

GUIDE TO

# REPORTING ABUSE AND SAFEGUARDING ENQUIRIES

**The vision of the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board is that all adults in Surrey live a life free from fear, abuse and neglect.**

If you are concerned that you, or someone you know, may be experiencing abuse or neglect, or are being exploited, please report it.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I REPORT ABUSE?

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is always the first point of contact when there are concerns that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of abuse or neglect.

Anyone can report a safeguarding concern. If you suspect abuse is happening, reporting it can help bring it to an end. It is everyone's responsibility to look out for others and protect them from abuse.

## When you report abuse, MASH will:

- » Listen to you and take your concerns seriously
- » Consider any immediate danger that the person may be facing
- » Consider the wishes and views of the adult at risk
- » Speak to the police if it is also a criminal matter

## WHAT IS A SECTION 42 ENQUIRY?

If MASH believes that an adult is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, they must carry out an enquiry into what has happened under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. This is commonly known as a Section 42 enquiry.

The goal of a Section 42 enquiry is to establish whether a person with care and support needs has been harmed (or is at risk of harm) and is unable to protect themselves, and decide on the action needed to protect them.

In other words, Section 42 enquiries are designed to help protect people with care and support needs.

## HOW DOES A SECTION 42 ENQUIRY WORK?

The exact process varies depending on the circumstances, but will typically involve:

- » Talking to the adult in question to understand their thoughts and wishes
- » Implementing immediate actions to protect the adult
- » Interviewing people who have been involved in or witnessed an incident
- » Taking action, where necessary, against the person who has committed the abuse or neglect

- » Developing a plan to protect the adult in future
- » Liaising with the police and other organisations where appropriate
- » Establishing whether anyone else is at risk of harm

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE ENQUIRY IS COMPLETED?

A Section 42 enquiry means making various decisions on how best to protect the person or persons involved. Once MASH has finished making its enquiries, the findings will be reviewed. A meeting for everyone involved – including MASH professionals, the adult in question and their representative – may be arranged to discuss the findings, and agree what happens next.

In some cases, other processes may run in parallel, for example, a police investigation or investigation in a hospital.

## GETTING HELP

If you're worried that a person is being neglected or at risk of harm, contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

- » Call on **0300 470 9100**
- » Text on **07527 182861**
- » Email [ascmash@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:ascmash@surreycc.gov.uk)
- » Out of hours, call **01483 517898**

**In an emergency**, or if you believe someone is in immediate danger, always dial 999 for the police.