

Serious failures to protect individuals from abuse essay sample

[Psychology](#), [Abuse](#)



Harold Shipman graduated from Leeds school of medicine in 1970, and moved to Todmorden in 1974 to practice as a GP. In 1975 he was caught forging prescriptions for pethidine for his own use, and was fined £600 and ordered to attend a drug rehabilitation clinic. For the following years, he worked in several temporary jobs before securing a position as a GP in 1977 and eventually setting up his own surgery in Hyde in 1993. Dr. Linda Reynolds of Brooke Street Surgery in Hyde reported to the coroner in March 1998 that she and Deborah Massey from Frank Massey and Son's Funeral Parlour both had concerns about the high death rate of Harold Shipman's patients. A particular area of concern was the number of cremation forms for elderly women that needed to be countersigned, and Dr. Reynolds believed Harold Shipman was responsible for their deaths. The matter was brought to the attention of the police, but they were unable to find enough evidence to press charges. The Shipman Inquiry later blamed the police for assigning inexperienced officers to the case, the first failing of the authorities which led to a further 3 people being killed before Shipman was eventually arrested and convicted. Shipman's last victim was found dead at her home on 24th June 1998.

He was the last person to see her alive, and signed her death certificate recording 'old age' as the cause of death. The victim's daughter became concerned when a solicitor informed her that a will had been made by her mother, leaving everything to Shipman and nothing to her or her children. This was reported to the police who began an investigation, during which the victim's body was exhumed and found to contain traces of diamorphine.

When investigating other deaths that Shipman had certified, they discovered

a pattern of him administering lethal overdoses of diamorphine, signing the patient's death certificates and then forging their medical records to indicate they were in poor health. The legal structures concerning health care and medicine were modified as a result of the Harold Shipman Inquiry, with recommendations being made to change the procedures for producing death and cremation certificates, and the investigation of death by a coroner.

Had these procedures been in place, and checked correctly then Shipman would have been unable to produce so many falsified death certificates for his victims. Recommendations were also made to change the procedure for managing and regulating controlled drugs, with tighter controls to ensure doctors could not stock large amounts of these lethal drugs. The unsafe practice of allowing Harold Shipman access to large quantities of diamorphine gave him the means to murder so many people. A further report highlighted the need for change in the complaints and whistle blowing procedure against GPs, with a call for a central NHS database that contained information on all practicing doctors and a system to allow staff to raise concerns. Throughout Shipman's career as a GP, he physically abused his victims to the point of killing more than 250 people, and financially abused victims by falsifying wills and other legal documents. The Shipman Inquiry identified a number of failings in the system that allowed this abuse to happen and its recommendations were put in place to ensure this wouldn't happen again.

Jimmy Savile

Jimmy Savile was a television presenter and media personality, and raised an estimated £40million for charities. Following his death in 2011, hundreds of allegations of child sex abuse and rape became public. A joint report by the NSPCC, Metropolitan Police and Giving Victims a Voice stated that 450 people had made complaints against Savile, with the period of abuse stretching from 1955 to 2009 and the ages of victims at the time of assault ranging from 8 to 47. During his lifetime he was noted for fundraising and supporting charities and hospitals, and was awarded an OBE in 1971 and knighted in 1990. The Guardian reported that Savile, who had raised a substantial amount of money for Stoke Mandeville hospital, 'lived' in a hospital bedroom that managers had given him and he could do as he pleased. Because of his charity work and him being a high profile public figure, he was allowed unsupervised access to the wards and no one had a problem with him doing so as 'all the doctors knew him'.

Almost a year after his death in October 2012, an ITV documentary examined the claims of sexual abuse against Savile which led to further accusations of sexual abuse being uncovered and accusations against public bodies for a failure of duty to protect individuals from abuse and covering the incidents up because they were made against a well-respected public figure. The scandal resulted in inquiries or reviews across several large organisations including the BBC, the NHS, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Department of Health. There were investigations as to why the CPS took the decision not to prosecute over allegations in 2009, when there were new allegations as well as those that dated back to the 1970s. Allegedly, the CPS

advised the police that no further action should be taken because of a lack of evidence against Savile who was still alive at the time. It was reported that the CPS should have referred sex abuse claims to relevant agencies, including social services, where evidence was not deemed strong enough for a criminal prosecution.

There were serious failures to protect individuals from abuse by Jimmy Savile, firstly in failing to take the allegations seriously and secondly in covering them up to protect the public image of the companies Savile represented. Following the Savile Inquiry, it was reported that the child protection system should be overhauled to ensure vulnerable teenagers are taken seriously when they come forward to report allegations of sexual or physical abuse. The report identified that there was a failure to recognise the signs of abuse and understand the long-term impact in victims. It was reported that older children who make allegations of abuse are often not believed and are dismissed by those in authority because of preconceptions about their previous behaviour or about the standing and reputation of the alleged perpetrator. This appears to be the case with Jimmy Savile, as he was respected for his charity work, and a public figure who worked at the BBC. The report also noted that with the exception of young babies, children aged 14 and over are the most vulnerable to abuse. Teenagers often do not recognise they are being abused, and those who do are often reluctant to disclose it because of shame, embarrassment or mistrust of authorities.