



Exploitation in Hotel Settings Notes – Homeless Services Staff

The housing of people experiencing homelessness in hotels will certainly have a positive impact. It is an opportunity to engage with many individuals who have previously been completely isolated from services. However, we also need to be aware of the risks of exploitation.

As support staff you have a responsibility to identify exploitation done to or by the people that you are supporting. It is important that in addition to knowing the signs of exploitation, you have professional curiosity, know the right questions to ask and are aware of the steps to take if someone needs support following an incident of exploitation.

Type of Exploitation



Sexual Exploitation

People might be forced to sell sex against their will and not receive the money. This does not include voluntary sex work.



Labour Exploitation

People might be forced to work in sectors such as construction, agriculture, and manufacturing.



Forced Crime

People personal details might be used for benefits or financial fraud, they might be forced to beg, shoplift or commit violent crimes.



Drugs Trade

People might be forced to store, transport, grow, or sell drugs. This might occur inside or outside the hotel.

Spot the Signs

General Signs of Exploitation	
Large amounts of cash in room	Residents mention someone has access to their bank account or that their benefits are going to others
A resident mentions they owe money	A resident is always accompanied by another
Drugs found in a room or around hotel	Residents show signs of trauma
Strangers at the hotel demanding money or favours	Strangers trying to enter the premises
Residents with signs of assault or abuse	Residents won't say where they are going
Multiple visitors to one room	Residents receive luxury gifts
Targeting younger residents ' taking under their wing '	Residents picked up & dropped off from the hotel



<i>Sexual Exploitation</i>	<i>Criminal Exploitation</i>	<i>Labour Exploitation</i>	<i>Financial Exploitation</i>
A resident requests more bedding or towels	Young or vulnerable people visiting the hotel frequently	Strangers hanging around outside the hotel, trying to befriend residents	Resident may not have any money the day their benefits are paid
Resident leaves the hotel at night, especially if picked up/dropped off	Violence and threats within the hotels between groups of residents	Leaving the hotel for long periods of time during the day or at night	Resident may show increased worry/panic on certain day of the week
Multiple used condoms in a room	Resident mentions 'bullying' or intimidation	Resident mentions payment in drugs or alcohol	Resident may not have access to own money, benefits or bank card
Signs of a controlling or abusive relationship	Finding weapons within the accommodation	Being picked up in vehicle from outside the hotel	Resident leaves hotel after receiving call
Frequent visitors to the same hotel room throughout the day or evening	Young residents joining group of older, long-term homeless individuals		

How to Report

You **do not** need to be sure. You **do not** need all to see all the signs. **Use your instinct**, if you think something isn't right, report it. If someone is in **immediate danger**, call **999**.

If there is **no immediate danger** you can either:

1. Inform the local authority **social worker** (if there is one on your site)
2. Call the police on **101**
3. Call the Modern Slavery Helpline **0800 0121 700**
4. Call the England Illegal Money Lending Team **0300 555 2222**
5. Report concerns through the **STOP APP**

The STOP App is an independent app created by Stop the Traffik which you can use to report even the smallest bits of information. The app supports multiple languages and can be downloaded from google play or the apple store.

Questions to Ask

These questions can help you identify stories of exploitation. Its important to know that many people who experience modern slavery don't recognise it as 'trafficking' and don't see themselves as 'victims'. It has commonly been referred to just as 'bullying' within the homeless community.

- Have you ever been offered work or favours for little or no wages or in exchange for food, accommodation, drugs or alcohol?
- Have you ever felt intimidated, manipulated or pressured into doing a job or favour?
 - If yes, do you think that person/group are a danger to you right now?
- Do you have a bank account?
 - If yes, does anyone else have access to your bank account?
- Have you ever owed money to people who have asked you to repay them by doing jobs or favours?
 - If yes, do you owe money to anyone right now?
- Have you borrowed money from someone and what you owe keeps increasing?
 - Do you know what you owe?
- Has anyone ever given you a job that ended up being very different to what you were promised?
- Have you been offered work that sounds too good to be true?
- Has someone taken your personal belongings or documents?
- Have you noticed people suddenly disappearing from the streets?



Steps to Support

In preparation for a survivor being referred to an agency with statutory obligations and the ability and resources to provide support, please consider the following:

1. Ask the individual what they want to do
2. Find out if they need immediate medical assistance or scripting
3. Consider early legal advice especially if they have No Recourse to Public Funds or don't have status in the UK
4. Make notes of what they say, but don't ask them their story, don't ask them details. If they tell you, listen, thank them for sharing, raise any safeguarding concerns and document it in the way they told you as a disclosure.
5. Refer to the designated Safeguarding lead and ensure you are familiar with your sites current safeguarding policy
6. Make contact with necessary agencies & potential referral into National Referral Mechanism

Maintaining a Trauma Informed Approach

It is important to have an understanding that a person who has experienced trauma won't respond in the same way to support that someone who hasn't would, always keeping in your mind that this person

- Provide a calm, consistent and welcoming environment
- Focus on current and future safety needs
- Demonstrate interest in survivors' immediate safety, health and practical needs
- Vet other people who accompany survivors to meetings or appointments
- Work appropriately with interpreters
- Explain the identity, role and duties of all professionals in the room.
- Ensure that survivors' consent is informed and given freely
- Work effectively and safely with parents who are with children and babies.
- Set realistic goals and objectives
- Minimise any distress by referring to the 'Here and Now'

Further Training

If you or your organisations feel unsure about the support available for survivors of exploitation, would like more information on the National Referral Mechanism or would be interested in general further information on training on the issue, please reach out to:

Questions & further information

Stop the Traffik, Tom Madden - Tom.madden@stophetraffik.org

Arranging further training around modern slavery & homelessness:

Human Trafficking Foundation, National Network of Coordinators Forum

- Webpage: Map of survivor support services (yellow pins are anti-slavery partnerships)
<https://www.humantraffickingfoundation.org/support-services>
- Email: For details of local partnership if contact details on map not up-to-date:
info@humantraffickingfoundation.org