

Keeping you safe.

We are constantly looking after our own safety on a day to day basis when we carry out our daily routines or chores. Everything that we do has potential dangers and we are aware and assess each risk mostly subconsciously. For example, we assess the risk when we get into the car, and reduce the risk by fastening our seatbelts.

When you become a volunteer with Community Connections, there will be different or new aspects of safety that you may need to take into account: you will be visiting a person in their home which will be unfamiliar. This means that you will need to be more alert to possible risks. You will need to think about 'manual handling' when lifting people's shopping, or how you travel to somebody's house if the area is unfamiliar to you.

Community Connections will only take referrals where the individual involved has agreed to receive a visit / support from a volunteer, therefore the volunteer will be welcomed into their homes. The referrals will identify any potential risks that could impact on the volunteer, such as pets, the need for medication, aggression etc.

Community Connections advise that volunteers adopt the following precautions to safeguard yourself.

- Don't visit anyone without telling the project coordinator.
- Try and give an estimated time for your return, or phone if the visit is going to take much longer.
- Do not give the individual your personal phone number or home address.
- Don't accept a lift home from any individual.
- Do not lend, give or borrow or accept money from the beneficiary.
- Never accept an alcoholic drink while you are visiting/ befriending.
- Be alert to the responses of the person you are supporting; use your instincts to pick up changes in mood; listen to their tone of voice and be aware of their body language.



If someone becomes aggressive towards you, you should:

- Try to stay calm, and make sure that you are on the same level as the aggressive person – if they are standing, stand up to so that you look less vulnerable.
- Do not touch someone who is angry.
- Respond confidently and use the person's name and address them directly. Being aggressive back could escalate the situation.
- Be aware of the exits out of the house and room and position yourself near them.
- Leave as soon as possible if you feel you are at risk.

If you do encounter a difficult situation or if something rings alarm bells for you, report it promptly to your project coordinator who will ensure that you get the right support.

