BIRMINGHAM SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

FACTSHEET 5

Neglect Abuse

Examples of neglect abuse can include:

- Regularly leaving the person unattended for long periods or abandoning them
- Lack of care including food, warmth, medication and access to medical treatment
- Failing to attend to physical needs such as toileting, dressing and washing
- Failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services

Signs and symptoms of neglect abuse can include:

- Poor heating, lighting, food or fluids
- Poor physical condition of the person such as ulcers, bedsores
- The person's clothing and body seem to be scruffy and neglected
- Failure to give prescribed medication or get appropriate medical care
- Apparent unexplained weight loss
- Failure to provide appropriate privacy and dignity
- Carers reluctant to accept contact from health or social care professionals
- Refusal to allow visitors to see the person
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing, or being kept in night clothes during the day
- Sensory deprivation - not allowed to have access to glasses, hearing aids or other communication aids
- The person thought to be at risk has no method of calling for assistance

BIRMINGHAM SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

FACTSHEET 5

Background

Janet, 58, had been living independently in her house despite suffering a mild stroke. Her son Daniel offered to move in to help support her. Janet agreed, welcoming the chance to spend more time with her youngest son. Daniel, however, had other plans and forced Janet to hand over all of her pension. Janet was also kept in virtual isolation, missing meals and her medication.

Janet's other son, John, visited several months later and noticed a marked deterioration in Janet's physical condition but no explanation was offered as to why by her or Daniel.

What happened next?

John visited **www.bsab.org** and read about the main types of adult abuse that were committed against vulnerable adults. He then called the Adults and Communities Access Service (ACAP) on 0121 303 1234 who confirmed his fears that his mother was possibly being abused.

They advised him to dial 999 immediately. West Midlands Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service attended Janet's house. Daniel was arrested on suspicion of abuse and Janet was taken to hospital where she was treated for malnutrition and dehydration.

Janet was also judged not to have capacity under the Mental Capacity Act.

The Mental Capacity Act helps protect people when they don't have the capacity to make decisions for themselves.

What was the outcome?

A police investigation found that Daniel had large debts through gambling and was using his mother's income to finance his gambling habit. The Crown Prosecution Service charged Daniel with theft and neglect and he was given a suspended sentence providing he returned all of the stolen money.