



## **THE THREE SHIRES MEDICAL PRACTICE**

Coleerne, Marshfield, Pucklechurch and Wick Surgeries

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## **Worried About Someone? Here's What You Can Do**

Seeing someone struggle as they get older can be upsetting, especially if they don't want help. Here's some advice on what to do.

### **Talking to Them**

Before you talk to the person, try to understand what's really going on. It might be something simple – like they're not eating well because they can't get to the shops. In that case, helping them order food online might be enough.

But sometimes it's more serious. Maybe they've stopped caring for themselves or their home, or their behaviour has changed. Try to look at the situation calmly.

### **Can They Make Their Own Decisions?**

If the person can still make their own choices (this is called having mental capacity), they have the right to live how they want – even if you don't agree. But if they can't make safe decisions and could be at risk, contact the adult safeguarding team at their local council.

### **What Level of Help Might Be Needed?**

Here are some examples of signs to look out for:

<b>Low Concern</b>	<b>Medium Concern</b>	<b>High Concern</b>	<b>Immediate Risk</b>
Not doing their hair or makeup	Not washing or dressing	Not eating, taking medicine	Dirty home, feeling suicidal
Less tidy than usual	Not going out	Drinking, smoking too much	Unsafe conditions, severe injuries

If you're very worried, don't try to handle it alone. Contact the local council's adult safeguarding team.

### **Things to Think About**

You usually can't force someone to get help unless they agree.

Try to see things from their point of view. They may:

- Be embarrassed or scared to ask for help
- Feel like nothing will change
- Not know where to start
- Feel like life doesn't matter anymore

### **Are You the Right Person to Help?**

You care, but that doesn't mean you have to fix everything yourself.

- Will they open up to you?
- Is helping them making you too stressed?
- Could another friend or family member help better?
- Talking to a professional could make a big difference

## How to Talk When You're Worried

1. Listen first. Don't jump to fix things. Ask how they're doing.
2. Ask open questions. For example, "What did you eat today?"
3. Listen without judging. Don't interrupt or argue. Show you care.
4. Focus on them. Talk about how they feel, not what you want.
5. Take small steps. Agree on little changes, not everything at once.
6. Talk more than once. Have short chats over time. Take breaks if needed.

## If You Can't Agree

It's hard to see someone you care about make bad choices. But adults can choose how to live unless they are very unwell. If they don't want help after you've talked, you have to respect their choice. It's hard, but it's their life to live.

## Where to Get Support and Advice

### Local Council Safeguarding Team or to request Care Needs Assessment

A care needs assessment works out what help or support someone needs with their care, and how you might get it.

**South Gloucestershire – 01454 868007**

**Wiltshire – 0300 456 0111**

### Age UK

They give advice to over 50s. This includes benefit checks and support if you feel lonely. They can also offer help with finding local services to support living at home.

**South Gloucestershire – 01454 411707**

**Wiltshire – 0808 196 2424**

### Care Coordinators at Three Shires Medical Practice

Care coordinators work to find and support patients in need of help. This includes if you have long term health problems, frailty, or care for someone. They give advice and connect you with health and care services.

**01179 371002**

### Carer support

A carer supports someone who would not manage without their help. If you are a carer there are support services that can help. You can call them on the numbers below.

**Carer Support South Gloucestershire – 0117 965 2200**

**Carers Together Wiltshire – 01380 710300**

### Carents UK

The one-stop-shop for looking after elderly parents. Information, support and practical guides. Online only.

**<https://carents.co.uk/>**

## Finally

We hope you have found this information helpful. Please ask us about anything you don't understand.