

Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) are a statutory requirement for Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs). Safeguarding adult practice can be improved by identifying what is helping and what is hindering safeguarding work, in order to tackle barriers to good practice and protect adults from harm.

Adult FF

Adult FF died at home in mid-November 2019, aged 94 years. At the time of his death, Mr FF was living in unsanitary conditions with evidence of self-neglect. Several agencies were involved with Mr FF. However, Mr FF did not always accept the services offered and he did not fully engage with agencies.

Themes that emerged from the Safeguarding Adult Review in to Adult FF;

- ◆ Lack of robust joint risk assessments and planning
- ◆ Poor use of safeguarding meetings and case conferences
- ◆ Lack of multi-agency information sharing
- ◆ Not working to principles of Making Safeguarding Personal
- ◆ Lack of understanding of legislative options when someone is presenting as self-neglecting
- ◆ Application and understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005
- ◆ Not always hearing the voice of the family

Agencies Involved; CCG, Thames Valley Police, Private Sector Housing, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, Buckinghamshire Adult Social Care. Environmental Health, Buckinghamshire Adult Safeguarding

Examples of Good Practice

When developing an approach to work with someone showing signs of self-neglect, it is important to try to understand the individual and what may be driving their behaviour. Here are some general pointers for an effective approach:

Multi-agency: Work with partners to ensure the right approach for each individual

Person centred: Respect the views and the perspective of the individual, listen to them and work towards the outcomes they want

Acceptance: Good risk management may be the best achievable outcome, it may not be possible to change the person's lifestyle or behaviour

Analytical: It may be possible to identify underlying causes that help to address the issue

Non-judgemental: It isn't helpful for practitioners to make judgements about cleanliness or lifestyle; everyone is different

Empathy: It is difficult to empathise with behaviours we cannot understand, but it is helpful to try

Patience and time: Short interventions are unlikely to be successful, practitioners should be enabled to take a long-term approach

Trust: Try to build trust and agree small steps

Reassurance: The person may fear losing control, it is important to allay such fears

Bargaining: Making agreements to achieve progress can be helpful but it is important that this approach remains respectful

Exploring alternatives: Fear of change may be an issue so explaining that there are alternative ways forward may encourage the person to engage

Always go back: Regular, encouraging engagement and gentle persistence may help with progress and risk management

Link to the Adult FF report;

[Safeguarding Adult Reviews - Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board \(buckssafeguarding.org.uk\)](https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk)

Recommendations

The new interagency Safeguarding Adults' Procedures should explicitly provide professionals:

- ◆ with clear criteria defining the safeguarding thresholds including definitions for the level of risks identified and their appropriate intervention including compulsory intervention – this is not about descriptors of concern but about levels of safeguarding risk requiring intervention.
- ◆ with flowcharts to show this process of assessment, planning and decision making
- ◆ with the use of consistent language to safeguard individuals who self-neglect and who are as a result at risk in the community.
- ◆ with specific timeframes for responses and multi-agency intervention.
- ◆ to provide advice about how to escalate concerns beyond a single agency when there is delay and urgent concerns remain for that practitioner or agency.

There needs to be:

- ◆ clear terminology/nomenclature for safeguarding meetings.
- ◆ Multi-agency safeguarding plans should be drawn up to ensure all agencies are clear about what is required.
- ◆ Following Strategy meetings and the making of multi-agency Safeguarding Plans, regular Safeguarding Conferences should be booked ahead to review progress and to update the Safeguarding Plan.

There should be at least monthly oversight of safeguarding cases - and preferably through a multi-agency process - of such high risk cases which have met the threshold of the safeguarding procedures and the safeguarding framework for there to be a safeguarding plan in place to enable practitioners and managers to challenge and reflect upon cases through their supervision process.

There is a need to:

- ◆ Consider in training and supervision the Mental Capacity 2005 Code of Practice
- ◆ Develop some guidelines for working with individuals who appear to be difficult to engage; these should include consideration of mental capacity and cultural needs.
- ◆ Following this review, specific workshop training for practitioners is required to ensure they have information about the learning from this SAR and that they are clear about:

The requirement to consider and apply thresholds for single or multi-agency involvement from supportive preventative safeguarding measures to formal adult protection.

Full adult protection processes may be required if the risks are high, even if it is against the wishes of the subject.

What they need to and can do together to promote the best interests of high-risk vulnerable adults.

How mental capacity needs to be considered and assessed at the earliest possible stage and regularly

The assessments must include full involvement of the wider family and social context if this is judged by professionals to be in the individual's best interest or the public interest, even if the individual has not consented. However, consent should be sought whenever possible and the individual's capacity and cognisance should be considered, and advice sought.

This family involvement should include:

- ◆ regular updates with the family
- ◆ holding Family Group Conferences, if possible, to discuss options and to provide the family with full advice