Early Warning Signs of Possible Institutional Abuse

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How concerns come to light

• In Care Reviews
• During visits to services (anyone including the public)
• In Discussions with managers, staff or residents
• Information from families
• Information from the Care Quality Commission
• Information from any health or social care staff.
• As a result of an adult protection alert
• In the Community from a member of the public
• From the Police
Sharing Concerns

- Thresholds that identify a spread or range of indicators is not proof of abuse but it may help us to consider that all may not be well in the service. Issues include:
Indicators 1

• Concerns about management and leadership
• Concerns about staff skills, knowledge and practice
• Concerns about residents’ behaviours and wellbeing
• Concerns about the service resisting the involvement of external people and isolating individuals
• Concerns about the way services are planned and delivered
Indicators 2

• Concerns about the quality of basic care and the environment
• Poor overall management
• Poor or unhelpful communication between managers and their staff
• Poor standards of cleanliness
• Low staffing levels over protracted period
• High staff turnover
• Inadequate levels of supervision and support
Lack of respect for dignity can take many forms and may differ from person to person. It may include:

- Being treated more as an object than a person
- Being addressed in ways they find disrespectful e.g. by first names or nick names
- Generally being rushed or ignored when asking for help
- Not being listened to
- Lack of privacy e.g. dressing in front of others
- Expectations of care are very low
- No control over what happens to them
What may the Person Experience

Examples may include:

• Feeling neglected or ignored whilst receiving care
• Feeling lonely and isolated
• Feeling cold
• Feeling hungry or thirsty
• Feeling sore and uncomfortable
• Feeling pain
• Feeling frightened to complain, to ask for help
What may the Person Experience 2

- No access to their own money
- No ability to exercise choice or make decisions
- Being frightened of the people who live with you because staff are not able to protect you.
- Unwanted sexual advances/assault
- Medication –too much—unable to function and have distressing side effects
- Medication too little—in pain, physically unwell, or extreme behaviors jeopardising welfare
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Dignity Challenge

- Treating people with respect will reduce the likelihood of abuse in care settings
- Respecting their privacy
- Having zero tolerance of all forms of abuse
- Providing person centred care
- Giving information, choice and independence
- Alleviating loneliness and isolation
- Listening and responding to people's wants and needs
- Involving the patient and their carer
- Responding to complaints
- Helping confidence and self-esteem
Treating people with Dignity will reduce the likelihood of abuse in care settings