

Safeguarding adults at risk – Professional Curiosity

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Webinar: house keeping

- Please put all microphones on **MUTE**
- If you would like to ask a question, please use the **CHAT** function
- **RESPECT** the stories you hear and protect the identity of adults at risk through **CONFIDENTIALITY**
- Take care of your own **WELLBEING** throughout this session

The role of BSAB

- BSAB is a partnership, it includes the local authority, clinical commissioning group, police, fire service, housing, health and social care providers and voluntary organisations. The board provides partner agencies opportunities to review practice, provide positive cross-agency challenges to enable accountability and strengthen the culture of continuous improvement.
- Our priorities this year are:
 - To establish that safeguarding practice reflects 'MSP' principles, meaning that adults at risk and people important to them are involved in decisions about how best to protect them from harm
 - Adults at risk are heard and their experiences shape continuous improvement
 - That we advance equality of opportunity, including ensuring access to justice for adults at risk
- S44 Care Act: statutory function to review cases where an adult with care and support needs dies or suffered serious harm as a result of abuse or neglect and there is reasonable cause for concern about how the SAB, members of it or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult.



Making Safeguarding Personal: Professional Curiosity

- **Professional curiosity** is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a household/ family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value.
- This has been described as the need for practitioners to practice '**respectful uncertainty**' – applying critical evaluation to any information they receive and maintaining an open mind. In safeguarding the term 'safe uncertainty' is used to describe an approach which is focused on safety but that takes into account changing information, different perspectives and acknowledges that certainty may not be achievable.
- More info available at:
<https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/resource/professional-curiosity-resources-practitioners/>

Key Points

- **Key Points**
- Show compassion, listen so that how you support the person respects their wishes and values.
- Be courageous and ask difficult questions, making sure that you provide a safe space for adults at risk to disclose concerns. Consider asking for help from trusted persons already involved within SAB partners (e.g.GPs, housing officers)
- Think the unthinkable; believe the unbelievable
- Consider how you can articulate 'intuition' into an evidenced, professional view and discuss 'gut feelings' with other practitioners





Case Study: transitional safeguarding

Ms A is 21, she was known to children services ['CSC'] and was on a child protection plan due to long term neglect. At 17.5 she moved in with her 'boyfriend'. He is known to police, who have raised concerns that Ms A was at high risk of sexual and criminal exploitation. CSC put in a package of support, but she frequently absconded to return to her boyfriend's address. Over 20-21 she frequently came into contact with police as she continued to engage in sex work and drug use, neighbours also raised concerns re domestic abuse and anti-social behaviours. Health partners report she is currently exhibiting self-harming behaviours, but has recently been assessed as not meeting the criteria for admission under the Mental Health Act. Mental health professionals believe her presentations are suggestive of an emotional unstable personality disorder. She has been assessed as having capacity to make choices.



- Taking into account the criteria under s42(1) Care act, namely:
 - Adult with care and support needs
 - At risk of or experience abuse/neglect
 - Unable to protect themselves
- How would you use your skills and legal powers, together with partner agencies, to engage with Ms A to better understand the risk she faces and put in place an effective protection plan?

Case Study: Hidden harm

Mr B is 81, he was diagnosed 8 years ago with Alzheimer's and was seen every 6 months by the memory clinic. In November 2019 the memory clinic, concerned about the speed of his decline referred him to ASC for an assessment under s9 Care Act. ASC have offered to undertake this and assess his son under s10 Care Act for carers support. Both have been declined. His son reported he moved in to care for his father during the lockdowns in 20-21. He has been provided with details of local voluntary sector support.

The police have submitted a MERLIN Mr B was found wandering, unaware of his surroundings and distressed.

His GP and staff at the memory clinic confirm they have not seen Mr B since November 2019, but have been assured when they have called his son for quarterly welfare checks that he is fine.





- Taking into account the criteria under s42(1) Care act, namely:
 - Adult with care and support needs
 - At risk of or experience abuse/neglect
 - Unable to protect themselves
- How would you use your professional expertise and legal powers to evaluate the risks to Mr B and ensure his current care arrangements were safe?

How to report concerns in Barnet

Social care direct at Barnet council are the point of first contact

- **Tel 020 8359 5000 text (SMS) 07506 693707**
email socialcaredirect@barnet.Gov.Uk

Police community safety unit in an
emergency 999

- **Tel 020 8200 1212 email sxmailbox-tib@met.Pnn.Police.Uk**

- What happens after you report abuse:

<https://www.Barnet.Gov.Uk/sites/default/files/assets/citizenportal/documents/adultsocialcare/whathappensafteryoureportabusebookletmay12.Pdf>

- Your concern should always be taken seriously and acknowledged. Usually the adult at risk will be consulted and you should always be told if the concern will be investigated.
- If you hadn't had this it is ok to ask again!



Further reading



- 'Safeguarding Adults under the Care Act 2014', Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice>: MCA Code of Practice
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>: Care Act statutory guidance
- <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/adult-safeguarding-practice-questions/>: SCIE guidance and <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/adult-suspected-at-risk-of-neglect-abuse/> on gaining access to an adult at risk
- http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/p_to_r/prosecuting_crimes_against_older_people/#mental: Guidance on prosecuting crimes against adults at risk
- https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/25.130%20Making%20Decisions%20on%20the%20duty_06%20WEB.pdf: LGA and ADASS guidance on decision making re s42 enquiries