



## Tool 1.5: Sexual abuse: behaviours and signs

**Sexual abuse** is a term used to describe a range of sexual acts where the victim's consent has not been obtained or where consent has been obtained through coercion.<sup>7</sup>

### Behaviours

- Sexual assault: touching or penetration of the vagina or anus.
- Indecent assault: any unwanted sexualised behaviour such as grabbing someone's breast or penis; exposing genitals.
- Aggravated sexual assault: indicates use of a weapon, force or threat.
- Non-consensual sexual contact and other sexual behaviours.
- Cleaning or treating the older person's genital area roughly or inappropriately.
- Unwanted exposure to pornography.
- Enforced nudity of an older person.
- Sexual harassment: any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviours.
- Any behaviour that makes an older person feel uncomfortable about their body or gender.

### Signs

- Unexplained STD or incontinence (bladder or bowel).
- Injury and trauma (scratches, bruises etc.) to face, neck, chest, abdomen, thighs or buttocks.
- Trauma including bleeding around the genitals, chest, rectum or mouth.
- Torn or bloody underclothing or bedding.
- Human bite marks.
- Difficulty walking, sitting or pain when toileting.
- Anxiety around the perpetrator and other psychological symptoms.
- Fear of being touched.

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### Tess's story

Tess is an 83-year-old woman. She lives in a granny flat adjoining her daughter, Jackie and son-in-law, John's property.

Unbeknownst to Jackie, John has been making unwelcome visits to Tess. John exposes himself and talks about what he would like to do with Tess in a sexually explicit way.

Tess wants to move away but worries if she tells her daughter, it will ruin their relationship.

*Behaviours – John is exposing himself and using sexually explicit language.*

*Signs – Tess is worried and wants the behaviours to stop.*

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