



British Triathlon Safeguarding Adults

Types of Abuse and Signs and Symptoms



Introduction

British Triathlon is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and ensuring Triathlon is an inclusive sport to be enjoyed by all.

Types of Abuse and Indicators

People with care and support needs, such as older people or people with disabilities, are more likely to be abused or neglected. They may be seen as an easy target and may be less likely to identify abuse themselves or to report it. People with communication difficulties can be particularly at risk because they may not be able to alert others. Sometimes people may not even be aware that they are being abused, and this is especially likely if they have a cognitive impairment. Abusers may try to prevent access to the person they abuse.

Signs of abuse can often be difficult to detect. This At a glance briefing aims to help people who come into contact with people with care and support needs to identify abuse and recognise possible indicators. Many types of abuse are also criminal offences and should be treated as such.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour or issue which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical Abuse

Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Possible indicators of physical abuse

- No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened
- Injuries are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle
- Bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps
- Frequent injuries
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person
- Signs of malnutrition

Sexual Abuse

Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse

- Bruising, to the thighs and upper arms and marks on the neck
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- The uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude
- Self-harming
- Fear of receiving help with personal care
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

Financial or Material Abuse

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Possible indicators of financial or material abuse

- Missing personal possessions
- Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle
- The family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person
- Disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources

Neglect

Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Possible indicators of neglect

- Poor environment - dirty or unhygienic
- Poor physical condition and/or personal hygiene
- Malnutrition or unexplained weight loss
- Untreated injuries and medical problems
- Accumulation of untaken medication
- Uncharacteristic failure to engage in social interaction
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing

Emotional or Psychological Abuse

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Possible indicators of psychological or emotional abuse

- An air of silence when a particular person is present
- Withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person
- Low self-esteem
- Uncooperative and aggressive behaviour
- A change of appetite, weight loss/gain
- Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger
- Apparent false claims, by someone involved with the person, to attract unnecessary treatment

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.

Possible indicators of self-neglect

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration

- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury

Modern Slavery

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Possible indicators of modern slavery

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Always wearing the same clothes
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers

Domestic Abuse

Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It also includes so called 'honour' based violence. Sport may notice a power imbalance between a participant and a family member.

Possible indicators of domestic violence or abuse

- Low self-esteem
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not
- Physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones
- Verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others
- Fear of outside intervention
- Isolation - not seeing friends and family
- Limited access to money

Discriminatory

Discrimination is abuse which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse

- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- Expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety
- The support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic

Organisational Abuse

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Possible indicators of organisational abuse

- Lack of flexibility and choice for people using the service
- People being hungry or dehydrated
- Poor standards of care
- Lack of personal clothing and possessions and communal use of personal items

- Few social, recreational and educational activities
- Unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet

Not included in the Care Act 2014 but also relevant:

Cyber Bullying - cyberbullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages, or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person. It can be used to carry out many different types of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities) but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology as a means to do it.

Forced marriage - Is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 make it a criminal offence to force someone to marry.

Mate Crime - A 'mate crime' as defined by the Safety Net Project is 'when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.' Mate Crime is carried out by someone the adult knows and often happens in private. In recent years there have been a number of Serious Case Reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were murdered or seriously harmed by people who purported to be their friend.

Radicalisation - The aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.