

## FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL ABUSE

**Background:** Financial and material abuse includes 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 & the misuse or misappropriation of property possessions or benefits without their consent or authorisation. Financial abuse can be perpetrated by people well known to the adult, can involve small and large values and can happen anywhere.

**Why it matters:** Financial abuse can feel confusing or frightening and impact on a person's mental health and wellbeing. People can experience a loss of confidence and self-esteem and sometimes shame that this has happened to them. This can impact on relationships with friends and family and can lead to isolation and loneliness or not taking part in social activities. It may also result in financial hardship that means the victim has difficulty affording their living costs and can take time to recover from.

**Questions to consider:** Prevention is the most effective way to protect adults from financial abuse. How do you raise awareness of the risks of financial abuse with the adults you work with? How do you use the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal to empower them to make choices & reduce risk? Are the risks of potential exploitation included in support plans and shared with care providers?

**Information:** It can happen to anyone but some people are more at risk: older people, people with learning disabilities, people with poor mental or physical health, people from minority ethnic communities, people who are isolated or are in debt. Scamming and identify fraud tend to be carried out by strangers but stealing & deliberate misuse of someone's money can often be done by someone in a position of trust, such as friend, relative, partner or carer.



**What to do:** From Jan-April 2021, Jersey saw a 100% increase in **reported** fraud and scams. Sometimes people may not be aware of what is happening to them, or the extent of the abuse. They may also not want to report the abuse. Financial abuse rarely stops by itself. If you think someone has been targeted by fraudsters or fallen victim to a scam and lost money, report it to the police on 612612. To make an adult safeguarding enquiry, call SPOR on 444440. For information on fraud and scams, visit [www.fraudprevention.je](http://www.fraudprevention.je), or [Financial Scamming and Fraud | NCPQSW](#)

Scams include romance fraud (sending money to someone they believe they are in a relationship with), mandate fraud (tricked into changing payments to a supplier), banking scams (tricked into moving money into another account to allegedly prevent a fraud), parcel delivery scams (asking for payment to be made in order to receive/release a parcel), property rental scams (tricked into paying deposits for fake rental properties) and sextortion (blackmailed by threatening to share video/photos of the victim of sexual nature).

**Indicators:** Lack of heating/clothing/food; inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money; lack of money; inadequately explained withdrawals from accounts; unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents; recent addition of signatories on accounts/cards, disparity between assets/income & living conditions; power of attorney obtained when adults lack capacity to make this decision; recent changes of deeds/title of house or will; recent acquaintances expressing sudden or disproportionate interest in the adult/their money; person not in control of their direct payment or individualised budget; mis-selling/ selling door to door traders/cold calling; illegal money-lending, financial & doorstep scams.