

Abuse & Neglect

1 Identifying Abuse and Neglect	
Observed abuse and neglect	Staff of accommodation support services, or any other service accessed by people with disability, are most likely to observe incidents of abuse or neglect towards people.
Reported abuse and neglect	Abuse and neglect may be reported directly to staff by the victim or by another person with disability who has observed the incident or multiple incidents. A support worker or any other person may observe that abuse or neglect of a person or persons and report it to an appropriate person such as a line manager.
Suspected abuse and neglect	A disability worker or any other person may detect unusual behaviours or events that could be indicators of abuse or neglect of a person with disability. A carer, family member or guardian who knows a person well and has reason to suspect that the person is being abused or neglected should inform a manager, or in the case where that particular manager is suspected, another manager. Any other person who is not necessarily familiar with the person but suspects an abusive or neglectful situation, should also report a suspicion to a manager who knows or is involved in the person's circle of friends.



2 Patterns of Abuse and Neglect	
Long term abuse	Abuse that occurs over a period of time. E.g. Can occur in the context of family or other ongoing living arrangement
Serial abusing	Perpetrator seeks out vulnerable individuals, and abuses several persons according to a pattern. Sexual abuse usually falls into this pattern, as do some forms of financial abuse.
Opportunistic abuse	Where a person takes advantage of an opportunity or exploiting opportunities and situations in general, especially in a devious or unprincipled way. An example is a person has access to another person's bank account, and they take their money. Opportunistic abuse is also referred to as situational abuse.
Institutional abuse	The features are poor care standards, lack of positive responses to complex needs, rigid routines, inadequate staffing and insufficient knowledge within the service/s. E.g. not rostering enough staff on shift to meet the needs of the people requiring support.
Neglect	A person's needs are neglected because those around him or her are unable to provide care or there is a lack of services or inappropriate services. This includes failure to provide access to key services such as health care, dentistry or prosthesis. An example is, a staff member does not respond to a person communicating they are not feeling well and needs to see a doctor.



Unacceptable 'treatments' or programs	Punishment such as withholding of food and drink, seclusion, unnecessary or unauthorised use of control or restraint, over-medication, or the unlawful administration of prescribed medications are unacceptable treatments. For example giving a person more medication than they have been prescribed.
Failure of agencies	Agencies are responsible for ensuring that staff receive appropriate guidance on anti discrimination practice and cultural sensitivity. For example, not providing staff with training on anti-discrimination and/or cultural sensitivity.
Misappropriation	Use of the person's money by others, fraud or intimidation. That is staff using a person's money to buy something for themselves.