

# WOLVERHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING TOGETHER

## 7 MINUTE BRIEFING: ADULT SELF-NEGLECT



### Why does it matter?

The reasons for self-neglect can be complex and may have an impact on a person's health, wellbeing or living conditions and may have a negative impact on others. Recent reviews have indicated that not all practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities when working with people who may be self-neglecting.

### What are my responsibilities?

- Be alert to the possibility of self-neglect of adults with care and support needs
- Report concerns of self-neglect on the same day as they become aware or are informed of the concerns
- Always consider mental capacity
- Read the Self-Neglect Procedure and Guidance

### What is the legal framework?

- The Care Act places duties on the Local Authority in the areas of assessment, enquiry and advocacy
- The Human Rights Act
- The Mental Capacity Act
- The Mental Health Act

### What needs to be considered?

- Balancing autonomy and protection is important
- Assessing mental capacity is crucial. A person with capacity has the right to make decisions even if they threaten their health or safety. For those without, decisions may need to be taken in their best interests
- Strength and relationship-based approaches are important

### What is self-neglect?

The Care Act statutory guidance definition of self-neglect:

*'This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding'*

### Why do adults neglect themselves?

Sometimes self-neglect results from physical or cognitive difficulties but at times the reasons for it are not clear. Research has suggested that it may also be the result of loss, fear of losing control, pride in self-sufficiency, a sense of connectedness to the places and things in their surroundings or a mistrust of professionals / people in authority.

### What are some of the indicators?

- Living in very unclean circumstances and/or hoarding
- Poor nutrition and diet
- Failing to provide care for him/herself, to maintain social contact &/or manage finances
- Declining to accept support and/or attend appointments

