



4LSAB Multi-Agency Guidance on Prevention and Early Intervention in Adult Safeguarding

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1. Introduction

Critical to the vision in the Care Act 2014 is that the care and support system works to actively promote wellbeing and independence and does not just wait to respond when people reach a crisis point. It is vital that the care and support system intervenes early to support individuals, helps people retain or regain their skills and confidence, and prevents need, or delays deterioration wherever possible. This approach applies equally to adult safeguarding.

The Care Act 2014 places a duty on Local Safeguarding Adults Boards to develop and implement a clear strategy around the prevention of abuse or neglect of adults at risk. Prevention is one of the core principles of safeguarding and as such forms a fundamental part of local adult safeguarding policy framework and arrangements. The Safeguarding Adults Board will have an overview of the prevention work taking place in its area and will maintain links with other strategic forums and plans to ensure this work ties in with their work. These include links with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnerships, Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Integrated Care Board, Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, the Care Quality Commission, Prevent Board, Modern Slavery Partnership, and other groups and partnerships operating locally.

This strategy recognises that there are several building blocks for prevention and early intervention, including:

- A well-trained workforce operating in a culture of zero tolerance of abuse.
- People being informed of their rights to be free from abuse and supported to exercise these rights, including access to advocacy.
- A framework for confidentiality and information sharing across agencies.
- Access to good universal services, such as community safety services.
- Needs and risk assessments to inform people's choices.
- Safeguarding to achieve a balance between protecting people and preserving their right to make decisions for themselves, using a strengths based approach.
- Availability of a range of options for tailored support to keep people safe from abuse.
- Awareness of service users and the local community about safeguarding.

This guidance has been agreed by the four LSABs in Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight and provides an overarching framework for the prevention and early intervention in safeguarding. Member organisations are encouraged to use this framework, alongside other 4LSAB documents, to inform the development of local plans and guidance to support this work.

2. Key messages

The following principles and key messages underpin this strategy:

- Prevention in safeguarding should be broadly defined and should encompass service users and the wider community, using a person-centred approach.
- Prevention needs to take place in the context of person-centred support and personalisation, with individuals empowered to make choices and supported to manage risks, using a strengths based approach.
- Safeguarding monitoring data and other intelligence should be used to identify people, groups or localities most at risk in order to target preventive work.
- Any not yet reached groups should be identified and strategies put in place to raise awareness and improve reporting amongst these groups and communities.
- Service users and their families, friends and carers should be actively encouraged to participate in developing solutions to challenges they may be facing. 'Co-production' and a collaborative strength-based practice is an approach which enables the individual to influence the support and services they receive (or when groups of people get together to influence the way services are designed, commissioned and delivered). This approach contributes to developing the resilience of individuals and helps promote self-reliance and independence.
- Effective prevention requires good partnership working and a multi-disciplinary approach adopted within and across local services.
- Robust risk management (undertaken within the context of positive risk taking) is an important tool in effective prevention and early intervention.
- Safeguarding training strategies and programmes should address prevention and early intervention and include as core skills Making Safeguarding Personal, risk enablement, risk management, community safety, legal powers and remedies. Staff will access such training as relevant to their role in line with competency frameworks.

3. Activities to promote prevention in safeguarding

Local services are encouraged to undertake a range of activities aimed at promoting general wellbeing and maintaining independence as a means of eliminating or reducing the adult's vulnerability to potential exploitation, abuse or neglect, and improving outcomes for adults and communities.

4. General activities to promote wellbeing may include:

- Making safeguarding personal for all adults
- Providing universal access to good quality information, in a format that is appropriate and easy to understand.
- Supporting safer neighbourhoods.
- Actively addressing hate crime or anti-social behaviour.
- Promoting healthy and active lifestyles.
- Reducing loneliness or isolation, such as by accessing befriending schemes or community activities.
- Encouraging early discussions in families/groups about potential future changes.
- Having conversations about care arrangements if a family member becomes ill or disabled.

