

Risk assessment and risk management

The risk management plan is the safeguarding plan. It is put in place to remove or minimise risk to the person, and others who may be affected. This assessment must always consider the balance between risk and the perceived benefit to the adult at risk. It will need to be monitored, reviewed and amended/revised as circumstances arise and develop.

A risk assessment must be undertaken when a concern is raised. This should clarify the degree of risk to the adult at risk, other adults and/or children.

Risk should be constantly re-evaluated throughout the process to ensure adults at risk and all others involved are appropriately protected.

Organisations will have a range of risk assessment tools in paper and IT formats to assist staff in risk assessment.

Risk assessments will seek to determine the following facts:

A summary of the presenting concerns:

- Who is saying that the person is at risk (professional/relatives/informal carer)?
- What are they saying and what information leads them to this conclusion?
- Does the person agree with what is being said?
- What is their view of the situation?
- What is known about their mental capacity?
- Should other professionals be involved in a multidisciplinary assessment? If so, who?

The alleged abuse:

What is the nature of the alleged abuse?

- evidence of abuse;
- harm/potential harm.

Risk assessment:

Are there factors that may mean the adult at risk could be more vulnerable to abuse?

- Mental capacity or deprivation of liberty issues;
- They are frail or have a disability;
- They appear to be emotionally dependent;
- They may be socially isolated;
- They may have communication needs;
- They may be financially dependent;
- Their carer may be under stress;
- Wider environmental issues.

Assessment of the seriousness of the alleged abuse and the risk of abuse reoccurring.

- How long has the abuse been occurring?
- Are the incidences increasing?
- Could significant harm/major injury result?
- What could be the worst possible outcome?
- What is the impact on the individual/others/children?
- Is the abusive behaviour deliberate?
- Does the abuser still have access to the adult at risk?
- What is the attitude of the alleged person alleged to cause harm now?
- What monitoring options are available?
- Are supportive measures in place, or can they be put in place?

Wishes of the alleged adult at risk.

- Are they aware of the abuse?
- What is their view /do they understand the risk?
- Do they wish to remain in the same situation?
- Does the person wish involvement from other agencies?
- Do they consent to information being shared?

Are there factors that mitigate (provide some protection against) the risk?

Consider the person's own:

- coping abilities and strengths;
- awareness of security in own home;
- awareness of own rights;
- awareness of what is abuse;
- supportive informal networks – family/friends/social contacts etc;
- support services – arranged care.

What is the immediate safeguarding plan?

- Does the person need to move from their environment to be safeguarded?
- If so, what alternative arrangements need to be made? Who will do this?
- Do other people also need support or safeguarding?
- Does the alleged person alleged to cause harm also have support needs?

- Do supportive measures need to be put in place in the current environment?

Who needs to be informed?

- Family carers, direct payments arrangements, other agencies involved etc.

Are other referrals or assessments needed, for example:

- Health, support for alleged person alleged to cause harm, emergency services, police, community care assessment.
- What are the contingency arrangements should this plan not deliver the desired outcomes?
- What are the arrangements for review of the safeguarding plan and how does this link with the ongoing safeguarding adults from abuse investigation.