

What do I do if...

I feel I am at risk from abuse.

This leaflet tells you how Second Step protects the people who use our services from abuse. It also explains what we do if we think you are a risk to yourself or to others.

**SECOND
STEP**

PUTTING MENTAL HEALTH FIRST

How Second Step protects its service users from abuse

Second Step understands that people who use our services may be vulnerable to harm or exploitation by others. We have developed a Safeguarding Policy to ensure we do all we can to protect our service users from abuse. This policy is monitored by various independent agencies, including the Care Quality Commission. Our partner organisations have similar policies in place.

Different forms of abuse

Abuse may take many forms, including physical, sexual, financial, emotional or discrimination. No-one should have to live in fear or feel that mistreatment is their fault. If you feel you have been mistreated, you may feel uncertain about what action you want to take, how much you want to tell us, and what might happen afterwards. Types of abuse include:

Physical: hurting someone eg striking someone with or without an object

Emotional: causing emotional or psychological distress eg bullying, intimidation or constant criticism

Sexual: a sexual act or behaviour where consent has not been given eg unwelcome kissing or touching

Neglect and acts of omissions: including not providing necessary care eg being left dirty or hungry

Self-neglect: not looking after oneself eg personal or home cleanliness, not eating enough to stay healthy

Financial or material abuse: misuse of another person's money or belongings

without knowledge or consent eg theft or scams

Discriminatory: hurtful behaviour due to ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, disability or religion eg verbal abuse

Organisational: the institutional mistreatment of people brought about by inadequate care or support or systematic poor practice

Domestic violence: violent or aggressive behaviour within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a spouse or partner

Modern slavery: including slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking

We can talk through all of these concerns with you before you make any decisions. Whatever you decide, we can give you support and advice. We want to make sure that if you are experiencing any exploitation or mistreatment, you know what you can do and who you can talk to.

We can help

Who should I talk to?

If you would like to report or discuss mistreatment of yourself or another vulnerable adult, talk to your support worker (or anyone else at Second Step who you would feel comfortable giving this information to).

Otherwise, you can contact your local authority Adult Services Team (or the police if you believe a crime has been committed). Contact details are shown on the back of this leaflet.

What happens next?

We will normally ask you what you would like to happen next. But in serious situations, we may have to inform another agency, even without your agreement. This is because we have a duty to be aware of and to respond to any suspicions or allegations of mistreatment. This would take place if:

- The mistreatment involved a professional or someone working for Second Step
- The situation could lead to a serious crime
- An individual does not have mental capacity and is unable to make an informed decision

Will my name be kept confidential?

Your name will be kept confidential within Second Step as far as possible in that your support worker may share your concerns with their manager. However, if there is serious concern, Second Step would need to contact Social Services (or the police if a crime has been committed) and give your name and address.

Local Authority Adult Services Contact Details

Bristol **0117 922 2700**

North Somerset **01934 888 801**

South Gloucestershire **01454 868 007**

Bath and North East Somerset **01225 396 000**

Outside office hours (all four authorities) **01454 615 165**

Police **101**

To discuss the information in this leaflet in more detail, contact your Support Worker or ask to see a copy of our Safeguarding Adults Policy.

You can also find this information online at

www.second-step.co.uk/aboutus

This leaflet can also be made available in Braille, large print or audio on request. Alternatively, we can arrange for someone to explain it to you. Translation is also available for people who require the information in other languages.

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