

Adult Support and Protection - General Awareness



National Adult Support & Protection Coordinator
supporting those protecting others

Background: why does it matter?

Everyone deserves to live a life free from harm and Adult Support and Protection (ASP) is everyone's business. See the Iriss Publication [ASP - Everyone's Business](#)

What are my responsibilities? If you are concerned for an adult - take action. If you see something, say something! Where you think the criteria might be met - make an Adult Support and Protection referral. Contact your local Social Work department [Care Information Scotland - ASP Contact Information](#) Also see the [Iriss ASPire Hub](#) - for numerous helpful ASP resources and access to ASP Learning & Development Resources.

What else do I need to know? If you are employed by, or a volunteer of, any organisation in Scotland - you should have access to appropriate Learning and Development opportunities to know your responsibilities in relation to Adult Support and Protection - see the [National ASP Learning & Development Framework](#). Anyone can make a referral for any adult (person over 16 years old) living in Scotland, that they know or believe meets the criteria (see the **Who is an adult at Risk of Harm?** box - opposite).

What is current practice like?

The overarching principle of the Act is that any intervention into an adult's affairs should provide **benefit** to the adult, and should be the **least restrictive** option available. The **past and present wishes of the adult** (and any supportive carers) should be taken into account and the adult should be supported to **participate as fully as possible**. If required, specific Orders can be granted which can legally provide protection to the adult.

[Short introduction to ASP Act](#)

What is the legal framework?

[The Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#) was enacted in Autumn 2008. The Act places a duty on Councils to make inquiries about an individual's well-being, property or financial affairs where the Council knows or believes that the person is an adult at risk and that it may need to intervene to protect the adult from being harmed. The Act ensured that each Council area set up a multi-disciplinary Adult Protection Committee.

Who is an Adult at Risk of Harm?

The Act, defines 'adults at risk' as individuals, aged 16 years or over, who:

- are unable to safeguard themselves, their property, rights or other interests **and**;
- are at risk of **harm**; **and**
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than others who are not so affected.

What is meant by harm?

Harm relates to all harmful conduct and, includes:

- Physical harm
- Psychological harm
- Financial Harm
- Self-harm and Self-neglect
- Sexual harm
- Neglect