

BSAB Escalation and Resolution Procedure

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Document Control

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Ratified by Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Date Revision Due

Revision History	Version	Changes made	Author

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS ESCALATION AND RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

SCOPE OF THIS PROCEDURE

This procedure provides for the resolution of professional disagreements / issues in work relating to the safety of adults at risk of abuse or neglect, and is applicable to all agencies that have a role in the safeguarding of adults and support Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures.

Key Principle: Communicate appropriately and effectively: “You must work in partnership with colleagues, sharing your skills, knowledge and experience where appropriate, for the benefit of service users and carers.” (HCPC Standards of conduct, performance, and ethics, 2016).

The Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) is clear that there must be respectful challenge whenever a professional or agency has a concern about the **action or inaction** of another. Similarly, agencies / professionals should not be defensive if challenged. Practitioners and managers should always be prepared to review decisions and plans with an open mind and act proportionately.

It is expected that this escalation and resolution process should be used first, however, if at any stage it is felt necessary to make a formal complaint, each agency should follow the recognised complaints procedure and adhere to any specified timescales.

1.1 Disagreements could arise in a number of areas, most likely as a result of differing views of actions; lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities; the need for action, possibly as a result of drift and issues regarding communication (including feedback); or where the Local Authority, as Lead Agency for Safeguarding Adults, decides whether to proceed with, or end, a Section 42 enquiry.

1.2 Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard adults

1.3 Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if it is not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion

1.4 At no time must professional disagreement detract from ensuring the adult is appropriately safeguarded. The adult’s wellbeing, wishes and safety must remain paramount throughout. Any new concerns presenting about the adult(s) subject to

escalation should be referred in to the Safeguarding Adult's Team at the Local Authority in the usual manner.

- 1.5 Difficulties should be resolved at practitioner level between agencies, if necessary with the involvement of their supervisors or managers. Attempts at resolution should reach a conclusion within one working week and place the views and needs of the adult(s) and carers involved above the personal views of professionals and organisational needs. All parties should be professionally satisfied that the disagreements have been resolved, and that each party has the relevant information in order to make a decision and express their views with any relevant evidence.
- 1.6 A common area of professional disagreement occurs when an enquiry is to be closed to Adult Social Care, which may lead to disagreements; these should be centred on whether the desired outcome has been achieved for the adult(s) at risk. The decision to end an enquiry is ultimately that of the Local Authority Manager responsible for co-ordinating the enquiry and should reflect whether the outcome is personalised for the adult at risk. A large number of cases are not closed completely and may involve de-escalation from Adult Safeguarding to care management for further monitoring and review. This allows further work to be undertaken by other agencies to meet the outcomes desired by, or in the best interests of, the adult at risk.

