

I Think An Older Person I Know Is Being Abused: What Can I Do?

- In an emergency dial 999
- You can also call the Ask SAL Helpline: 08452 66 66 63

I Think I Am Being Abused: What Can I Do?

- You don't have to leave the relationship to seek help
- Remember the fault lies with the abuser
- No one has to suffer alone: Help and Support are available



Where Can I Find Out More?

Essex Police encourages you to report domestic abuse to them:

- In an emergency dial **999**
- If it is not an emergency dial **101**
- They have specialist units with staff who are fully trained to deal with domestic abuse.
- Domestic abuse dedicated non-emergency number: **0800 358 0351**

Safer Places

Able to provide a wide range of services to support you and respond to your individual needs and circumstances, whether it is in refuge accommodation or in the community: **0845 0177 668**

SOS Domestic Abuse Projects

Domestic Service for Women: **01702 302333**

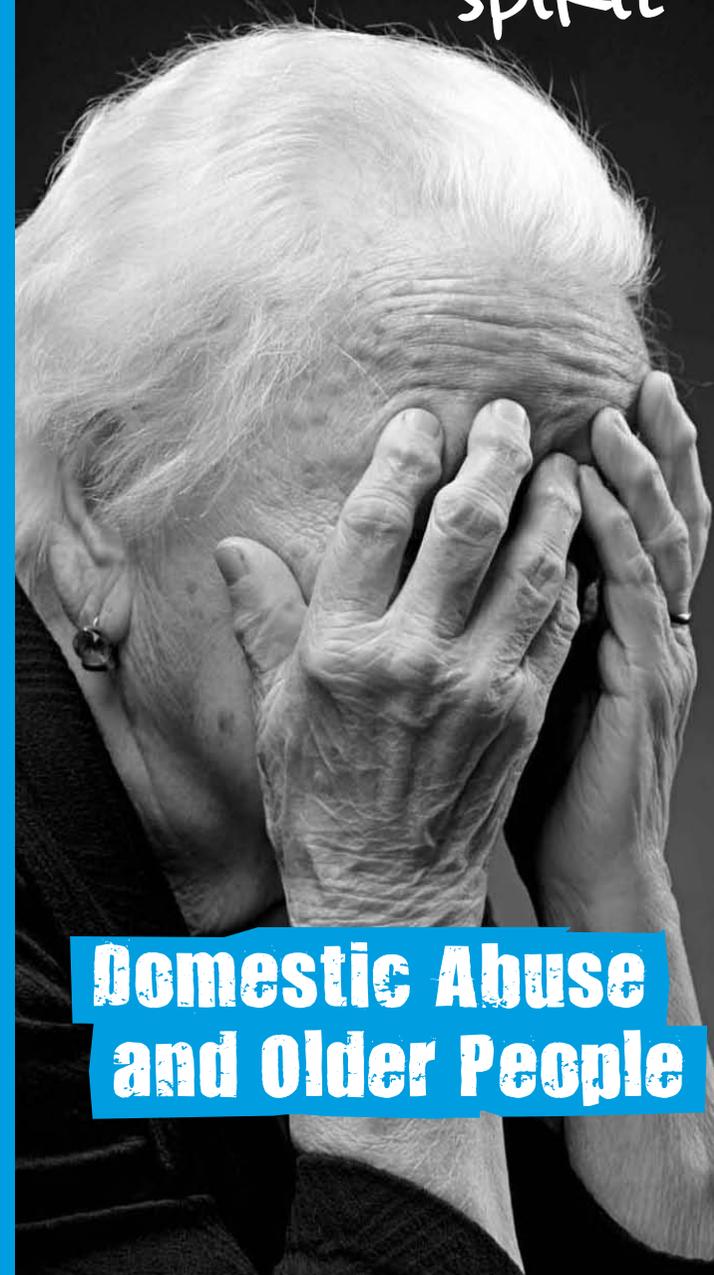
South East Essex Advocacy for Older People

Advocacy service older people aged 60+ in Southend: **01702 340566**

This leaflet was brought to you by the Southend Domestic Abuse Strategy Group: a multi-agency partnership of organisations working together to tackle domestic abuse.



“I was broken in mind, body and spirit”



Domestic Abuse and Older People

What is Domestic Abuse?

- Controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour
- Violence
- Psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse between adults over 16 years old who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members.

Why is this leaflet about Domestic Abuse and Older People?

Research shows older¹ people are also victims of domestic abuse but that the issue is under-reported or, if it is reported, older victims may not get the support and help they need.

Domestic abuse is where harm is done, or distress caused, to a person within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and the abuser is a partner/spouse of family member. Most Victims of elder abuse are older women with a chronic illness or disability and the most typical abusers are their partners, adult children, or family members.

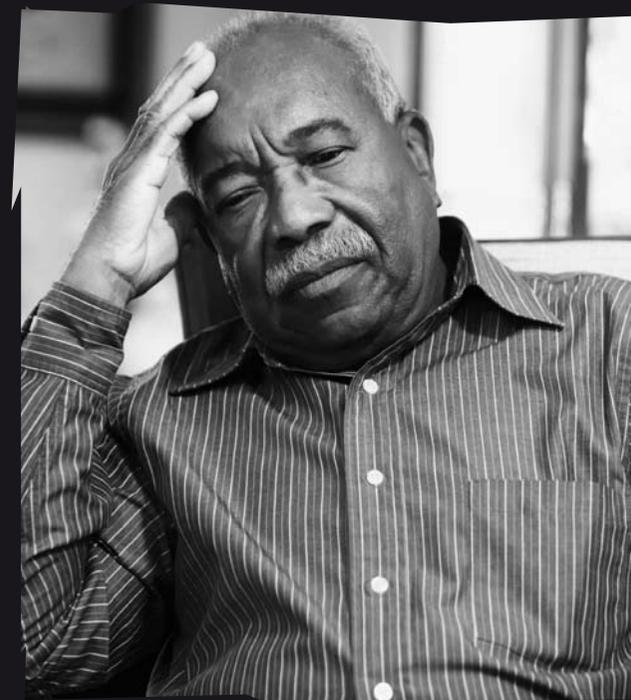
Evidence shows that:

- 500,000 people are believed to be abused at any one time in the UK
- 53% of those who abuse are sons or daughters
- Those between 80-89 years old are the most vulnerable to abuse.
- Two thirds of abuse is committed at home, by a relation, spouse/partner in a position of trust
- In 37% of situations, two types of abuse occur simultaneously
- In a third of circumstances, the abuse is perpetrated by more than one person in collusion²
- Research shows that spousal abuse is more likely to be violent whereas adult children are more likely to perpetrate financial abuse
- Older women are still more likely to experience abuse and may experience more barriers to disclosing abuse than younger women
- Older women may be more reluctant to report violence
- Older women may not see their experiences as relevant
- Older women's experiences of violence may have been some time ago and therefore they may have forgotten the incidents, or see them as no longer relevant³

When abuse begins or worsens in old age, it is likely to be linked to one or more of the following:

- Retirement
- Disability
- Changing roles of family members
- Sexual changes

However the majority of domestic abuse where an older person is the victim is domestic abuse grown old. Research does not support the **myth of the 'stressed care-giver'** as the predominant explanation for abuse.



¹ Generally meaning those aged 55 or over

² Source: NHS Barking and Dagenham

³ Women's Aid (2007) "Older Women and Domestic Violence" - www.womensaid.org.uk