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## Resources

[SAB Procedures - Self-Neglect and Hoarding](#)

[Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\) Self-Neglect at a Glance](#)

[Working with People who Self-Neglect](#)

[Self-Neglect Policy and Practice: Key Research Messages –Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\)](#)

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## What can you do?

- Work with partner agencies to ensure the right approach for each individual
- Establish who has the trusted relationship with the individual
- Be person-centered and look at what their priorities are – as these might be different to the professional's priorities.
- Be analytical to identify underlying causes that help address the issue
- Have patience and gain trust from the individual and agree small steps at a time
  - Remain professionally curious at all times.

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## Mental Capacity

Consider if the person has the mental capacity to make a particular decision and executive capacity which is the ability to carry out the decision. If the person has capacity, the actions proposed should be with their consent. If you are concerned about risk, you should escalate via your own agency's processes. In extreme cases of self-neglect and/or hoarding behaviour, the very nature of the environment should lead professionals to question whether the person has capacity to consent to the proposed action or intervention and trigger a mental capacity assessment.

# Bury Safeguarding Partnership

## 7 Minute Briefing: Self-Neglect



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## Why does it matter?

Reasons for self-neglect can be complex and may impact on a person's health, wellbeing or living conditions and there can also be a negative impact on others. Without early intervention, existing health problems may worsen. Neglect of personal hygiene may mean that the person suffers social difficulties and isolation, or physical/mental health breakdown. Dilapidated property or excess rubbish can become infested and can be a fire risk, which is a risk to the adult, family, neighbours and others.

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## What is Self-Neglect

Self-neglect is included as a category under adult safeguarding in [The Care Act \(2014\)](#). Self-neglect covers a wide range of behaviour relating to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings. Three recognised forms of self-neglect include:

- Lack of self-care – this may include neglecting personal hygiene, nutrition or health (e.g., non-attendance at medical appointments)
- Lack of care of one's environment – this may result in unpleasant or dirty home conditions, and increased risk of fire due to hoarding
  - Refusal of services that could exacerbate the above

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## Signs of Self-Neglect

Self neglect can affect anybody for a number of reasons. These can include mental wellbeing, trauma, social isolation, substance misuse, lack of friends or family, financial difficulties.

Signs can include:

- The person might be isolating themselves
- The upkeep of the outside of their home
  - Lack of people going to the house
  - The person might be unkempt
- Refusing care; not taking medication; not attending appointments

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## Causes of Self-Neglect

It is not always possible to establish the cause however self-neglect can be a result of:

- Brain injury, dementia or other mental disorder
  - Trauma
  - Social isolation or lack of family
  - Bereavement
- Physical illness which has effect on abilities, energy levels, attention span, organisational skills or motivation
  - Addiction