

7 MINUTE BRIEFING

Financial/Material Abuse



**KNOWSLEY
SAFEGUARDING
ADULTS BOARD**

PREVENTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



1. What is Financial/ Material Abuse?

The Care Act 2014 states that financial and material abuse includes theft, fraud, doorstep crime, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, and the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Financial and material abuse can happen to people anywhere and at any time. It can happen in a person's home, day care, hospital, college or in a public place, it is never acceptable no matter how minor it may seem.

2. Types of Financial Abuse

What financial abuse looks like can vary which can make it difficult to detect and identify. As the Care Act 2014 definition shows, financial abuse can be concerning money, property or belongings.

Types of financial abuse may include:

- Borrowing money and not giving it back
- Stealing money or belongings
- Taking pension payments or other benefit away from someone
- Taking money as payment for coming to visit or spending time together
- Forcing someone to sell their home or assets without consent
- Scams / doorstep fraud
- Forcing someone to make changes in wills, property or inheritance
- Online fraud

3. Indicators of Financial/Material abuse:

- Missing personal possessions
- Lack of money to pay essentials such as bills, rent and food
- Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts
- Power of attorney being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity
- Unusual interest in the assets of a person by family or others
- Recent changes in deeds or title to property
- Failure to provide receipts for transactions carried out on persons behalf.
- Isolation or withdrawal from friends and family.

This list is not exhaustive.

4. Who is at risk of Financial/Material abuse?

Financial abuse can affect anyone.

It often takes place where there is an unequal balance of power. This can happen when:

- Somebody is a victim of Domestic Abuse
- Someone has a learning disability
- Someone has a medical condition
- Someone takes medication

Research tells us older people, particularly people with dementia, are among those at greatest risk of financial abuse.

7. Report a concern/further information:

Financial/ Material abuse is a crime. If it is an emergency, please contact Police on 999.

If it is not an emergency but you are worried that an adult is a victim of financial/material abuse you can make a [safeguarding referral](#) or contact Knowsley MASH team on Tel: 0151 443 2600.

[Action Fraud](#)

[Cost of living support - Knowsley News](#)[Safeguarding order people from abuse and neglect \(ageuk.org.uk\)](#)

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/can-the-new-159-anti-fraud-hotline-stop-impersonation-scams-a3sp35C1gDCC>

<https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/beatthescammers/article-10684121/Dial-159-fraud-Scam-prevention-hotline-receives-75k-calls-six-months.html>

6. Who are the most common abusers?

It is often those people who the elderly trust the most, who are usually the perpetrators of financial abuse, such as a family member, friend or neighbour. Unfortunately, the elderly or people at risk are also often targeted for scams.

Commonly, financial abuse occurs in the adult's own home or a care home. Abusers can often have drug, alcohol, relationship, financial or gambling problems.

5. Impact on Individual

The impact of financial abuse should not be underestimated and can be as significant as any other type of abuse.

Even small financial or material losses have the potential to have a significant impact on the adult at risk and can leave people unsettled and without the confidence to live independently.

It can cause the person who previously did not have any care or support needs, to deteriorate to a level which does require intervention and the requirement for support and services from Adult Social Care.