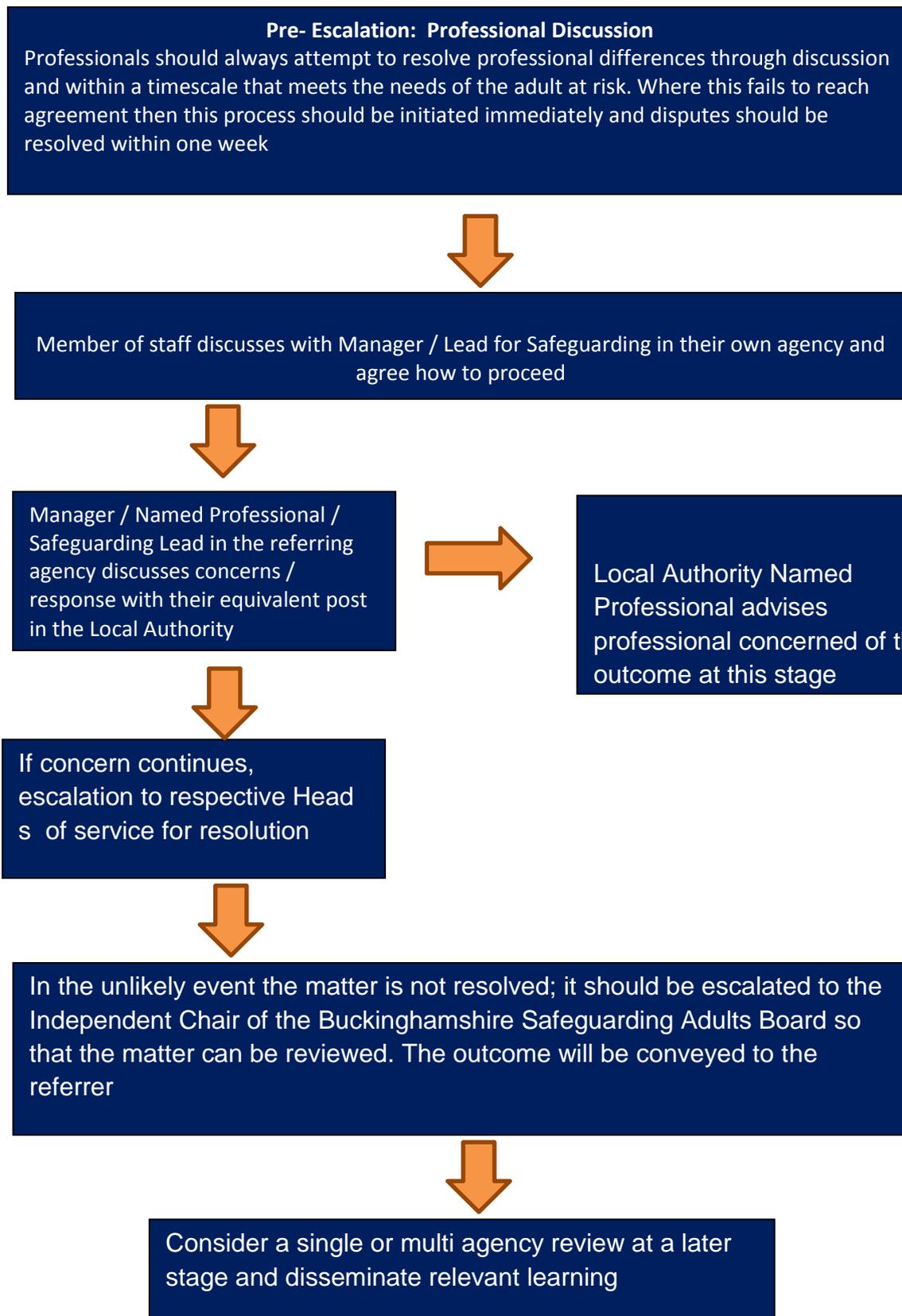
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- 1.1 It should be recognised that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to escalate this unsupported, however all members of staff have a duty to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users, and act promptly.
- 1.2 If unresolved, the issue should be referred to the worker's own supervisor, who will discuss it with their equivalent post in the other agency (*see flowchart*).
- 1.3 In the case of Care Providers, unresolved disputes should be raised with the relevant Manager responsible for co-ordinating the Safeguarding procedure.
- 1.4 Where there is failure to resolve disagreements between managers, those managers must escalate the matter to the relevant Head of Service. Heads of Service must be prepared, where necessary, to intervene.
- 1.5 In the unlikely event the matter remains unresolved; it should be escalated to the Independent Chair of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board for resolution.

1.6 Where the disagreement concerns professional or family differences in opinion about a best interests decision, for a person who lacks mental capacity to make that decision, reference should be made to Chapter 15 of the Code of Practice to the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Where no consensus of agreement can be reached despite taking all practicable steps to do so, then the Court of Protection should be approached.

1.7 A clear record should be kept at **all stages by all parties**. In particular, this must include written confirmation between the parties about the agreed outcome of the dispute and how any outstanding issues will be pursued. This should be documented in the appropriate record system within each individual agency, in accordance with their internal processes.

Escalation and Resolution Procedure for Raising Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart



Appendix B

Record of Escalation, Challenge and Conflict Resolution between Practitioners or Agencies

At all stages of escalation records of discussions and any decisions made should be recorded in writing and shared with any relevant personnel.

The BSAB does not prescribe a specific reporting format, but this form can be used where helpful.

Name of adult at risk:			
Summary of reason for dispute – include views of all agencies concerned			
Agreed outcomes or actions if satisfactorily resolved / agreed next steps including escalation to next stage if unresolved			
Please indicate who this information is being copied to			
Stage at which resolution achieved:	Time taken to reach resolution:	Additional Notes:	
Signature of challenger manager		Name:	
		Job Title:	
		Agency:	
		Date:	
Signature of challenged manager		Name:	
		Job Title:	
		Agency:	
		Date:	

Action Note: Copy of this form to be held on the adult's record in all agencies involved in the resolution of professional difference. If escalating to next stage use as basis of report to manager at next stage.