

Supporting people who self-neglect

An easy read leaflet for friends and families

2023



Self-neglect is when someone is not looking after themselves or their home well enough and is refusing help to make things better. It includes having poor personal hygiene and poor hygiene within the home.

Do you know someone who is struggling with self-care? They may be unable or unwilling to ask for help. They may have been injured or had a brain injury, have a learning disability, or be suffering with their mental health, loneliness, or isolation?

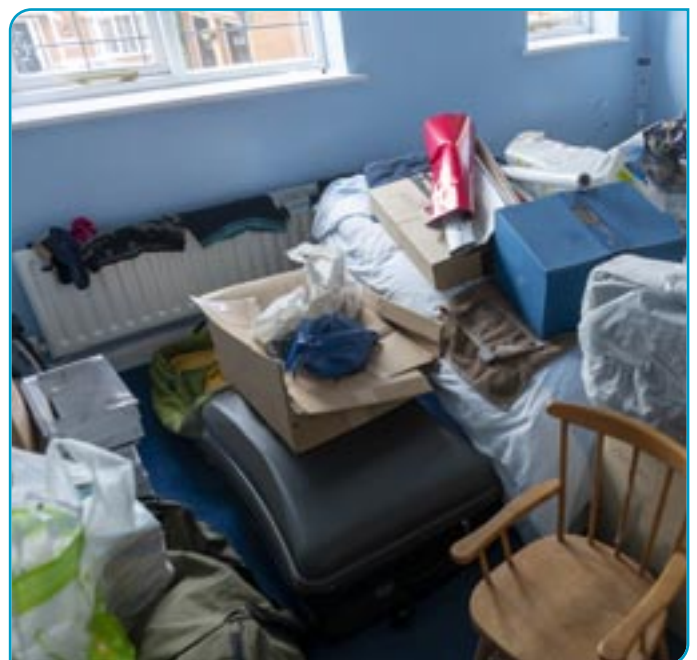
Some signs of self-neglect:

- poor diet and nutrition leading to significant weight loss or other associated health issues (including skin damage/pressure ulcers)
- social withdrawal from their family, community or support networks
- very poor personal hygiene and unkempt appearance
- lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- living in unclean or unsanitary conditions
- neglecting household maintenance
- hoarding.

How do I recognise self-neglect?

People who are self-neglecting may show one or more of these signs:

- the fridge is always empty or has mouldy food in it
- they have unclean clothes and bedding
- the home is excessively cluttered or untidy
- post is not opened
- they are not eating or drinking properly
- they are self-harming
- they are not taking their medication
- they are not looking after their health and reluctant to go to health appointments
- their house is unsafe and needs maintenance. It may even be a fire risk
- they are pushing those trying to help away and declining help from everyone
- they are taking drugs or alcohol to make them feel better and neglecting everything else
- they isolate themselves from everyone.



What do I do if I am concerned about someone who is self-neglecting?

- Be their friend - we all need a little help sometimes.
- Help them find someone they trust to talk to.
- Don't label them, just help them to get help.
- Build a relationship with them in a friendly reassuring conversation.
- Tell them not to worry or get embarrassed, help is available.
- Tell them that people will not judge them.

What do I do next?

Concerns around self-neglect are best approached by different agencies working together to help the person to find solutions. Ask someone you trust in one of the agencies mentioned here to set up a multi-agency meeting to help. These meetings are called MART meetings in Slough.



If you do not know anyone in any of these agencies, call Adult Social Care in Slough on 01753 475111, and ask to speak to a social worker about someone you are concerned about who you believe is self-neglecting. Remember to tell the person you are concerned about, that you are doing this.

Helpful organisations:

- Adult Social Care: 01753 475111
- Mental Health Services (Common Point of Entry): 01753 690950
- SBC Housing Department: 01753 475111
- Turning Point - Our local substance misuse service: 01753 692548
- SBC Resilience and Enforcement teams: 01753 475111.

Voluntary agencies and befriending organisations:

- Salvation Army: 01753 525819
- Age concern Slough & Berks East: 01753 822890
- Pakistani Welfare Association: 01753 821003
- Alzheimer society: 01628 626331
- Citizen Advice East Berks: 01753 981040
- Slough Foodbank: 01753 550303
- Slough Crossroads: 01753 525796
- Silver line Helpline: 0800 4 70 80 90
- Alzheimer's Society: 01628 626331.

Churches and places of worship may also be able to provide support, and Housing Associations also have their own support services.

This document can be made available on audio tape, braille or in large print, and is also available on the website where it can easily be viewed in large print.



This leaflet has been co-designed by SBC Co-Production network, local people with experience of using health and social care services, and professionals.

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There is also a full self-neglect protocol available [here](#).