

# **Risk Guidance in Safeguarding Adults**

Your role in assessing and managing risk in situations where an adult may be at risk of abuse is crucial.

## **Failure to:**

- **Fully assess risk**
- **Take the necessary steps to address this with the adult at risk (taking account of the adult's views, experiences or concerns)**
- **Collaborate in a planned manner with multi agency colleagues**
- **Keep accurate records**
- **Recognise the case holder or lead manager through which all information should flow at all stages of the process**

**Has led to concerns being overlooked or ignored and service users being at risk of serious on-going abuse.**

## Person Centred Principles

- Put the person at the centre. Listen. Promote well being. Build trust relationships. Encourage participation and involvement. Take steps to support person to communicate
- Empower people (access to information and support). Enable them to have choice and control of their own life as far as possible
- Work with people to identify and manage risk
- Share assessment of risk with the person
- Build in reviews to make sure we learn from what works and what does not in individual plans as well as the service as a whole

## Risk Management

- Think holistically
- Agree on prioritised risks and document them
- Agree what steps are required to minimise risks
- Be clear on who is doing what
- Identify a care co-ordinator from the professionals or agencies involved
- Agree on timescales for review
- Agree on potential signs or indicators that the situation may be deteriorating
- Monitor for change in signs or indicators and adjust the risk management plan accordingly
- Agree on steps for escalating concerns
- Consider review with your line manager

## Information Sharing

Share information that is:

- Relevant, timely, proportional to the risks identified
- Share with key people or agencies who need to know and within agreed timescales
- Share in a secure way

## **Mental Capacity**

- **Presume capacity and support person to make own choices**
- **Unwise decisions do not in themselves imply incapacity**
- **Maximise capacity, for example use a variety of communication techniques**
- **Understand when and how to carry out Capacity Assessments**
- **Assessing capacity – decision dependent but could your responsibility, not someone else's. How and with whom you share that information might be a multi agency owned process**
- **Act in person's Best Interests where they lack capacity to make a decision**
- **Consider person's Human Rights when acting in their Best Interests**
- **Act in the least restrictive way**

## **Defensible Decision Making**

- **You are accountable for decisions and actions taken or not taken**
- **Record reasons for decisions**
- **Record different perspectives**
- **Demonstrate a proportionate approach**

## **Multi-Agency best practice**

- **Talking to the right people**
- **Sharing information**
- **Evidence of shared decision making**
- **Communication with all parties involved in the care package**
- **Shared approach to planning care and support**
- **No 'silo' working**

- **Good Risk Assessments start with the adult at risk**
- **Good risk management means working with the person to identify, discuss and address the risks identified. Ensure that the person is fully informed about any risks you are concerned about**
- **Where this agreement with the person is not possible or is refused, an objective decision will need to be collectively taken where there is continued risk of harm to the person and/or others**
- **The importance of assessing mental health, particularly where this may be affecting decision making, cannot be over-emphasised. This equally applies to the importance of assessment of mental capacity in risk management**
- **Risk Management Plans can involve one or many people or organisations providing support or services**
- **Everybody in the risk management plan needs to know the extent of their involvement and where it starts and finishes**

## **Safeguarding is everyone's business**

- **The safeguarding process is a multi-agency process co-ordinated by the local Authority – when the safeguarding process starts, agencies need to work with colleagues in relevant organisations to support the needs of the adult at risk**
- **If the Local Authority is the co-ordinator, it needs to be held to account for maintaining open communication channels**
- **All agencies should be 'critical friends' and know when and how to challenge decisions made or not made whilst maintaining professional standards**