5. Specific activities to prevent exploitation, abuse or neglect may include:

- Identifying vulnerability factors and potential risks as part of the needs assessment and addressing these as part of the support planning process.
- Using support plans to reduce loneliness or isolation and helping the person to strengthen or build their social and support networks.
- Using accessible ways and support to help people understand the different types of abuse and its prevention including what to look out for and the steps to take if abuse is suspected.
- Providing people with information about sources of independent information, advice and advocacy, and supporting them to access this if required.
- Providing people with information about the role of the Court of Protection and Office of the Public Guardian as well as the mechanisms available (for example: lasting power of attorney, deputyship, Department of Work and Pensions appointeeship) to ensure their best interests are protected and to safeguard against financial exploitation if they lose their capacity to make welfare and/or property and financial decisions in the future.
- Reinforcing through literature and day to day interactions with adults that everyone has the right to be free from abuse and ensuring where someone

needs support in exercising this right, they can access appropriate support, including advocacy services.

- Providing training and education of service users on exploitation and abuse in order to help them to recognise this and to have the interpersonal skills necessary to deal with the situation should this occur.
- Developing and promoting a range of 'Keeping Safe' initiatives, for example: Mail and Telephone Preference Services, Safer Places, Buy with Confidence, Making Money Matter, No Cold Calling Zones, Mate Crime Awareness, SCAM Awareness initiatives, Neighbourhood Watch, Dementia Friendly Communities. Information should be available in an accessible format.
- Ensuring people are safe in whatever setting they live and that they are protected by the crime prevention measures aimed at the whole community and that they can access mainstream criminal justice and victim support services. This requires effective links between adult safeguarding arrangements and the full range of community safety services and resources
- Supporting carers by offering a needs or carer's assessment and use this as an opportunity to explore the individuals' circumstances and consider whether it would be possible to provide information, or support that prevents abuse or neglect from occurring, for example, by providing training to the carer about the condition that the adult they care for has or to support them to care more safely.
- Recognition that abuse or neglect may be unintentional and may arise because a carer is struggling to care for another person. This makes the need to take action no less important, but in such circumstances, an appropriate response could be a carer assessment and support package for the carer and monitoring.
- Ensuring the person is able to access support and services to help them recover from the abuse or neglect they have experienced. This approach will also help build future resilience.
- Appropriate use of the Multi Agency Risk Management (MARM) Framework to manage risk and avoid the need for safeguarding, if the statutory criteria for a safeguarding enquiry has not been met.

6. Activities to promote prevention and early intervention in care settings may include:

- Organisations should ensure that the principles of wellbeing and adult safeguarding are directly linked into commissioning, contract and procurement activity.

- Commissioners should assure themselves, through contracting arrangements that providers have clear arrangements in place to prevent abuse or neglect and that they undertake a range of activities aimed at keeping service users safe.
- Care providers should be able to demonstrate a person-centred approach to care; a zero tolerance of abuse and neglect which encourages whistleblowing; staff, service user and family awareness of the nature of abuse and what to do if this is suspected; safe recruitment practices; regular quality monitoring and audit of care; regular staff training and updating of skills and clear policies and practice guidance available to all staff and volunteers.
- Care providers should make their staff aware through internal guidelines of what to do when they suspect or encounter abuse of adults in vulnerable situations. This should be incorporated in staff manuals or handbooks detailing terms and conditions of appointment and other employment procedures so that individual staff members will be aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults. This information should emphasise that all those who express concern will be treated seriously and will receive a positive response from managers.
- Commissioners should assure themselves, through contracting arrangements that a provider is capable and competent in responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including having robust processes in place to investigate the actions of members of staff.
- Commissioners should put in place robust arrangements to enable poor or unsafe care to be identified and addressed at an early stage.
- All commissioners or providers of services in the public, voluntary or private sectors should disseminate information about the multi-agency safeguarding policy and procedures.