Organisational Abuse

Organisational/Institutional abuse can be defined, as abuse or mistreatment by a regime as well as by individuals within any health or care setting or person’s own home. 

Organisational/ Institutional abuse violates the person’s dignity, which results in lack of respect for their human rights. Organisational/Institutional abuse may range from a one-off incident to ongoing ill treatment. It can be neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, process and practices within an organisation, which results in poor or inadequate standards of care and poor practice which affects the whole setting and denies, restricts or curtails the dignity, privacy, choice, independence or fulfilment of adults at risk.

The risk of organisational/ institutional abuse increases in services:

* With poor management.
* With too few staff.
* Which use rigid routines and inflexible practices.
* Where there is a closed culture.
* Where there is poor training of staff.
* Where there is poor supervision of staff and inadequate guidance.
* Where there is a culture of failing to promote people’s rights.
* Where is there is a lack of or poor response to complaints.
* Where there is poor communication between staff, residents, managers, visitors and carers.
* Where there are inflexible services based on the convenience of the provider rather than the person receiving the services.
* Where there is a lack of adherence to confidentiality.
* Where there is a lack of understanding regarding the importance of person-centred planning.
* Where there are out of date/poor care plans, risk assessment and care reviews.

Indicators of institutional abuse:

* Lack of dignity, privacy or respect.
* Lack of opportunity for drinks or snacks outside of main mealtimes.
* Lack of choice regarding meals.
* Lack of flexibility and choice, excessively rigid routines.
* Lack of opportunity to personalise environment, lack of personal possessions.
* Use of restraint except where there has been clear multi agency risk assessment and planning.
* Lack of choice of same sex staff to undertake intimate personal care.
* Treating adults as children.
* Lack of choice in everyday activities.
* Changes in accommodation (within or between homes) without agreement.
* Denial of individual identity.
* Lack of privacy and personal care.
* Lack of personal clothing or possessions.
* Being left on toilet/commode for long periods
* Discouraging visits or the involvement of relatives or friends
* Run-down or overcrowded establishment
* Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
* Failure to manage residents with abusive behaviour
* Misuse of medication
* Failure to provide care with dentures, spectacles or hearing aids
* Not taking account of individuals’ cultural, religious or ethnic needs
* Failure to respond to abuse appropriately
* Interference with personal correspondence or communication
* Failure to respond to complaints
* People being hungry or dehydrated
* Poor standards of care
* Lack of personal clothing and possessions and communal use of personal items
* Lack of adequate procedures
* Poor record-keeping and missing documents
* Absence of visitors
* Few social, recreational and educational activities
* Unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet
* Lack of management overview and support

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse#self-neglect>

[What is Organisational Abuse? - Ann Craft Trust](https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/what-is-organisational-abuse/)