

**A series
of research
projects about
health and
social care for
older people.**



Just because I'm old doesn't mean I'm vulnerable

Do adults over the age of 65
believe they are vulnerable?

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Overview

This research explores the views older people hold in relation to vulnerability and whether or not older people actually believe themselves to be vulnerable.

The British Geriatric Society believes that all specialists working in older people's health care are in a pivotal position to recognise vulnerable adults and to work with multi-disciplinary teams to help those adults who are believed to be vulnerable.

Perceptions of older people as a vulnerable group were common in early thinking on ageing and persist in certain stereotypical media portrayals. Most current research rightly criticises blanket assumptions of older people's dependence and vulnerability.

While certain risks are indisputably shaped by age, there are a number of factors of which vulnerability is ultimately the product. Yet so far, few attempts have been made to draw parallels or learn from different experiences, or understand what older people understand by the term vulnerable.

Initial analysis of evidence suggests that that people over 65, living at home in the community do not see themselves as vulnerable.

“I think vulnerability is not dependent on age anymore”

“I was talking about our mental and physical health being a sort of “armour” against vulnerability”

