanings.



This makes it hard for people to know who they should be helping.



We want the whole country to use the same meanings for certain words.

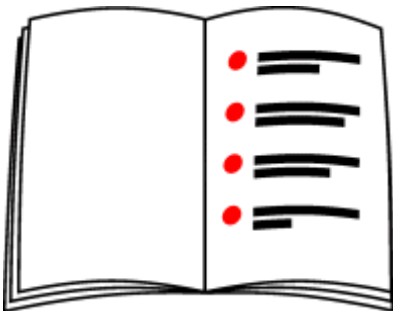


To help us get the meanings right, please tell us:

9 (a) Who do you think a “vulnerable adult” is?

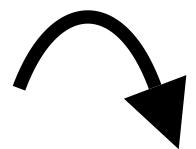


9 (b) What is abuse?



9 (c) What other words do you think we should use to describe what happens to people who are hurt?

This is the end of Part 9.



Please go to the answer booklet to fill in your answers.



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